

# Soroti BIBLE SCHOOL

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

## STRATEGIC PLAN – 2024 - 2029

### **Introduction**

This is a key document of Soroti Bible School, which will guide its actions, priorities, spending and investment plans, as it seeks to realise its Vision and fulfill its Mission, as set out in its adopted Constitution.

### **Vision**

The Vision of Soroti Bible School for the next five years remains as set out in its Constitution:

'To equip disciples of Jesus Christ to know more of God and His Word'.

### **Mission**

The Mission of Soroti Bible School for the next five years remains as set out in its Constitution:

'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 Four Objectives**

There are four objectives of Soroti Bible School for the next five years, which are in line with its Constitution:

1- To provide Bible teaching and theological training at Certificate, Diploma and eventually Degree and Masters' levels from its campus in Soroti, in partnership with Africa Renewal University (AfRU), in line with the Memorandum of Understanding between Soroti Bible School and AfRU, signed in 2023.

2 - To develop its main study centre in Opuyo, Soroti, hosted by Soroti School of Business, as well as to provide training through distance learning and other methods of delivery, including outreach and online learning.

3 - To support church planting and partner with other organisations to take the Good News of Jesus Christ to those identified as unreached people groups.

4 - To develop practical and vocational training skills and other programmes, as appropriate, including management and financial training and project management skills for pastors and church workers.

## SWOT - Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

In developing its Action Plan, as part of this Strategic Plan, Soroti Bible School has developed an understanding of its Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats, a SWOT Analysis.

The perceived Strengths and Weaknesses at Soroti Bible School

<b>Soroti Bible School (SBS) – SWOT Analysis</b>	
<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SBS is hosted by Soroti School of Business and so does not have to provide its own buildings, or teaching, catering or hostel facilities, as these are provided by the business school outside of its semester time.</li> <li>• The campus provided for SBS training is located centrally close to Soroti city.</li> <li>• The on-site hostel provided for Soroti School of Business when available to SBS, means pastors from outside of Soroti can be accommodation during training.</li> <li>• Soroti School of Business is the income-generator for SBS and some profits from the business school are donated to SBS to support its work, meaning SBS is not dependent directly on being financially viable solely from its own activities.</li> <li>• SBS is not linked to or funded by a specific church group or denomination, so is free to develop its own theological approach, based on the understanding of its staff of the Scriptures.</li> <li>• The link between SBS and Soroti School of Business means it can support the theological education of young people training in business, as well as pastors and full-time church staff.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SBS is restricted in the use of its teaching resources to pastors to outside of the semester time of Soroti School of Business, although it has a key role in providing theological training to business students during the business semester.</li> <li>• As there is no specific link to a church network or denomination, it does not immediately have a cadre of pastors to train and will need to work hard to recruit students from different churches and networks. Some denominations will not want their pastors to be trained by an independent Bible school.</li> <li>• Its status as an indigenous NGO means activities are restricted to be within Soroti. This does not prevent SBS from encouraging pastors from other districts to travel to Soroti for training, but the Operating Permit for 2024-2029 does limit SBS from actively operating outside of Soroti as an NGO</li> <li>• SBS will take theological positions on some matters affecting the life of the church in Soroti, including spiritual authority that women seek to have over men in church leadership, the understanding of 'Israel' as it relates to the church, and the understanding of 'prosperity' as it relates to the gospel. SBS does not seek to be needlessly controversial, and taking a position for truth is never a weakness, but this may impact how SBS is seen by some churches or church leaders.</li> </ul>

## The perceived Opportunities and Threats of Soroti Bible School

Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The opportunities SBS has, especially in its unique relationship to a business school, are frankly endless. Being able to combine theological training with the training of management and business skills could transform the effectiveness of pastors and church leaders.</li> <li>• Not being linked to any denomination or church network may in some senses be a weakness, but is also a key Opportunity, as it will allow SBS to offer training across a range of church groups and networks, without being in any sense tied to them.</li> <li>• Not being linked to a denomination means that SBS is not under any influence to adopt any theological stance of any given topic. SBS will always seek to teach orthodox Christian teaching in all matters, without fear of losing funding or influence from any external donor who is seeking to use SBS as a vehicle to promote its own theological frameworks or presuppositions. This will prove to be especially true on issues of 'Israel', 'Prosperity' and the march of Theological Determinism in its various forms.</li> <li>• Having an income generating body, in the form of Soroti School of Business, means SBS can focus on delivering its Vision and Mission and Objectives without spending a disproportionate amount of time on 'income generation.'</li> <li>• The exchange of an MoU with Africa Renewal University (AfRU) provides amazing opportunities for the academic development of SBS, especially the accredited nature of its courses to both business students and pastors.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The success of SBS is almost entirely dependent on the success of Soroti School of Business. The business school opened in 2018 and was impacted by the Covid-19 lockdowns, and this directly impacted the development of SBS.</li> <li>• As stated, SBS has no intention of being needlessly controversial. At the same time, it has no intention of adopting theological positions in order to achieve cheap popularity. SBS may at some point in the future have to defend its positions in public against influential groups or individuals who will disagree strongly with the views of SBS.  Taking a position for truth is never a threat but can be seen as threatening, and it may lead some to take a harsh view of SBS. The school will be ready for that and will seek to address it with love, joy, peace, patience and kindness, as well as with courage and without compromise. SBS shall graciously allow others to hold different views and will remain in fellowship with all true believers to the extent that it depends on SBS, regardless of disputable matters.</li> <li>• SBS shall seek to keep the right balance between its theological teaching and the cross-over with Soroti School of Business on the teaching it will offer pastors and church leaders on issues of management, business and financial skills and project management skills. SBS is first and foremost a Bible institution. It will be mindful that some may want to attend its courses, over time, to learn the skills of monetizing the Gospel, rather than serving with financial and moral integrity, but the link between a Bible school and a business school presents a perception and reputational risk to both institutions, unless properly managed</li> </ul>

