

# A LOCAL APPROACH TO IMPROVING LITERACY

Literacy Program

Book donation

Library contribution



It will take efforts on global and governmental levels to improve and promote literacy worldwide, there is a wide range of opportunities to help improve literacy on a local level. Literacy is fundamental to reducing poverty, building life skills, and achieving gender equality. And yet, according to research there are about 773 million youth and adults in the world who can't read. Children are at a greater risk now than ever since the pandemic than ever of losing out on vital reading skills.

In areas, where the literacy rate is 99%, a majority of adults can't maintain employment because of their inability to read or write. In less-developed nations such as Niger, only 19% of adults can read and write, that number drops to 11% for women. Gender

inequality in literacy affects the opportunities and quality of life of women and girls worldwide. Two-thirds of those who face illiteracy globally are women.

Assisting children to return to school is a step toward a better future. Improved literacy can increase employment opportunities and empower children as well as adults alike to lead better lives. Below are four key actions that can promote literacy in your community.

#### 1. Volunteer in a local literacy program.

Wherever you are, there's probably some kind of charitable literacy program around your area. Reading aloud to children helps build early literacy and social skills.

For some communities, reading programs can offer access to a library, a place to go on the weekends and the opportunity to build foundational skills for literacy. Research shows that students that come from low-income households regularly score lower on reading assessments every year.

One study conducted on the nonprofit literacy program Reading Partners found positive impacts on students' reading skills, estimated at the equivalent of an extra one and a half to two months of additional progress. Get involved and find a literacy program in your area or better yet start up one in your area.

#### 2. Volunteer with incarcerated people.

Study shows that adult literacy is intertwined with poverty and incarceration. Illiteracy only perpetuates the prison cycle. Education in prisons can be an effective form of rehabilitation and help adults earn diplomas that can lead to more job opportunities.

To reduce inequalities and promote better lives for incarcerated people, there are multiple ways to help out. You can volunteer to be a tutor at a corrections facility, donate books through the Prison Book Program, or write letters and become a pen pal.

#### 3. Donate books.

You can help by donating or starting a fundraiser to buy books for children or schools that are in need. You can reach out to organisations anywhere near you or abroad that distribute books or give back to their communities around your area or all around the world.

#### 4. Contribute to libraries.

If you're in the city area or suburban neighbourhood, you may have passed one of these creative book-sharing programs on the street. Tiny libraries are a growing trend that can

help promote literacy in your community. Getting involved can be easy: Simply drop off your gently used books in one of these fairy home-like boxes. If there are none nearby, you can also start your own.

These are just a few ways that you can help improve literacy skills in your area. Let us know what other ways people can contribute to improving the literacy skills in their areas. Use the box below to add your comments or share your tips.