



# 2017

Annual Report



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# Here's how we're going to reach the next billion

## Message from our Co-Founders

Worldreader is eight years old. A lot can happen in eight years: in 2010, the iPad had just come out, fewer than 35% of Americans owned smartphones<sup>1</sup>, and the Mars Rover had not yet landed on the surface of our next-door neighbour. Today, tablets and mobile phones are everywhere, 77% of Americans own a smartphone and America trails India in total smartphone ownership<sup>2</sup>, and space tourism is getting closer by the day.

And in eight years, Worldreader has helped seven million people read local and international books on mobile devices around the world. Not only has this helped unlock the potential of millions of people, it has begun to mainstream the idea that digital reading can reach millions more, even in some of the world's least-developed areas.

As proud as we are of what we've accomplished, we're acutely aware of how much further we have to go, and how important it is to move quickly as the world goes digital. One of our tenets is: when a fire is burning bright, pour on the gasoline. But more gas won't be enough. To help billions of people, we need to

evolve our approach. After all, even at the pace of one million people a year, it'd take us 1,000 years to reach our goal. We're patient, but we're not *that patient!*

Here's what you can expect from us next.

**A systems change approach.** Large-scale problems require system-level solutions. In late 2017, in partnership with the Municipal Education Office (MEO) of Kwaebibirem in Ghana's Eastern Region, we launched a project to get all 45,000 primary-school students in the district reading digitally by 2020. Importantly, our role is to help them get started, and build the district's capacity to the point where we can transition full ownership of the project to them in two years. That, in turn, will serve as a model for other districts, for an entire country, and hopefully for the world.

We've made significant strides already. We've completed the first training program, helping 84 primary-school teachers incorporate e-reading into their classrooms. The Kwaebibirem MEO now has an E-Reader department. In all, and after only six months, the program is already active in the first set of 12

schools and has already helped 1,706 students. Stay tuned for the next phase, beginning in September. This program is one example of how we're evolving our approach at Worldreader: if we are to reach billions of people, we need to build capacity within large systems like Ministries of Education and partner at large scale with other non- and for-profit organizations as we drive towards national scale in Ghana and beyond.

### More partnerships with for-profit companies to amplify impact.

Non-profits like ours tend to be relatively small. Compared to the size of the problems we're addressing, our resources are infinitesimal. But by creating smart partnerships with for-profit companies, we can harness the full power of capitalism to amplify our impact many times over.

As an example, just last week, 3,500 Kindles from Amazon showed up at our door—only a fraction of a much larger investment-donation by the company of hardware, cloud-based software and expertise. There are many reasons for this partnership, but chief among them is how it lets Amazon tap into some of what we've learned. They can't know when digital reading in the so-called "developing world" will be an important market opportunity for them, but they can be sure that as that happens, they'll be ready by learning alongside us.

Here's another example.

With Worldreader's help, publishers in Kenya and Ghana are increasingly turning to the digital marketplace. The work we have done to help create digital versions

of their work has allowed them to sell into global markets and keep up with an increasingly digitized world. And the fact that we pay them to use their local books in our reading programs—about \$2 million in total over the past eight years—is an incredibly important jump-starter to their own digital efforts. Many of these publishers are now seeing small but growing revenue streams coming from the e-book side of their businesses, and the result is that each of the 350 local publishers we partner with is now rooting for digital reading's success.

Finally, our long-standing partnership with Opera software continues to pay dividends for both organizations. Each month, two million people access our mobile reading application at read.worldreader.org, largely due to its promotion on Opera's best-in-class web browser. About 600,000 of those visitors read from at least one book in our app—be it a self-help book, a health book, or a romance title (everybody could use a little romance in their life!). When they improve their lives through books, Opera's users deepen their connection both to reading and to the platform that connected them. And if you're wondering "are people really reading books on cell-phones?", in 2017 over 45 million people read for an average of 9 minutes each—the equivalent of reading the entire Harry Potter series about 100,000 times. So, yes!

As the saying goes, "If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together." We're deeply appreciative of all of our partnerships with our for-profit siblings, and will look to collaborate even more to improve the lives of millions.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.pewinternet.org/fact-sheet/mobile/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://techcrunch.com/2017/10/27/india-second-largest-smartphone-market/>



**Putting data to work for the good of us all.** Perhaps you've picked up on a trend in the news: data can be used for good or ill. We know which side we come down on: we want to use data to help our publisher partners know what people want to read, our school and library partners know what's working and our readers discover new books that will improve their lives.

Just to pick a single example: for years, donor agencies have spent millions of dollars buying books for classrooms. But they've had nearly no visibility into whether those books made it to their intended readers, let alone which of those books generated the most interest. Today, we can know both, quickly and at nearly no cost. We can even see what books are being read during the day and what books are of interest for home reading. We don't need to collect personal information to do so, something that should give comfort to those of us who feel strongly about privacy. But we can share aggregate data far and wide, so that others can benefit from what we learn.

From our earliest days, Worldreader

has committed to using data to help us improve our work (have a look here to see reports from all the way back to 2010: [worldreader.org/learnings/](http://worldreader.org/learnings/)). The tools we're developing today let us take that idea to an entirely new, higher-impact level.

Promoting systems change, growing partnerships with large for-profit organizations, and using large-scale data for good—none of this is easy. **But if we've shown one thing in eight years, it's that we're not afraid of a good challenge.** With you by our side as we continue to learn and increase our impact, we'll get all this done and more, unleashing the potential of millions.

Thank you for helping the world read.

