

ANNUAL REPORT 2023

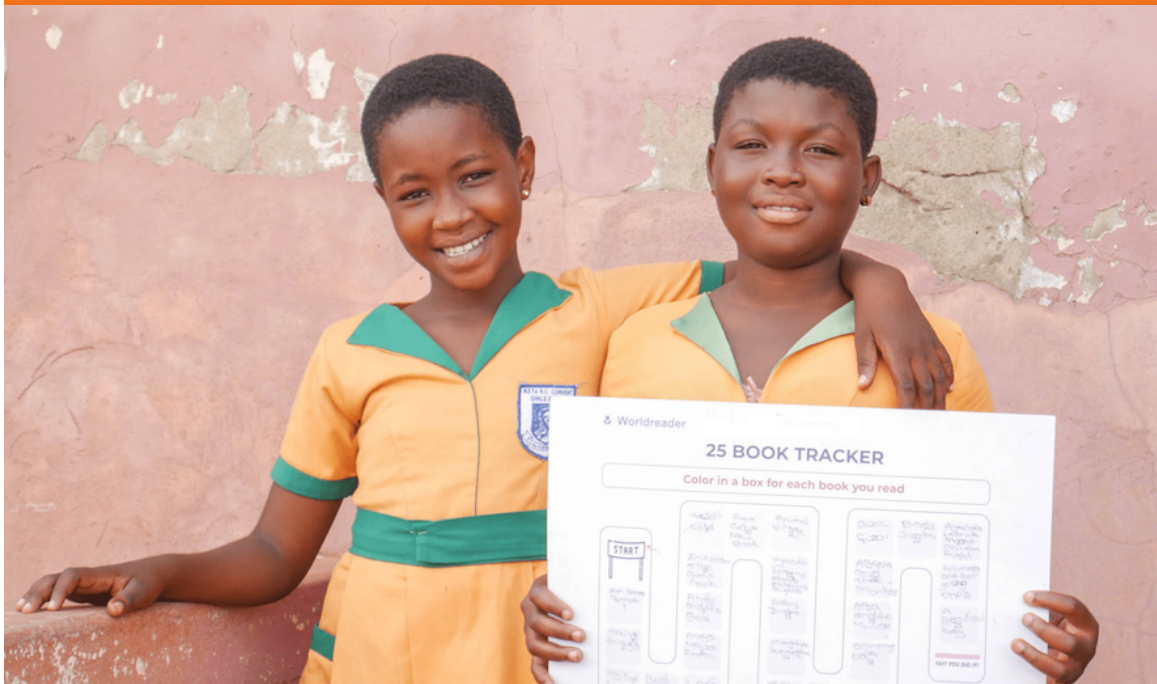


**Prepared By
Rebecca Leege, CEO**

In 2023, you wove reading into the fabric of home. Your dedication has empowered parents and caregivers around the world, turning them into the heroes of their children's learning journey.

“In our partnership with Worldreader, the GSR Foundation has played an active role in supporting Worldreader's mission to empower young readers globally. As a grantmaker founded by a cryptocurrency market maker, we are acutely aware that social responsibility must adapt to the digital future, to ensure young people aren't excluded from the exciting opportunities presented by new technology.”

James Newell
Executive Director
GSR Foundation



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We must listen to the voices of parents

Dear friends and supporters,

What an extraordinary year 2023 has been. As I celebrate my first year as CEO of Worldreader, I can't help but feel immense pride in the impact we made together.

Your support made a stand against the learning crisis and opened new opportunities for children and their families around the world. In 2023, over **330,000 families experienced the joy of reading on BookSmart** – families who previously had limited to no access to children's books and can now discover and explore thousands of titles at their fingertips.

You're powering stories that matter. In 2023, we saw a 36% increase in readers completing 25 different books or more. Books children are passionate about and books they can grow and learn with. Books like Skilled Like Sadio that spark the imagination of children and discussions between them and their caregivers. Thanks to these stories, you helped families create unforgettable memories, quality time captured in moments of reading together.

As a child, we often learn to love to read from an older sibling or parents and as a caregiver, we then **wish to pass that same love for books on to our children**, knowing the benefits of reading – from empathy and creativity to academic and professional success – will stay with them forever.

2023 found me reflecting more and more on the supportive role we can offer parents and caregivers in reading to and with their kids in communities with limited access to children's books. Without weaving reading into the very fabric of home, we won't be able to break down the barriers that are holding us back from ensuring equal access to learning for all of the world's children.



