



# PLANETREAD ANNUAL REPORT 2016



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## Introduction



“ Such subtitles can be used worldwide to increase literacy  
-The New York Times ”

“ Reading for a Billion: A Simple Way to Increase Literacy in India  
-The Huffington Post ”

PlanetRead is a not-for-profit registered in USA 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

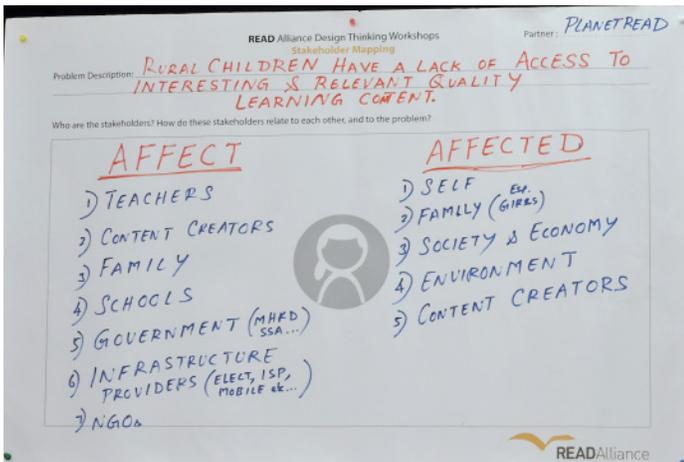


The READ Alliance launched the Early Grade Reading Innovation Challenge 2015 (EGRIC 2015) which aims to discover, develop, and scale early grade reading innovations, with the goal of contributing to the improvement of reading skills of at least 1.5 lakh Indian primary school age children.

Along with a few other organisations that deal with pedagogy, PlanetRead won the Early Grade Reading Innovation Challenge (EGRIC) from READ Alliance and USAID.



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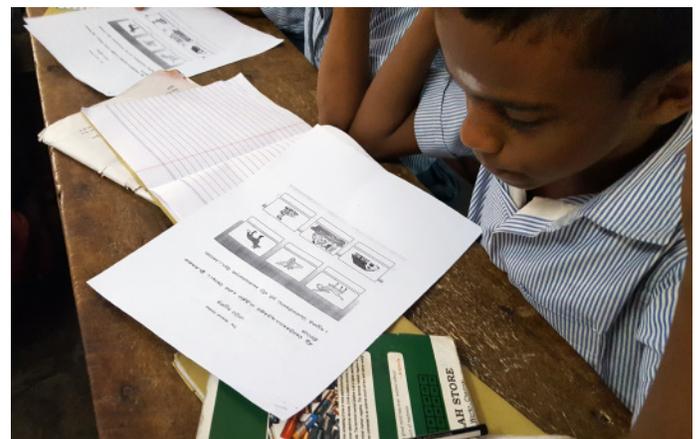
PlanetRead’s “AniBooks for Early Grade Reading” aims at integrating AniBooks into the schools and lives of children in Grades 1–4 (roughly ages 6–11) to support the development of reading skills.

The project targets schools in the states where Hindi is spoken widely (Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, and Chhattisgarh), in partnership with organisations that have the experience and infrastructure to distribute and deploy digital content on existing screens in schools and homes.



Thirty new stories and poems were chosen and converted into AniBooks, along with ten existing Hindi stories from PlanetRead’s sister concern, BookBox. The AniBooks were chosen carefully to cater to each level, keeping in mind several parameters like concept, vocabulary and length.

In order to make each module as exciting as possible for children who are learning to read, we added activities that grew out of the research we’ve been doing on this project.





