

# A Foundation for Change in Central America



**Riecken  
Community  
Libraries**

ANNUAL REPORT 2016





## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

*Dear Friends,*

Reflecting on our work in 2016, I have seen a year of growth and reinforced confidence for the programs, leadership and opportunities presented by Riecken Community Libraries. They are the hard-earned results of years of effort.

In both Honduras and Guatemala, we have strengthened critical library network infrastructure that will keep us moving forward. Libraries have taken on more self-government and management of their processes – demonstrating leadership development at its best.

High-value programs offered through the libraries that benefit entire communities have evolved into highly regarded models for the region. One example, our early childhood and nutrition program, is considered by development experts as the benchmark to strive for throughout Honduras.

Our organization has itself evolved, with stronger operational processes and institutional capacity. This has enabled us to acquire more, larger institutional partners such as IDB/Government of Japan and USAID/ASHA (Association of Schools and Hospitals Abroad). The opportunities we can create for the communities we serve are significantly greater with this support.

Despite strong program funding, Riecken Community Libraries faces the on-going struggle – as do many non-profits and NGOs – to finance basic

operations and administration. We are actively using available resources and tools to help identify, nurture and secure unrestricted funding opportunities so that program investments can deliver the highest possible return to our communities.

The strength of the Riecken Community Library Model (see chart below) underlies the success of 65 Riecken libraries in Honduras and Guatemala. It is what makes us uniquely positioned to thrive in today’s world, and that of tomorrow.

**William Cartwright**  
President  
Riecken Community Libraries

COMMUNITY	RIECKEN COMMUNITY LIBRARIES	LOCAL GOVERNMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Local Governing Board</li> <li>▶ Local Volunteers</li> <li>▶ Local Programming Initiatives</li> <li>▶ Fundraising Activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Partners/Donations</li> <li>▶ Technical Advice</li> <li>▶ Training</li> <li>▶ Building Construction</li> <li>▶ Institutional Visits</li> <li>▶ International Volunteers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Librarian’s Salary</li> <li>▶ Utilities</li> <li>▶ Land/Building</li> <li>▶ Legal Recognition for Local Management</li> </ul>

# RIECKEN COMMUNITY LIBRARIES

CHANGING LIVES FOR CENTRAL AMERICA'S RURAL POOR THROUGH COMMUNITY LIBRARIES THAT ARE OPEN AND FREE TO ALL



Creating Community



Developing Leadership and Capacity



Augmenting Public Education



Creating Economic Opportunities

## 2016 BY THE NUMBERS

**65**  
Community Libraries

**372,862**  
Library Users

**7,785**  
Active Volunteers

### THE RIECKEN NETWORK IN GUATEMALA

**12**  
Libraries

**85,596**  
Library Users

**833**  
Local Volunteers

### THE RIECKEN NETWORK IN HONDURAS

**53**  
Libraries

**286,266**  
Library Users

**6,952**  
Local Volunteers



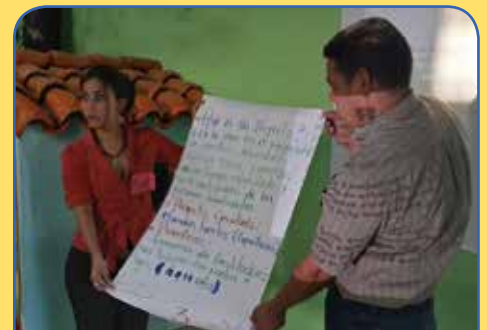
Building Healthy Families



Empowering Women and Youth



Preserving Tradition for Future Generations



Promoting Sustainable Self-Government



## COMMUNITIES FACING CHALLENGE

The population of a Riecken Library community is composed mostly of subsistence farmers, growing corn, occasionally coffee or other crops, on small family plots.

- ▶ Many people are indigenous, members of racial and cultural groups historically excluded from access to higher education and high-paying jobs.
- ▶ Six out of ten families earn the equivalent of less than 100 dollars a month. Homes are often simple square structures with a dirt floor and an outhouse.
- ▶ Water is provided either directly from a nearby stream or from a well.
- ▶ Many of the outlying villages served by the central library do not yet have electricity.

