

READ Nepal

Annual Report 2008



READ - Rural Education and Development
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Message From the Country Director

READ Nepal has worked in Nepal for past 18 years. We have seen READ growing. Started with a small library building in Junbesi of Solukhumbu district now the libraries supported by READ have grown into the real community development centre with a proven model to address education, enterprise and prosperity of the rural communities. ATLA award 2006 and replication grant from Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, has encouraged READ to grow and reach to more needy population. We are happy that READ model implemented in Nepal are now being replicated in other countries as well. India and Bhutan are already two of them.

On 2008, READ has conducted patron evaluation surveys in two of READ supported community libraries. The survey has shown that READ supported libraries are able to cater services to different sections of the society including women, children, senior citizen, farmers, teachers, local businesspersons etc. 11% of our library users are illiterate and that 38% of users have completed secondary level of education. 93.5% of the library users are satisfied with the books and services offered by the libraries. Dedications of the three community libraries; Bardibas, Sarlahi and Beni enabled more communities to cater effective services that they needed. Similarly, establishment of two Tech centres (Bardibas and Ramewshor) is connecting rural communities to outer world in an effective way.

Sustaining the work of READ, we are fortunate to include five more dedicated staff members in our team in 2008. I would also like to thank Library Management Committee of Community libraries, other community based stakeholders and different partnering organizations – Rotary Clubs, Nepal Library Foundation in Canada, Gates Foundation, Town Development Fund for their endeavors to carry our mission forward.

2009 will be an important year for us to look back and evaluate our work. We are going to see what really has been impacted by community libraries to bring positive change in the lives of the people.

Sanjana Shrestha
Country Director,
READ Nepal

READ Nepal in 2008

In the 17 years long history of READ Nepal, the year 2008 established some exciting milestones. Partnership with likeminded organizations, evaluation of library programs in two community libraries (patron Survey) and establishment of READ Model in the South East Asia region with our support are our significant achievements. READ Global established country office in two neighboring countries (India and Bhutan) replicating foundational model of READ Nepal.

READ India staffs were trained by READ Nepal staff in replicating the READ model. During the initiation phase, READ India succeeded to establish three community libraries. READ Nepal was there when the Ullen Community Library in India opened its doors, providing training and guidance to the READ India team.

READ Bhutan has been established at the end of the year. READ Nepal organized an orientation visit for the Executive Director of READ Bhutan in three community libraries of eastern Nepal. Observation of community libraries, discussion on the operating modalities of READ supported libraries and discussion on existing policy, guidelines and tools helped the Bhutanese representative to replicate READ model in Bhutan.

READ Nepal country office -welcomed four new professional staff members; Programme Support Coordinator, Training Officer, Programme Officer and Monitoring and Evaluation Officer and we set up an information bank of best practices to strengthen the delivery of the model both within Nepal and to India and other countries. We conducted our first-ever library patron survey and integrated the results into our future planning. Finally, we established a formal system for monitoring and evaluation of the activities of the READ Nepal Country office and the community resource libraries. All of these activities are geared toward the sustainability and replication of the award-winning model.



In addition to these initiatives, READ Nepal continued to carry out its mission of establishing and strengthening community resource libraries in rural and semi-urban areas of Nepal. This year, READ Nepal partnered with 10 local Nepali communities to build resource libraries. Three of these libraries have been inaugurated, three are under library setting process, and three are at the final stage of construction and one library construction agreement has been signed between the community, READ and TDF.

Along with bricks-and-mortar construction projects, we continued to implement innovative programs and form vital partnerships for success. We have opened regional technology centers, (Tech centers) funded by the Gates Foundation, at two of our libraries. With the establishment of these Tech centers, library patrons are connected to the outer world and they have developed a feeling that they are living in a global village. After the establishment of training section in READ, we are able to deliver leadership training program to over 130 women at four of our community libraries.

READ Nepal continues to value and seek partnerships with like-minded organizations such as Nepal's Town Development Fund, Rotary International, and the Nepal Library Foundation. Our relationship with the Gates Foundation has supported us in advancing towards achieving our mission. Last but certainly not the least, all the people in the communities and our volunteers remain a great source of strength and are responsible for a good measure of our success.

