



Bangladesh Library Completion Report

Dear Moontrekker,

I am so pleased to share the following library completion report with you! The library at Poirtala Uttar Government Primary School, which is just one of the 90 libraries we established in Bangladesh in 2013, is already deeply cherished by the school's students and teachers. I wish I could bottle and send you the joy that exudes from the children whenever they open a new book or recognize a new word for the first time. They are on their way to becoming avid, independent readers, and I cannot wait to watch as class after class of students learns to read using the books and materials you have helped us provide. Thank you for supporting our efforts to promote literacy and bring this wonderful new resource to this community!

Our team has been very busy ensuring all of the libraries we established in 2013 are functioning well and educators have the skills they need to best leverage library resources. We have been working with teachers and librarians to create book checkout systems, make the libraries comfortable and welcoming for students, and organize reading materials so they are easy to access and find. We regularly visit each school to see how our libraries are doing and provide coaching and support to help school staff improve their library management and resource utilization skills.

Room to Read Bangladesh and our government partners will continue to support these libraries over the next three years to ensure activities are running smoothly and provide additional assistance to educators as needed. Ongoing support for our libraries over the next three years will consist of:

- Refresher trainings for teachers and librarians
- Continued support and monitoring visits
- Delivery of materials designed to maintain student interest and build teacher and librarian capacity
- Activities to engage communities and promote library sustainability

In addition to these support efforts, we have also started work on another 80 new libraries this year. With every new library we create, and every student we reach, we get one step closer to a world where every child is guaranteed access to a quality education. I want to thank you again for believing and investing in Room to Read and our partner communities. Because of people like you, the children in our programs now have the opportunity to pursue a better future filled with all of the possibilities literacy provides. For that, I and my staff are forever grateful.

Sincerely,

Shah Alam
Literacy Director, Room to Read Bangladesh

Prepared for: Moontrekker

With your help, Room to Read established a Classroom library in Bangladesh!



Project Location

Poirtala Uttar Government Primary School is located in Chittagong, which is the largest division geographically in Bangladesh. It covers the most southeastern areas of the country and has a population of more than 28 million people. Many residents in the division make their living farming rice, grain, and vegetables. Home to the city of Chittagong, a port with access to one of Bangladesh's largest harbors, the division has been a center of trade and commerce since the 9th century C.E.

Chittagong has a 54.8 percent literacy rate, which is above 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. The Bangladeshi government launched an educational improvement plan in 2007 that aims to raise the country's national literacy rate to greater than 80 percent. The Chittagong division has been a significant focus of this new effort, especially low-performing sub-districts and rural areas. In collaboration with the local government, the region of Chittagong 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 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 Environment Council Bangladesh.

Project Details

Project ID: BD-RR-13-0020

Name: Poirtala Uttar
Government Primary School

State/Province: Chittagong
District/Zone: Brahmanbaria
City/Village: Sadar
Grades: Preschool through 5

Number of Students

Female: 312
Male: 227
Total: 539

Number of Teachers

Female: 5
Male: 0
Total: 5

Environment Council Bangladesh (EC Bangladesh) is a non-government organization (NGO) that empowers the people of Bangladesh to meet their basic needs for a sound and sustainable future. The main goal of the organization is to promote environmentally, socially and economically sustainable development in Bangladesh through collaborative partnerships with other NGOs and community-based organizations. EC Bangladesh 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 Details

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 the government is unable to designate a teacher to serve exclusively as a librarian. By establishing classroom libraries, we are able to 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. Under this model, each classroom 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 three 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:

- 744 local language books published by Room to Read
- 358 non-Room to Read local language books
- Art Supplies; Posters; Stationery
- Shelves

To ensure the long-term sustainability of the libraries, Room to Read aims to increase the participation of families and communities around our schools. Our goal is that by engaging families and communities, there will be increased awareness and support of literacy both in school and at home, resulting in the sustainability of our programs and program outcomes—children’s reading skills and habits.

Our strategy to engage communities involves:

- Meeting and collaborating with the local community before the library is established;
- Creating a literacy committee that coordinates community activities to promote reading such as parent meetings and literacy events;
- Developing a plan with the literacy committee to continue engaging the community and sustain the literacy program even after Room to Read’s support ends;
- Supporting the school to identify a community mobilizer to liaise between the school and community
- Providing regular support and capacity building to school principals and teachers to engage families and communities in reading

Trainings

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 support visits that take place an average of once per month over the three years of Room to Read support. During these visits, the School Libraries team oversees the establishment of the library, provides tailored assistance on training topics, encourages school management to involve teachers in daily library operations, and promotes family and community engagement in reading. The team also assesses library quality by using a rating tool, which evaluates the library's functionality across 19 indicators. Room to Read staff use these ratings to determine the frequency and type of support they provide to each school, and to assign extra support time for schools with greater needs.

Start Date	Length of Training	Training Topic*
2/1/2013	3.0 days	Book leveling; Importance of libraries and reading; Library period and reading activities
2/1/2013	3.0 days	Book leveling; Importance of libraries and reading; Library period and reading activities
2/4/2013	3.0 days	Book leveling; Importance of libraries and reading; Library management
2/7/2013	3.0 days	Book leveling; Importance of libraries and reading; Library management

** Some trainings are provided for various groups of stakeholders (teachers, librarians, field facilitators, etc.) at different times. Because of this, the same training may be listed more than once.*

Poirtala Uttar 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 support and monitoring visits.

Photos



Students reading together in the library.



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



The classroom in which the library was established.



A student selecting a book to read.



Students reading together in the library.



Furniture and other resources provided by Room to Read.