



PlanetRead Annual Report 2013

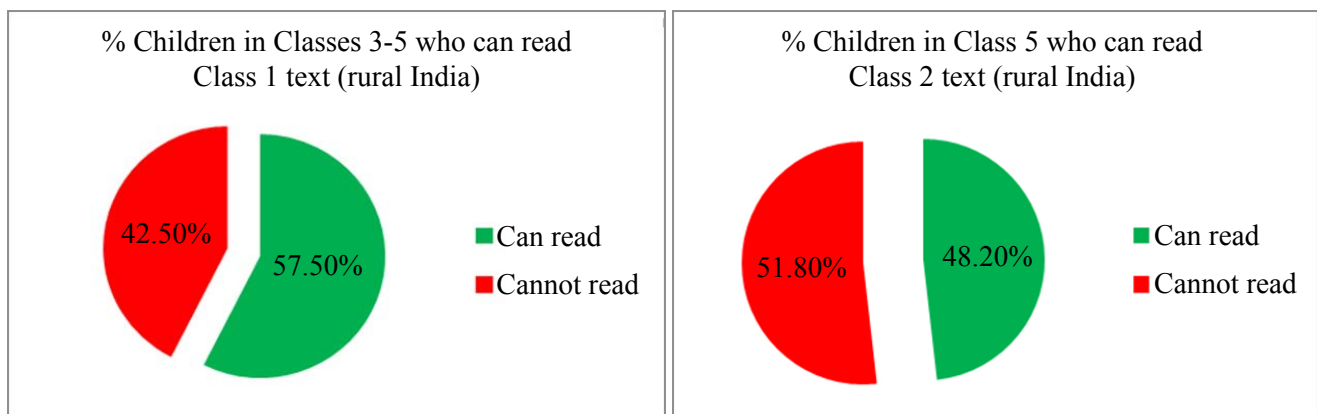


Literacy for a Billion: the Year in Review

Same Language Subtitling (SLS)

Of all the skills taught in primary education, reading is arguably the most essential. Without reading, acquisition of information, more complex skills, and critical thinking within the educational system is frustrated. Competence in reading determines the quality of learning.

Illiteracy in rural India is enormous, and the lack of effective institutional infrastructure makes it a persistent educational challenge. 42.5% of rural India's children in Classes 3-5, cannot read a Class 1 level text (ASER 2011). In Class 5, more than half cannot read a Class 2 text. The education of India's rural children is being constructed on a foundation that cannot support it – and India is 70% rural. Illiteracy is undermining broader academic performance; and the disability imparts a lifelong disadvantage.



“Literacy is, finally, the road to human progress and the means through which every man, woman and child can realize his or her full potential,” says Kofi Annan, former Secretary General of the United Nations. Literacy offers better lives and more opportunities – it improves health, increases income and enables more community involvement. (A child born to a mother who can read is 50% more likely to survive past the age of 5.) PlanetRead’s Same Language Subtitling (SLS) puts more people on that hopeful path.





Sep 2013 PlanetRead wins “The International Prize” a literacy award from Library of Congress, USA



PlanetRead’s Same Language Subtitling (SLS) was announced as the winner of “The International Prize” on Sunday, September 22, 2013. Librarian of Congress James H. Billington chose the winners of the 2013 Library of Congress Literacy Awards, a new program originated and sponsored by philanthropist David M. Rubenstein.

The Library of Congress Literacy Awards were announced in January 2013 as a program to help support organizations working to alleviate the problems of illiteracy and ‘aliteracy’ (a lack of interest in reading) both in the United States and worldwide. The awards seek to reward those organizations that have been doing exemplary, innovative and easily replicable work over a sustained period of time and to encourage new groups, organizations and individuals to become involved.

“The generosity of David Rubenstein in instituting this literacy awards program will have a profound impact not just on the winners and their programs, but also on literacy programs everywhere that can benefit by replicating some of the best practices of those who applied for an award,” said Billington. He noted that the Library is producing a publication that highlights the best practices in a number of categories as exemplified by the top applicants.

June 2013 – Baseline Study for SLS scale up in Maharashtra

In the third and fourth weeks of June, 2013, a baseline survey was conducted in the 4 Treatment Districts (TDs) and the 2 Control Districts (CDs). The month of May was devoted to the preparation of tools, pre-pilots in other districts in Maharashtra and Gujarat, and modification and finalization of the tools.

The first couple of weeks of June was devoted to training of the Master trainers in Delhi and training of the surveyors at the district level. This report provides details about all the activities conducted for the survey. Telecast of SLS was resumed in the month of July.

<http://www.planetread.org/interview.php>

Media Excerpts

THE TIMES OF INDIA November 8, 2013

US salutes use of Bollywood songs as literacy tool



Badmouthed for promoting tawdry kitsch and tell moves, Bollywood's song-and-dance routines — most recently endorsed by first lady Michelle Obama during the White House Diwali celebrations this week - has been recognized as a tool for learning by the US Library of Congress.

PlanetRead, an Indian non-profit born from IIM Ahmedabad, has been named winner of the Library of Congress' first international literacy award announced this week for its pioneering work in

teaching millions to of semi-literate people to read using same language subtitling (SLS) for Indian movie songs. The award, which carries prize money of \$ 50,000, supports organizations working to alleviate problems of illiteracy and aliteracy (a lack of interest in reading) both in the United States and worldwide.

BW BUSINESSWORLD January 10, 2013

Words Fail Them

Music and song videos are helping many in India to step into the world of education and literacy. But government policy lags behind supporting innovative ways of improving literacy.

India's literacy programme may be chugging along with claims of success, but it is leaving behind a huge population that can barely read what's written on the blackboard.

Under government rules an adult or a child is literate just after acquiring the ability to read a few letters of alphabet. The literacy programme does not focus a lot on measuring and nurturing the reading ability of the just literate. As a result, most remain semi-literate. Without continuing support, many slide back into illiteracy.

THE ECONOMIC TIMES November 8, 2013

Indian NGO awarded for using Bollywood films to promote literacy

In recognition of its effort to promote literacy through use of Bollywood films, a Mumbai-based non-profit organisation has won the 2013 Library of Congress Literacy Awards.

Selected in the international category, carrying a cash award of \$50,000, PlanetRead in India is an innovative programme that reinforces literacy skills, primarily through subtitles for popular musical television programming, the Library of Congress said.

The Alternative

January 16, 2013

Same Language Subtitling: Karaoke for a well read India



Raise your hands if you knew that the karaoke type subtitles that appear on quaint TV Shows Rangoli and Chitrahaar as India are aimed at making us a country of billion plus literate people!

Same language Subtitling (SLS) as a concept struck Brij Kothari, a student of Cornell University, while hanging out at a friend's living room in Ithaca, New York, in 1996, watching an Oscar award

winning Spanish movie "Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown" with English subtitles.

"As a student of Spanish I wanted the subtitles in the same language, so as to catch and reproduce better. That is when it occurred - if Hindi film songs were subtitled in Hindi, India would become literate," he recalls.

TheNational December 9, 2013

Hindi film subtitles translate into successful literacy project for India

Often criticised for its suggestive dance sequences and over-the-top melodrama, the Hindi film industry has emerged triumphant in the field of literacy. For millions of barely literate Indians, singing along to their favourite film songs while watching television has become a way to improve their reading skills.

brisbanetimes.com.au December 14, 2013

Use of film subtitles in project PlanetRead helps more than 200 million Indians learn to read

Ever wondered why your mind weirdly starts reading English subtitles on an English film, automatically, without your being able to stop it? The answer lies in neuroscience, of course, but this feature of the brain is the key to a literacy project that has benefited more than 200 million Indians.

The subtitling project, PlanetRead, has turned India's national pastime of singing along to Bollywood film songs into a powerful tool to help the "notionally literate" poor to read. In India anyone who can sign their name - even partially - is considered literate.

Research indicates that substantial percentage of those who the Government of India terms “literate” in fact have reading skills so weak as to be dysfunctional. Looked at another way, many functional illiterates have some rudimentary ability to discern phonetic representation from letters and words. These weak readers total more than 300 million. Most of these people, including children, have regular access to television. This is the natural target audience for SLS.



In India, PlanetRead’s “karaoke” approach to literacy is providing regular reading practice to over 200 million early-literates and prompting another 270 million illiterate people to begin reading.

As the name implies, SLS is the simple idea of subtitling audio-visual content – TV programmes, music-videos, and other accessible content drawn from popular culture – in the same language as the audio. Word for word, what you hear is what you read. And research shows conclusively that viewers of SLS programming are, in fact, reading.

\$1 buys:

3/4 cup of coffee



1 year of reading for 5,000 people



The results are profound. Introducing PlanetRead’s SLS to the plenary session of his 2009 Clinton Global Initiative, President Bill Clinton observed, “Same Language Subtitling doubles the number of functional readers among primary school children – a small thing that has a staggering impact on people’s lives.” And it does so in a way that is efficient, cost effective, and readily available to all. Every US dollar spent on subtitling a nationally telecast program of Hindi film songs, gives 30 minutes of weekly reading practice to 10,000 people, for a whole year! This is the equivalent of one paisa per person per year in India.

PlanetRead partners with Doordarshan, India’s national television broadcaster, to present one national and eight regional programs. Doordarshan has seen a 15% increase in ratings for programs with SLS.

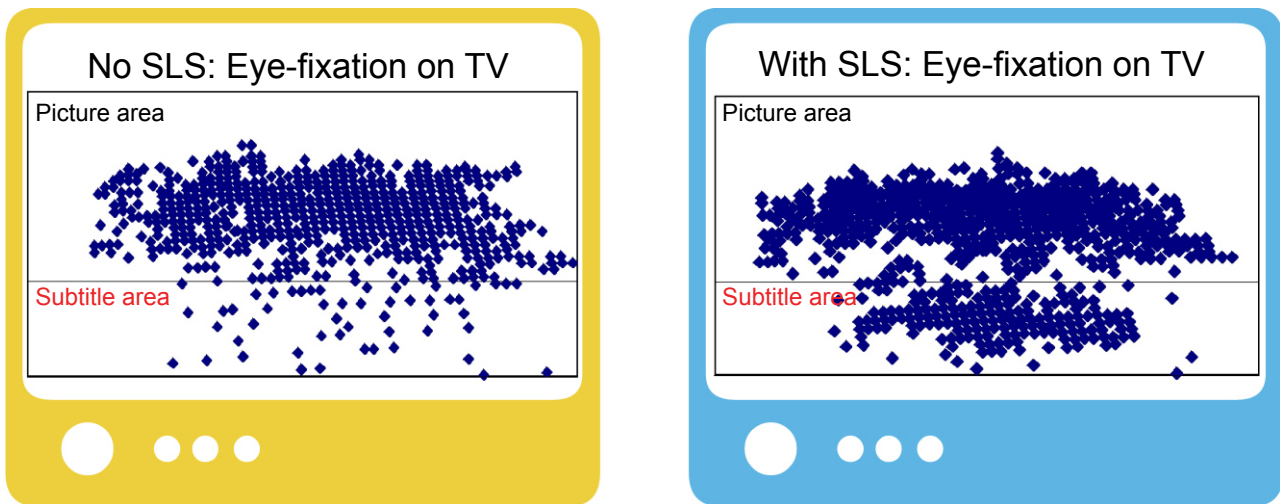
Doordashan SLS Programming

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.