Photo: Volunteers

READ Nepal is enthusiastic about its achievements for the year 2008 and looks forward to continuing its support for community resource libraries in the years to come



How We Work: Our Award Winning Model

For almost two decades, READ has brought life, learning, and literacy to underserved rural communities pairing non-profit library community centers with for-profit businesses in partnership with the local population. Our replicable and sustainable model, using a holistic approach to educational, economic, and social development, won the Gates Foundation 'Access to Learning Award' in 2006.

Our model values the leadership of the community: identifying and analyzing community's past successes to strengthen, people's confidence in their own capacities; engaging people as citizens and partners in development, empowering ownership, and involving individual's and community talents, skills, and assets.

Nepal's Challenges

The READ Nepal Model

Educational Development

Nepal has an overall literacy of about 52% with the female literacy rate at around 35%. Many schools are without sufficient books for students and resource materials for teachers. Additionally, there is no tradition of lending libraries and no funding for libraries at the national or local levels.

READ designs library facilities to bring educational resources and a learning environment to Nepalese of all ages and literacy levels. Forty-five library community centers by 2008, each with 3,000 – 5,000 books in Nepali, a children's section with educational toys, women's section, computer, internet and audio-visual centers, cultural section and meeting hall are hallmarks of READ Nepal's educational prowess.

Economic Development

Nepal is one of the least developed countries in the world, with an unemployment rate of nearly 30 % including inactive population. With an annual per capita income of less than \$360.

READ promotes rural economic empowerment by introducing for profit businesses to support the library, providing jobs, securing a financial investment from communities, and providing an educational resource for community people. With business development assistance from READ, communities have built, furnished and sustained library community centers, and have generated enough funds to underwrite other community needs.

Social Development

Eighty –five percent of Nepalese are farmers and live in remote, isolated areas. Moreover, ongoing political instability undermines the fabric of Nepali society, threatening the provision of basic services, including healthcare and education. The historic patriarchal caste system puts women and those in certain groups in a disadvantaged position.

READ facilitated community development process by opening countrywide channels of communication, linking villagers with service organizations and creating avenues for empowering disenfranchised populations, particularly women. Many READ-launched community centers organize health clinics, literacy classes, and promoted micro-finance organizations, these communities remained safe haven from political movement and kept , publishing wall newspapers, and continues Promoting women's activities.

Where We Work: The Rural Communities of Nepal

We work where the need is the greatest. READ Nepal supported community libraries added 10375 new beneficiaries in 2008. In total, so far the number of direct beneficiaries of community libraries has increased to 356,741 persons in 2008, which in 2007 were only 346,366. In terms of district coverage, so far, READ supported community libraries have reached to 35 districts of Nepal. As for Zonal context, we have covered 13 zones leaving only Rapti.

1. Junbesi Library
2. Janajagaran Library
3. Panchthar library
4. Matribhumi Library
5. Moti Library
6. Thak Library
7. Rastriya Library
8. Tribhuvan Library
9. Nangi Library
10. Gauradaha Libray
11. Jana Kalyan Library
12. Bhanu Library
13. Jana Chetana Library
14. Agyauli Library
15. Sagarmatha Library
16. Tamakoshi Library
17. Samudaik Jana Chetana Library
18. Jhuwani Library
19. Jana Sewa Library
20. Jalpa Devi Library
21. Saileshowri Library
22. Srijana Library
23. Kamala Public Library
24. Bhupi Memorial Library
25. Chaturbhujeshor Library
26. Rumesbor Library
27. Katari Information and Development Center
28. Vidhya Mandir Library
29. Lekh Nath Library
30. Rumjatar Library
31. Gaurishankar Library
32. Laxmi Memorial Library
33. Laxmi Narayan Library
34. Puthang Library and Information Center
35. Sangam Community Library
36. Kamali Himalaya and Information Center
37. Bardibas Library
38. Gyanodaya Library
39. Kolti Library
40. Myagdi Library
41. Lo Manthang Library
42. Sirijunga Library
43. Dorpu Bazaar Community Library and Information Center
44. Tikapur Communnith Library
45. Dadeldhura Community Library

New Library Construction Projects

The construction of a building and opening of a READ supported library is a very special event for the community. It reflects great achievement of contributions from community as well. It's a celebration of not only the opening of a new community building but also of the power realized from working together for the betterment of the community.