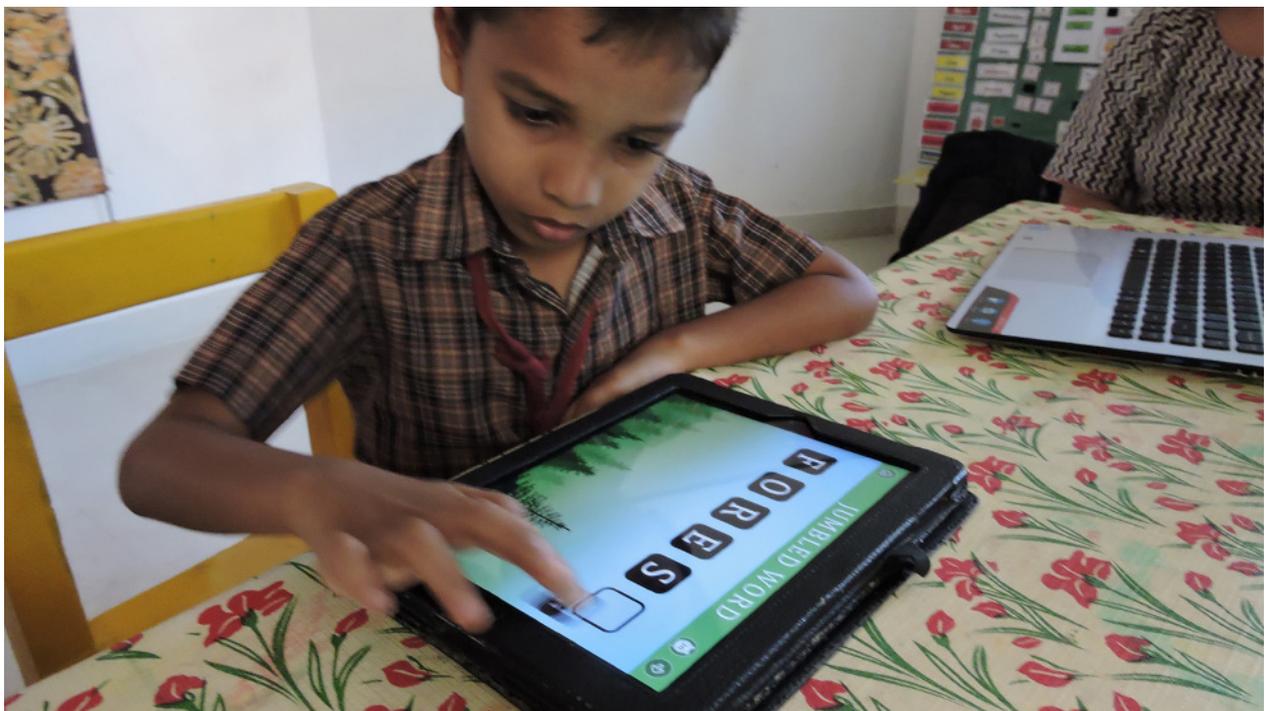
For each AniBook, a set of activities has been designed to test various skills like vocabulary, comprehension, grammar, letter–sound association and problem solving.

The activities are designed to test learning and progress of the child while having fun with learning come alive on screen. These activities are designed for the tab and mobile as well as a printable workbook format that can be easily replicated, printed and distributed.

The fun element appealed to all the children and they enjoyed learning through games and colourful activities as compared to the regular workbooks.



To see how the stories and activities work for children, PlanetRead team members went to schools in Pondicherry and Ahmedabad to test the content with kids.



In fact, several pilot projects were conducted for testing the stories and activities with schoolchildren. The children enjoyed themselves while discovering new ways of learning and wanted more!

The team and several outreach partners are helping to make our content more widely available. We have been doing outreach with partners like Project DRUV, who are already distributing AniBooks, 4SL, that creates solar-powered wi-fi enabled “digital classrooms” that can be used anywhere, even in places without electricity.



Before we distributed the AniBooks to the children, we conducted a baseline study to understand their current reading levels so that we can do another study at the end of our program (i.e. after 9 months) to see if AniBooks have helped in improving their reading skills.

Baseline studies, that consist of checking some rudimentary reading and comprehension skills, were conducted in schools across the Hindi belt in India. The impact of viewing the AniBooks on a regular basis and following it up with activities will be recorded after 9 months from the baseline studies.



## SLS of Telugu programs supported by Oracle Giving

Oracle supports more than 1,000 nonprofit organizations globally through a combination of grants, sponsorships, and volunteer support. The grantees are working to solve some of the world's most pressing challenges, from delivering reliable healthcare to rural communities in Africa, to fostering the next generation of innovators, to supporting girls and young women of color in the digital space. <https://www.oracle.com/corporate/citizenship/corp-giving/index.html>

PlanetRead was invited by Oracle Giving to submit a proposal in February 2015 following which an application for subtitling 30 minutes of Bollywood songs every week for one year, was submitted. In April 2015, PlanetRead was selected as one of the grantees by Oracle. In order to process the release of funds and start the project work, Oracle appointed Charities Aid Foundation (CAF) to conduct a due diligence on PlanetRead. Charities Aid Foundation is a leading international not-for-profit organisation, which works to make giving more effective and charities more successful. [www.cafindia.org](http://www.cafindia.org)

Oracle Giving has decided to support PlanetRead's Same Language Subtitling (SLS) on national TV for another year. With support from Oracle Giving and Zee Entertainment, PlanetRead added SLS to Hindi songs of 52 movies. These songs were telecast on both Zee Cinema and Zee Classic.

