



**40% of adults in Nepal are illiterate. 57% live on less than \$2 per day, and more than half live without electricity.**

**RESULTS**

 **66** READ Centers established

 **128** enterprises launched

 **138** villages served

 **1.9** million villagers reached

**WHERE WE WORK**



**THE NEED**

A majority of the 275 million people in Nepal live on less than \$2 a day. For 57% of the rural population, it takes longer than 30 minutes to get to the nearest durable road making it difficult for children to attend school. Less than 30% of the rural population has access to electricity, and the during the day season, load shedding causes electricity to be unswayable for a majority of the day.

**READ NEPAL PROGRAMS**

READ has its roots in Nepal, where our first office opened in 1991 after a rural villager told our founder that all he wanted for his village was a library. Since then we have created a network of public libraries across the country to provide access to information and economic opportunities so that Nepalis can work towards a better future. Through partnerships, we provide several years of trainings and workshops at each Center in the following core program areas:

**1. ACCESS TO KNOWLEDGE AND INFORMATION**

READ Centers offer basic to advanced classes on literacy skills and retention. With 40% of adults in Nepal unable to read (53% of female adults), READ Centers provide educational opportunities to adults to help increase the value placed on education for future generations. Literacy programs increasingly feature the use of information communications technology (ICT) for interactive trainings. Reading groups encourage women to help each other learn to read, and a school launched by READ for housewives in the Hariwan district gives them another opportunity to get an education. Many READ Centers also feature English language classes.



***"[This initiative] was an amazing change in my lifestyle. Now I can go out of my house without any doubts from my family members for participating in youth activities and sports."*** – Mala Das, Pokhariya READ Center

## INSTITUTIONAL PARTNERS

BILL & MELINDA  
GATES foundation



## 2. ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

A crucial part of the READ model is creating income-generating opportunities to help villagers overcome the cycle of poverty. Each READ Center is paired with a for-profit business enterprise to sustain the Center while providing life-changing skills and economic opportunities. 86 sustaining enterprises have been seed-funded in Nepal: from basic storefront rentals to turmeric farming, souvenir production and community radio stations. READ also has a robust livelihood skills training program. In partnership with local NGOs such as Practical Action, READ Nepal provides training in income-generating activities, such as beekeeping, mushroom farming, milk production, goat farming, off-season vegetable farming, and more. READ Centers also launch savings cooperatives to teach local villagers basic financial literacy and provide loans - more than 20 savings cooperatives have been launched in Nepal to date.

## 3. WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

READ Centers have children's sections with age-appropriate books, student resources, educational games and toys, and child-friendly furniture – in Nepal, this section is often the most visited in the whole Center. As part of the ECD focus, Centers conduct specific programs aimed at children, such as story-telling hours, book quizzes, poem and story competitions, and drawing competitions. READ's ECD focus gives mothers a safe and nourishing environment for their children, so that they too can pursue educational opportunities at the READ Center and work to support their families.

## 4. HEALTH EDUCATION AND SERVICES

READ Centers libraries offer educational resources on health issues, and READ Center training halls provide a space for visiting doctors and nurses to offer health services to rural villagers who are otherwise unable to go to hospitals for checkups. READ Nepal hosts regular health camps at its Centers where advice and medicine are given for minor issues, and referrals to nearby hospital are provided to those with more significant issues. Health camps focus on children's health and nutrition, women's health, balanced diets, sexual reproductive health, dental hygiene, eye health and more. READ Nepal also conducts regular blood drives at its Centers.



## FUTURE FOCUS

- **Country-level sustaining enterprise:** READ plans to establish an agricultural distribution center to generate income to support operating costs.
- **IT-related local content:** Through the *Practical Answers* program, READ is creating a digital database of information on agriculture, livestock, health and more.

