



USAID EDUCATION: ALL CHILDREN READING

By teaching children to read, USAID is opening the door to economic opportunity and life-long learning.

USAID works in more than 50 developing countries to ensure that children have access to a quality education and the skills needed to be productive members of society. USAID invests in global education because we know that the positive effects of education are far-reaching - that it serves as a driver for all other development and for the reduction of extreme poverty.

USAID's education work focuses on **improving the reading skills of children**; strengthening youth workforce development and higher education; and expanding access to quality education in crisis and conflict environments. We partner to leverage resources and expertise, strengthen education systems and drive change so that children and youth can learn.

LITERACY CHANGES LIVES

The United States has historically championed efforts to improve literacy around the world. While access to education has improved, the world is still experiencing a learning crisis — 250 million children worldwide are unable to read, write or do math. Reading is a fundamental skill for all learning and allows children to learn math, science and other subjects. The ability to read also improves health and well-being of individuals and families, opens up employment opportunities, and mitigates the chances that youth will pursue criminal or violent activities.

USAID focuses where we will have the best return on investment. Children and youth who learn to read are healthier, more self-sufficient, can earn a better living and have more opportunities to become productive members of their societies.

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USAID works with governments, teachers, students, schools and communities to:

- Improve teaching techniques and learning materials
- Support regular testing to measure reading skills
- Help teachers in the classroom with teaching basic skills, and student-centered learning
- Promoting parental and community involvement in schools and learning

GLOBAL PARTNERSHIPS AND COUNTRY HIGHLIGHTS

The UN Sustainable Development Goals focus the education community on a learning agenda through partnerships, evidence-based research, technology and innovation. USAID helps lead this agenda through various partnerships, including: **All Children Reading Grand Challenge for Development**, using science and technology innovations to improve early grade literacy in developing countries; the **Global Book Alliance**, providing children access to books to learn to read and read to learn; the **Mobiles for Education Alliance**, using technology to help improve student learning in developing countries; and the **Global Reading Network**, USAID's community of practice to ensure long-term impact, scale, and sustainability.

From 2011-2015, 50.2 million children and youth benefited from over 150 USAID and partner-supported programs in 51 countries, including 1.5 million students with improved reading skills. Here are some examples:

- In **Kenya**, 30 percent of young women are semi-literate even after six years of school (UNESCO). Building on past collaboration, in 2014, USAID and the Government of Kenya launched the national Tusome activity to build basic reading skills. The activity currently reaches 1.1 million Kenyan children per year - 50 percent girls - in 23,000 public schools. To expand access to quality reading materials, partner and digital content provider eKitabu has supplied over 1 million tablets with digitized books, which are accessible for children who are blind/low vision.
- In **Honduras**, where high dropout rates from school leave children and youth at risk to gangs, drugs and irregular migration, USAID support to Honduras' education systems is yielding significant improvements in children's learning. Since 2003, USAID has worked with the Ministry of Education (MOE) to establish a standards-based curriculum, design modernized teacher and learner materials, strengthen local participation, and create a world-class education evaluation system. Between 2007 and 2015, the number of students reading at grade level doubled in Honduras (from 25 to 51 percent), and low performers dropped dramatically--from 26 percent to only 9 percent.
- In the **Philippines**, 1 million children in early grades have benefited from USAID reading programs, including 14,500 out-of-school children who are now in school.

Education reduces poverty: If all students in low-income countries left school with basic reading skills, 171 million people could be lifted out of poverty--equal to a 12% cut in global poverty.

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