

Soroti BIBLE SCHOOL

P.O. Box 402, Soroti, Uganda, East Africa

Annual Report – January to December 2020



‘...to equip disciples of Jesus Christ to know more of God and His Word.’



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SOROTI BIBLE SCHOOL is an interdenominational Bible school based in Soroti, Uganda. It seeks to provide quality Bible teaching and theological training to all disciples of Jesus Christ who seek it.

SOROTI BIBLE SCHOOL is an initiative of Soroti School of Business Ltd, which provides facilities, funding and administration support to help develop the work of Soroti Bible School.

SOROTI BIBLE SCHOOL is part of the corporate social responsibility (CSR) program of Soroti School of Business Ltd.

SOROTI SCHOOL OF BUSINESS is based on a 12-acre campus south of Soroti city and offers nationally accredited Certificate and Diploma programmes in business management and administration, accounting and finance, records and information management, marketing and secretarial studies. It has a centre number UBB269 with the Uganda Business and Technical Examinations Board (UBTEB). It has two intakes a year – March and August.

For more information go to www.sorotischoolofbusiness.com

Vision, Mission and Objectives

The vision of Soroti Bible School is to equip disciples of Jesus Christ to know more of God and His Word.

The mission of Soroti Bible School is to provide quality Bible teaching and theological training, practical and vocational skills and opportunities for personal and character development, to disciples of Jesus Christ.

The objectives of Soroti Bible School are to:

- ❖ Provide Bible teaching and theological training at Certificate, Diploma and eventually Degree and Masters' levels from its campus in Soroti.
- ❖ Develop other study centres in order to make its training available from a variety of accessible locations. These centres will be developed alongside a programme of providing training through distance learning and other methods of delivery, as appropriate.
- ❖ Support church planting and partner with other organisations to take the Good News of Jesus Christ to those identified as unreached people groups.
- ❖ Develop practical and vocational training skills and other programmes, as appropriate.



Report on the Year 2020 – Principal

The dark clouds on the front page of this annual report express much of what happened to the world, to Uganda, to Soroti and to the plans we had for 2020 in developing Soroti Bible School. A global pandemic erupted in the early months of 2020, just as Soroti Bible School was celebrating achieving its registration with the NGO Bureau of Uganda and as we had our Operating Permit.

By March 2020, Uganda was in lockdown to prevent the spread of the coronavirus, also known as Covid 19, with measures implemented across the world, as well as in Uganda, to prevent the spread of a virus that has gone on the claim the lives globally of more than one million people.

This event meant that so much of what Soroti Bible School wanted to achieve in its first year of operations has not been able to be delivered. We have made some progress in 2020 on raising awareness among pastors of our plans and vision and a lot of contact was made with pastors from across the area, who are excited to know that Soroti Bible School is now in existence and who are ready to benefit from what it will offer.

But it remains the case that the progress we had hoped to make, after waiting so long to begin to achieve our purpose, has been delayed by the lockdown brought by Covid 19 and the recovery that is on-going even after schools and institutions were reopened in October 2020.

We remain committed to achieving our goals and will press on, in spite of the challenges and delays that so many experienced as a direct result of the pandemic and its aftermath, so that Soroti Bible School achieves its purpose. **S**

Pastor Patrick Orotin
Principal, Soroti Bible School

| Objective for 2020 | Achievement |
|--|---|
| Develop the board of Soroti Bible School and appoint board members to oversee its governance and structure | We were unable to mobilise potential board members during 2020 due to Covid 19 lockdown and restrictions on movement. |
| Deliver a launch event to announce that Soroti Bible School is beginning operations, with the start of a teaching and training programme available for pastors to join | Plans for a launch event of Soroti Bible School were advanced in early 2020 but had to be put on hold due to Covid 19 restrictions and the ban on conferences and large gatherings. |
| Develop a number of the policies and documents as set out in the Constitution | Some of the policies as set out in the Constitution of Soroti Bible School were developed in early draft form, but no meetings were possible, to develop them further, due to Covid restrictions. |

Report on the Year 2020 – Director of Outreach

Some progress was able to be made during 2020 on our engagement with key stakeholders. The Theological Education Group of North East Uganda had its first meetings in 2020 and Soroti Bible School representatives were active supporters in the development of this group. The first meeting took place immediately the Covid 19 restrictions were lifted in October 2020 and Soroti Bible School was able to meet with representatives from around 20 other training and theological institutions, to discuss matters of mutual interest.

