

Baatonu Literacy Project

Baatonu is the language spoken by the Bariba people, the majority population in northern Benin. They were a conquering people who co-founded a kingdom in present-day Benin and Nigeria. There are about 1,652,000 Baatonu speakers in Benin, Burkina Faso, Nigeria, and Togo.

The Bariba are 65% Muslims, 18% animists and only 16% Christians. Their Bible has been fully translated, however the literacy rate varies from 1% to 30% (Ethnologue.com). Illiteracy, especially among women in the remote rural areas, causes a lack of good hygiene and health practices, among many other problems.

The project will enable the Bariba people to learn to read the Bible in their own language, make disciples, share the Gospel of Christ, and strengthen churches.



Objectives:

1. By the end of February 2027, to finish and print the primers – 90 lessons with biblical content. To launch the literacy project in April 2027.
2. By May 2027, to train church teachers and leaders for evangelism, discipleship and church planting.
3. In the first year, to have 40 trained teachers with 20 literacy classes and 10–25 pupils per class.

Partnerships and estimated impact

The churches of the Union des Églises Evangéliques du Bénin (UEEB) will provide classroom space, mobilize volunteer teachers, and identify needs. We anticipate 800 to 1,000 new readers over the first two years, and 2,000 to 5,500 new readers within five years.

Cost Breakdown:

Primer Construction Workshop	\$8,000	Lodging, meals and supplies for 8 workers for 21 days. Computer input for 3 months.
Launch, promotion of primers, and Teacher training	\$2,000	
Printing	\$4,000	2,000 copies each of Book 1 and Book 2
Administration	<u>\$2,800</u>	LEI Headquarters fee
	\$16,800	Total