Psychologists claim that emotions are a function of human evolution. Emotions can solve problems, help oneself and one's family to survive extreme situations, or create solutions or alternative paths. With this perspective on emotions in mind, let me try to describe the spirit and impact of the Riecken Community Libraries Network.

The Community Libraries Project was created to improve the quality of communities’ lives, and thanks to the collaboration of Riecken and its 65 community libraries partners, municipal governments and other civil society organizations, we have managed to generate a “before” and an “after” in the lives of over half a million people. These Hondurans and Guatemalans have benefited from the libraries’ services and sought answers to their questions, which I’m sure that they have found in their community’s library.

Today more than ever Riecken community libraries create excitement, emotions, and change. Therefore, we, as Riecken Community Libraries, will continue investing in libraries because by doing so we will be investing in community and youth leadership; and in people and communities that collectively develop local solutions for local challenges and problems.

I want to share my enthusiasm with you, and invite you to read our Annual Report. Support our commitment to promote more prosperity and democracy in Central America, and further social participation and opportunities to promote community-driven change.

Best regards,

William Cartwright
Chief Executive Officer
Riecken Community Libraries

Riecken Community Libraries Respond

Community libraries provide development opportunities in areas such as: environment, the promotion of children’s rights, women’s empowerment, digital literacy, economic entrepreneurship, preservation of cultural memory, the promotion of family and community values, and working with young people on cultural, educational, and health issues, etc.

They provide answers that result in increased social participation, and encourage progressively active volunteerism and youth involvement. Libraries reduce the digital divide, provide internet access, and promote best practices in the use of information and technology as tools for local development. Libraries network to take advantage of external opportunities (such as funding, building relationships, continuing education and training, etc.).

In 2013, Riecken remained committed to information and knowledge as the most suitable means to open doors to personal opportunities, community development and the positive Central American community transformation. With this commitment, Riecken stood firm in its goal of promoting democracy and prosperity in Central American communities, through a network of 65 Honduran and Guatemalan community libraries.

523,833 users
65 Community Libraries
3,548 volunteers
Community support has ensured that Riecken Community Libraries has been able to advance their positioning with local governments and other civil society actors. Riecken has conducted basic and intermediate training of community leaders, and coordinated with strategic partners, including each municipality's educational authority. Riecken's model envisions that the community will have direct responsibility for the library's management, and along with local government and Riecken's support, will link the public education system directly to the library's programs.

In 2013 the libraries began to understand that their professional training and skills were strong assets to support community development. This new system of support enabled each community to analyze their strengths and strategically examine which skills needed to be improved to make a positive impact on democratic development in Central America. While each community library within the Riecken Network involves different groups to make this happen, in particular young people have become key players, as the engine of volunteers who drive the different programs and services: reading for pleasure to promote curiosity, values-based youth leadership, access to information and technology to generate opportunities and promote inclusion of disadvantaged people.

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and AIR/USAID through MIDEH have invested in empowering Riecken's communities.

Reading stories not only supports my Spanish lessons but also during recess, since children enjoy this free time reading.

Veneranda Maradiaga, Director, School Miguel Paz Barahona

Reading for pleasure, training teachers to serve as reading promoters, parents’ support in Spanish classes, and the educational authorities’ political support have enabled libraries to help improve the quality of classroom Spanish language lessons.

Community libraries now have more capacity for training teachers and involving parents and the general public in their children's education. Community libraries have also shortened the distances with isolated and rural populations through a network of library extension services (mobile libraries). The greatest impact has been an agreement signed with the Honduran Ministry of Education that recognizes Riecken Community Libraries as equal in importance as local community schools.

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and AIR/USAID through MIDEH have invested in community libraries to offer programs to support formal education.
Bridging the Digital Divide

Riecken librarians have become knowledge managers and, as part of their ongoing training, have strengthened their skills in the use of information technology, social networks and blogging, as well as in community leadership development. Digital media is becoming an alternative source of information and communication in rural communities, and social networking and blogs help link up communities and publicize the libraries’ activities and programs.

Community libraries are also helping to build teachers capacity in the use of on- and offline educational resources, including the Khan Academy, in order to promote classroom technological projects. Teachers, with training from Riecken, organize educational projects for students to learn to use office automation tools and electronic devices so they can apply that technology to their schoolwork.

Nutrition Information Programs Help Build Healthy Communities

Although and early childhood development reading program began in the libraries in 2007, in 2013 a child nutrition component was launched and offered as a preschool educational option to parents. The program was piloted in 15 community libraries: Guatemala (Xolsacmaljá, Cabricán, Huitán, San Juan Chamelco, and La Libertad), and in Honduras (San Lucas, San Luis, El Porvenir, San Jerónimo, Santa Cruz de Yojoa, Copán Ruinas, Dulce Nombre, El Nispero, San Juan Planes, and Yorito).

This early childhood development program that links reading and nutrition is enabling communities to ward off health problems and malnutrition, strengthen the mother-child emotional bond, and guide, train and educate parents or children’s caretakers to ensure children’s continuous and ongoing development.