Library construction is a collaborative effort between the community, READ Nepal and other partners. The initiative and leadership for the construction project comes from the community. READ Nepal provides capital to build and stock community resource library and also provides seed money to start an associated business venture such as an ambulance service, storefront rental or furniture factory. The profit that comes from the business not only supports the library and pays its bills, but it also ensures the sustainability of the library and its associated initiatives.

Once inaugurated, these buildings are more than just libraries. They serve as community meeting halls and health clinics. English and literacy classes are held, entrepreneurial training takes place, conferences are conducted, and many other events unfold at these libraries, aim at enriching the community and its people. Most importantly, they remind the people in the community of their ability to shape their own destiny.

This year READ Nepal collaborated with ten communities on new library construction projects. Three libraries were inaugurated in 2008, Baridibas Community Library in Bardibas, Chaturbhujeshowr Community Library in Sarlahi and Beni Community Library in Beni. Three library resource centers; DadelDhura Community Library, in DadelDhura, *Tikapur Community Library in Tikapur and Shirijunga Community Library in Tehrathum* are under library setting process. Similarly, Building construction process of three libraries; *Kolti Community Library in Bajura, Gyanodaya Community Library in Kohalpur and Lomanthang Community Library in Upper Mustang*, have reached to final stage of completion. Similarly, partnership agreement between community, Town Development Fund and READ Nepal was held to start *Deep Sikha Community Library in Lekhnath kaski*. These four libraries are at under construction stage and or in the final stages of preparation and are expected to open in 2009.

READ Nepal continues to receive requests and proposals from communities desiring a community library. Supported in part by Nepal's Town Development Fund, community members of Walling have submitted credible proposals for new library. Construction on this learning center is expected to begin in 2009.

A Day of Celebration

The Inauguration of Bardibas Community Library and Technology Center

The Bardibas library with its four storey building located at Bardibas in the East West highway is becoming a popular resource center for the students, school teachers, community members, businessmen and government and Non government organization's officials. The library building was completed with the total investment of 6 million Rupees. In this model library for the eastern Nepal, a tech -center has been established with the financial assistance of 800,000 Nrs from Bill and Melinda Gates foundation. Eleven computers, a printer, fax, telephone, scanner and photocopy machines are installed.

Opening of library and tech center is a special ceremony for the local community. Meanwhile, the inauguration of Bardibas community library and resource cum Tech center was done by Founder president of READ Global Dr. Antonia Neubauer. The ceremony was chaired by the chairperson of Library Management Committee Ms. Sharada Dahal. A big mass including local school teachers, students, community members, library management committee members, representative of major political parties, businessmen, hotel entrepreneurs, district level journalists, representatives from District Health Office and District Education Office expressed their happiness on the completion of the community library and the Tech center.

Addressing the inauguration ceremony, Founder president of READ Global Dr. Antonia Neubauer noted that she was amazed to see great achievement of big building along with equipments for its various sections from the small financial support from READ Nepal. She emphasized on the sustainability of the library and tech center which now is a great challenge to the community people than construction of building. Dr. Neubauer emphasized to take benefit of library and tech center equally by all community people irrespective of sex, age, class and caste. Dr. Neubauer distributed certificates to Life Members of Bardibas Community Library.

Local community members, district level journalist, businessmen, school teachers, all contributed for the library construction were attending the ceremony promised to continue their support in sustaining the community library.

Existing Library Activities

A sign in the Jhuwani Community Library states, “The library is a growing organism.” The Library Management Committee arranged resources of more than one million Rupees and constructed third floor of library building from its own initiative. This newly constructed part of the building is designed for organizing public ceremonies as it has capacity to accommodate about 400 persons. The community libraries of READ Nepal are not static, but dynamic organizations. Each year you can find some of the existing READ community libraries launching new training programs, renovating or adding onto their buildings, starting saving and credit cooperatives, or hosting cultural events. The year 2008 was no exception. This year, the community libraries in Sagarmatha, Junubesi, Panchtar, Moti, and Matribhumi community libraries have planned for new construction or renovation projects. Other libraries implemented innovation activities to stimulate educational, economic or social development.

