



53%

of people in South Asia are illiterate.



More than 480 million people are illiterate in South Asia. A majority live in rural areas that lack access to information and educational resources. When parents can't read, they can't take care of their families in simple ways. Minority groups and women in particular face social barriers to education.

Despite an increasing attendance rate for boys and girls in primary school, on average, children only complete 4.7 years of schooling. Children are often forced to drop out to help with house or farm work.

PROVIDING HOLISTIC EDUCATION TO RURAL COMMUNITIES

READ Global provides holistic education for villagers of all ages and backgrounds. Literacy and basic education is often the first step, opening doors to trainings in livelihoods and information communications technology (ICT). These skills together lead to new economic opportunities, improved health, and increased civic participation.

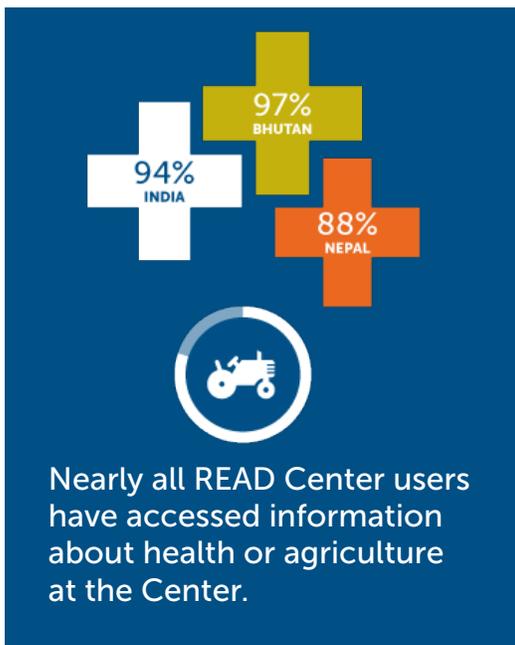
To lay this foundation, every READ Center has a fully stocked library, computer room, children's and women's sections, training hall and AV section. Through partnerships, we also provide educational trainings such as:

- **Literacy:** Adult literacy courses, activities that promote habit of reading, and study groups give villagers a second chance to learn basic skills that can change their lives. Our programming is centered on creating a culture of learning.
- **Children's programs:** READ Centers have sections specifically for children, featuring books for early readers, and educational games and toys. We provide children's programs such as art workshops, environmental education, and reading groups.
- **Health:** READ Centers provide information on preventative health, such as sanitation, hygiene, nutrition, preventable diseases, and sexual and reproductive health.
- **Youth education:** READ Centers support school-age youth by loaning out school textbooks, wiki-readers, and tablets, and by offering support in tutoring, homework, and exam preparation.



“Before, I was nervous about giving my children medication because I couldn’t read the bottles. But I took a literacy class at the Geejgarh READ Center, and now I can mark the medicine so that I know what to give my children.”

- Lali Devi, Rajasthan, India



OUR IMPACT

Our monitoring and evaluation metrics show that READ Centers and their programs significantly increase access rural villagers’ access to educational opportunities and information in South Asia:

- **A large majority of Center users** (99% in Bhutan, 75% in India, and 67% in Nepal) said they **would not otherwise have access to information** they obtained at the Center. READ Centers are often the only resource of its kind in rural villages.
- **50% of users who were illiterate** before coming to the Center report that they **can now sign their name and read signs**.
- **91% of teachers** surveyed in India and 88% in Nepal **report that students’ grades have improved** as a result of the Center.
- **Over a third** of villagers surveyed in India and Nepal **shared information** learned at a READ Center with at least ten people.

FEATURED PARTNERS



Together, **Practical Action** and READ implement the *Practical Answers* program to solicit and respond to thousands of commonly-asked questions from rural villagers on livelihoods, health, livestock, and more, by producing and distributing educational pamphlets, videos, and radio programs, and bringing field experts to READ Centers to lead skills training courses.



READ partners with the **Ministries of Education** in India, Nepal, and Bhutan to offer literacy programs in rural communities. READ also works with the Ministries to do outreach to local schools, often sharing books, inviting students to use the computers at READ Centers, and hosting kid’s educational camps.



VAST Bhutan partners with READ to conduct youth interaction art camps on an annual basis. The camps teach children art skills ranging from charcoal to sculpture, and use the art to educate the community about wider cultural issues such as the environment, health, and civic participation.



The Reach Out to Asia Foundation, in partnership with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, has begun an exciting new four-year partnership with READ to allow us to build new Centers, develop new youth programs, and strengthen our ICT resources and programs— which will benefit 100,000 people.