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Joan Fuestch and Regina Winner have invested in community libraries to help improve child nutrition.

Human beings by nature are very intelligent, but if not developed, are left a bit cold. It’s like a meal that is simmering, but if we take it off the fire it is undercooked. I think it is the same with children. I think that it is very important to include many mothers who are in the community.

(Mother enrolled in the Chiché library early childhood development program)
Libraries have begun to overcome the challenge of creating local content by promoting indigenous peoples’ cultural identity. Five libraries of the Guatemala Network (Huitán, Cabricán, Xolsacmalja, Chiché and San Juan la Laguna) are leading the process of mapping and documenting anthropological and cultural resources. Digital and printed maps have been created of places such as Mayan altars, water sources, regions with at-risk flora and fauna, endangered areas, historic landmarks, and important local organizations and institutions. Coordination with the Guatemalan Ministry of Culture and Sports has positioned community libraries as guarantors of cultural identity rights for Guatemala’s indigenous peoples.

Technology represents an opportunity for an economic boost to excluded sectors. Community libraries are organizing new services to meet local populations’ needs. Some libraries have organized business centers that offer a means for local entrepreneurs, such as weavers and handicrafters, to access and use technology to improve their marketing and sales. With that goal in mind, the libraries offer workshops on how to use technology for advertising and marketing, and bring entrepreneurs together to share experiences and best practices. In the library of San Juan La Laguna, women weavers are learning to use the internet, create their own email accounts, and write their own blog to promote their products.

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, INHERIT/MACHI, Richard Strock & Family, Brown Family Foundation, S.G. Foundation, the Patricia Price Peterson Foundation, Burns-Fazzi Brock, and the South Pacific Jewish Teen Foundation have invested in community libraries to help reduce the digital divide.

I go to the library whenever I have time. I feel welcome and get help whenever I need it. For example, a customer asked me for photos of my hats, which I did not have. Then I took some hats to the library and asked for help. When they took the photos I sent them by mail to my customer, as before I had already learned in the library how to send mail. Now we are creating with a purpose, and customers can order them directly to our Cooperative.

Rosalinda Tay, artisan San Juan la Laguna (Guatemala)

"We immediately think about information that provides opportunities to isolated communities, which is recreated whenever used, and which grows in value whenever a child or parent shares it. This day the Network of Riecken Community Libraries was born in my mind!"

Allen Andersson, Riecken founder
We Build Community. We Are Growing

The Network of Riecken Community Libraries grew in 2013. The 65th library is about to be inaugurated in Parramos (Guatemala) based on the tri-party cooperation model in which: (1) an organized group of citizens manages and assumes leadership of the construction and maintenance of the library, with the support of (2) the municipal government and assistance from (3) Riecken Community Libraries headquarters. Riecken provided 80 percent of the budget, and the community contributed 20 percent. Maintenance costs are borne by the local government. Riecken has been responsible for community organization and leadership training, including library management skills and basic librarian training in topics as Reading promotion and book clubs, early childhood development, technology, youth programming, etc.

In the framework of the Annual Meeting of the Riecken Community Libraries Network, various community leaders discussed the challenges faced by the Network in the current socioeconomic context and defined its strategy for local government advocacy. In Honduras, a dialogue with educational sector officials and locally elected leaders was established to promote the commitment to support local initiatives in improve the quality of primary and secondary education.

*The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and Cindy & Tom Kilkenny have invested to strengthen the Community Libraries Network.*

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**We are Global Libraries**

The Riecken Community Libraries Network is recognized internationally.

**Beyond Access.** A platform that promotes public libraries as a player in economic and social development. Riecken Community Libraries is part of the Organizing Committee and community libraries. Arturo Flores Aguiluz of San Luis (Honduras), and Rija'tzuul Na'ojoj of San Juan La Laguna (Guatemala) are members.

**Network “Read” for Reading Promotion** (Red Lee de Promoción Lectora). Central America, Mexico, and the Caribbean institutions’ network that promotes the exchange of experiences, in the promotion of Reading for Pleasure.

**Forum Virtual Educa.** Riecken Community Libraries presented the community libraries’ experience and implementation of technology in education in the IV Multilateral Education and Innovation Forum that took place at Colombia 2013.

Nominated as a candidate for the **2014 Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award**, for “authors, illustrators, oral storytellers, and promoters of reading” to increase interest in children and young people’s literature and promote children’s rights to culture on a global level.

