



READ (Rural Education and Development) Global is a nonprofit organization that believes that empowering rural communities is critical to alleviating global poverty.

We establish community library and resource centers (READ Centers) in rural villages of South Asia as vehicles for social and economic transformation.

70% of the world's poor live in rural areas. More than **half** of them are illiterate and earn less than **\$2 per day**.

THE "READ EFFECT"

A READ Center can be the catalyst for empowering individuals, families, and entire communities.

When a center provides educational and economic trainings to an individual, they gain greater access to income-generating opportunities. Increased education and income enables parents to better take care of their families and keep their children in school, so that they can become the next generation of leaders.

This cumulative "READ effect" results in increased knowledge and prosperity for rural communities today, and better prospects for the future.

COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP

Community ownership and management is critical to the success of our model and instilled in every step over a period of five years.

Communities approach READ to create a new center. We ask for a community co-investment of at least 10-15% – through a donation of land, a building to be renovated, or fundraising efforts. Local Center Management Committees oversee day-to-day operations. As a result, the community feels invested in the success of the center and welcome once it's completed.

RESULTS

 **102** READ Centers established

 **162** for-profit enterprises launched

 **314** villages served

 **2.3 million** villagers reached

WHERE WE WORK



ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

READ Centers provide free educational resources and economic opportunities to women, families, and entire villages.

A majority of READ Center users surveyed (99% in Bhutan, 75% in India, and 67% in Nepal) said they would not otherwise have access to the information they obtained at the center — often the only educational resource in the community.

A READ Center includes:

- A **library** with 3,000 - 5,000 books, magazines, and newspapers in local languages and English.
- An **information communications technology (ICT)** section with computers, Internet access (where available), and computer skills training.
- A **women's empowerment** section that provides specialized educational materials and a safe space for women and girls.
- A **children's** section with age-appropriate reading materials, games, and toys.
- A **multimedia** section with TV, DVD player, phone, fax, and copier.
- A **training and meeting hall** to conduct educational programs.



SUSTAINING ENTERPRISES

With each READ Center, we also seed a for-profit "sustaining enterprise," a small business that creates local jobs and generates profit to support the ongoing costs of the center, from new books, to electricity, to training programs.

Enterprises include agricultural cooperatives, community radio stations, sewing businesses, storefront rentals, and more. Each enterprise is run by local villagers, which provides income for families, and ensures that each center is self-sufficient and sustainable in the long term.

TRAINING PROGRAMS

READ partners with organizations and local governments to provide trainings that address the most pressing needs of rural communities in the following areas:



INSTITUTIONAL PARTNERS



BILL & MELINDA
GATES foundation



ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK

