



LITERACY FOR A BILLION



ANNUAL REPORT
2017

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Introduction



“ The unexpected way that Bollywood could help millions.
-BBC Future ”

“ India must seize this low-hanging fruit.
-Hindustan Times ”

PlanetRead is a not-for-profit registered in the US and in India with the simple vision of a reading planet – a planet where everyone can read and have access to interesting and affordable reading opportunities in both his/her native or other language(s).

PlanetRead, along with the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad pioneered the Same Language Subtitling (SLS) initiative with the aim to transition over 300 million people in India, from a state of early reading, to functional and fluent reading ability.

The SLS innovation was featured by President Bill Clinton at the Clinton Global Initiative in 2009. It is the recipient of honours and awards from the Tech Museum of Innovation (San Jose), the Institute for Social Inventions (London), and Development Marketplace (World Bank).

Supporters of SLS include Google Foundation, Sir Ratan Tata Trust, the Department of Education (Govt. of India), Mahindra Tractors, DELL Giving, and Doordarshan, India’s public service broadcaster.

AniBooks for Early Grade Reading



Last year, we were in phase 1 of the project AniBooks for Early Grade Reading, where we produced 30 new AniBooks in collaboration with BookBox. This year, we implemented those 30 new AniBooks along with another 10 existing ones in 6 government primary schools. These 40 AniBooks were carefully chosen for grades 1 to 4 and made available via LED TVs that were installed in all 6 government schools.

In close collaboration with a local NGO called Society for All Round Development (SARD), we worked out the modalities of an AniBook intervention, to be implemented in 5 Treatment Group (TG) schools and NOT to be implemented in 5 Control Group (CG) schools.

As preparation, we conducted a baseline Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) of children in Grades 1-4, in 14 schools, and then whittled the group of schools down to 5 in TG and 5 in CG, such that TG and CG would be similar in reading performance on the EGRA.



The AniBook intervention and implementation was closely monitored in TG schools, over a period of 7 months, to ensure that it was implemented as planned.

An endline impact evaluation of reading skills, using the exact same EGRA, was conducted in the 5 TG and 5 CG group of schools, with as many of the same students as was possible to reach in Grades 1-4. We were able to administer the endline EGRA to 70% of those tested at the baseline.

Indirect Implementation via Outreach Partners:



The aim of this activity was to find good ed-tech solutions that can be used to scale up the distribution of AniBooks. We looked for suitable organizations that have leveraged technology in their educational programs.

We identified 5 organizations namely, Project DRUV, 4SL, DSH, Zaya and E Class Education and partnered with them to distribute all the AniBooks we produced in our project via their programs. Except Zaya and DSH, the other organizations successfully distributed the AniBooks via their programs.

[Click here](#) to read the detailed report from our website.



SLS of Gujarati programs supported by Oracle Giving

With continued support from Oracle Giving for the 3rd year, we added Same Language Subtitling (SLS) to Gujarati songs that were telecast on Chitra Gurjari on DD Girnar. We received tapes containing songs for 52 episodes. We added SLS to all the songs and delivered them to DD Girnar as per the plans we made.

This program got 7.3 million views per week. Our main target group were children & Adults with weak reading skills.

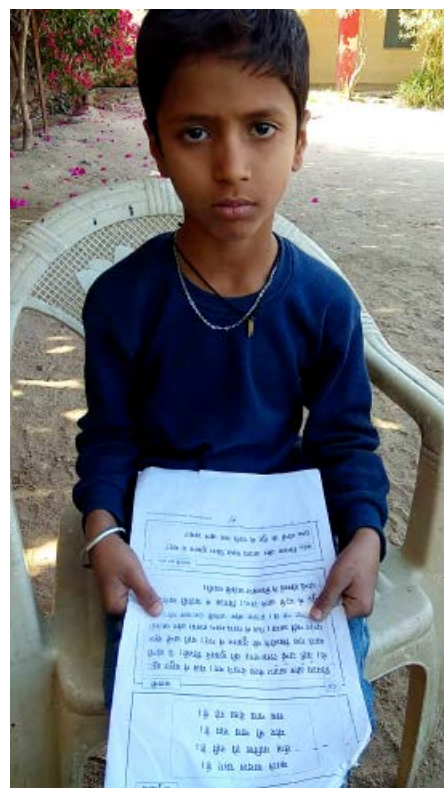


E-libraries Project, Rajasthan supported by Tata Trusts

With support from Tata Trusts, we did an eye tracking project in Rajasthan where an e-Library programme has been active in 10 government primary schools in Abu Road. This program gives low-income children in-school access to curated educational content on tablets.

We used Hindi AniBooks in this project. This study aimed to determine whether children actually read along with SLS while watching AniBooks, and if so, how much? What are some ways in which reading along with SLS can be encouraged?

In this project, 98 children in Grades 2-5 were shown Hindi animated stories, with and without SLS. Their viewing was eye-tracked without their awareness. The presence of SLS got around 95% children to engage with the subtitles, to varying degrees, depending on reading ability. Better readers engaged more but almost everyone interacted with the text, confirming an important finding from other eye-tracking studies in Europe, that the reading of subtitles is automatic and inescapable.








The Rajasthan study's critical finding is that even school children who can barely decode a few letters, but, cannot yet read simple sentences – starkly different subjects from the known eye-tracking studies, almost all with readers – actually do interact with the on-screen print. Overall, the presence of SLS increased the engagement with the text by 44 more eye-fixations per minute. By grade, the mean engagement increased by 18 (Grade 2), 35 (Grade 3), 54 (Grade 4) and 88 (Grade 5) fixations per minute.

[Click here](#) to read a detailed report from our website.

TV Programs SLSed by PlanetRead

Program Name	Language	Channel	Day	Time
Rangoli	Hindi	DD National	Sunday	8:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.
Chitrahaar	Hindi	DD Delhi	Friday	7:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
Movie	Bengali	DD Kolkata	Sunday	4:10 p.m.
Movie	Kannada	DD Bangalore	Saturday or Sunday	4:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.
Movie	Punjabi	DD Punjabi	Saturday	12:00 p.m. & 10:00 p.m. (repeat)
Oliyum Oliyum	Tamil	DD Chennai	Friday	7:30 p.m.
Movie	Telugu	DD Hyderabad	Sunday	4:00 p.m.
Filmi saragam	Gujarati	DD Ahmedabad	Friday	7:30 p.m.
Chitrageet	Marathi	DD Mumbai	Wednesday	2:00 p.m.
Madhura Madhuravee Manjula Gaana	Kannada	DD Bangalore	Every Day	2:30 p.m.
Movie	Marathi	ZeeTalkies (Zee TV)	Every Day	7:00 p.m.
Movie	Hindi	ZeeCinema (Zee TV)	Every Day	8:00 p.m.
Movie	Telugu	Zee Telugu	Weekly	Varies
Chitra Gurjari	Gujarati	DD Girnar Gujarati	Thursday	8:00 a.m. & 6:30 p.m.

Media

-  “Successful Ed-Tech solutions deliver big at scale, cost and effectiveness” - [Medium](#)
- 4th September, 2017
-  The unexpected way that Bollywood could help millions - [BBC Future](#) - 20th September, 2017
-  Voice Technologies Not Yet Ready to Push Literacy - [Voice of America](#) - 27th October, 2017
-  Subtitles on English content are a low hanging fruit for India’s development. Seize it
- [Hindustan Times](#) - 25th December, 2017
-  Noteworthy Social Entrepreneurs Year Ender 2017 - [The Daily Eye](#) - December, 2017

Partners



Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad, India

Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad is a prestigious public business school located in Ahmedabad, Gujarat, India.



Prasar Bharati and Doordarshan Broadcasting Corporation of India

Prasar Bharati India's largest public broadcasting agency. It is an autonomous body set up by an Act of Parliament and comprises Doordarshan Television Network and All India Radio, which were earlier media units of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.



Oracle Giving

Oracle Giving provides grants to select nonpolitical, nonreligious, nonprofit organizations that support K-12 education or the environment.



Charities Aid Foundation

Charities Aid Foundation is a leading international not-for-profit organisation that works to make giving more effective and charities more successful.



Tata Trusts, India

Established in 1919, the Tata Trusts is one of the oldest philanthropic institutions in India, and has played a pioneering role in changing traditional ideas of charity.



Ashoka Innovators for the Public

Ashoka is an international organization that promotes social entrepreneurship by affiliating individual social entrepreneurs into the Ashoka organization.



A Grand Challenge for Development. ACR

All Children Reading: A Grand Challenge for Development is an ongoing series of grant and prize competitions that leverages science and technology to source, test, and disseminate scalable solutions to improve literacy skills of early grade learners in developing countries.



DELL USA

DELL supports promising organizations and programs in the field of education and information technology.



Google Foundation USA

Google foundation supports organizations that use technology and innovation to help more children get a better education, apart from many other causes.



WORLD BANK GROUP

Development Marketplace The World Bank

The World Bank Group works in every major area of development, providing a wide array of financial products and technical assistance, and we help countries share and apply innovative knowledge and solutions to the challenges they face.



सर्वकारा ज्ञान
Government of India
Ministry of Human Resource
Development

Ministry of Human Resource Development Department of Elementary Education and Literacy, Government of India

The MHRD works for the access and development of literacy, education and higher education for all in the country. works to make giving more effective and charities more successful.



Nasscom Foundation Software Donation supporter: www.BigTech.in, India

NASSCOM Foundation's BigTech program endeavours to build the capacities of the nonprofit sector.