Sincerely,



*David Risher*

David Risher  
CEO and Co-Founder

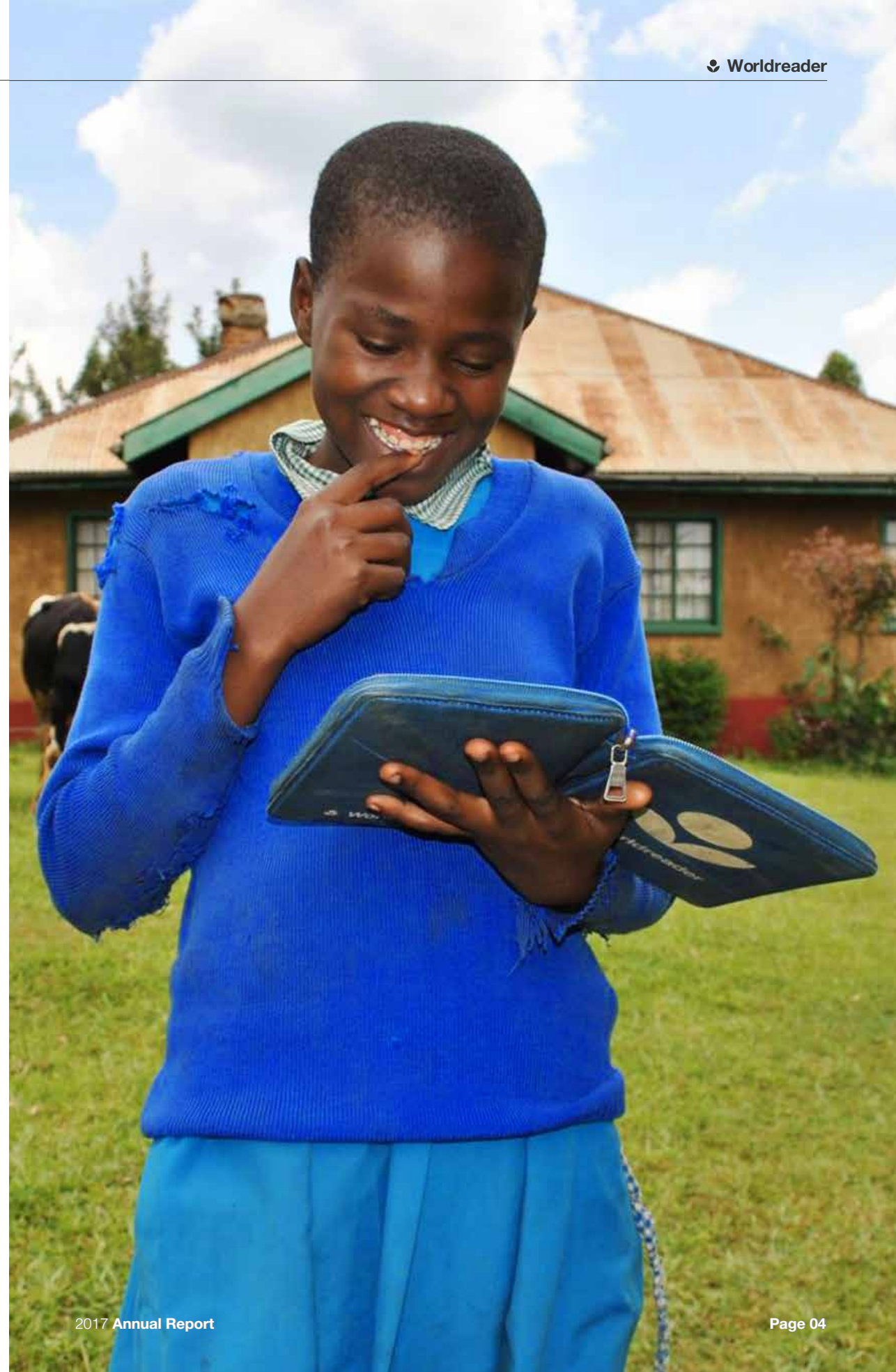


*Colin McElwee*

Colin McElwee  
Co-Founder

**“If we've shown one thing in eight years, it's that we're not afraid of a good challenge.”**

*David Risher & Colin McElwee*





# The key to lasting organizations is the ability to learn

## Message from our Board Chair

**M**y Dad was a first-generation Albanian who started a diner with 12 stools. Even though he never went to college, he placed tremendous value on reading and education. I grew up in a world of books, magazines, newspapers across a wide spectrum: *The New York Times*, *The Boston Globe*, *The Manchester Union Leader*, Chip Hilton, Tom Swift, The Hardy Boys, Nancy Drew, *The Smithsonian*, *National Geographic*, *Time/Newsweek*, *Popular Science*; the list goes on and on. There was always a stack of newspapers and magazines to be read. Reading stimulated my sense of adventure. It gave me perspective. Without me even realizing it, early and broad reading led to lifelong learning.

I was lucky. The foundation of reading, encouraged by my father, led to a life of embracing change and challenge. This in turn led me to join the Peace Corps in Mali; then to University of Wisconsin-Madison where I first studied and worked with databases; and eventually to Microsoft, where I worked with others to set the technical vision and build the culture around a number of database technologies such as SQL Server, WinFS and SQL Azure.

In my 30+ years in the tech industry, I've seen a wide variety of companies ranging from startups to established industry giants. Some thrived and some died; some stalled then rejuvenated themselves. In my experience, if the key to becoming a successful person is reading, then the key to all successful organizations is the ability to learn.

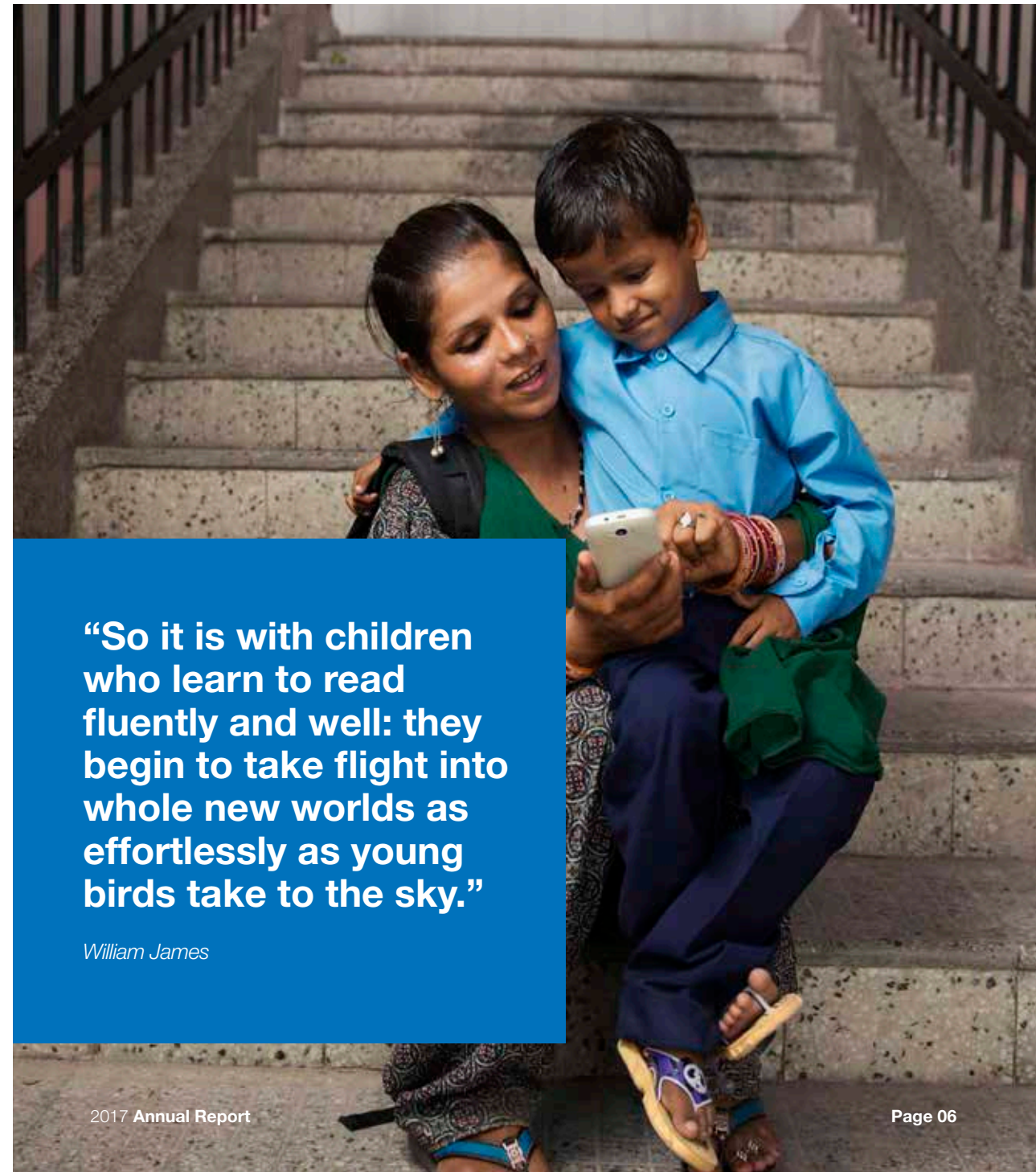
Worldreader's learning journey began in one classroom in Ghana with a simple idea: let's load up Kindles with a bunch of books and bring them to classrooms in Africa. Eight years later, while we're true to our initial idea of using technology to get people reading, Worldreader's work has changed, evolved, and matured as we have grown as an organization. No one idea or product can sustain long-term success without evolving and growing. Organizations need to create a culture of observing, experimenting, learning, staying nimble, and seizing opportunities. That's what allows them to grow, stay relevant and have the greatest impact.

