



Bible Access List

Where Bible access is most difficult, and Bible shortage is greatest

Namibia

Bible Restrictions Rank: **84**
MINIMAL ACCESS RESTRICTIONS

Bible shortage has been confirmed



An Overview of Bible access in Namibia

Namibia's Christian population makes up around 91% of its 2.6 million people—that's roughly 2.4 million believers. Encouragingly, rough estimates show that 80% of Christians have access to a Bible, placing Namibia among the more spiritually resourced nations in the region. While this is good news, it also means that hundreds of thousands of believers, especially in remote and underserved areas, still lack consistent access to God's Word.

There are no formal restrictions on owning, distributing, storing, printing, or importing Bibles in Namibia. However, this openness does not guarantee universal access. Economic disparities and rural isolation still create practical challenges, especially for those in informal settlements or lower-income communities. The remaining Bible gap often reflects affordability, not availability. While the poverty level on paper indicates an upper-middle-class average population, the disparity on the ground is striking—as many Christians are living under very poor and harsh conditions.

Another layer to consider is the digital environment. While internet access is steadily growing in Namibia, just a little over 60% of the country is connected online. Additionally, just a little over half of the population is powered with electricity, highlighting access problems as more of a logistical challenge than a legal one.

Before we continue, would you take a pause to pray for Namibia?

How can I pray for Namibia?

- **Provision for the Underserved.** Pray that those who still lack access to a Bible—especially in rural and low-income areas—would receive Scripture in the format and language they need.
- **Digital Wisdom and Freedom.** Ask God to protect the digital space in Namibia, so believers can access Scripture and share their faith online without fear or restraint.
- **Spiritual Hunger and Growth.** Pray that the church in Namibia continues to grow in maturity, with a renewed hunger for the Word and boldness in discipleship and outreach.

After praying for Namibia, continue reading on the next page to learn more.

Bible Access Restrictions

Minimal Access Restrictions

Other Limiting Factors

Some Other Factors



Poor infrastructure



50-70% of population access to electricity

Bible Shortages Among Believers



Bibles are needed for believers and seekers

Main religion: Christianity

Country population: 2,646,000

Christian population:



2,408,000, 91% of total population

WHAT'S BLOCKING BIBLE ACCESS IN NAMIBIA?

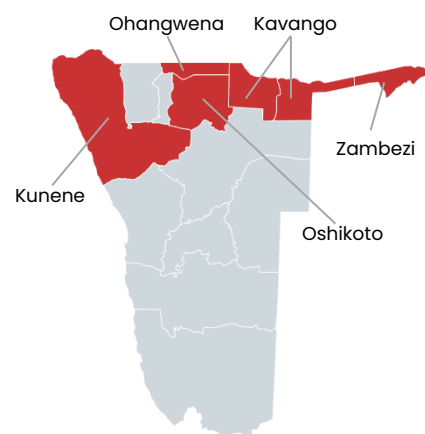
While Namibia enjoys one of the most open and Christian-friendly environments in Africa, Bible access is not without its challenges. The barriers here are not political or legal—but practical, economic, and geographic. With the majority of the population identifying as Christian and strong constitutional protections in place, believers in Namibia are largely free to worship, own, and share the Bible. There are no restrictions on importing, distributing, storing, or printing Scripture, and the government has a history of cooperative engagement with churches across denominations.

But freedom does not equal access.

The Quiet Challenges of Access

Despite nearly 80% of Christians having access to a Bible, this still leaves an estimated half a million believers without Scripture. The reasons are rarely dramatic, but they are deeply entrenched. Namibia is one of the world's most sparsely populated nations, with just three people per square kilometer.

For Christians living in remote regions such as Kavango, Ohangwena, Zambezi, Kunene, and Oshikoto, the nearest Bible shop or church might be hours away over rough terrain. Limited transport infrastructure and few commercial networks in these areas make consistent Bible distribution incredibly difficult.



Economic Inequality and Bible Scarcity

Namibia ranks among the most unequal societies in the world. Though classified as an upper-middle-income country, wealth is concentrated in the hands of a few. For Christians living in poverty, particularly in rural areas, owning a Bible is not a financial priority when daily survival is uncertain.