Each Riecken Community Library serves all ages, from infants to the third generation, and its functions vary from Internet searches for school projects to reading programs to health education. Often our libraries are converted temporarily into clinics for vaccinations or other health services provided by visiting health brigades.

In Guatemala and Honduras, the public educational day is divided, so afternoon students might use the library in the morning and morning students in the afternoon. Teachers use the library to prepare lessons.

Being dynamic and responsive to each community's needs, a Riecken library tailors services to its community and is open on weekdays typically serving 100 daily, or nearly 400,000 users, over 80% of which are school age children.

### We Provide Access to

- ▶ Information
- ▶ Training & Technology Tools
- ▶ Programs Supporting Education
- ▶ Health & Development
- ▶ Preservation of Culture and Traditions

# A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A RIECKEN COMMUNITY LIBRARY



**8 AM** The librarian, or in some cases a pair of librarians, opens the doors. The first students arrive, some finishing last minute details on homework, others using the Internet, if it is working, or reference books to complete school projects.

**9 AM** Story time for preschoolers is a time for the librarian to demonstrate the power of communicating the written word to young children, who sit in a circle and are encouraged to ask questions to clarify themes and storylines. Books include some written and illustrated by local people, published with the help of the Riecken Foundation, with topics important to the community.

In a separate room a group of new mothers and their infants are gathered to learn how to care for their new children with an early childhood development and nutrition program.

**10 AM** Indigenous elders – the “third generation” – arrive and use one of the spaces to tell stories and legends of the community to indigenous children. In some communities, young people have learned through these stories the locations of culturally significant landmarks and have mapped the locations, marking their GPS coordinates.

**11 AM** Teachers from public schools prepare lessons for afternoon classes. Young people read, socialize, and browse the Internet.

**NOON** At least five community volunteers help a crowd of students access reference materials and help apportion computer access.

**1 PM** After the mid-day rush of students subsides, a clinic is set up. Today it is a screening clinic for people with vision problems. Some will be given prescription glasses or reading glasses; others with more serious problems such as cataracts, will be referred to a mobile surgery clinic that may operate twice a month.

**3 PM** The board room is in use, reserved today by a group of local coffee farmers who are discussing improvement in access to markets. Also at this time the youth book club gathers around donated kindles to read and discuss the book of the week.

**4 PM** The library’s youth group, young people from ages 12 to 18, is refining teaching points for its technology project on internet safety for children and young people.

**5 PM** Students are doing homework. The librarian asks students to start wrapping up their work.

The local volunteer board, the junta directiva, meets to discuss issues impacting programs and projects, such as an offer from the Riecken Foundation to bring in two externally-funded projects that would expand the early childhood development and nutrition program, and focus on educating teachers on how to instill in children a lifelong love of reading.

Children and library volunteers help the librarian clean the library.

**6 PM** Library doors close for the day.





## KEY ACHIEVEMENT

# COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP IN ACTION

The 2016 Honduras and Guatemala library associations, made up of and run by community volunteers, saw strengthened participation in general, and a significant increase in the role taken on by women. The networking provided by the associations goes beyond sustaining and evolving the libraries they serve, as they have become critical players in resolving community issues of all kinds.

The Honduran association, ARBICOH, started in 2006, today has 53 delegates,

plus regional representation and a governing board. Riecken Foundation is not a voting member.

In Guatemala, after just two years in existence, the library association, ABITS, has legal standing, 12 delegates on a governing board and 6200 volunteers supporting it.

We watch proudly as both associations have gained firmer footing on their paths to self-determination. Setting their own organizational agendas,

managing complex projects, and handling elections have been the responsibilities of ARBICOH and ABITS, and recently two key functions – logistics/coordination and reporting on project results were turned over to them. A productive annual meeting in December, paid for by the Inter Development Bank, gave further confirmation of the financing needed for additional strengthening of these leadership skills.

