LitWorld Annual Report 2014





Be the Story.



About LitWorld

LitWorld is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization creating permanent positive change in the world. We implement on-the-ground innovative solutions to the hard-to-tackle challenge of illiteracy worldwide. The combined power of children's own stories, access to diverse reading and writing experiences, and peer-to-peer and adult mentor relationships leads to transformational literacy. We work in close and trusting partnerships with locally based, grassroots organizations to build sustainable outcomes for young people around the world.



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Letter from the Executive Director & the Chair of the Board

Dear Friends.

The LitWorld movement is at a pivotal moment. Thanks to the strong partnerships that we have cultivated with community-based organizations in over 15 countries around the world, we are ready to rapidly scale our big ideas and on-the-ground programs.

Literacy for LitWorld is about the transformation people experience when reading and writing become a deep part of their lives. Every LitWorld program is about cultivating a love of reading and writing through creative expression, the power of the read aloud, and tapping into the strength in all our own stories and the stories of our local and global communities.

This approach is profoundly innovative and has led to lasting, life-saving outcomes for children around the world. What we have seen this year is how immediately the impact of LitClub is felt. In 2014, LitWorld programs launched in the Za'atari Syrian refugee camp in Jordan. In the midst of a quarter million refugees, the power of reading together brings nourishment and healing. Before children received access to our reading programs they were drawing scenes of violence – guns, death and separation. After one month of regular read alouds and access to quality books, the children began to draw gardens, trees, and beautiful images of hope and happiness.

LitWorld is a first responder, bringing urgently needed literacy programs to people who have experienced trauma or natural disasters to help children and whole communities recover emotionally and academically right away, rather than waiting for buildings and schools to be reconstructed. But the power of LitWorld is that we also stay for the longterm, cultivating sustainable learning structures that will support children through to high school, college and beyond.

As we go forward into 2015 we stand fiercely committed to giving each child a safe environment of learning and mentoring to ensure that she can launch her deepest dreams.

With our gratitude,



Why?

The push for universal education has increased primary school enrollment rates around the world, however, research shows that the quality of education children receive at school is devastatingly substandard. As many as 250 million children are in school but are not learning. In the US, 32 million young people will not graduate high school this year because of low literacy rates. Providing all children with quality basic education could boost annual economic growth by at least two percent in low-income countries.

LitWorld is taking urgent action to address the global learning crisis by creating practical, innovative solutions to help children and young adults grow in ways that are fresh and new, building resilience and capacities for lifelong learning.

How?

Our programs are centered around the child's own story, the power of a supportive community, and advocacy for literacy as a human right. LitWorld believes that everyone has stories that can change the world.

LitWorld's model of social emotional learning is designed around the LitWorld 7 Strengths – Belonging, Curiosity, Kindness, Friendship, Confidence, Courage, and Hope – key ideas for building resilience.

What are LitWorld's Results?

- A dramatic increase in children's reading and writing capacities, civic engagement, future outlook and sense of personal value
- A positive change in overall literacy levels, reading and writing, habits of all community members
- Inclusive literacy communities where every child has access to supportive network of mentors and peers to accompany them through life's journeys and transitions

LitWorld's Core Programs



LitClubs & LitCamps fill critical out-of-school time with joyful learning, creative play, and social interaction. Trained mentors support children as they learn to value their own and others' stories and use their reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills to work towards their dreams.

LitWorld's high-need Innovation Hub regions center our resources in physical headquarters where our on-the-ground team members run LitWorld programs including lending libraries, technology labs, and family LitClubs to cultivate sustainable community growth through the power of story.

The 10,000 Girls Initiative is a joint venture with the organization Global G.L.O.W. to deepen our support for girls and young women leaders through our LitClubs and LitCamps as well as additional layers of mentorship and creative self-expression.

Our advocacy-based program, World Read Aloud Day, enrolls a worldwide network of champions in over 85 countries to share the immediacy, power and benefits of reading aloud to children of all ages and to advocate for equal access to quality learning experiences.



Select 2014 Accomplishments

2014 showcased the mobility, flexibility and innovation of LitWorld's programs. We continued to expand the scope of our work, launching LitClubs in new countries and expanding our programs to reach new communities in our existing locations. We capitalized on the momentum of successful pilot programs, rolling them out into full-scale programs, and in turn created new pilot initiatives to continue to add layers of support in response to the literacy needs of our communities.