Nominated as one of the top 100 innovators for the **Rockefeller Foundation’s Centennial Next Century Innovator Award.**

**EIFL Innovation Award.** The Library Rija’tzuul Na'ojoj of San Juan La Laguna (Guatemala) was recognized in the category of empowering women and girls through the use of technology.
# Financial Balance

As of December 31, 2013 and 2012
Amounts in U.S. dollars

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assets</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2012</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Checking / Savings</td>
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<td>429,832</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accounts Receivable</td>
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<td>500,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Property, Plant &amp; Equipment</td>
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<td>29,911</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Assets</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Assets</strong></td>
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<td><strong>959,743</strong></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Liabilities &amp; Equity</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2012</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Liabilities</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Accounts Payable</td>
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<td>101,140</td>
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<td>Other Current Liabilities</td>
<td>(1,186)</td>
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<td>Deferred Revenue</td>
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<td><strong>Total Liabilities</strong></td>
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<td><strong>851,140</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Equity</strong></td>
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<td>Opening Bal Equity</td>
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<td>127,620</td>
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<tr>
<td>Net Income</td>
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<td>(19,018)</td>
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<td><strong>Total Equity</strong></td>
<td><strong>211,586</strong></td>
<td><strong>108,602</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Total Liabilities &amp; Equity</strong></td>
<td><strong>791,737</strong></td>
<td><strong>959,742</strong></td>
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</table>

# Income & Expenses

As of December 31, 2013 and 2012
Amounts in U.S. dollars

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income &amp; Expenses</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2012</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Income</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Cash Donations</td>
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<td>Financial Performance</td>
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<td>1,726</td>
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<td><strong>Total Income</strong></td>
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<td><strong>549,043</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Expenses</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>New Libraries</td>
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<tr>
<td>Library Programming</td>
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<td>43,634</td>
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<td>Librarians</td>
<td>45,120</td>
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<td>Board of Directors</td>
<td>23,789</td>
<td>18,629</td>
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<tr>
<td>Volunteers</td>
<td>14,875</td>
<td>6,070</td>
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<td>Other Training</td>
<td>1,180</td>
<td>200</td>
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<td>Salaries &amp; Benefits</td>
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<td>30,625</td>
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<td>Other Staff Expenses</td>
<td>70,459</td>
<td>211,767</td>
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<td>Follow Up &amp; Monitoring</td>
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<td>Financial Expenditures</td>
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<td>Building Expenses</td>
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<td>Vehicle Expenses</td>
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<td>Office Expenses</td>
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<tr>
<td>Staff Salaries &amp; Local Benefits</td>
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<td>114,711</td>
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<td>Professional Services</td>
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<td>18,215</td>
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<tr>
<td>Overhead</td>
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<td>7,915</td>
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<tr>
<td>Business Expenses</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Expenses</strong></td>
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<td><strong>568,060</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Net Income</strong></td>
<td><strong>102,986</strong></td>
<td><strong>(19,018)</strong></td>
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2013 Facts & Statistic

Riecken Community Library Model

Social Participation

3,548 VOLUNTEERS
758 Boards of Directors
510,912 Hours of Volunteer Time

Economic Potential

$613,095
If Volunteering had an Economic Value
$ 1.20 hour / day (Minimum Wage)
Average of 3 Hours a Week per Person.

Training

109 Librarians
2,369 Support Committees

Leadership: Roles and commitments of Boards of Directors
Education: Work Plans, Local Partnerships and Social Participation.

Volunteers

301

Technology: Internet, Social Network, Blogs.
Reading for Pleasure: Early Childhood Development, Child Nutrition.

65 RIECKEN COMMUNITY LIBRARIES

109 Librarians
352 New volunteers

Data were collected from the quarterly reports by 61 Riecken Community Libraries Network during January and December 2013
SOCIO-ECONOMIC REALITY

- 61% of Users have a Monthly Income less than $100.00
- For Every 10 Users,
  - 3 Live in Homes with Dirt Floors
  - 3 Have a Computer
  - 9 Have a Mobile Phone at Home
  - 8 Live with their Fathers or Mothers
  - 2 In Households of Members
  - 3 With Less than 6 Books at Home

ECONOMIC INVESTMENT
FOR EVERY $ 10.00
SPENT ON PROGRAMMING

- $ 0.34 TECHNOLOGY
- $ 3.68 READING FOR PLEASURE
- $ 1.53 NEW LIBRARIES
- $ 3.79 LIBRARIANS
- $ 0.36 IDENTITY & CULTURE
- $ 0.12 LIBRARY NETWORK

LIBRARIES USERS

- 523,833
  - 38% People
  - 39% Men
  - 23% Women

52.25% (Average Month / Library)
47.75% (Average Month / Network)

728
(Average Month / Library)
44,403
(Average Month / Network)

REDUCING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE

- 102,069 PEOPLE USING INTERNET
- 2,379 NEW PEOPLE CONNECTED

ACTIVITIES IN THE
PER 100 USERS

18 Reading Promotion
12 Technology
06 Citizen Participation
05 Supporting Teachers
04 Youth Activities
02 Environment Activities
03 Health Activities
28 Activities Outside the Library
21 Cultural & Identity Promotion
02 Other Community Outreach Activities

Preferences

- Creating documents
- Navigating The Internet
- Social Networking

Computer Use

- 288,370 people
  - 394 (Month/Library)
  - 24,031 (Average Month/Network)
- 95 CONNECTED TO THE INTERNET