Research, Monitoring & Evaluation

Research conducted at the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad shows that SLS improves reading ability by strengthening decoding capacity and habituating fluidity. The data also demonstrate that SLS is effective in stanching skill loss in adult non-readers and in pushing a higher percentage to functional literacy levels. SLS exposure was found to raise the rate of newspaper reading among “literate” youth, from 34 percent to 70 percent.

Exposure to SLS at home during the years when a child is picking up alphabetic knowledge in school more than doubles the number who become good readers during primary education and halves number who otherwise remain illiterate after five years of schooling.



Eye-tracking research has shown that viewers naturally synchronize the auditory and textual information while watching a film song with SLS. When SLS is integrated into popular TV entertainment, reading happens automatically and subconsciously.

Using the Television Audience Measurement (TAM) ratings system, PlanetRead monitors viewership for all SLS-enabled shows and, by correlation with periodic evaluation of functional literacy and academic achievement by AC Nielson/ORG Marg in 5 states, is able to evaluate programmatic impact in the diverse populations reached by SLS.

Financials

Balance Sheet as on 31st March

	2013	2012
ASSETS	USD	USD
I. FIXED ASSETS	14077	16860
II. CURRENT ASSETS		
Loans and advances	14303	2384
Deposits	1952	2108
Cash in hand at bank	5357	9026
Total Assets	35688	30378
LIABILITIES		
I. Capital fund	13536	22705
II. Loan	0	7207
III. Current liabilities	22152	466
Total Liabilities	35688	30378

Income and Expenditure Account

	2013	2012
INCOME		
I. Donations	39687	52728
II. Earned Income	45278	32539
III. Bank interest	367	535
IV. Excess of expenses over income	10865	0
Total Income	96197	85802
EXPENSES		
I. Operational costs ***	70065	57076
II. Administrative costs	26091	17296
III. Bank costs	40	19
IV. Excess of income over expenses	0	11411
Total Expenses	96197	85802

*** Salary totally included in the Operational Costs

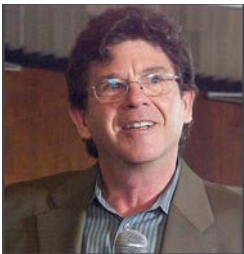
Conversion rate in INR to USD	50	50
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Board of Directors and advisors



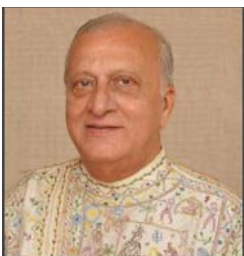
Brij Kothari, Chairman

Brij Kothari founded PlanetRead in 2004 to implement his pioneering academic research on literacy education and Same Language Subtitling (SLS). Dr. Kothari earned his Ph.D. from Cornell University, with a specialisation in Education and Development Communication. He is on the faculty of the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad, and was a Reuters Foundation Digital Vision Fellow at Stanford University. He is also the founder of BookBox, a social venture producing children's animated books with SLS in 25+ languages.



Stuart Gannes

Stuart Gannes has been on PlanetRead's board since its inception. Mr. Gannes is an educator, journalist, and pioneer of digital media. He served as the Director of the Reuters Digital Vision Fellowship at Stanford University. He earned his BA from the University of Michigan and an Ed.M. from Harvard University.



Ram Sehgal

Mr. Sehgal has more than 30 years in the advertising industry and served as President of the Advertising Agencies Association of India and as the Chairman of the Advertising Standard Council of India. He holds degrees in journalism from Regent Institute, London, and advertising from Institute of Practitioners, London.

Staff

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 Editing
Swapnil Jadhav	Video Editor
Vengatasalapathy	Video Editor
Jackson	Video Editor
Amutha	Video Editor
Sweta Sravankumar	Project Manager
Priyanka	Project Coordinator
Gayathri	Project Coordinator
Victor Lourduraj	Accounts Officer
Arvind Kumar	Senior Programmer (R&D)
Praveen Kumar	Programmer (R&D)
Pauly	Secretary to President
Pakhyalakshmi	Office Care Taker & Cook
Francis Mars	Attender





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