## Goals and Action Plan

Soroti Bible School has set itself the following objectives to be achieved in the next five years of its operations. These objectives have been set out under the three headings of Finance and Governance, Academic Opportunity and Standards and Outreach and Community Impact:

### Finance and Governance

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Action Plan</b>
FG 1: Fully establish a clear, consistent and transparent relationship with Soroti School of Business, so the governance of Soroti Bible School is clear to both institutions	AP1: Review the Constitution of Soroti Bible School and consider in the next five years if the two schools should remain separate or should merge into a single institution
FG 2: Develop a transparent financial relationship between Soroti Bible School and its donor Soroti School of Business, to ensure SBS programs are fully funded and there is no dependency on other external donors	AP2: Review how the Annual Financial Statements of both Soroti Bible School and Soroti School of Business are prepared alongside each other, so there is a clear audit trail of funding between the schools
FG 3: Aim to generate as much income from its training activities as possible, so that it can minimize the donations needed from Soroti School of Business to fund its activities	AP3: Approve a 'Fees at Soroti Bible School' policy as set out in its Constitution which make its training affordable while aiming to cover costs as far as possible
FG 4: Develop a 'Statement of Faith' that will set out the theological stance of the school in line with an evangelical tradition	AP4: This Statement will be developed in line with the Constitution of Soroti Bible School
FG 5: Ensure each member of the executive team develops an Annual Work Plan, which will set their individual goals and objectives	AP5: These Annual Work Plans will be presented to a meeting of Soroti Bible School for approval and regular monitoring

### Academic Opportunity and Standards

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Action Plan</b>
AOS 1: Set out clearly the courses that Soroti Bible School offers to both business students and to pastors and church leaders	AP6: Publish a 'Programme of Studies' as set out in the Constitution, including the academic requirements to quality to study them
AOS 2: Develop fully the relationship with Africa Renewal University (AfRU), including ensuring that accredited Diploma-level courses are offered within the five years 2024-2029	AP7: Work with AfRU to ensure their Diploma-level courses are available in Soroti, with teaching provided by both AfRU and SBS staff
AOS 3: Aim to provide Mature Entry to potential students of Soroti Bible School, working with other education providers to ensure every opportunity is offered to any student to study its courses	AP8: Understand in detail of Mature Entry to higher education in Uganda and support a program that will allow mature students, who did not reach Senior 4 level, to get back on the ladder of higher education so they can study at SBS
AOS 4: Ensure the management and business skills of Soroti School of Business are offered fully to pastors and church workers	AP9: Take some of the notes of Soroti School of Business, delivered for UBTEB courses and develop them for deliver to pastors to improve their business and management knowledge
AOS 5: Integrate more fully to business students the theological studies of Soroti Bible School to be delivered alongside the Uganda Business and Technical Examinations Board (UBTEB) academic programmes of Soroti School of Business	AP10: Work with Soroti School of Business to ensure the modules of the Certificate of Proficiency in Christian Studies, offered by SBS to all business school students, is delivered alongside the modules of the business school

## Outreach and Community Impact

Objective	Action Plan
OC 1: Develop an outreach programme that promotes the opportunities to potential students that are available from Soroti Bible School	AP11: Building on the lessons and techniques of Marketing Plan of Soroti School of Business, developing an outreach programme to churches
OC 2: Work with Soroti School of Business to highlight the Certificate of Proficiency in Christian Studies that is offered to business students	AP12: Promoting the Certificate of Proficiency in Christian Studies is already in the marketing work of Soroti School of Business, so SBS will work with the business school to highlight this more fully at marketing events of the business school
OC 3: Ensure that the work of Soroti Bible School has the widest possible impact on the community of Soroti	AP13: Aim to develop community programmes that, within the resources available, express the love and mercy of God to all sections of the communities of Soroti
OC 4: Develop a proactive programme of evangelism and Gospel preaching, from both students of SBS and of the business school	AP14: As part of their studies, business students and students of Soroti Bible School will be supported and where possible resourced to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ to people who have not yet accepted Him as Lord and Saviour
OC 5: Facilitate a Sunday student fellowship at Soroti School of Business and provide pastoral care and mentoring of business school students	AP15: Seek to appoint a part-time or full-time pastor who will deliver modules of the Certificate of Proficiency in Christian Studies, oversee the Sunday fellowship of Soroti School of Business and provide pastoral care to business school students

## Monitoring and Evaluation

The 15 Objectives form the Action Plan of Soroti Bible School for 2024-2029, for the school to achieve its Vision and its Mission and to fulfil the key objectives set out in its Constitution.

A full meeting of Soroti Bible School will establish measures of success or achievement for each of the 15 objectives and will then hold meetings on a regular basis to review actions and expenditure, so these objectives are being met. Sub-committees of the main board of Soroti Bible School will be formed as required, to ensure the Action Plan is delivered and the Objectives are met.

The measurements of success, set by the board of Soroti Bible School and any sub-committees, will follow the SMART approach of measurement:

**Specific - Measurable - Achievable – Realistic - Time-limited**

A full report on the 15 objectives will be given at the Annual General Meeting of Soroti Bible School and at least one board-level workshop will be held at the mid-point of this five-year period, to monitor and evaluate this Strategic Plan and make whatever adjustments and actions are necessary, for the objectives to be fulfilled.

**July 2024**