I'm proud to see the Worldreader team embodying a culture that will enable us to continue to evolve in an environment

of constant change. Worldreader has already affected so many lives but our greatest impact is yet to come. With your help we can move towards creating a world where everyone – yes, all 7 billion of us on this planet! – can be a reader.



**Peter Spiro**  
Board Chair  
Microsoft  
Technical Fellow



**“So it is with children who learn to read fluently and well: they begin to take flight into whole new worlds as effortlessly as young birds take to the sky.”**

*William James*

# HOW WE HELP THE WORLD READ



At Worldreader, we combine digital technology with relevant content, strong partnerships and smart programming to  
**CREATE A WORLD OF READERS**

## TECHNOLOGY

We offer a variety of digital reading solutions to our readers. These include mobile phone and tablet apps as well as e-readers pre-loaded with books.



## CONTENT

We provide our readers with a library of high-quality local and international digital books. We focus on local content since it is relevant to our readers, helps preserve the local culture and contributes to a strong reading ecosystem.



## PARTNERSHIPS

We partner with publishers, organizations, governments, school and library systems, the private sector and philanthropic institutions to maximize the impact of our programs.



## PROGRAMS

Worldreader's four programs make it possible for anyone to become a reader at any stage of life.



PRE-READING



SCHOOL READING



LIBRARY READING



LIFELONG READING



# 2017 AT A GLANCE

Growing readers  
around the world



**2,967,830 PEOPLE**

read from the  
Worldreader library



**50 COUNTRIES**

impacted by  
our programs

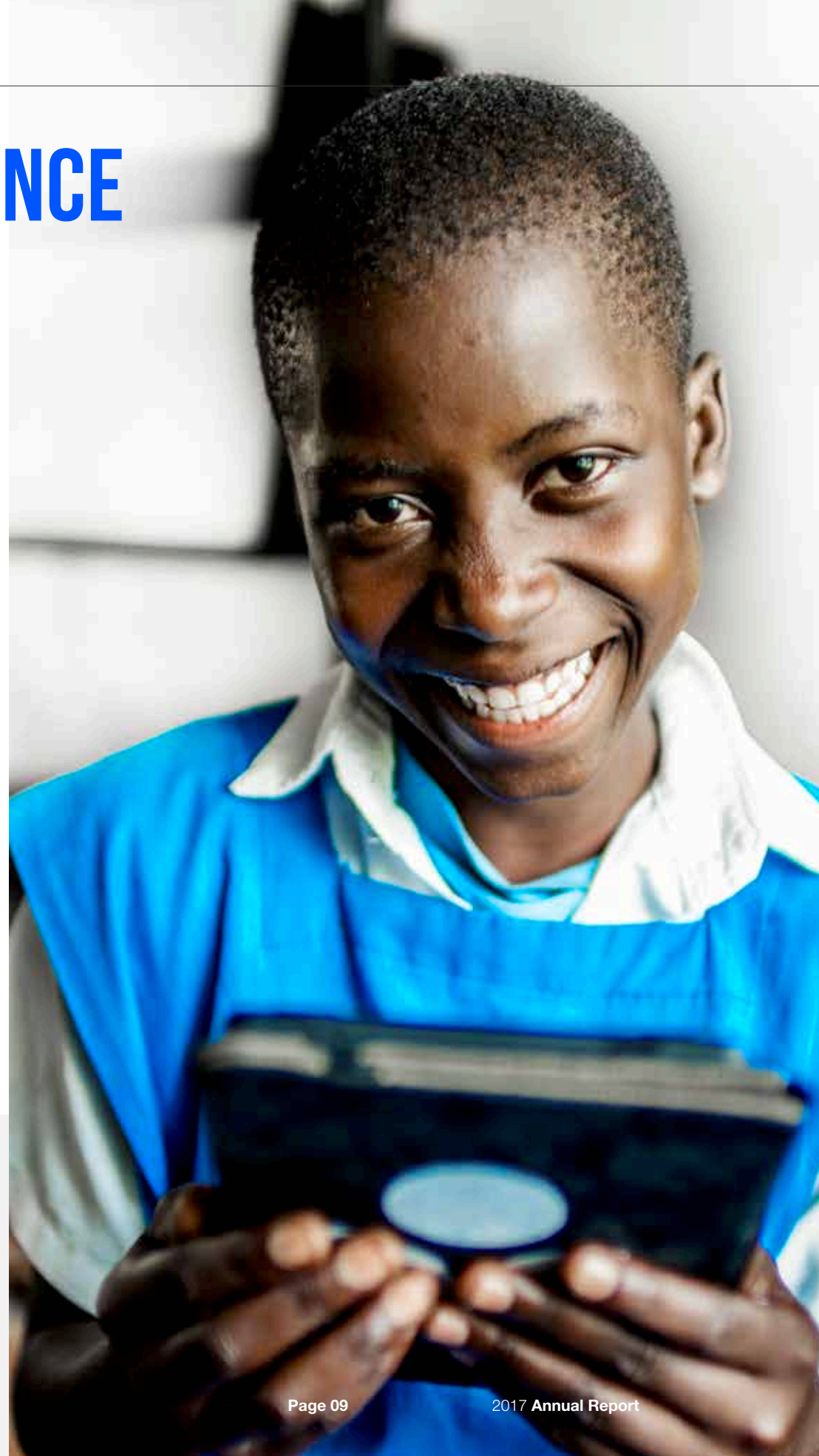


**29,603,805 HOURS**

spent reading on  
mobile phones and e-readers

That's the equivalent to  
reading War and Peace

**900,000 TIMES**



Enriching our  
library with  
local books

**40,000+ TITLES**

provided to our readers thanks  
to our publishing partners

## A WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT COLLECTION

launched to reflect the needs and  
interests of women and girls  
in Kenya



## 107 NEW ARABIC BOOKS

acquired for our library as part  
of our Worldreader Kids project  
in Jordan



# Supporting readers at every stage of life



## PRE-READING PROGRAM



## SCHOOL READING PROGRAM



## LIBRARY READING PROGRAM



## LIFELONG READING PROGRAM

In 2017

**155,296 HOUSEHOLDS**  
reached

**79,302 STUDENTS**  
reached

**92,400 READERS**  
reached

**2,796,128 READERS**  
reached

### Key projects

- Read to Kids India, [India](#)
- Tuta Tuta, [Jordan](#)

### Key partners



### Key projects

- Girls Education Challenge-Transition, [Tanzania](#), [Zambia](#) and [Zimbabwe](#)
- Ghana District Scale, [Ghana](#)

### Key partners



### Key projects

- Libraries, e-Reading, Activities and Partnership (LEAP) 2.0, [Kenya](#)
- Local Content for African Libraries (LOCAL), [Ghana](#), [Uganda](#) and [Zambia](#)

### Key partners



### Key projects

- Anasoma, [Kenya](#)
- AvanzaLee, [Mexico](#)

### Key partners





# 2017 PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

**“When my daughter, Sunali, comes home from school I read with her. Reading is very important for my daughter because it will help her develop her imagination and stand on her own two feet.”**

*Rajkumar from Delhi, India*

## Promoting parents as first teachers

### Read to Kids India

**Parents are a child’s first teacher. Ensuring that young children have support for learning in the early years sets the foundation for all future learning.**



**PRE-READING**

Mobile phones are increasingly present in even the poorest of households. This technological shift provides a unique opportunity to reach parents and caregivers with children’s books and reading support in low-resource communities around the globe.

Our goal was to take the ubiquitous mobile phone in India, transform it into a great mobile library, and discover how to get parents reading with their children.

Worldreader, Pearson’s Project Literacy, and Results for Development (R4D) developed and implemented a digital reading pilot called Read to Kids.

As part of the project, we launched a mobile application with a collection of 550 children’s storybooks in both Hindi and English. This collection of storybooks was promoted in two ways: community outreach through a network of partners and a widespread media campaign.

Over the two-year pilot, we reached 203,000 families in and around Delhi, nearly 7,000 of which became “frequent readers.” Over the course of the pilot, thousands of parents—particularly women—adopted digital reading for themselves and their children and became reading evangelists in their communities.

## PROJECT IMPACT

**203,000  
HOUSEHOLDS**

reached since the  
beginning of the  
project



**7,000  
PARENTS**

read frequently  
to their children



**550 BOOKS**

in Hindi and English  
added to the app



On-the-ground partners  
conducted outreach  
activities in  
**177 COMMUNITIES**



Recipient of the  
**DIGIXX &  
MBILLIONTH  
AWARDS**

## SUPPORTING PARTNERS



## SUPPORTING PUBLISHERS



**Rajkumar, Barti and their 2-year-old daughter, Sunali, are a family from Dakshinpuri, southern Delhi and were introduced to the Read to Kids mobile application.**

Since discovering the app, both parents have used it as a tool to spend quality time storytelling and reading to their daughter. Sunali enjoys it when her parents read her poems and stories about elephants. Her mother, Barti, frequently uses the picture and wordless books so she can make up oral stories to tell her daughter. Rajkuma spends time reading stories to his wife and daughter in the evenings when he returns from work.

The parents learned the importance of reading every day for their daughter's development and school readiness.

With Sunali starting lower Kindergarten, this time spent reading with her parents will give her an invaluable head start.



# Fostering reading in 338 schools

## Building Literacy Using E-books (BLUE Box)

**In several sub-Saharan African countries, a shortage of books and a lack of reading culture in schools is hampering educational outcomes for students.**

ABC

SCHOOL  
READING

Our school programs focus on ensuring that educators have the tools they need to help students develop literacy skills and reading habits.

In 2017, we delivered over 1.4 million books to an additional 16,267 students in schools across Africa. Many of these students were impacted thanks to individual donors who sponsored schools through our BLUE Box initiative. BLUE Box stands for Building Literacy Using E-Books and provides schools with all the resources needed to start a digital reading program, including culturally-relevant books, technology and training.

One school in particular that received a BLUE Box in 2017 is the Suhum M/A Experimental Primary School.

Pam Fleischer, a strong believer in early exposure to reading and a Worldreader supporter, sponsored the school so that their existing e-reading program could be expanded to all of the school's primary classrooms.

Pam's sponsorship means that all the students at Suhum M/A Experimental Primary now have daily access to life-changing digital reading. Each one of these students is now empowered to reach their potential so that one day they can become the next astronaut to land on Mars or the scientist who finds a cure for malaria. That's the power of putting a library of digital books into the hands of people who need them most.

**“The pupils have adopted a positive reading culture because of the various and many reading materials on the e-reader.”**

*Kofi Sem Michael, primary teacher at Suhum M/A Experimental Primary School, Ghana*



## ■ BLUE BOX IMPACT

**10,042**  
**STUDENTS**

impacted thanks to  
generous BLUE  
Box sponsors



**156,250**  
**BOOKS**

delivered to  
schools



**3,561**  
**E-READERS**

delivered  
to students



**32 SCHOOLS**

reached with the  
support of BLUE  
Box sponsors



## ■ SUPPORTING PARTNERS



## ■ SUPPORTING PUBLISHERS



## ■ BLUE BOX SPONSORED SCHOOLS

Abundant Grace School, [Ghana](#)  
 Al-Waleed Islamic Basic School, [Ghana](#)  
 Dordiak Educational Complex, [Ghana](#)  
 Eduyal Foundation, [Ghana](#)  
 Egyekrom Commuity MA Primary School, [Ghana](#)  
 Elmina Catholic Girls Primary School, [Ghana](#)  
 Girls Education Initiative Ghana School No. 2, [Ghana](#)  
 Komenda College Practice Primary School, [Ghana](#)  
 Krisan Community DA Primary School, [Ghana](#)  
 Ogoime Anglican Primary School, [Ghana](#)  
 St. Anthony Catholic Primary School, [Ghana](#)  
 Suhum D.A. Primary, [Ghana](#)  
 Tarkwa Brehman, [Ghana](#)  
 Wechiau Community Library, [Ghana](#)

Amani Kibera Library, [Kenya](#)  
 Chania Girls High School, [Kenya](#)  
 Iyenga Primary School, [Kenya](#)  
 Kangundo A.I.C Primary School, [Kenya](#)  
 Kangundo DEB Primary, [Kenya](#)  
 Karibaribi Secondary School, [Kenya](#)  
 Kibera Girls Soccer Academy, [Kenya](#)  
 Kibera School for Girls, [Kenya](#)  
 Masewani Primary School, [Kenya](#)  
 Nanana-Win Bridge Education Centre, [Kenya](#)  
 Reuben Centre, [Kenya](#)

Chamwino Secondary School, [Tanzania](#)  
 Chome Primary School, [Tanzania](#)  
 Chome Secondary School, [Tanzania](#)

Jinja Public Library, [Uganda](#)  
 Roseville Preparatory School, [Uganda](#)

Murewa Primary School, [Zimbabwe](#)

PAM'S STORY



**Pam Fleischer recently saw her contribution in action when she joined Worldreader to visit a number of schools in Ghana including the one she sponsored with a BLUE Box.** Here's what she had to say: "The students' vocabulary is expansive; never have I been around children who use the variety and depth of words, I experienced in every encounter with an e-reader student. They used multi-syllable words at ages 7 and 8 and knew what they meant. I am convinced that it is the ease of use of the e-reader, its dictionary and the richness of the localized digital content—stories and textbooks—that in turn drives this richness of vocabulary."

**To sponsor a school or get involved in any of our programs, contact:**  
[development@worldreader.org](mailto:development@worldreader.org)



# Transforming libraries in Kenya

## Libraries, e-Reading, Activities and Partnership (LEAP) 2.0

**All over the world, libraries present a unique opportunity to drive economic and social development in their respective communities.**



**LIBRARY  
READING**

But without the right books and training, many libraries are being held back. Investment in systems, librarians, and increased access to resources—including more and better books—are key to helping libraries reach that potential.

In 2014, the Kenya National Library Service (knls) launched a groundbreaking pilot program, Libraries, e-Reading, Activities and Partnership (LEAP), that would later transform the reading culture across Kenya and position libraries as major contributors to the country's development.

Over the course of the pilot program, Worldreader worked with knls to bring e-readers filled with relevant content

as well as training for librarians to eight libraries in Kenya. Following the success of the program, knls committed to bringing digital reading to all public libraries in Kenya with LEAP 2.0.

In 2017, this goal was successfully achieved. Since the launch of LEAP and LEAP 2.0, the libraries have reached readers far beyond the walls of the library with outreach efforts and they have contributed towards creating cultures of reading in their surrounding communities.

LEAP 2.0 demonstrates that digital reading programs, such as the one implemented by knls, present a huge opportunity to help African libraries meet the needs of their 21st century patrons.

**“The library has many other programs but e-readers are the mother of all programs.”**

*Michael Kazungu, Head Librarian at KNLS Kwale, Kenya*



## PROJECT IMPACT



**61**  
**LIBRARIES**  
reached through  
LEAP 2.0



Over the course of  
the project, patrons  
checked out e-readers  
**314,424 TIMES**

Primary-school-age  
children borrowed  
e-readers an average of  
**1,200 TIMES**  
**PER MONTH**



**38,604 NEW**  
**MEMBERS**  
registered at the  
libraries

## SUPPORTING PARTNERS



## SUPPORTING PUBLISHERS



## MICHAEL'S STORY



**Michael Kazungu is the head librarian at knls Kwale in Kenya.** As part of LEAP 2.0 the library received a batch of e-readers in February 2017. Since then, neighboring schools have started bringing their students to the library for weekly reading sessions.

In 2017, Michael, who has tirelessly championed digital reading since the start of the program, was chosen as one of 19 IYALI winners—an outstanding achievement. IYALI stands for the Young African Library Innovators Initiative and will give Michael the unique opportunity to expand his professional horizons by introducing him to new ideas and learnings around how he can grow his potential as a librarian. Equipped with this new knowledge and the e-readers, Michael will continue to greatness the impact that digital reading is having on his community and beyond. In Michael's words: "the library has many other programs but e-readers are the mother of all programs."



# Promoting gender equality through reading

## Anasoma Project

**The ability to read and the availability of quality books can empower women to transform their lives. Yet millions of women around the world lack access to a library of books.**



**LIFELONG  
READING**

**“I find that most of the boys in society can do anything they want, but girls are supposed to stay home. Reading has made me realize there is more.”**

Alice Ndanu, student and reader of the Worldreader library, Kenya

Books allow women to become more economically self-reliant and more actively engaged in their country's social, political and cultural life. What's more, books can help lead to critical shifts in beliefs around gender norms and stereotypes by depicting women in empowering roles. Ultimately, books will play an essential role in closing the gender gap.

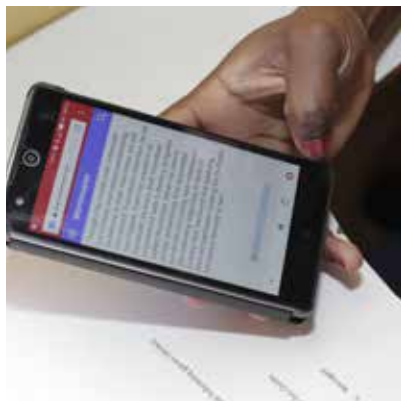
So how do we get millions of women to start reading? We need smarter, more scalable solutions. The Anasoma project, which means “she/he reads” in Kiswahili, funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, aims to promote gender equality by increasing women and girls' access to an online library that

will ultimately boost their empowerment and assertiveness. As part of the project, we acquired and commissioned new content aimed at challenging social norms and redefining the traditional stereotypes around what it means to be a woman.

In 2017, we concluded a two-year-long quantitative and qualitative research to understand the barriers, drivers, motivators and influencers of female mobile readership. The findings will serve to establish Worldreader's strategy in Kenya and globally to get more women reading life-changing books on their mobile phones.



## PROJECT IMPACT



**OVER 1.3  
MILLION WOMEN**

reached since the launch of  
Anasoma in Kenya



**60 BOOKS**

aimed at challenging  
social norms and  
redefining traditional  
stereotypes added to  
our library

**300 APPLICATIONS**

received as part of the  
Anasoma writing contest  
under the theme 'women's  
empowerment'



**5 ORIGINAL  
BOOKS**

aimed at  
empowering  
women created  
and made  
available via our  
app

## SUPPORTING PARTNERS

BILL & MELINDA  
GATES foundation

internet.org

Opera

## SUPPORTING PUBLISHERS

L u k e m a n L i t e r a r y

Molly  
Books

Step STEP PUBLISHERS  
BOOKS, MAGAZINES, WRITING TRAINING

WEAVER  
W  
PRESS

WordAlive  
P U B L I S H E R S



**Alice is a 17-year-old student from Langata Kenya.** She first discovered the Worldreader Library on her phone when she attended a book club at the Kibera library, supported by Worldreader. These book clubs were held on a monthly basis and focused on themes that inspired discussion around gender stereotypes that are retrogressive to girls and women.

"I find that most of the boys in society can do anything they want, but girls are supposed to stay home and do the house chores and not do anything beyond that. I think it is wrong. Girls should be given a chance to do something bigger," says Alice.

"Before I started reading, if I faced a problem, I would feel discouraged. Reading has made me realize there is more. It helps me to know the right thing to do. *The Best is Yet to Come* is one of my favorite books. I found out that if you are facing challenges right now, there is a brighter future for you later on. If you focus on your goals, you can achieve them," she says.



# A LOOK INTO THE FUTURE



## Improving the reading experience

### Worldreader Student

Since Worldreader's founding in 2010, data has played a crucial role in informing our decision making when it comes to supporting readers around the world. As we work towards providing an even more personalized experience for the reader, data can play a huge role in empowering both teachers and students.

**In 2018, we will launch Worldreader Student (WRS) to bring a rich reading experience to children in schools and libraries** while generating critical data insights into their reading habits. WRS will operate

on Android-powered tablets that will be distributed to schools in our key geographies. In addition to WRS, we will continue to use Amazon Kindle technology for our school and library programs.

The app will enable us to learn about reading habits in an unprecedented way. With this new data, teachers and librarians will better understand their students' and patrons' reading preferences, while readers will have an optimized reading experience incentivizing them to keep reading.



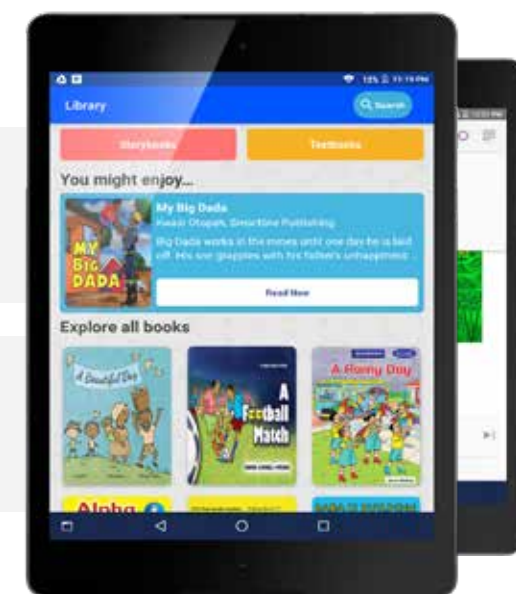
### 300 STUDENTS

will be impacted  
in 2018



### 3 SCHOOLS

will participate in the pilot  
project in 2018





# Empowering refugees and host communities

## Tuta Tuta

The ongoing Syrian refugee crisis has interrupted the education of millions of children. Elevated literacy rates among Syrian families coupled with ubiquitous mobile access creates a real opportunity to equip children and their families with digital books.

**In early 2017, we partnered with the Queen Rania Foundation to launch Tuta Tuta** to help Syrian refugee families and host communities in Jordan read via a mobile phone app. “Tuta Tuta” is an Arabic expression traditionally said at the end of a story, meaning “and they all lived happily ever after.”

The project, funded by the Stavros Niarchos Foundation, will work with schools, informal learning centers, and community based organizations to bring 250 high-quality Arabic children's books to families. It will also promote discoverability of the collection through a digital reading campaign aimed to impact 30,000 households.

Tuta Tuta will allow us to reach thousands of families impacted by the Syrian refugee crisis, enabling parents to provide educational support to their children and help them reach their full potential.



**250 ARABIC BOOKS**

will be made available on the app



**30,000 FAMILIES**

will be reached

# Scaling digital reading district-wide in schools

## Ghana District Scale

Since we launched our first e-reading program in 2010 in Ghana, we learned that digital reading programs have the power to transform entire communities. Now we have the opportunity to move from making an impact at the school level, to impacting an entire district of schools, reaching 45,000 students.

**In early 2018, Worldreader partnered with the Municipal Education Office (MEO) of Kwaebibirem in Ghana's Eastern Region to launch our most ambitious school reading project to date called the Ghana District Scale (GDS) project.** The aim of this project: to build a model that demonstrates how digital reading in schools can be scaled nationwide through creating

systems-level change starting at the district level.

Over the course of three years, this project will deliver digital reading to all 90 public primary schools within the Kwaebibirem municipality. GDS will deliver technical expertise and support to the municipality, so they can lead in the overall implementation, management and sustainability of the programs.

A project of this scale will lead to more impactful and durable change that can be widely adopted by other districts in Ghana and governments—a steadfast way to get millions of students reading.

**700 TEACHERS**  
will be reached

**45,000 STUDENTS**  
will be impacted

**495,000 BOOKS**  
will be delivered to students



# Addressing the need for local content

## Local Content for African Libraries

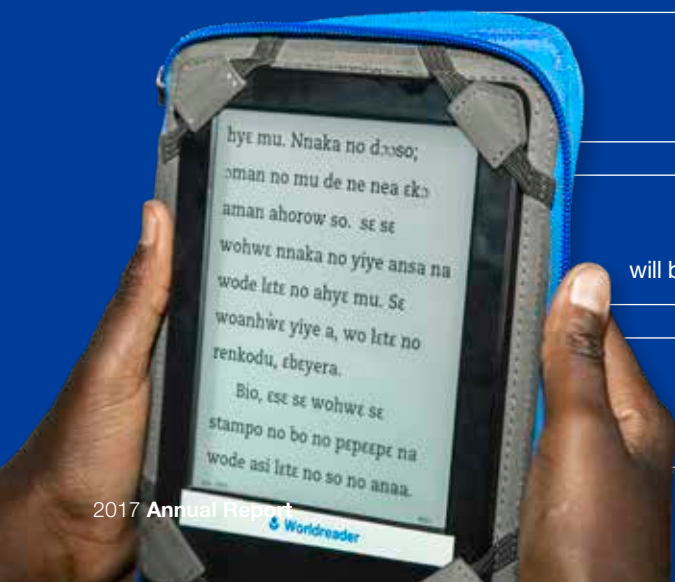
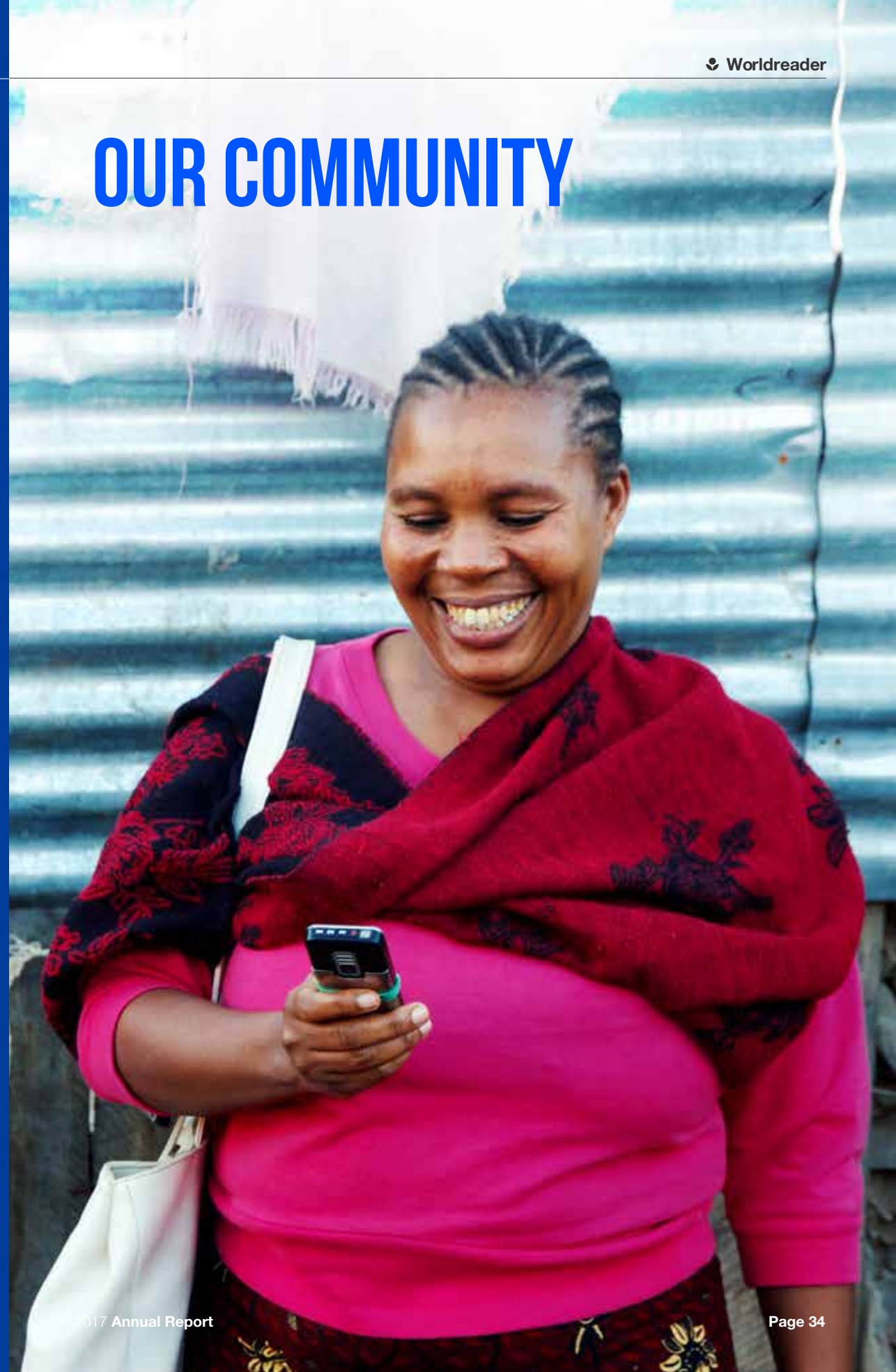
Still today, four in ten children do not have access to education in a language they speak or understand. A bigger effort needs to be made to improve the content that public institutions, such as libraries, provide.

**In 2017, we partnered with the African Library & Information Associations & Institutions (AfLIA) to launch the Local Content for African Libraries (LOCAL) project.** The project will bring local-language books to 30 libraries in Ghana, Uganda, and Zambia.