2023 was a year of great success. We reached a major milestone – 22 million readers supported since our foundation. And our collective work was recognized by the Library of Congress, which on World Literacy Day 2023 awarded Worldreader with the Library of Congress Literacy Award, International Prize, for our work advancing global literacy in over 100 countries.

And yet, 64% of the world's children still can't read. If we want to help protect their future, we must continue to find creative, innovative, and scalable solutions to this crisis. Personally, I think the best way to do it is by **finally listening to the voices of parents.**

The Worldreader team recently took part in some extraordinary conversations about the future of education. And while I was blown away by the creative ways in which small organizations are meeting children and families where they are, I keep thinking that education systems aren't adapting fast enough to the world's greatest challenges.

From war to the climate crisis and growing inequality, children continue to face unprecedented educational disruption. Our solutions cannot be structured around only the formal school system and must provide better support for parents and caregivers, often at the frontline of the education crisis.



Education will look very different in five years. In conflict and climate-affected areas, we'll see more displaced families and fewer functional school systems. Parents and caregivers will have to continue taking a bigger role in their children's learning. And while AI and digital technology offer unique, exciting opportunities, the under-resourced families who most need new EdTech solutions may not be able to access them.

Together, you and Worldreader are well-placed to address the learning crisis because we're already firmly centering on family learning. We know that the one thing every parent will have – whether they're displaced, seeking refuge, or from a low-income community – is a mobile phone. From day one, we made it our priority to enable parents to use their digital devices to engage with their children's learning. And from day one, we made our BookSmart app accessible across devices. Because as incredibly challenging as it can be **to ensure all caregivers have access to effective digital education technology**, we cannot miss out on the opportunity to help all parents be effective first teachers to their children.

Our research in Kenya shows that parents and caregivers are excited about reading with their children. When asked about their child's post-reading behavior, the vast majority said that books made their child happier and more confident. Few things get a parent more excited than seeing their kid happy. Yet lack of access to quality books, time, and confidence in their own reading skills can get in the way.

Reading heroes like Dr. Reshma Thadani, who's made her clinic in California "Kinder Ready" by providing learning materials in a friendly clinic environment for families less connected to early childhood education programs, tell us that BookSmart is "a perfect solution" for the parents they work with, who find it hard to access physical books and often need bilingual materials.

That's why in 2024, we'll continue to listen to the voices of parents and caregivers to improve our **one-stop reading solution BookSmart**. We'll continue finding the most effective ways to enhance children's literacy and family learning, listening to the needs and challenges of the families we serve. We'll continue learning from their reading behavior, understanding what are the best times, ways, and materials that will help them make reading part of their home life.

Much more than a library, BookSmart has already become a place of wonder and growth for the whole family. No matter where they are, their busy schedule, their reading levels, parents can rely on a trusted tool. A resource that can support their children's learning at home and on the move, in and out of school. Anytime, anywhere, on any device.

More on this very soon.

Thank you for taking a stand against the learning crisis with us in 2023. I look forward to getting even more children reading together in 2024.

With gratitude,



Rebecca Chandler Legee
CEO of Worldreader



Rebecca Chandler Legee was named Worldreader's Chief Executive Officer in April 2023 after serving five years as the organization's Chief Impact Officer. Her leadership has been instrumental in fostering innovation and expanding Worldreader's impact, which now exceeds more than **22 million readers** in under-resourced communities.

Stories that matter

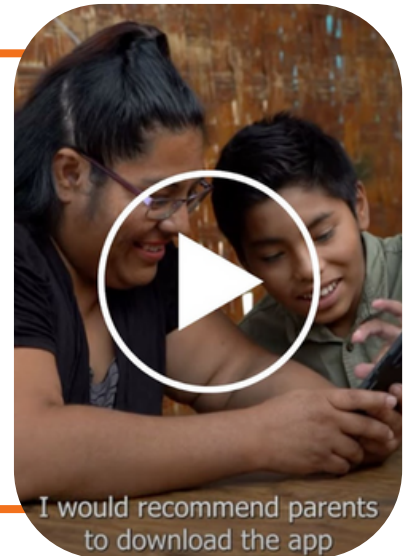


Better stories at the border

Borders can be education-disrupting barriers. Together with World Vision, we're providing free and accessible reading materials in English and Spanish to unaccompanied minors and families immigrating at the US-Mexico border.