Steadfast in our mission to correct the gender imbalance in worldwide literacy rates, we maintained the focus on women and girls in two thirds of our programming. With our partner Global G.L.O.W, we brought the 10,000 Girls Initiative beyond our pilot sites in Harlem and Kibera to two more US cities and eight countries. We continued to add layers of support to the initiative, including Story Summits, which we piloted on the International Day of the Girl.

Story Summits are day-long community-wide gatherings, bringing LitClub members from a given region together with their mentors, as well as other girls and young professional women and college students from the community. Story Summit workshops give girls the chance to share their stories with one another, and to discuss topics and questions that impact their lives but are rarely discussed in school or at home. With Story Summits, we have created a model to spread LitWorld's reach, opening up access to LitWorld programming to support more girls and train more mentors.

LitWorld believes that sustainable and lasting social change requires whole community involvement, and we have continued to grow our intergenerational programs to enroll parents and caregivers in supporting children's learning lives. We continued to invest in measuring the literacy outcomes that we value using our custom monitoring and evaluation tool, and customized the tool even further to integrate it into our new programs and pilots. For LitWorld, transformational literacy is measured through a positive increase in participants' sense of self, civic engagement, future outlook and academic engagement. The data we collect will allow us to continue to meet our communities' needs effectively, and to be a voice for best practices in the field of global education.

litworld.org



LitClub & LitCamp Highlights

The key innovation of LitClubs and LitCamps is a focus on children's own stories as the most powerful tool for social-emotional development, resilience-building, and academic engagement. In a supportive community of friends and under the guidance of LitClub mentors, children have access to books, technology and supplies that make quality learning possible. LitClub and LitCamp members also have access to each other's stories and a community that listens and celebrates their experiences, helping them pursue their deepest dreams.

In 2014, 162 LitClubs and LitCamps ran in 15 countries on 5 continents giving more than 5,200 children and families a thriving literacy community to grow in as readers, writers, listeners and speakers who see literacy as a tool for personal empowerment and social change. Our on-the-ground leaders from our grassroots partner organizations ran these programs in Colombia, Ghana, Haiti, India, Jordan, Kenya, Kosovo, Nepal, Pakistan, Peru, the Philippines, Rwanda, Uganda, Zambia and the United States. Our partnerships continually allow us to listen deeply and carefully to the needs, hopes and dreams of local communities and create responsive curriculum around those goals.

We turned the successful 2013 pilot of our Story21 intergenerational family LitClub program into a full-scale program. Story21 works to close the achievement gap: the catastrophic problem that makes low-income children far more likely to fall behind in school. Weekly workshops combine a family-oriented version of our LitClub curriculum with access to iPads. Story21 strengthens each family member as a reader, writer, story-sharer, and technology-user, and improves parent and child interactions with the combined tools of literacy and technology.

This year we expanded the Story21 program to the Children's Village Polo Grounds Community Center in Harlem to reach 20 additional families. We also established a weekly Story21 lending library program at the Broadway Housing Communities Dorothy Day apartments. The library provides weekly programming and a diverse selection of books and iPads that families can use throughout the year.



10,000 Girls Initiative Highlights

To expand and deepen our LitClub and LitCamp support, LitWorld launched the 10,000 Girls Initiative with our partner Global G.L.O.W. This initiative grew out of our commitment to extend support to the girls of our LitClubs after program graduation by investing more deeply in professional development for our LitClub mentors and creating new structures to keep girls connected with their LitClub community after graduation. We piloted this initiative with the girls of our longest running LitClubs in Kibera, Kenya and New York City in 2012 and 2013. In 2014, we solidified program and training structures and began to roll out the program to more of our sites.

The initiative layers in additional support through in-depth mentorship, intensive programs designed to address the specific needs of each group of LitClub members, and community-wide Story Summits. These combined programs allow LitWorld and Global G.L.O.W. to extend our reach to girls as they transition into high school and college. With this ongoing holistic support, girls continue to cultivate a positive sense of self, remain engaged in learning opportunities, feel confident in their futures, and strive to improve the world around them.

