



Bangladesh School Libraries Completion Report

A Letter from the Country Director

Dear Pete and Keara,

I am excited to share with you the completion report for the Room to Read library you supported through your fundraising campaign. The Bangladesh School Libraries team has been very busy during 2013 ensuring that the libraries we established last year are of high quality and are being used by students and teachers. During the past few months, our field staff has been working with each librarian to ensure that book checkout systems are fully functioning, the library is welcoming and inviting to students, and that all of the books are well organized and accessible. Teachers and librarians were trained on these activities in the fall and are now implementing what they learned at their schools. For example, our team worked with teachers to ensure that they know how to use the new books in classroom activities and how to support students in picking out the right materials for their reading level. It is so rewarding to see joy and excitement as they are first introduced to the library. It is during these months that children and communities start to feel the impact of our work. With the help of our government partners, we will continue to monitor the libraries regularly and provide additional support to teachers and librarians as needed.

In the past, our efforts have been largely focused on ensuring that students have access to materials and time to practice reading in the library. While access remains a priority, we are also continuing to look for ways to improve teachers' and students' interaction with reading materials inside of the library. In 2012, we developed and shared guidelines for activities that can be conducted during the library period to support the development of a habit of reading. Besides book checkout, some of the activities we promote in the library period include reading aloud, shared reading, paired reading, and independent reading as well as extension activities such as book discussions, dramatizations, art activities, and storytelling. In 2013, we will continue to support teachers and librarians in conducting engaging reading activities so that students can become independent readers.

In 2012, we also continued to explore ways to impact students' interaction with books and reading outside of the library by involving families and communities in library activities. One way we did this was by arranging "read-play" festivals, which is one of the most popular community involvement activities our program currently organizes. These events are planned and conducted in partnership with schools and community members and give students an opportunity to demonstrate their literacy skills through reading based competitions. When each library was launched, our team also conducted library orientation meetings with school management committees, parents and teachers. We are pleased to continue our efforts to further engage families and communities in our work during 2013.

Mamudpur Registered Non Government Primary School library, funded by your gift in 2012 is up and running, and the children and teachers are excited about all of the interesting and colorful books now available to them. In the following pages, we provide a brief update on this library and share the tremendous impact you have made on this community. Thank you for bringing the joy of reading to the children of Bangladesh!

Sincerely,

Zaki Hasan
Country Director, Room to Read Bangladesh

Prepared for: Pete and Keara Brennan

Through your generous support, Room to Read established a Classroom Library in Bangladesh.

Project Location

Mamudpur Registered Non Government Primary School is located in Rajshahi, a division located in the northwestern region of Bangladesh. With a population of 18 million residents, the division is an agricultural hub, producing large amounts of mangos, lychee, vegetables and livestock. The majority of Rajshahi residents make their living as day laborers working on large plantations or in communal growing fields. Because wages for day laborers are extremely low, parents often pull their children out of school to help during times of harvest or to provide childcare while they work, in order to earn extra money.

An isolated and impoverished region, Rajshahi's government often lacks the capacity and support needed to improve local education. The division has a 46.7 percent literacy rate, which is slightly below Bangladesh's national rate of 48.8 percent. Although men's and women's literacy rates are similar in Rajshahi, women's secondary school completion rates are still lower than men's. In collaboration with the local government, the region of Rajshahi stands to benefit significantly from Room to Read's programs.



Partner Organization

Room to Read partners with local organizations in many of the communities where we work. Through this model we are able to leverage existing local expertise, build the capacity of smaller non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and extend the reach of our program. Working with local corporate and NGO

Project ID: BD-RR-12-0100

Name: Mamudpur Registered Non Government Primary School

State/Province: Rajshahi

District/Zone: Sirajgonj

City/Village: Shernagar

Grades: 1 through 5

Number of Students

Female: 182

Male: 118

Total: 300

Number of Teachers

Female: 2

Male: 2

Total: 4



Exterior view of the school building where the new library is located



The classroom in which the library was established

partners also ensures the sustainability of projects as these organizations will remain invested in the success of a project long after we have completed our commitment of support. Our partner in this project is Socio Health And Rehabilitation Program.