The main outcome of those discussions for Soroti Bible School was to have a clear understanding of the difference between non-accredited informal training programs and formally accredited qualifications from institutions that are fully registered by the National Council for Higher Education in Uganda.

On-going engagement with pastors has made it clear that many who are leading churches and ministries are seeking to attain formally recognised and accredited Certificates and Diplomas, which will allow them to go on to achieve Degrees and eventually even Masters programs from institutions that have achieved full registration status.

So while the year 2020 saw a lot of delays and set-backs for Soroti Bible School, the time was useful for us to understand what our key stakeholders want by way of training, moving through informal training programs that have given them a lot of knowledge and depth, to more formal accredited programs.

It is regrettable that Soroti Bible School was not able to hold a formal launch event to announce its plans, but we remain committed to working with our stakeholders to hold such an event when the time is right. **S**

Pastor John Onyao
Director of Outreach, Soroti Bible School

| Objective for 2020 | Achievement |
|--|--|
| Participate fully in and support the development of the Theological Education Group of North East Uganda . | This was achieved and helped to give a clearer picture of the academic pathway that Soroti Bible School will want to provide. |
| To plan for the delivery of at least one conference or event to make pastors aware of the work of Soroti Bible School through a launch event sometime in 2020, once NGO registration and an Operating Permit has been granted. | This has had to be delayed due to restrictions during and following Covid 19 lockdown, which ran from March to October 2020, therefore covering more half of the year of this report |
| To offer pastors ICT training and some basic management training that will support them in their work as pastors and leaders on a day-to-day basis in their churches. | Soroti School of Business also closed for lockdown, so management training for pastors can only be delivered once education normalizes in Uganda. |

Report on the Year 2020 – Director of Strategy & Resources

The period of lockdown in Uganda from March to October 2020 did allow for a time where some written materials and documents could be developed, in line with the approved Constitution of the school.

Our participation in the Theological Education Group of North East Uganda allowed us to understand how other more established schools approach key issues, including registration, setting and collecting fees for tuition, and the early developments in distance learning and online learning that are emerging in many schools. A key challenge going forward will be the need to develop and provide appropriate resources to support such learning and to ensure these resources are properly funded.

The impact of lockdown on Soroti School of Business is likely to have a limiting affect on how much financial support can be made available for the development work of Soroti Bible School in the coming year, but there remains a very strong commitment for Soroti Bible School to be supported to achieve its goals.

A key strategic issue now before us is how Soroti Bible School could partner with an established academic partner and provide them with the facilities to open a study centre in this part of Uganda. During the course of 2020, Kampala Evangelical School of Theology (KEST) is emerging as one such potential partner and 2021 will be used to explore this relationship further, to see how possible it is for KEST to open a study centre under the umbrella of Soroti Bible School. **S**

Mark Palin
Director of Strategy and Resources, Soroti Bible School

| Objective for 2020 | Achievement |
|--|--|
| Agree funding for the development of Soroti Bible School from Soroti School of Business Limited and open a bank account for funds to be held. | Soroti School of Business had to abandon holding any board meetings in 2020, so this issue will be progressed next year. |
| Begin the work of seeking and identifying an appropriate academic partner who can bring accredited courses, as well as informal theological training, to pastors in Soroti | This was achieved partly through work in the Theological Education Group of North-East Uganda and the potential for working with KEST will be explored more in 2021. |
| Further develop written materials and training programs for delivery by Soroti Bible School in 2020 | Teaching materials were further developed in 2020, assisted by the long lockdown, with more resources planned to be under development in 2021. |

What we aim to achieve in 2021

- ❖ Hold a combined launch event and engagement event with Kampala Evangelical School of Theology (KEST) to engage with stakeholders on both the launch of the school and a partnership with KEST in Soroti
- ❖ Again seek to recruit members of the board of Soroti Bible School, so that its governance can be implemented in line with its approved Constitution.
- ❖ Continue our involvement in the Theological Education Group of North East Uganda to learn best practice from other institutions that will work in developing Soroti Bible School.
- ❖ Collaborate with Soroti School of Business to develop a joint program of management training for pastors, especially in the skills of financial management, strategic management, human resource management and project management.
- ❖ Agree appropriate levels of funding and support from Soroti School of Business in 2021 for the development of Soroti Bible School.
- ❖ Seek to hold at least one event or conference where the materials developed by Soroti Bible School can be used as the basis for training of some pastors on a trial basis.

Contact Information

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Soroti Bible School is hosted by Soroti School of Business, which is located in Opuyo, south of Soroti city on the Mbale Road, behind Rhema High School.