Tech Museum of Innovations USA

The Tech Museum of Innovation is a family-friendly interactive science and technology center located in the heart of downtown San Jose, California. It is a valued community resource for education and innovation.



USAID AUSAID World Vision

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID), and World Vision have announced a request inviting grant proposals from interested organizations for innovative programs with potential to improve reading skills and low literacy rates among primary grade children. Through a multi-year initiative called 'All Children Reading – A Grand Challenge for Development (ACR)', the Founding Partners have plans to collaborate to achieve the goal of global action to improve child literacy.

Awards



Winner, [iF Social Impact Prize 2017](#).



Our work with same-language subtitles for literacy was honored with the 2017 iF Social Impact Prize.

Winning this prestigious award—selected by the top names in design and given in support of ideas that make progress toward one of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)—will allow PlanetRead to make further progress with SLS initiatives, from subtitling film songs in multiple languages to creating AniBooks for early-grade reading.

Jury Statement:

What an ambitious goal: to help 300 million Indians improve their reading skills. Can we imagine that 1 US dollar can already help 5,000 people to increase their reading capabilities? It sounds so doable that we feel bad not helping immediately. And it shows the difference between ‘luxury’ social challenges and basic needs. The project has already created a lot of change and positive results. It also provides the basis for an even more positive development by enabling participants to gain competence, insights and independence.

Financials

Balance Sheet as on 31st March

ASSETS	2017 (USD)	2016 (USD)
I. FIXED ASSETS	20904	22519
II. CURRENT ASSETS		
Loans and advances	8266	6571
Deposits	1538	1515
Cash in hand at bank	58431	22139
Total Assets	89139	52744

LIABILITIES		
I. Capital fund	78651	42607
II. Loan	6570	9572
III. Current liabilities	3918	565
Total Liabilities	89139	52744

Income and Expenditure Account

	2017	2016
INCOME		
I. Donations	189761	149005
II. Earned Income	86	0
III. Bank interest	1371	4097
IV. Excess of expenses over income	0	0
Total Income	191218	153103

EXPENSES		
I. Operational costs ***	139885	117392
II. Administrative costs	15928	20334
III. Bank costs	17	42
IV. Excess of income over expenses	35338	15335
Total Expenses	191218	153103

*** Salary totally included in the Operational Costs

Conversion rate in INR to USD	65	66
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Board (USA)



Brij Kothari

Dr. Brij Kothari (Cornell University) and his team have innovated, researched, and nationalized the use of “Same Language Subtitling” (SLS) on Bollywood film songs on TV, for mass literacy in India. He laid the foundation for the SLS project as an Associate Professor at the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad (IIMA) in its Centre for Educational Innovation.

Brij is an Ashoka Fellow and the President of PlanetRead, a non-profit involved in scaling SLS efforts in India and other countries. He is also the CEO of BookBox Inc, a for-profit social venture producing children’s animated stories in more than 25 languages. He co-founded PlanetRead.org and BookBox.com as a Reuters Digital Vision Fellow at Stanford University.

Brij grew up in the Sri Aurobindo Ashram at Pondicherry and went on to get a Masters in Physics at IIT Kanpur, a Masters in Development Communication and a Ph.D. in Education from Cornell University. His doctoral research was on the conservation of local knowledge in Andean Ecuador.



Stuart Gannes

Known as one of the icons in the communication industry, Ram Sehgal began his career at Air India, where he spent five years after obtaining his degree in Journalism from Regent Institute, London, and an advertising degree from Institute of Practitioners, London.

He worked for JWT for 15 years where he handled a diverse portfolio of brands like Air India, Philips, Voltas, Beecham, BHEL, ITC etc. Subsequently, Ram took over as President at Contract Advertising where he spent 15 years.

Ram Sehgal was conferred the A & M Advertising Man of the Year in 1994 for his contribution to the advertising industry. In 2001, the Advertising Club of Kolkata elected Ram to their Hall of Fame. From 1997-1998, Ram Sehgal served as President of the Advertising Agencies Association of India, and in 1998, as the Chairman of the Advertising Standard Council of India.

Board (India)



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Team

Name	Designation
Nirav Shah	Chief Operating Officer
Parthibhan	General Manager
Hema Jadvani	Field Researcher
Santosh Jadhav	Chief Video Editor
Vijay Shinalkar	Assistant Manager
Regis	Team Lead - Video Editor
Swapnil Jadhav	Video Editor
Vivek	Video Editor
Rajesh	Video Editor
Idhaya	Video Editor
Sasi Kumar	Video Editor
Sweta Sravankumar	Project Manager
Priyanka	Project Coordinator
Jemina Wood	Project Coordinator
Victor Lourduraj	Accounts Officer
Arvind Kumar	Senior Programmer (R&D)
Arun Bala	Project Coordinator
Pakhyalakshmi	Office Care Taker & Cook
Francis Mars	Attender





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