As part of the project, we'll be providing hardware to the library systems. We'll also be training librarians and equipping them with additional skills so they can distribute this content in the most impactful way. By bringing local language books to libraries, we will be contributing to creating an environment in which more children can learn in their mother-tongue language so that none are left behind.

The LOCAL project further solidifies our work assisting libraries to be reading champions in their communities across sub-Saharan Africa.

## OUR COMMUNITY



**58,000 PEOPLE**  
will be impacted



**1,450 DEVICES**  
will be delivered by the end of 2018



**30 LIBRARIES**  
will be reached



# Featured partners

## Humble Bundle

Humble Bundle, with their innovative mission to support causes while providing great digital content, continues to be one of Worldreader's strongest partners. By featuring Worldreader as the selected nonprofit on their e-book and game bundles, the Humble community has raised more than \$650,000 over the years, making an incredible difference to our readers around the world.



Microsoft continues to be a leader in corporate philanthropy by harnessing the potential of technology for everyone. Last year, the Microsoft Philanthropies team was integral in increasing Worldreader's smart use of Microsoft products, most notably Azure, so that we can provide a fast, stable and secure experience for our millions of readers across the world.



Supporting PepsiCo's commitment to female youth education, PepsiCo Europe & sub-Saharan Africa (ESSA) has partnered with Worldreader in order to support on its Performance with Purpose 2025 goals. We've collaborated on a number of projects focused on engaging both our readers and ESSA employees, most notably creating the digital Read for Life Collection, designed to help young people develop lifelong reading habits.



Amazon has generously provided tens of thousands of donated and discounted Kindle devices for use in our e-reading programs. Worldreader has become one of the biggest global users of Whispcast, their tool for sending content to Kindles, and uses Amazon Web Services to collect and interpret reading data from our mobile library.



Pearson is a co-founder of Read to Kids, Worldreader's first project focused on leveraging mobile technology to encourage parents and caregivers to read to their young children. Launched in Delhi, we reached over 200,000 families over two years, and together are committed to deepening and expanding the Read to Kids program.



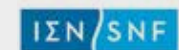
Together with the Kenya National Library Service (knls), Worldreader took its first digital reading program to national scale in all 61 Kenyan public libraries. knls was a responsive and passionate partner, and has taken full ownership of the project to sustain and continue to expand its reach in the coming years.



In 2017 Worldreader began work on the Local Content for African Libraries (LOCAL) project with support from African Library & Information Associations & Institutions (AfLIA), focusing on local-language content for young library patrons in Ghana, Uganda, and Zambia. AfLIA was instrumental in helping to design the project framework and make introductions to local library authorities, allowing Worldreader to pilot an innovative reading intervention.



With support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Worldreader continued the Anasoma research project, aimed at increasing the number of Kenyan women reading on our mobile app. Also in 2017, the Foundation's support enabled us to launch the Local Content for African Libraries (LOCAL) project, which addresses the need for local-language books in libraries throughout Ghana, Uganda, and Zambia.



In 2017, the Stavros Niarchos Foundation (SNF) funded Worldreader's first-ever national-scale e-reading program, bringing a total of 3,000 e-readers to all 61 national public libraries across Kenya. SNF also funded our Read to Kids Jordan program. Thanks to SNF, children and their families in Jordan will be able to access hundreds of children's' books in Arabic and English on an easy-to-use mobile app.





Opera has put our digital library of over 40,000 books in front of more than 20 million users across Africa. As our biggest distribution partner, Opera has played a huge role in enabling us to reach the scale that we have to date.



Two of Worldreader's largest school projects in 2017 were collaborations with Camfed International. In Malawi, Worldreader teamed up with Camfed to support students in 10 secondary schools with digital reading resources and mentorship in after-school groups through PEPFAR's DREAMS Innovation Challenge, a project funded by a grant from the United States Department of State, managed by JSI Research & Training Institute Inc. We also worked with Camfed to launch a 50-school project in Tanzania, funded by DFID through the Girls Education Challenge. The program aimed at improving learning outcomes for girls transitioning to secondary school, through integrated e-reading materials and life-skills mentorship.



Working with Population Council in 2017, Worldreader further expanded its school-based programmatic work in Zambia with GirlsRead!. GirlsRead! is funded in part by a grant from the United States Department of State as part of the DREAMS Innovation Challenge, managed by JSI Research & Training Institute, Inc. (JSI). The partnership, which also includes the Forum for African Women Educationalists in Zambia (FAWEZA), works with girls after school to increase their access to reading materials, and aims to improve reading outcomes and increase girls' transition to secondary school.



Moneygram Foundation is committed to transforming lives around the world through education. In 2017, Moneygram collaborated with Worldreader and the Christianna Foundation to fund a pilot project that implemented digital reading programs in three primary schools in Nigeria.

## Institutional partners

AbeBooks	Microsoft Philanthropies*
Alliance Data	MoneyGram Foundation
Amazon*	New Creation Church LA
AmazonSmile	NRG Energy
Anish Mathew*	Onslow House Group
Anonymous	Opera*
Argus Media	PayPal
Atlassian*	Pearson
AWS Cloud Credits for Nonprofits Program*	Pencils of Promise
Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation	PepsiCo Europe and Sub-Saharan Africa
Book Aid International	PhD Media
Brighton Jones*	Pledgeling Foundation
Caja de Ingenieros	Population Council
Camfed	Promotora Social Mexico
Clif Bar Family Foundation	Quest Foundation
Community United Methodist Church	R.Y.T.H.M. Foundation
Department for International Development (DFID)	S&P Global Foundation
Ebrolis PR LLC	Smartpipe*
EDIFY	Starbucks
Everywhere Mobile*	Stavros Niarchos Foundation
Facebook	Survey Monkey
FHI 360	Tableau Foundation*
First Giving	Tease and Totes
Google*	The London Book Fair
Google One Today	TwoSigma
Grace Episcopal Church GO Committee	UNHCR
Hay Festival Collection	University College School Parents' Guild
Humble Bundle	Wilbur & Niso Smith Foundation
IBM Employee Giving	WineDirect
Jazi Foundation & The Netherlands Chapter	World Bank Haiti
Joe Waechter and the Larry L. Hillblom Foundation	Xerox
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\* In Kind



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\$250,000 - \$499,999

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She Writes Press  
Short Story Day Africa  
Simon & Schuster  
Small Beer Press  
Story Shares  
Publishers On Demand Global  
Studio Brain Communications  
The International School of Art, Business,  
and Technology  
Tiny Islands Press  
Top Five Books  
Urban Fox Studios

### New publishers welcomed in 2017

Amazon Content Services  
Asala Publishers  
Dar Al Yasmin  
Garnet Martmag Ventures  
Jabal Amman Publishers  
Literamed Publication Ltd  
Kenechi Udogu  
Muskaan  
Once Upon a Tiger  
Rimal Books  
Speaking Tiger

Sibahle Productions  
Queen Girls Publications, LLC  
Saddleback Educational Publishing  
Womancraft Publishing  
The Wilbur and Niso Smith Foundation  
Vishv Books Publications Limited  
Al Hudhud Publishing  
Kitabna  
Kalimat  
Winmat Publishers Ltd

## Publishers

### Publishers whose donated books were used in 2017 projects

2911 Productions, LLC  
368 Press  
American University Nigeria  
Aura Publishers  
Australian Literature Review  
Berrett-Koehler  
Bispiral, s.r.o.  
Blooming Twig Books, LLC  
Bookbyte Digital  
Books Go Walkabout  
Camfed International  
Carus Publishing