*“The Riecken Guatemalan Community Library Association (ABITS) is a great support for the libraries in Guatemala. It is an institution that foments trust and can offer answers to concrete problems. Perhaps other institutions can offer economic support, but ABITS was also created to position the community libraries as true development actors. We all speak the same language as the libraries and we best understand their problems.”*

**Isabel René Santos**

Governing Volunteer Board Officer  
Guatemala Innovative Libraries Association  
Weaving Knowledge (ABITS)





## KEY ACHIEVEMENT

# AN EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT & NUTRITION MODEL FOR THE REGION

With funding from the Inter American Development Bank and the government of Japan, Riecken Community Libraries has built an early childhood development and nutrition program operating in all of the Honduras Riecken libraries. The program has standardized guidelines, and is implemented by teachers for the Ministry of Education, parents of the very young in the community, and nurses, doctors and midwives through the Ministry of Health and local health outposts. To date over 1500 people have been trained in the methodologies used in the program - that include working with parent and very young child together to encourage and maintain the good nutrition so critical to all aspects of development in later years, parent/child activities built on pre-reading skills development.

Over 5300 Hondurans have participated in the program activities. The program, expanded and enhanced throughout 2016, has delivered the best trained and equipped communities in the country, and has now been adopted through the libraries as a model.

*"I had high hopes for the reading and early childhood development program as I thought the relationship with nutrition was interesting. As a licensed nurse, topics related to health and the reduction of malnutrition in the country are of interest to me. By participating I learned reading techniques and how to work with children and families via reading. I can complement reading with my experience and knowledge related to community health and how to improve health services for families in my community."*

**Astrid Nunez**

Nurse from the Health Post  
Creating Culture Community Library  
Nueva Morolica (Choluteca, Honduras)





## KEY ACHIEVEMENT

# THE RIECKEN MODEL: EVOLVING AS AN INSTITUTION

The Riecken Community Library model, unique in the field of development, has proven the power of the partnership created between community, municipality and The Riecken Foundation. This sustainable model continues to thrive, drawing the support of individual and institutional donors. It has attracted larger partners, such as the Inter Development Bank (with the Government of Japan) and USAID/ASHA (Association of Schools and Hospitals Abroad), enabled more productive conversations regarding the acquisition of technology resources with donors, and presented the opportunity for larger proposals – some now passing the \$300,000-500,000 threshold.

Thanks to a large multi-year grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Riecken Community Libraries was able to enhance our accounting, reporting and infrastructure to meet the complex reporting requirements of such proposals and grants.

*"I promote women leaders in the community of San Juan Chamelco (Guatemala). There is a lot of need. The women do not have enough confidence in themselves, the daily activities they take part in, or that they have the potential to improve themselves and their community. Many women have no support and with this program they receive valuable training in self-esteem, computers, and the values and potential women like them have."*

Doris Amanda Botzoc

Women's Leadership Program  
funded by Partner Burns-Fazzi Brock  
San Juan Chamelco (Guatemala)





# THE RIECKEN FAMILY

Throughout 2016, as before, Riecken Community Libraries have been supported by the amazing efforts of a very lean but effective and dedicated staff, thousands of volunteers, and the generous contributions of donors and partners.

This year we are grateful for the generosity of each and every donor, and of the following funding partners:

- ▶ Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo (IDB)/Government of Japan
- ▶ Brown Family Foundation
- ▶ Burns-Fazzi Brock Foundation
- ▶ Christer Garbis/Amazon.com
- ▶ Peterson Foundation
- ▶ Adrian Ridner and Family
- ▶ Board Members and Friends of Riecken
- ▶ The Family of Richard Strock
- ▶ Strachan Foundation
- ▶ Study.com
- ▶ USAID/AIR



## Riecken Foundation Board of Directors

Allen Andersson

Dan Bradbury

William Cartwright,  
Chairman & President

Liz Davila

Jon Hofius

Adrian Ridner

Jim Wilson

## In Memoriam

*In February 2016, the Riecken Foundation lost Jim King, a longtime true friend, Board Member and Riecken Community Libraries donor. Jim loved working with the children in the libraries and never missed opportunities to visit them in his travels. He is missed by the entire Riecken Community Library family.*