SLS effectively causes automatic and inescapable reading engagement among the spectrum of early, weak and functional readers. Especially on song-based content, film, folk and music videos, we now have strong evidence that SLS contributes to improved reading and language skills and even higher program ratings. Zee Entertainment has been extremely supportive of PlanetRead's SLS for literacy.



The team interviewed a wide range of people and spoke to the beneficiaries of SLSed movie songs on Zee Telugu and understand their experiences. Here are some excerpts of the feedback received:

“I watched Subtitles on Zee Telugu a month ago. I could read them properly and my brother could not do as much as I did. I liked those subtitles for songs because I could sing along and I also come to know the meanings of them.”

“I watched Subtitles on Zee Telugu songs in between the movie. They are helpful to understand the song lyrics and sing along with it.”



“Yes, I have seen the subtitles for the songs in the movies on Zee Telugu which are telecasted on Saturdays & Sundays. Am able to read them and I think they will help me in improving my Telugu reading skills.”

## Programs that have been telecast with Same Language Subtitling

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.

## Media Coverage

### Following are some Newspaper Reviews from the recent past

-  Solve Literacy, Digital Literacy Will Follow - [The Huffington Post](#) - 29th August, 2015
-  Literacy in India: A bolly good read - [The Economist](#) - 25th April, 2015
-  A Prime Minister Gets the Innovation Ball Rolling - [The Huffington Post](#) - 13th December, 2014
-  Literacy, the Subtitle Way - [The Wall Street Journal](#) - 17th May, 2014
-  Bollywood Karaoke and Same Language Subtitling to Promote Literacy - [Worldbank.org](#) - 31st January, 2014
-  Indian NGO wins award for educating through Bollywood subtitles - [Hindustan Times](#) - 8th November 2013

## Our Partners

Here are some of our significant partners in our endeavors:



### 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.



### 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.



### Oracle Giving

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



### 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.



### Ashoka Innovators for the Public

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



### 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.



सत्यमेव जयते  
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](http://www.BigTech.in), India

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



### SRTT Mumbai, India

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



### 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 and accolades

In November 2016, PlanetRead's founder Brij Kothari spoke at the TEDx talks to demonstrate that the simple solution of subtitling songs and Bollywood films massively improves literacy and promotes reading across India. Brij showed examples from eye-tracking studies that demonstrate how same-language subtitles bring weak readers into inescapable engagement with written words.



Click here to watch PlanetRead's founder Brij Kothari spoke at the TEDx talks.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XRP4xfN89Ss>

# Financials

## Balance Sheet as on 31st March

ASSETS	2016 (USD)	2015 (USD)
I. FIXED ASSETS	22519	16953
<b>II. CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Loans and advances	6571	4947
Deposits	1515	4839
Cash in hand at bank	22139	11973
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>52744</b>	<b>40681</b>

LIABILITIES		
I. Capital fund	42607	29032
II. Loan	9572	8975
III. Current liabilities	565	705
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>52744</b>	<b>40681</b>

Income and Expenditure Account	2016	2015
<b>INCOME</b>		
I. Donations	149005	121694
II. Earned Income	0	19
III. Bank interest	4097	2262
IV. Excess of expenses over income	0	7463
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>153103</b>	<b>138122</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
I. Operational costs ***	117392	111741
II. Administrative costs	20334	19675
III. Bank costs	42	22
IV. Excess of income over expenses	15335	0
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>153103</b>	<b>138122</b>

\*\*\* Salary totally included in the Operational Costs

Conversion rate in INR to USD	66	62
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## Board members (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 members (India)



**Brij Kothari**

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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 Editing
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)
Pauly	Secretary to President
Pakhyalakshmi	Office Care Taker & Cook
Francis Mars	Attender





#### **OPERATIONS OFFICE:**

Sea coast CHS,  
Row House no 5 (1st and 2nd floor),  
Phase -3,  
Sector - 15/A,  
Kille Gauthan,  
(Opposite NMMC office),  
CBD Belapur, Navi Mumbai 400614  
Mobile: +91 29619 182202  
Email: [info@planetread.org](mailto:info@planetread.org)

#### **REGISTERED OFFICE:**

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#### **USA**

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