Chicken House  
Chronicle Books  
Cook Street Publishing  
Crossway  
Crux Publishing  
Danbuab  
Dorling Kindersley (DK) India  
Egmont UK Limited  
Fantastic Phonics  
Grey Gecko Press, LLC  
Hardie Grant Egmont  
HarperCollins UK





# Authors

## Authors whose donated books were used in 2017 projects

Aaron Zerah  
Alex Nderitu  
Amma Kyerewaa  
Asare Oppong  
Brian Chikwava  
Cheryl Rogers  
Cheryl S. Ntumy  
Dennis M Lane  
Dragos Ionel  
Ellen Banda-Aaku  
Elsie Ntim-Duodu  
Eunice Zakayo  
Eve Yohalem  
Irene Smalls  
Isabella Kamau  
Jackee Budesta Batanda  
Jackson Twesigye  
Janelle Meraz Hooper  
Janet Doolaege  
Janet Keegans  
Jennifer Nkemdilim Emeanya  
Jens Hildebrand

Jeremy Brown  
Jocelyn Price  
Joe Frazier  
John Cospers  
Jon Merz  
Kwei Quaterly  
Kylie Reynolds  
LC Cooper  
Leslie Bulion  
Marg Reynolds  
Marzia Bisignani  
Mellanie Bauslaugh  
Mwendwa Mbugua  
Nana Awere Damoah  
Nancy Curtis  
Orly Katz  
Robert J. Bannon  
Rocky Ford  
Ruby Yayra Goka  
Thomas Baekdal  
Toni Krasnic  
Wayne Visser

## Recognized international authors

Neil Gaiman  
Paulo Coelho  
Satya Nadella  
Tad Hills  
Mary Pope Osbourne

Richard Dawkins  
Chelsea Clinton  
Chimamanda Adiche  
Sarah Ladipo Manyika  
Nnedi Okorafor





# DONOR OPPORTUNITIES

## Become a BLUE Box sponsor

**A BLUE Box, which stands for Building Literacy Using E-Books, is an all-in-one e-reading solution that contains everything needed to launch and sustain an e-reading program:**

e-readers, program support services, and importantly, books.

A \$15,000 donation funds a BLUE Box for hundreds of students in Kenya. We'll report back to you with reports, stories and photos of the whole process directly from the field, from start to finish.

In 2017, a number of generous donors sponsored BLUE Box projects across Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

**To sponsor a school or get involved in any of our programs, contact:**

[development@worldreader.org](mailto:development@worldreader.org)





# Join the Reading for Opportunity Campaign

As we deepen our impact in the countries where we currently operate, and continue to strengthen Worldreader to tackle the challenges of today, **we are excited to launch the Reading for Opportunity Campaign.**

This new fundraising campaign will leverage the significant progress we have made over the past 8 years. **Reading for Opportunity** will garner the support needed to create systems-level change in partnership

with governments and local institutions, leverage the power of mobile technology to achieve greater impact and scale, and respond to the needs of women and girls, who are disproportionately impacted by illiteracy.

To learn more about the Reading for Opportunity Campaign, please contact the Development team [development@worldreader.org](mailto:development@worldreader.org)

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# FINANCIALS

Driving  
sustainability



**\$6.2 MILLION**

contributions



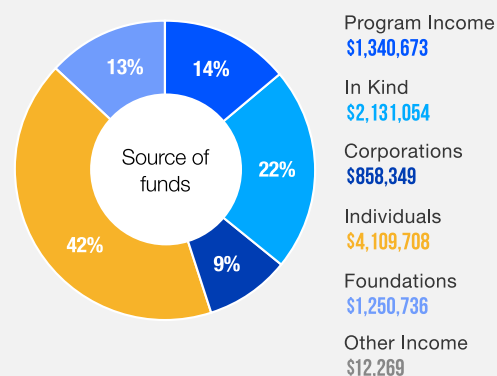
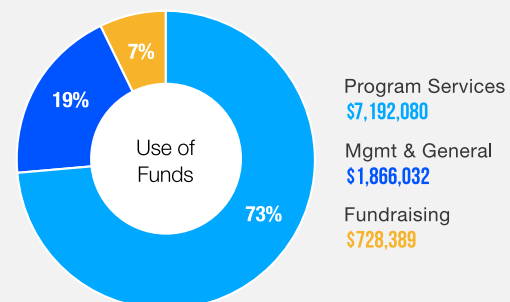
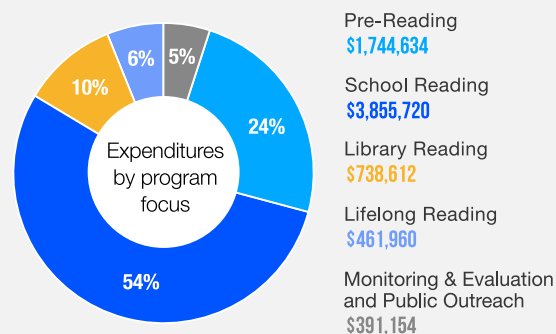
**\$2.1 MILLION**

in-kind donations



**\$2.42**

cost per reader



For Years Ending December 31, 2016 and 2017

## WORLDREADER GLOBAL BALANCE SHEET

	2017	2016
<b>Assets</b>		
Cash	\$2,351,671	\$3,998,861
Accounts & grant receivables	\$5,645,528	\$4,391,815
Fixed assets, net of depreciation	\$577,353	\$441,306
Other assets	\$241,039	\$32,833
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>\$8,815,591</b>	<b>\$8,864,815</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>		
Accounts payable	\$93,160	\$85,199
Accrued liabilities	\$247,953	\$176,696
Deferred revenue	\$155,250	\$199,980
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>\$496,363</b>	<b>\$461,875</b>
<b>Net assets</b>	<b>\$8,319,228</b>	<b>\$8,402,940</b>
<b>Total liabilities &amp; net assets</b>	<b>\$8,815,591</b>	<b>\$8,864,815</b>

## WORLDREADER GLOBAL REVENUE AND EXPENSE STATEMENT

	2017	2016
<b>Revenue</b>		
Program income	\$1,340,673	\$855,724
Contributions & grants	\$6,218,793	\$6,025,807
In-kind donations	\$2,131,054	\$2,482,711
Other income	\$12,269	\$5,539
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$9,702,789</b>	<b>\$9,369,781</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Program services	\$7,192,080	\$8,200,444
Management & general	\$1,866,032	\$1,440,644
Fundraising	\$728,389	\$530,926
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$9,786,501</b>	<b>\$10,172,014</b>
<b>Change in net assets</b>	<b>\$(83,712)</b>	<b>\$(802,233)</b>
<b>Net assets at the beginning of year</b>	<b>\$8,402,940</b>	<b>\$9,205,173</b>
<b>Net assets at the end of the year:</b>		
Unrestricted	\$1,359,639	\$1,864,495
Temporarily restricted	\$6,959,589	\$6,538,445
<b>Total net assets at the end of the year</b>	<b>\$8,319,228</b>	<b>\$8,402,940</b>

\*The financial report presents consolidated data for Worldreader US, UK, Spain and Ghana. Audited statements for each individual entity (US, UK, Spain and Ghana) are available upon request. This consolidated report is unaudited.



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For more information about Worldreader's programs please contact  
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To read books on your mobile phone download the Worldreader app on the **Google Playstore** or go to **read.worldreader.org**.

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UNITED KINGDOM

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