Importing Bibles is expensive: orders from overseas require upfront payments and can take up to three months to arrive. High costs, limited print runs in indigenous languages, and financial constraints at the Bible Society of Namibia mean that Bibles are often out of stock in local tongues, especially for underserved communities.

The Literacy and Language Gap

Another invisible barrier to Bible access is education. Namibia's school system has struggled to meet basic literacy benchmarks. For children and adults who cannot read, a printed Bible is of little use. While the Bible Society has made progress in providing audio Bibles, especially solar-powered devices for nomadic groups like the Himba, these are not yet available at the scale needed to meet the demand.

Even where literacy exists, language remains a hurdle. Many Bibles are only available in English, while translation efforts into local languages are ongoing but underfunded and slow.

Denominational and Social Friction

Although not persecutory, tensions have emerged around what the government labels “fake churches.” In 2022, a number of smaller, unregistered churches, mainly Pentecostal and independent, were shut down by police for alleged fraud and dangerous practices. This sparked protests among Christian groups, who feared this could set a precedent for state overreach.

While the closures targeted fringe churches, they also revealed lingering denominational divides and concerns over equitable treatment of newer Christian movements.

Digital Bible Use Under Surveillance

Digital tools offer hope, especially in urban centers. But there’s a catch. Under the Communications Act of 2009, all internet traffic in Namibia can be monitored and stored for five years. While this hasn’t resulted in direct persecution, it raises flags for digital privacy. Believers using online Bibles or sharing Scripture digitally, particularly in sensitive conversations, may be cautious, knowing their activity is being tracked. In a country where Christianity is the majority, the threat may seem low, but the awareness of surveillance subtly shapes behavior, especially for those engaging in evangelism or social commentary online.

All things considered, what blocks Bible access in Namibia is not overt hostility, but quiet, persistent limitations: the weight of poverty, the isolation of rural life, the slow pace of translation, and the gap between what’s legally allowed and what’s practically available.

THE URGENT NEED FOR BIBLES IN NAMIBIA

Despite Namibia’s strong Christian foundation and legal freedom to own and share Scripture, a significant portion still live without access to a Bible.

Church Decline Making Bible Access More Urgent

Although the Christian population in Namibia has seen a slight decline in recent years, this makes the task of increasing Bible access all the more urgent. A decrease in growth should not signal a reduced need; instead, it highlights the importance of spiritual depth and discipleship for those who remain.

In an era of shifting cultural values and economic hardship, access to God’s Word becomes vital for sustaining faith, especially among the next generation of believers.

Bible Formats for Unique Needs

When it comes to formats, **printed Bibles** remain the most critical. Namibia’s vast rural regions and limited internet infrastructure make physical copies the most reliable means of distribution.

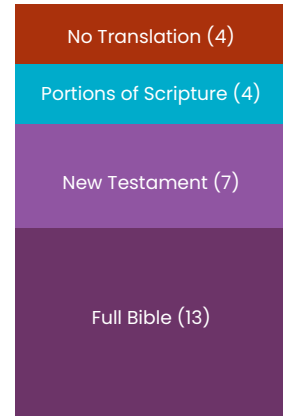
However, as internet access continues to expand, digital formats also play an important role, especially among younger, urban populations.

The Translation Gap

Language diversity presents another challenge. Of the 28 languages spoken by Christians in Namibia:

- Only **13** have a full Bible translation
- **7** have translations to the New Testament only
- **4** languages have just portions of Scripture translated
- **And 4 languages still have no translation at all**

This translation gap leaves many believers unable to engage with Scripture in their heart language.



Spoken Languages with Believers in Namibia

THE CLARION CALL

The need for Bibles in Namibia is not a matter of possibility. It’s a matter of priority. The doors are open. The government welcomes religious freedom. The people are hungry for truth. But access remains uneven.

This is a moment for the global Church to respond, not with fear, but with faith. By investing in Bible translation, printing, and distribution, we can ensure that every believer in Namibia has the chance to hold, hear, and share God’s Word.

The opportunity is now. Will we answer the call?



-0.4%

Annual Church Growth



Bibles needed for both
Believers & Seekers



Printed Bible
Preferred Format



Internet Bible
Format 2nd Priority