Focus on Social Development: Teej Festival celebration at Sangam Community Library

Teej is a national festival of Nepali women. During this annual festival, Hindu women fast for the entire day and worship lord Shiva. The purpose is to ensure the long life of their husbands. On September 2nd, the women’s section of the Sangam Community Library hosted a special “Collective Haritalika Teej Festival 2065”. More than 3,000 women from different castes and classes gathered to feast, dance, sing and perform skits at the program.

The songs and dances carried social messages and created an amiable atmosphere. The festival was an example of cultural preservation as women carried forward an age old tradition. Also, at the event, cash donation totaling 11,924 Nepali rupees was collected for the Koshi flood victims.

The celebration was a huge success with an impressive turnout from the community people. The women’s section of the library is interested to organize different other programs in the days to come. The organizers believe that such events will not only substantially increase the women library users but also helps in spreading good messages across the communities.



New Program Initiatives

Each year READ Nepal implements new projects and initiatives identified by its community library members. These efforts toward educational, economic and social development indicate responsiveness to the people living in Nepal's communities.

Regional Information and Technology Center

Funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, information technology centers were established at two READ Nepal community libraries. The tech center at Rameshwar Library was opened in April and the tech center at Bardibas, along with the library, was inaugurated in October of this year. These two Tech centers are contributing to link local patrons to the outer world. Modern means of communication like e-mail/internet, fax and telephone are available at the Tech centers. With 12 computers in Rameshwar and 11 computers in Bardibas community libraries, these Tech centers have become a vital resource center of the district. Tech center in Rameshwar is offering computer training to the community members. The training course includes basic computer literacy in windows, email, and internet use. Training on computer and information technology is helping to reach access to various information for the library patrons. Tech Center in Bardibas is planning to organize training for the library patrons. As the supply of electricity is decreasing in the country, these Tech centers are suffering due to power cut.

READ Nepal's library patron survey found that two-thirds of library users feel that the computer and internet facility in the library is the most important component of the library. These centers will help to meet the need in the communities that they serve.

Community Radio

Laxmi Memorial Community Library has registered a Radio Syanjga 89.6 MHZ. The radio station has received an approval from the Ministry of Information and Communication and the station is affiliated with the Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (ACORAB). READ Nepal made partial support to the community library in establishing community radio. Rest of the money was arranged by the community and the local government. The library conducted a month long journalism training for interested people from the district. From the trainees, the radio announcer has been chosen. The station will be on the air in 2009.

Women's Leadership Development Trainings

A three-day training course on "Leadership Development, Group Management and Social Inclusion for women" was organized by READ Nepal country office. The Training was held at four sites: Agyauli, Rameshwar, Jhuwani and Chaturbhujeshwar Community Library where a total 130 women participated. The goal of the training was to empower women, make them

fully involved in the management of the library and its women's section. The relevant topics taught were; Record keeping and financial bookkeeping, group dynamics, leadership skills, and overall management of library. Following the training, the women have started organizing a system of regular meetings with proper order. READ Nepal plans to expand these trainings to other library sites in 2009.

Outreach to Schools

READ Nepal worked with several communities (Jhuwani, Agyauli, Syangja, Udayapur) to establish libraries in existing schools. Outreach services were extended to the schools where community library existed and the schools located at the periphery of the community libraries. During the outreach program, books were made available for circulation. A *Library Outreach Management Guideline* was developed to assist the community through the process. The guideline will help the field staff to select school library, manage needed materials and to learn the operation of school library program.

Partners

Community library establishment process is a collaborative endeavor of READ, community people and other development organizations. In order to stimulate the process, READ Nepal will always welcome the likeminded organizations to take part in library establishment process. Partnership with individuals and organizations that share a similar mission, or values, or is expanding in meeting the library and resource center's needs of people. Involvement of the community is a precondition for READ supported programs. Community members and volunteers are our core partners and take lead on all of our endeavors – from library construction, inauguration and management to new programs designed to meet each community's unique needs.

Partnership scenario of READ Nepal in 2008 clearly depicts that development agencies are impressed from READ's working modalities and support in establishing community resource centers. Some agencies are becoming strong partners of READ Nepal for delivering community library related needs of people.