# FINANCIAL REPORT

## THE FRANCES AND HENRY RIECKEN FOUNDATION, INC.

### Statements of Activities for the Years Ended December 31,

	2016	2015	2014
<b>Changes in Unrestricted Net Assets:</b>			
Revenues, Gains, and Other Support –			
Contributions	\$ 864,478	\$ 69,904	\$ 183,669
Fundraising	–	–	390
Grants	–	566,273	409,633
Interest and dividends	3,797	2,689	1,888
Other revenue	–	–	54,871
Net assets released from restrictions	–	19,100	12,729
<b>Total Revenues, Gains, and Other Support</b>	<b>\$868,275</b>	<b>\$657,966</b>	<b>\$663,180</b>
<b>Expenses:</b>			
Library programming	214,526	66,775	60,629
Librarians	30,230	2,873	15,014
New libraries	–	62	23,808
Board of Directors	30,300	31,337	31,561
Volunteers	94,753	13,180	2,102
Salaries	188,379	269,413	219,090
Benefits	–	25,072	30,121
Other staff expenses	64,144	41,782	58,317
Followup and monitoring	32,372	23,674	58,290
Financial expenses	4,208	4,839	7,369
Building expenses	29,850	26,290	33,818
Vehicle expenses	9,698	19,935	6,419
Office expenses	30,275	25,565	26,764
Professional services	145,833	54,134	37,371
Reicken donations	–	–	1,626
Local Directors	17,380	386	33
Miscellaneous business expenses	9,375	16,721	8,231
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>901,323</b>	<b>622,038</b>	<b>620,563</b>
<b>Total Change in Unrestricted Net Assets</b>	<b>(33,048)</b>	<b>35,928</b>	<b>42,617</b>
<b>Changes in Temporarily Restricted Net Assets</b>			
Net assets released from restrictions	–	(19,100)	(12,729)
<b>Total Change in Temporarily Restricted Net Assets</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>(19,100)</b>	<b>(12,729)</b>
Increase in Net Assets	–	16,828	29,888
Net Assets, Beginning of Year	–	292,406	262,518
<b>Net Assets, End of Year*</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>\$309,234</b>	<b>\$292,406</b>

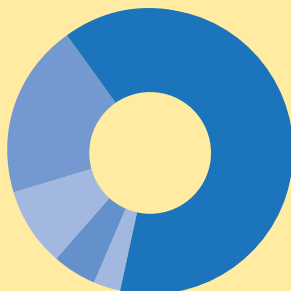
See Independent Auditor's Report and Notes to Financial Statements.

\* 2016 Net Asset information is pending institutional audit due September 2017.

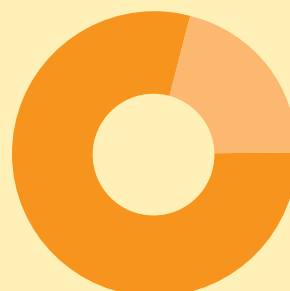
The Riecken Foundation is a private foundation that is currently in transition from legal status to Public Benefit Foundation, a 501 (c) (3). During this process, the United States government (IRS) has determined that Riecken Foundation can act as a non-profit organization 501 (c) (3) and with all the benefits that entails.

#### INVESTMENT BY CATEGORY

Programming	64%
Human Resources	20%
Fundraising	9%
Operating Costs	5%
External Services	2%



#### INVESTMENT BY COUNTRY



Guatemala  
21%

Honduras  
79%

# 7,785

## LEADERSHIP

Community Volunteers who actively participate in library programs

# 1,542

## VOLUNTEERS

New Community Volunteers

# 280,268

## HOURS

Volunteer Time

# 372,862

## LIBRARY USERS

People who use the Library Services

# \$336,322

## ECONOMIC POTENTIAL

Putting a value on volunteer hours  
Average of 3 hours per week per person at \$1.32USD hour/day (minimum wage)

## USER AGES

**41% Children**  
(0-12 years old)

**37% Youth**  
(13-21 years old)

**22% Adults**  
(22+ years old)

## DONOR DOLLARS INVESTED

For every \$10 USD spent on programming:

- \$ 0.16 Technology
- \$ 3.31 Reading Programs
- \$ 0.12 Entrepreneurship and Youth
- \$ 1.18 Local Leadership Development
- \$ 0.07 Cultural Identity and Young People
- \$ 0.88 Women's Business and Leadership
- \$ 3.46 Fundraising
- \$ 0.82 Operations

# 74,746

## INTERNET USERS

People connected to Internet in libraries:

- 42% Men
- 58% Women

# 140,381

## COMPUTERS

People using technology:

- 44% Men
- 56% Women

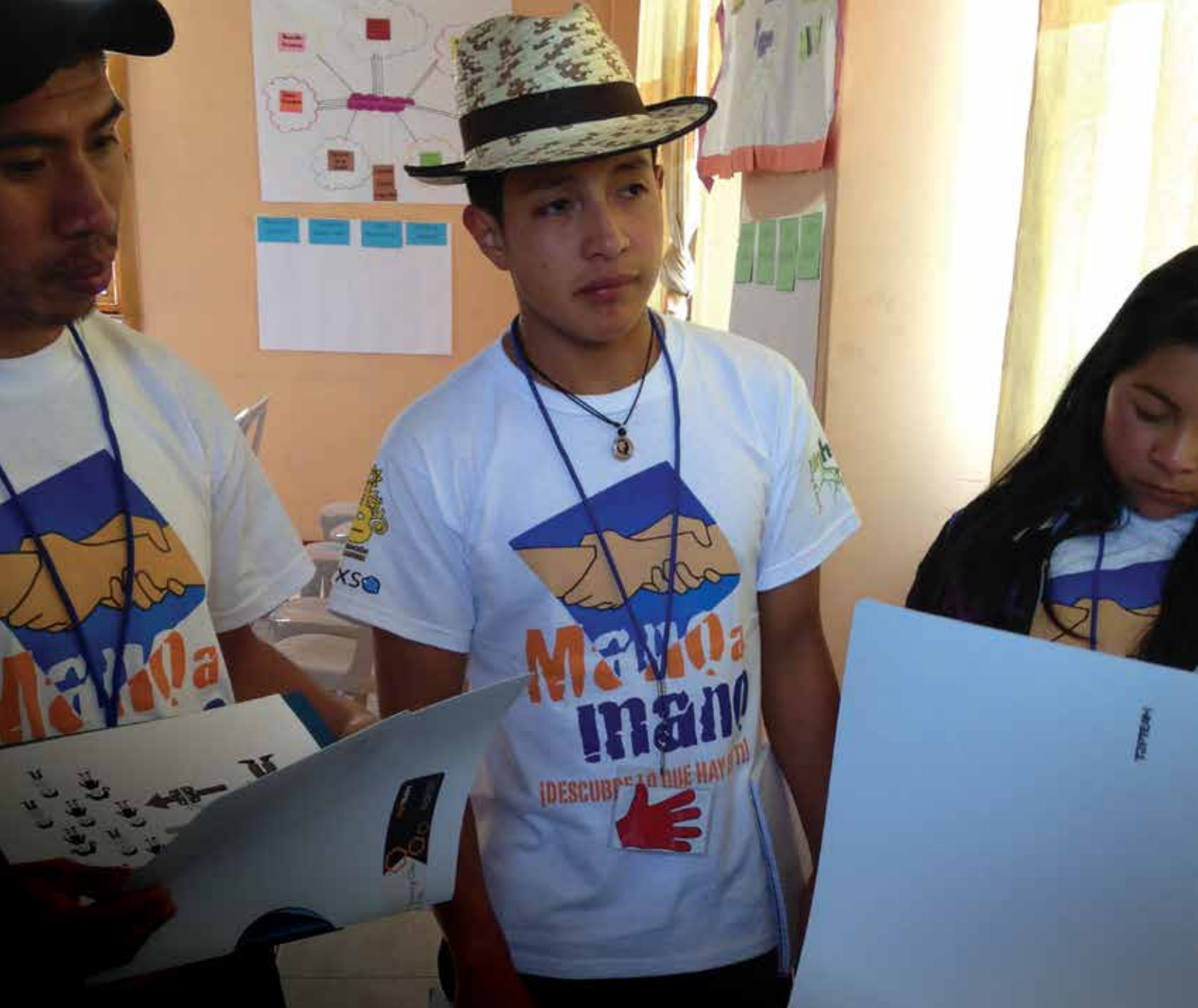
1,658 new computer users, 52% of whom are women

## COMPUTER USAGE

- 34% Reading
- 14% Supporting Teachers
- 13% Technology Use
- 8% Youth Activities
- 4% Health Activities
- 4% Environmental Activities
- 10% Other Community Development Activities

## GENDER

Total Users:  
48% Men  
52% Women



# Riecken Community Libraries

**Changing Lives Through Access to Information**

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