LitWorld's annual Stand Up for Girls program is our signature day of action in honor of the annual International Day of the Girl on October 11th. Stand Up for Girls 2014 was the launch of Story Summits, wholeday workshops that bring LitClub members together across a community to connect and share stories. Story Summits allow us to connect with our existing LitClub members, but also extends our reach to girls who do not have access to LitClubs, giving more girls access to our programs. On October 11th our 10,000 Global Girls community and supporters mobilized to host Story Summits and advocate online, reaching over 5,000 people who raised their voices on behalf of every girl's right to a literate future.

LitWorld's ground-breaking, community-centered and urgent response to the gender gap in education has caught the attention of major news outlets. Forbes Magazine featured the 10,000 Girls Initiative, writing: "Beyond educating girls across the globe, LitWorld offers something perhaps even more valuable: a safe, open community for girls where they are free to be themselves and invest in their own futures, without fear of retribution or embarrassment"



Innovation Hub Highlights

Over the past two years, LitWorld has been incubating our programs and growing replicable models in our Innovation Hub countries; Haiti, Kenya, the Philippines, and the US. These countries are the places where we invest the most deeply, centering our resources and establishing physical spaces for the work to grow.

Our Innovation Hubs have increased our reach to 3,000 children and family members in these communities over the past year. We launched new LitClubs and LitCamps and deepened our work as LitClub members graduated and stepped into new roles as LitWorld leaders. Each Innovation Hub space includes lending libraries and technology labs, which allow us to give children and local leaders access to books, guided reading and community building programming, and technology time.

Innovation Hubs remain testing grounds for incubating LitWorld's new initiatives and ideas. We reached over 150 women through our LitClubs for mothers, combining literacy empowerment and social support with life skills development, including technology training, sewing lessons, and food and nutrition workshops.

World Read Aloud Day Highlights

Over 750 million people around the world are illiterate, meaning that about one in ten people cannot read or write. World Read Aloud Day is a global call to action that raises awareness about the immediate and long-lasting impact of reading aloud to children of all ages as part of their healthy upbringing and to build lifelong skills.

In 2014, World Read Aloud Day was celebrated on March 6th in over 85 countries by a global community of readers of more than one million people. Our global network of WRADvocates,, made up of over 150 influential individuals, organizations and corporations, rallied their communities and online friends and followers to join the World Read Aloud Day movement and to spread LitWorld's key messages year-round. This year the content LitWorld shared online through Facebook and Twitter reached over 19 million people through likes, shares and retweets.

Our 2014 WRAD press release was syndicated by 303 outlets, garnering over 70 million impressions. Notable press mentions include The Washington Post, The Boston Globe, NY Daily News, Yahoo! Finance, Publishers Weekly and the International Literacy Association.

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We work together with the following partners so that we can operate locally to create change globally.

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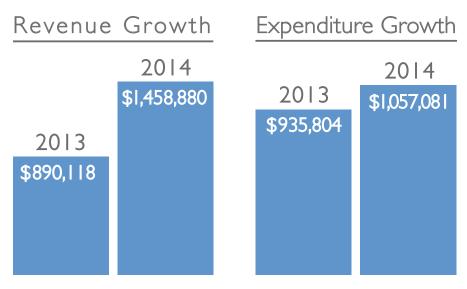
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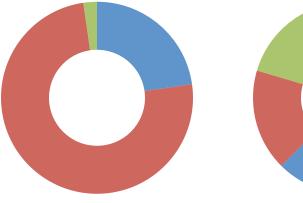


2014 Financial Highlights

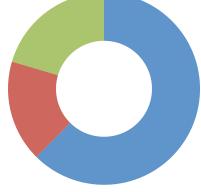


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2014 Expenditure Allocations



- \$1,093,678 Grants & Corporate Funding
- \$331,850 Individual Donations
- \$33,352 Programming Revenue



- **\$660,059 Programs**
- \$215,871 Operations
- \$181,152 Fundraising

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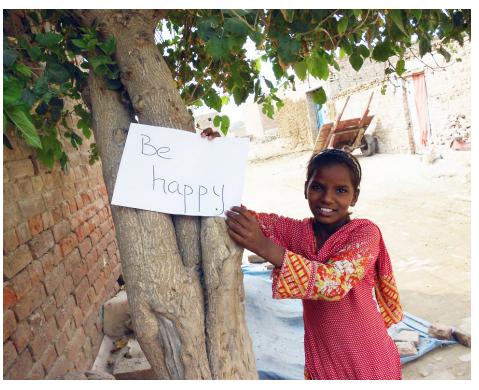
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