Town Development Fund

The (TDF) provides funds for the development of infrastructures such as marketplaces, schools and surface drainage in the towns and cities of Nepal. READ Nepal and its community partners work with TDF to fund the construction of the library resource centers. In 2008, building construction of two community libraries; Tikapur Community Library and Dadeldhura community library were supported by TDF. Similarly, partnership with TDF is escalating for the building construction of two community libraries; Deepshikha community library in Lekhnath Kaski and Waling Community Library in Syangja for 2009.

Rotary

Over the years, READ Nepal has enjoyed a vibrant relationship with Rotary at the local, national and international levels. In 2008, Rotary U.S. provided an assistance of USD 10052 for the construction of Beni Community Library in Myagdi. READ Nepal also collaborated with Rotary on a proposal to hire and train auxiliary nurse midwives in four districts of Nepal.

Nepal Library Foundation

This year, READ Nepal and the NLF, a Canadian registered charity promoting literacy in Nepal, signed a memorandum of understanding to collaborate in supporting library development in both rural and urban settings. In the agreement, NLF cited READ Nepal's excellent track record and unique model of library sustainability as key factors for the collaboration. Tikapur Library and Beni library have received USD 2300 and USD 4800, respectively from NLF.

Looking Ahead

Supporting the Communities taking into consideration of Success of last 17 years:

READ in 2009, will continue to establish, promote and strengthen community libraries in the rural and semi-urban communities of Nepal. We will support the building of new libraries approved or under construction, and conduct new programs and trainings as requested by the Library Management Committee. Evaluating our progress through our monitoring program and patron surveys, we will shape our strategies to best meet the community's needs. READ will visit all 43 libraries and review their service delivery mechanism. Based upon review, support, rehabilitation and reconstruction packages will be developed in making a community library as a resource and learning center for local development.

Documenting the Model: The Knowledge Bank

While working with 45 communities in Nepal, READ gained immense knowledge and experience on successful community development practices. A major activity that continues in 2009 is to document policies, best practice the lesson learned, and cases studies in our knowledge bank. We also plan to strengthen our monitoring, evaluation and reporting system and conduct library patron surveys at additional sites.

Financials

RURAL EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT(READ)
 Baluwatar, Kathmandu, Nepal
Income & Expenditure Account For the year ended 31st December 2008

	Schedule	Current Year Amount Nrs.	Previous year Amount Nrs.
Income			
Fund Transferred from USS A/C		21,888,432.96	31,840,943.12
Grant Received from Others	8	2,261,072.50	1,269,695.15
Bank Interest		189,539.23	68,839.70
Total Income		24,339,043.69	33,179,477.97
Expenditures			
Program Support			
Personnel Expenses	9	3,957,606.25	2,953,662.00
Office Rent	10	560,456.00	495,219.07
Office supplies	11	560,871.02	353,255.00
Communication	12	342,374.00	275,207.78
Repair & Maintenance	13	61,111.00	83,100.10
Fines & fees	14	33,563.44	16,731.00
Training & HRD Expenses	15	159,294.00	68,532.00
Other Program Activities	16	3,281,600.65	3,104,471.56
Program Development	17	520,847.00	563,180.75
Other Expenses	18	1,397,123.00	1,667,585.89
Library Support	19	19,665,925.36	15,468,675.93
Office Library Funds	20	85,274.60	159,244.50
		30,626,046.32	25,208,865.58
Other Expenditure			
Audit fee		60,000.00	45,000.00
Total Expenditures		30,686,046.32	25,253,865.58
Surplus/ (Deficit) Before Depreciation		(6,347,002.63)	7,925,612.39
Less, Depreciation		367,798.22	284,683.42
Surplus/(Deficit) transferred to Balance sheet		(6,714,800.85)	7,640,928.97

Significant Accounting Policies & Notes to the Account

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Chetan Shrestha
 Admin & Finance Assistant




Sanjana Shrestha
 Acting Executive Director

As per our report of even date attached


Yuddha Raj Oli, FCA
 Partner
 P.Y.C. & Associates
 Chartered Accountants

Date: 2009.06.10
 Place: Kathmandu

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