Stories to dream big

Gianfranco's story started rough. He struggled in school and often got in trouble. But after discovering our one-stop digital reading solution BookSmart, he's now reading with his mother every day. This sixth-grader from Peru has big dreams – he wants to become a soccer player!



Stories for the whole family

In Kenya, about 70% of children aged 10 can't read a simple text. Worldreader and the Overseas Development Institute are leading the Raising Readers study to answer a key question – Can mobile technology enable Kenyan schools to improve caregiver engagement in reading?

Stories that matter

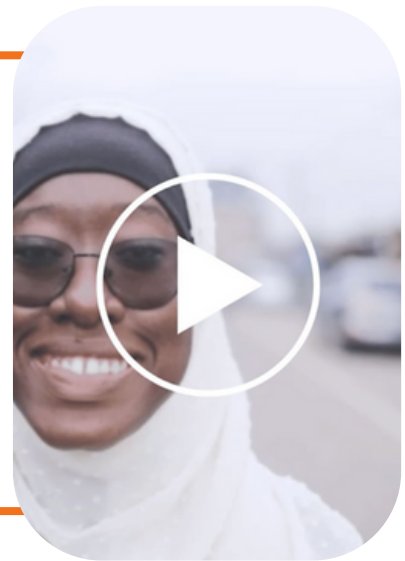


Stories that change lives

Between October and December 2023, your support of our [Give a Better Story fundraising](#) campaign allowed Worldreader to get 183,000 children and families reading around the world to achieve their dreams – thank you for your generosity! Discover some of their stories.

Stories that get girls reading

[Ayisha](#) has always loved reading. Through Worldreader's partnership with Achievers Ghana, she gained access to hundreds of books, learning to express herself better and speak more confidently. She now helps share that same joy of reading with young girls in her community.



Stories that inspire change

South Asia suffered one of the largest increases in learning poverty during the pandemic: learning poverty is estimated to have increased by nearly 20% in two years, rising from 60 to 78%. In 2023, our CEO [Rebecca traveled to India](#) to meet the people at work to end the crisis.



News from Worldreader



Worldreader wins
the **2023 Library of
Congress Literacy
Award**



Award-Winning Impact

On International Literacy Day 2023, Worldreader was recognized as the recipient of the coveted US Library of Congress Literacy Award, International Prize.

The award acknowledges organizations that have made significant and measurable contributions to enhancing literacy and promoting reading. We're beyond grateful and honored to receive this recognition.

As our CEO Rebecca says, it's "a testament to the relentless efforts of our team, partners, and supporters." **Thank you** for championing literacy and reading around the world. Watch the video from the Library of Congress to learn more about the award.



News from Worldreader



Introducing Worldreader Originals

We couldn't be more excited to share that in 2023 we launched Worldreader Originals, **the first collection of books published by Worldreader.**

Last year, we published over 40 books for children aged 3-12 and we're not going to stop – check out one of our newest and extra funny releases *Kooky Goes to the Dentist*, and keep an eye out for upcoming Originals.

Because we want to make the magic of books accessible to everyone on planet Earth, all Worldreader Originals are published under a Creative Commons license, meaning that anyone can enjoy and share this creative work for free under copyright law.

Worldreader Originals have been translated into several major and local languages, including but not limited to English, Spanish, Hindi, and Kiswahili.

Your impact by the numbers

333,986

Readers served
in 2023

2,059,257

Books distributed
in 2023

22,210,665

Cumulative readers
in 2023

Our financials

Donations & Grants

\$4,327,430

In-kind Gifts

\$1,113,971

Earned Income

\$430,048

Other Revenue

\$263,841

Total Revenue

\$6,109,924

Program services

\$7,204,699

Mgt and General

\$1,290,648

Fundraising

\$1,123,744

Total Expenses

\$9,604,339



Collective impact

Thank you to our partners



You got children reading

Thank You to our long-standing board members, individual and institutional donors, and new supporters who joined this passionate group of organizations, publishers, and Reading Champions in accelerating and amplifying the impact of Worldreader in 2023. We couldn't have done it without you.

Organizations

The following comprises corporates, nonprofit organizations, and institutional partners.