Socio Health and Rehabilitation Program (SHARP) is a local non-profit organization that was established in 1992 to support socio-economic development in Bangladesh. The organization works in the areas of education, community health and sanitation, environmental development, disaster preparedness, livelihood security, human rights advocacy, good governance, prevention of violence against women, and gender sensitization. SHARP supports the implementation of Room to Read programs by helping to monitor and evaluate projects, procure resources, recruit field staff, and facilitate government relationships at the local and national levels.

Library Model

The majority of schools in the most rural and underserved areas of Bangladesh where we work face a serious shortage of classrooms and are unable to dedicate a spare room for a library. There is also a shortage of teachers in these schools, and understandably, the government is unable to designate a teacher to serve exclusively as a librarian. By establishing classroom libraries, the School Libraries Program can reach the largest number of students while simultaneously supporting teachers to utilize books in the classroom. The goal of the classroom library model is to allow children in schools that do not have free space to benefit from books and other library resources, as well as to promote integration and use of reading materials in classroom instruction. Each classroom in the selected schools receives a collection of level appropriate books to use for classroom lessons, free time, and designated library time. These libraries are also provided with other educational materials, classroom storage furniture, and a standard 3-year training plan for teachers.

Resources Provided

The School Libraries team works hard to select the most appropriate and engaging reading materials to stock the libraries. The Room to Read Book Publishing program in Bangladesh works closely with the School Libraries team to provide culturally relevant and developmentally appropriate books for our libraries in Bangladesh. In addition, the Bangladesh team purchases books from local language retailers and publishers in Bangladesh. The books selected play a vital role in supplying students with relevant and engaging learning materials. Room to Read has provided the following books and other resources to this library:

- 360 LLP Books
- 360 Non-RtR Local Language Books
- Art Supplies; Cushions/Mats; Paint; Shelves; Stationery
- Magazines
- Art Supplies; Posters; Stationery



Students enjoying the resources now available in the school library



A student enjoying one of the new books



A teacher assisting students with the new books



A student reading a story to classmates

To ensure the long-term sustainability of the libraries, Room to Read seeks community and school co-investment from the very beginning of the project. One of the most vital contributions the school makes is to select one or two school staff or volunteers to serve as librarians. In addition, communities may contribute materials for the library and help to paint the classrooms where the libraries are located.

In Bangladesh, Room to Read involves families and communities in the libraries by hosting orientation meetings for School Management Committees, inviting parents to attend school and sub-district-wide reading festivals, and asking parents to serve as judges during reading festival competitions.

Training and Support

In Bangladesh, all librarians and teachers involved with Room to Read libraries receive three days of training in year one and one day of refresher training in year two and three of Room to Read support. These trainings build on each other and serve as refresher courses and venues for working through problems that have arisen during the year.

The Bangladesh School Libraries program also supports educators by providing coaching and program implementation feedback during monitoring visits that take place an average of once per month over the three years of Room to Read support. During these visits, our team oversees and supports library establishment, provides additional support on topics covered in the trainings, and encourages school management teams to promote library use among teachers. Visits are conducted by Room to Read staff and NGO implementation partners. In 2012, the program focused on training teachers and librarians on how to best use the library period to support the habit of reading.

Start Date	Length of Training	Training Topic
4/28/2012	3.0 days	Library set-up / management; Book selection; Library activities; Teaching reading
5/19/2012	3.0 days	Library set-up / management; Book selection; Library activities; Teaching reading
5/22/2012	3.0 days	Library set-up / management; Book selection; Library activities; Teaching reading
5/25/2012	3.0 days	Library set-up / management; Book selection; Library activities; Teaching reading

Mamudpur Registered Non Government Primary School library will receive three full years of additional support from Room to Read, which will include books, additional training for the school teachers and librarians, support for family and community engagement, and regular monitoring and support visits.



Furniture and other resources provided by Room to Read