AkooBooks Audio
Amalgamated Foundation
Amazon.com Inc.
Amazon Digital Services
Amazon EU
Amazon Smile
Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy
Barefoot College Tilonia
Boeing Company Charitable Trust
Book Aid International
Bright Funds Foundation
Burst Into Books
CARE International
Chronicle of Philanthropy
Compassion International
Delinian
Diocese of Varanasi Education Society
EdTech Hub
Empresarios por la Educación Perú
Enterprise Community
Gates Ventures
Girls Education Ghana
Give Lively Foundation
Google

GSR Foundation
Humble Bundle
Inkitt GmbH
Intertrust Cloud Services Corporation
Intuit
Jane Austen Literacy Foundation
Jio (Reliance Jio Infocomm Ltd.)
KaiOS
Kidogo
Los Niños Primero
Microsoft Corporation
Momentive Inc.
Moya App / Datafree
MTN Ghana
National Book Trust, Ministry of Human Resource and Development, Government of India
Opera
Orrick
Pencils of Promise
Plan International Jordan
Publisher Mass Account
Quest Foundation
Raising a Reader
Results for Development (R4D)
Rockefeller Foundation
Salesforce

Society for All Round Development (SARD)
Smart & Final Charitable Foundation
Smartline Limited
Survey Monkey
Team4Tech
Tellumind Foundation
The Catherine Mayer Foundation
The Learning Foundation
The Library of Congress
Tiny Totos Kenya
UK Online Giving Foundation
UNICEF
World Bank Group
World Vision Perú

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Publishers

Afram Publications Ghana Limited
Arte Publico Press
Asala
Asia Foundation
Booktalk Africa Ltd
Crabtree Publishing Company
Destiny Media
Dolphin Press
Dorling Kindersley India
Ediciones Pichoncito
Feminist Press
Grey Gecko Press, LLC
Grow and Know
Hachette UK
Hugo Rodriguez
Inner Truth Books

Iván Bolaños
Kidza
Laura Jimenez
Mango Publishing
Maria Luisa Figueroa
MME Media
Morgan and Claypool Publishers
Mountype Publishing
New Africa Books
Osu Children's Library Fund
Oxford University Press
Pages & Stationery LTD
Penguin Random House
Peppy Pals
Perazim Kenya Ltd
Pickle Yolk Books
Prabhat Prakashan

Pratham Books
Prudent Pens
Publerati
Reading Teacher
Red Oak Limited
Room to Read
Ruby Yayra Goka and Ruby Goka
Sam-Woode Ltd
Star Bright Books
Step Publishers
Storymoja Africa
Treasure Books
Tulika Publishers
Ubongo International
Vokal.com
Winmat Publishing Ltd
Xylem Inc



Your impact in the news

FORTUNE

Artificial Intelligence Could Make a Difference for Young Readers Around the World—or Make Literacy Even Less Equitable

“So if A.I. can help children, the next question we must ask ourselves is: Which children? As we take advantage of the benefits, we must consider how this new technology can bring all of us along, not just those who are important to for-profit companies.”

– **David Risher**



How Worldreader and Booksmart Are Revolutionizing Reading for Children Everywhere

“For many children in the US and around the world, accessing inspiring and unforgettable stories isn’t easy. Time and resources aren’t enough to support the foundational reading they need to reach their potential.”

– **Amber Cortes**

THE ATLANTA VOICE

Worldreader Partners With Atlanta Nonprofits, Schools To Promote Youth Literacy

“Children are only part of the solution. [...] Worldreader is shifting its focus on parents and guardians with its approach to improving youth literacy, as they are also responsible for creating an atmosphere at home where reading is encouraged and treated like a valuable pastime.” – **Janelle Ward**



Inaugural Mashujaa Wa Kusoma Challenge Attracts Dozens Of Families

“This literary activity, powered by BookSmart, a free digital library by Worldreader with over 3,000 books, aimed at fostering reading culture, has set a new standard for the love of reading more so during the school holidays.”



The Role of Worldreader in Achieving Sdg 4- Inclusive, Equitable and Quality Education: The East African Perspective

“The global nonprofit organization harnesses the power of affordable and scalable digital solutions to bring reading to the under-resourced children who need it most and motivates children and caregivers to read at least 25 books a year with understanding.” – **Joan Mwachi-Amolo**

Thank you for inspiring families around the world!



Solving the **learning crisis** requires collective action – all this impact is made possible by your passion and support. We hope you'll share these **incredible milestones** with your friends and family.

Get children reading now:

