

# Annual Report 2012



## Opportunities for Change: Riecken Community Libraries in Action





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# Mission

To promote  
prosperity and  
democracy in  
Central American  
communities  
through  
community  
libraries that  
awaken a spirit of  
discovery and  
social enterprise.

## A Word from the Founder

Fifteen years ago, when the sale of my internet software company offered the possibility of new life directions, my wife Susan proposed: Let's do something for other people! We decided to work in Central America simply because I knew of the region's needs from long-ago Peace Corps days. But what could we do for the poorest people in our hemisphere, so near and yet so far from our shores?

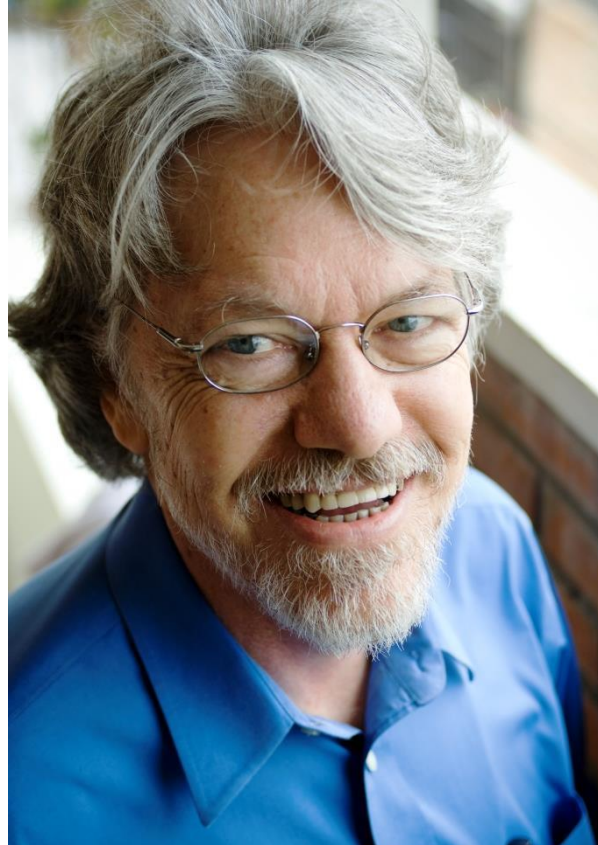
Central America has received countless billions donated from afar for medicine, schools, police, disaster aid, food, and cultural exchange. Those programs mostly evaporate without a trace and without lasting effect. We didn't want to throw our efforts and assets at lost causes. So, how to create real value for real people, value not soon exhausted and forgotten?

We thought immediately of information, which unlocks opportunities for isolated communities, which recreates itself each time it's used, which grows in value every time a child or a parent carries it away. Planning for the Riecken Community Libraries network began on that same day!

We knew up front it would be tough to introduce a new idea into villages where few people had read a book, and fewer had ever seen a library. From our earliest communities, we relearned the ancient lesson, re forgotten in every generation: that you can't give away knowledge, education, understanding, and freedom. That's why every library must involve the whole village to keep it on mission: books lent out, not imprisoned on the shelf; the noise of sharing, not the chill of silence; nurtured by all, but ruled by none. Because they invite citizen participation, they have become the most vibrant and most trusted institutions in their communities.

This is a working organization, not a hobby. We don't distribute gifts and walk away. Our libraries' spirit of discovery doesn't just happen; it arises from the hard work of renewing that spirit every day, hard work shared by parents and children in every community, hard work that deserves worldwide support and respect. You're invited, too, to join our fellowship.

One of these days, we hope you can visit a Riecken library, no appointment needed. Read a story to the kids, join a game of chess, email a picture to a friend. So many miracles in one small place. It's an adventure we think you'll want to join.

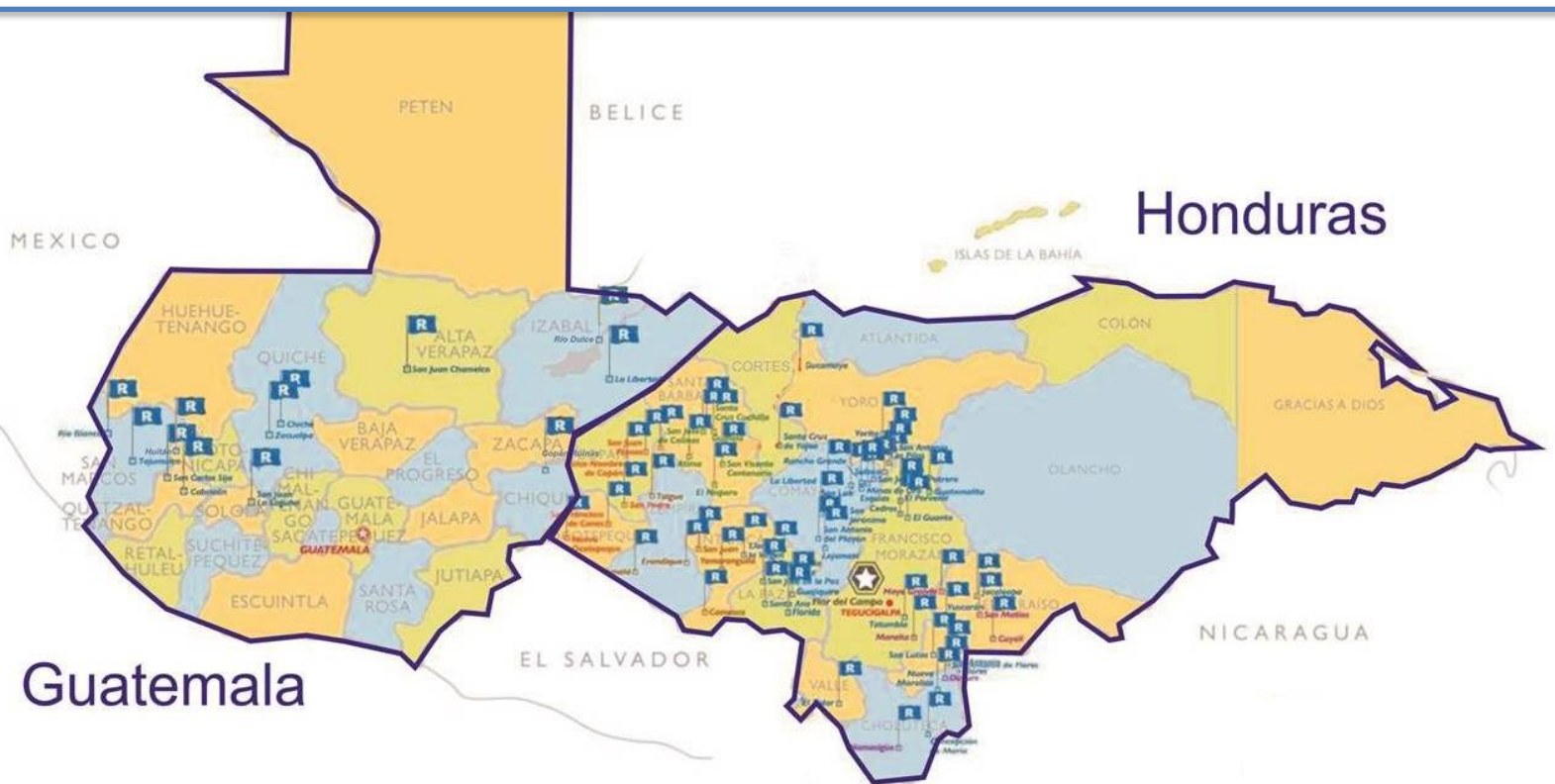


Allen Andersson, Founder of Riecken Community

*Allen Andersson*



## Our library network



## International recognition

- **“Knowledge from the South” Regional Conference for South-South Cooperation, Panamá, May 8-10, 2012**  
The Riecken Community Libraries were selected as a South-South Cooperation representative by the government of Panamá and by the United Nations Development Office for Latin America and the Caribbean.
- **ALA Presidential Citations for Innovative International Library Projects, May, 2012**

- **Beyond Access - Libraries Powering Development, Washington D.C., October 1-3, 2012**

The Riecken Foundation, as a member of the Steering Committee of the community libraries of San Luis in Honduras and San Juan la Laguna in Guatemala, represented the community library network as a model of libraries promoting human development in Central America.

- **Central American New Horizons Conference, Goethe-Institut Mexiko y Secretaría de Cultura de la Presidencia de El Salvador, November 12-13, 2012.**

Riecken Community Libraries and their best practices for the promotion of reading for pleasure as a means of human development and support for processes of social inclusion.



Riecken team members at Beyond Access

# 2012: a path toward prosperity and democracy

In 2012, Riecken continued to bet on information and understanding as the means best suited to open the doors of personal opportunity, community development, and the transformation of Central American communities. We became firmer in our aspiration to promote prosperity and democracy through a network of 64 community libraries in Honduras and Guatemala.

Riecken has shown that libraries are fundamental to a democratic society. Libraries are institutions where citizens can make informed decisions and reach their full potential. They deliver essential understandings, nurture critical thinking, and stimulate self-education with lasting effect. In poor communities, libraries run by volunteer community leaders also provide a sustainable framework for the formation of leadership skills and self-government.

Riecken spent 2012 concentrating its efforts on human capital, sharpening the skills to manage a network of libraries, focusing on the library staff, strengthening community leadership, promoting access to technology and information, and promoting local initiatives to develop and encourage networks of cooperation between libraries.



Volunteer member from Biblioteca Popular Riecken of Yorito (Honduras)

# 1. Community leadership development



The driving forces of Riecken libraries are their local volunteer boards, librarians, and activists. We have made numerous trips to every library in the network to encourage increased community volunteer participation. This has also helped us to stay informed on the state of programming and services offered by libraries, to improve communication with the various community leaders, and to identify the strengths and difficulties of achieving optimal community participation.

In Honduras we organized several regional exchanges of library governing boards to share experiences and ideas. Boards in the North Central and Eastern regions have held conferences of approximately seven libraries

each. Such exchanges strengthen coordination and responsiveness between libraries.

In Guatemala, we began the transition from a centralized model based on the leadership of a local director to a participatory model focused on empowering local volunteers. The first steps focused on initial training of more than fifty leaders of the Guatemala library network on Riecken's participatory model for community libraries, the mission of community libraries, promoting volunteerism, and fostering optimal relationships with local governments.

In 2012, more than 400 local volunteers contributed about 97,000 volunteer hours in the 64 community library network.

### Community libraries, a platform for youth leadership

Both internal studies and external impact studies of libraries (see the chapter on Monitoring and Evaluation) reflect the importance of young people in the life of the library and thus in the life of the community. More than 50% of the libraries' user population is between 13 and 22 years old. Although youth are among the principal library users, we are not yet achieving maximum attendance for this group.

Overall, the reading for pleasure programs Barilete Viajero (Traveling Kite) in Honduras, and Lorito Lector (Little Reading Parrot) in Guatemala, have won the greatest youth support and participation. Daily story hours held in every library are also wildly popular. Likewise, at any time, around 120 youths serve

as full members of the volunteer boards that govern every community library.

Similarly, numerous community libraries have provided spaces for youth participation in concrete development activities, according to the needs of the communities involved in the projects. For example, six community libraries in the Guatemalan network have supported youth participation in environmental programs through eco-clubs or through engagement in the identification and GPS mapping of places of social and historical interest, political boundaries, and tourist attractions.

In Honduras, youths have been prominent in implementing library extension services (bookmobiles) in ten Maya Chortí settlements near the Copán Ruins, promoting information access and reading for pleasure among the children of these communities. In 2012, bookmobile volunteers were chosen as youth representatives in a number of children's councils organized by local governments.

We have laid a foundation for change in the paradigm of library services for the young, strengthening the profile of youth as active citizens and decision makers. In all our communities, youth



Youths of Maya-chorti community (Copán Ruinas, Honduras) prepare a recycling project



at risk suffer from the lack of local youth activities; and Riecken libraries have been the best response to that need. We have begun reviewing the profile of our youth program so

that, through the use of technology and other areas of the youths' interest, in 2013 we will see the achievement of a new vibrant program for young volunteers.

### **Betting on the citizenry of the future**

The population aged 1-12 years comprises more than 33% of the library network's users. The Riecken Foundation recognizes the importance of reading for pleasure. Riecken encourages innovation and imagination, and strives to discover opportunities for local communities in search of development alternatives to meet local needs.

That is why in 2012 we have focused our librarian training curriculum on ways to promote reading for pleasure. Thirty-three community librarians were trained in reading aloud and in developing plans for reading for pleasure activities.

All the community libraries have the tools needed to host weekly story hours and monthly book clubs in order to nurture a citizenry with greater abilities in analysis and critical thinking. In fact, in 2012 all 64 community libraries undertook activities coordinated with the public education and health sectors. Of those collaborations, 44 cultivated reading for pleasure (story time and book clubs) activities; and 32 libraries strengthened their own systems of lending out books.

Among many other practical collaborations, community libraries have created prisoners' book clubs (Chiché, Guatemala) and activities in health centers and hospitals (Copán Ruinas, Honduras).



A mother and child attend an early childhood development reading group at the Biblioteca La Llave Mágica de la Mente (Zacualpa, Guatemala)



Mayan women at a publication event for a Mayan-Spanish bilingual book in the Biblioteca Rija'tzuul Na'ooj (San Juan La Laguna, Guatemala)

### Access and social inclusion

From the beginning, Riecken has tried to reduce the informational divide between social groups who are excluded because of economic status, gender, national origin, age, language, or any other circumstance. In 2012, Riecken community libraries strove to create bridges of access and participation for native populations and elderly, so that they might share the benefits of technology and information.

### Reviving local traditions

Our nine bilingual (Mayan & Spanish) books, which were published in 2011, collected stories and customs in four Mayan languages and in Spanish. They were recognized by the Guatemalan Ministry of Education as teaching resources for culture and language, promoting awareness and use of the mother tongues of students as well as understanding and respecting their culture; and they became cornerstones of Guatemala's National Basic Curriculum for public schools. These publications, created in working partnership with community members, set forth the oral traditions of their communities, recounted by elders, translated by library staff, and illustrated by young volunteer artists.



### Bridges between generations

Twelve of the network's community libraries have strengthened the dialogue between the very young and the very old. Children meet in the library to share in the great-grandparents' wisdom and histories and legends. These close encounters, integrated with library activities in local languages, such as story hours in Mayan languages in most Guatemala libraries, have helped to enhance social cohesion, respect, and tolerance.

### Social participation by bookmobile

The network of ten bookmobiles operating around the town of Copán Ruinas has opened opportunities for management and leadership. Operated by more than sixty youth leaders and community volunteers, in 2012 the bookmobiles served more than 3,600 people, mostly children and young adults, located in remote and isolated villages without access to basic services.

A reading program volunteer rides a bookmobile to a Maya-Chortí community (Copán Ruinas, Honduras)





## 2. Unhindered access to information and development for all



## Librarians: apostles of knowledge

The position of librarian is central to all our programming. He or she is responsible for getting information out to the user community and for carrying out reading for pleasure activities.

In 2012, the programs and services of the community library network were carried out by a total of 82 librarians; and in this year Riecken brought their technical and social skills to a professional level. The agreements signed with local governments and Riecken assigned the libraries the responsibility of creating systems and methods for strengthening the librarians' professional skills in providing information and knowledge, cultural outreach, and information technology skills.

This year, 45 community librarians who for various reasons had not received initial librarian training, were given training in Honduras and Guatemala. This year's training centered on practical techniques to facilitate information access (organization and proper use of the book collection), design of activities to encourage reading (story hours, thematic exhibitions), and the use of basic administrative systems.

## Technology for community development

The use of technology in libraries demonstrated a correlation between internet connectivity and vibrancy of computer usage. Where communities could not sustain the internet connection, computer usage fell. The number of libraries connected to the internet has fallen over the past year and a half from 33 to 12.

This situation has led Riecken to augment training in management and negotiation with local governments by the library board in order to seek long-term solutions for internet connectivity and improvement of the computing infrastructure.

In 2012, we succeeded in acquiring new computer equipment and internet connection



Program Officer in a librarian training (Honduras)

In Honduras as well as in Guatemala, we organized several professional conferences and exchanges for the librarian network, with an agenda of promoting skill transfer, learning from experience, and listening to lessons learned by each. The Riecken network's Guatemala region and its Pata Pluma region in western Honduras both participated in the International Book Fair in Guatemala (FILGUA), where they organized several colloquia to help develop and improve library skills. The Guatemala region also updated their collections with book purchases.

for some libraries by negotiating specific projects that involved more intensive use of technology. Most community libraries, with or without internet connection, have sponsored workshops on the use of office software such as word processing and email.

The Huitán (Guatemala) library provided a dramatic example of technology at the service of the community. After several computer training workshops and continuing publicity of community ownership of technology and social networking, a natural disaster tested and proved their effectiveness. After a devastating earthquake in Guatemala, the community library used social networks and blogs to monitor victims' needs and to help coordinate the delivery of aid.

In 2012, four libraries in the Guatemala network continued the mapping of their communities with global positioning equipment (GPS). They are creating digital maps of natural, historical, and sacred sites within their communities. In this way, libraries are contributing to conservation plans informed by the maps, definition of property boundaries, selection of locations for certain crop cultivation, reforestation activities, and more.

The Riecken community libraries continue to update their "transparency corners" as a public exercise in accountability to the community for funds provided for library programming. This has not only won recognition throughout the community as a uniquely transparent organization; it has also sometimes facilitated negotiations for financial support by village governments.



Children using computers in the Biblioteca Pública Comunitaria de Tatumbla (Honduras)





Cross-generational exchange in the Biblioteca Comunitaria Rija'tzuul Na'ooj  
(San Juan La Laguna, Guatemala)

### 3. Community libraries for human development



In 2012, the community library network developed a variety of activities and projects with local content for social outreach. These programs are not standardized by the Riecken; rather, they reflect local initiative, using local resources and the relationship with other community activists. Our library network provides space for citizens to deploy information to act for common benefit. Riecken's 64 libraries offer a geographic platform to address and satisfy community needs. They themselves initiate activities and projects focused on social inclusion and partnership among communities. They address issues such as environmental protection, public health, reading habits, agriculture, nutrition, and microenterprise.

Prominent among the quality-of-life initiatives fueled by community libraries include: power tool training for masons and apprentices, bakery courses for women entrepreneurs, tomato greenhouses, forestry instruction, neighborhood clean-up campaigns, and environmental stewardship.

### **Innovations in infant nutrition through reading for pleasure**

In 2012 the Chiché community library (Quiché, Guatemala) instituted a new approach to infant health. Twenty-five mothers with their young children gather to participate in early childhood development training through reading, while also learning best practices for child nutrition. They enjoy the support

of the local health center and a local dentist to track their children's development.

### **Riecken community libraries and electoral democracy**

The Diamond of Wisdom Library (Biblioteca Diamante de Sabiduría, Jacaleapa, Honduras) organized a 2012 Policy Forum Panel with mayoral aspirants from several national political parties during elections. At the forum, the candidates for public office presented their visions for the town's development and how best to promote the common good, especially for children and youths. Citizens also expressed their views on the management of public services and their unease on matters of education, health, and community safety.

Similarly, the Diamond of Wisdom Library's governing board provided the ideal setting to advocate for the libraries' style of democratic participation, bringing the candidates in a local primary election to a debate, thereby encouraging the public to align with the library's rôle in social participation and community development.



The Biblioteca Mi Nuevo Mundo de Huitán (Guatemala) coordinates distribution of donations for earthquake victims.

## 4. A network for advocacy and negotiation



Members of the Governing Board of the Riecken Community Libraries Network (Honduras), elected in general assembly, take the oath of office.

Our library model is based on shared effort and social inclusion; and this model drives the vitalization of our network. In 2012, we held the Annual Meeting of the Riecken Community Libraries Network Association (ARBICOR). ARBICOR is the network of Honduras's 53 Riecken libraries. We expect in 2013 to formalize a comparable network in Guatemala. With the motto of "Riecken Community Libraries, partner for local governance," community representatives reflected on the year's achievements and challenges encountered in organizing and managing a community library.

We also reorganized the regional library associations into geographic groupings, in order to qualify for legal recognition as civil associations.

### **Dialogue for impact**

One of the most important contributions to library sustainability is the negotiated contribution from local governments for librarians' salaries, utilities, and basic maintenance costs. In the course of the annual meeting, we organized a discussion forum on how better to train library leaders to engage with local political systems to support government policies that affect the library as well as the rest of the community. Town officials had a chance to see and hear first hand the concerns of the library leaders and, equally, to offer their own points of view on the various negotiations that each carries out within their own departments. Riecken intends to strengthen this dialogue with local authorities to continue to advocate for library sustainability.

### **Local Alliances**

The leadership shown by the libraries in carrying out initiatives in such areas as environment, safety, health, and education in 2012 is paying off. Community libraries have evoked responses from other development groups and have created effective partnerships with NGOs, government offices, civic associations, and grassroots organizations for joint action on community priorities and for national reading programs such as Guatemala's Let's Read Together.







Mayan girls attend an activity in a Riecken community library (Guatemala)

### Advocacy to bring the community library model to scale

Riecken has demonstrated that libraries are fundamental to a democratic society and that our community library model provides an example of democracy in action. Access is free for all, management is by local citizens from all walks of life, and the library materials span a wide range of viewpoints. The services of our libraries are available to anyone who asks for them. This vision has enabled us to advise other initiatives that aspire to a similar model for their own projects.

In 2012, Riecken continued its partnership in the Educational Reform in the Classroom (REAULA), coordinating with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and its subcontractor, Juarez & Associates, to

organize and implement the Riecken library model in twelve non-Riecken rural communities of El Quiché, San Marcos, and Totonicapán (Guatemala).

In a similar context, we advised the Paz y Convivencia (Peace and Harmony) project in Valle de Sula (the Sula River valley in Honduras), funded by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), on organizing and implementing our community library model in seventeen non-Riecken communities in the region to support the reduction of crime and violence among youths between the ages of 12 and 25.

# Resources and Management



## 2012 INCOME AND EXPENSES

### INCOME

Donations for projects	331,941
Individual donations	162,511
Fund raisers	3,059
Other	49,806
Bank interest	1,726

**TOTAL INCOME** 549,043

### EXPENSES

#### Programs

Early stimulation	2,600
Library programs	41,034
Librarian training	27,093
Governing board training	14,948
Local library directors	3,681
Volunteer training	6,070
Other training	200

#### Programming personnel

Salaries	17,434
Benefits	13,191
Prof. Services /Consultants	211,767

Oversight and monitoring 30,695

Bookkeeping	1,840
Office operations	15,903
Vehicles	7,511
Office materials	23,188

Personnel salaries	95,340
Staff benefits	19,372
Other staff costs	1,571
Outside professional services	18,215

Operation Costs	7,916
Per diem travel reimbursement	8,492

**TOTAL EXPENSES** 568,061

### INCOME

Total income rose in 2012 to \$549,043. Of this amount, \$547,317 came from donations, including individual gifts from members of the board of directors, projects on behalf of international cooperation entities, and donations solicited on the internet. The total financial resources suffice for reliable support for library network programs and for corporate management and administration.

### EXPENSES

Expenses rose to \$568,061. A total of \$368,713 was invested in programming: training of local volunteer boards and librarians and of volunteers and programming specialists.

Office operating costs, including salaries and benefits, office maintenance, vehicles, and other operating costs came to a total of \$199,348.

### MANAGEMENT

We grew as an institution in 2012. We consolidated organizational processes and strengthened our internal systems of tracking and control. Our board of directors has renewed its commitment to our founding ideals and has grown in numbers. Building on successes and validated by outside evaluation, we have this year amply increased our capabilities and given management space to apply the year's lessons to our network of community libraries.



## Acknowledgments

### International Institutions

- Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
- Embassy of Finland in Central America
- IBBY Guatemala
- Inter-American Development Bank / Proyecto Paz y Convivencia.
- Open Society Institute / The Soros Foundation
- Rising Voices
- Rotary Club of Reno, Nevada USA
- Rotary Club of Woodside/Portola Valley, CA USA
- Goethe Institute in Mexico

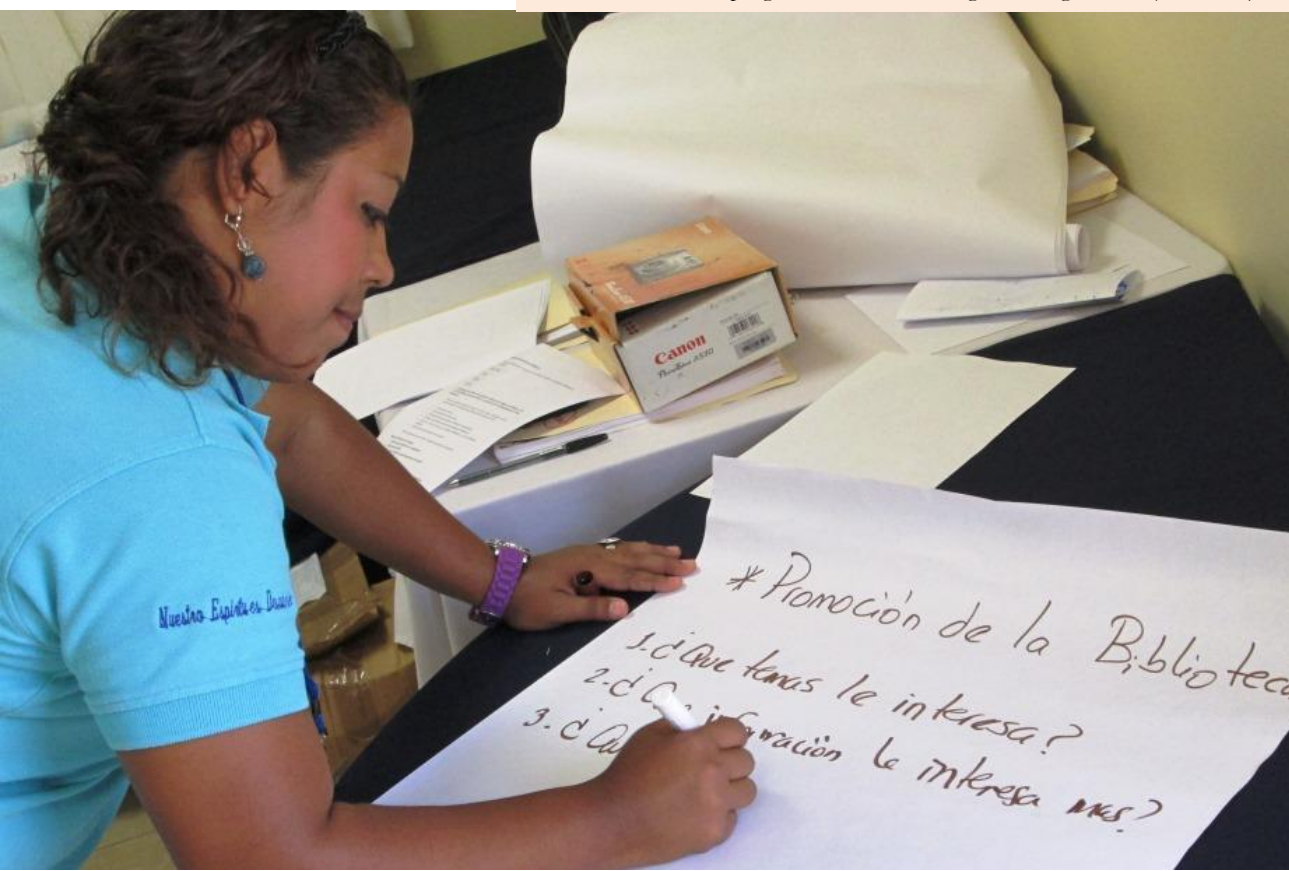
### Guatemala

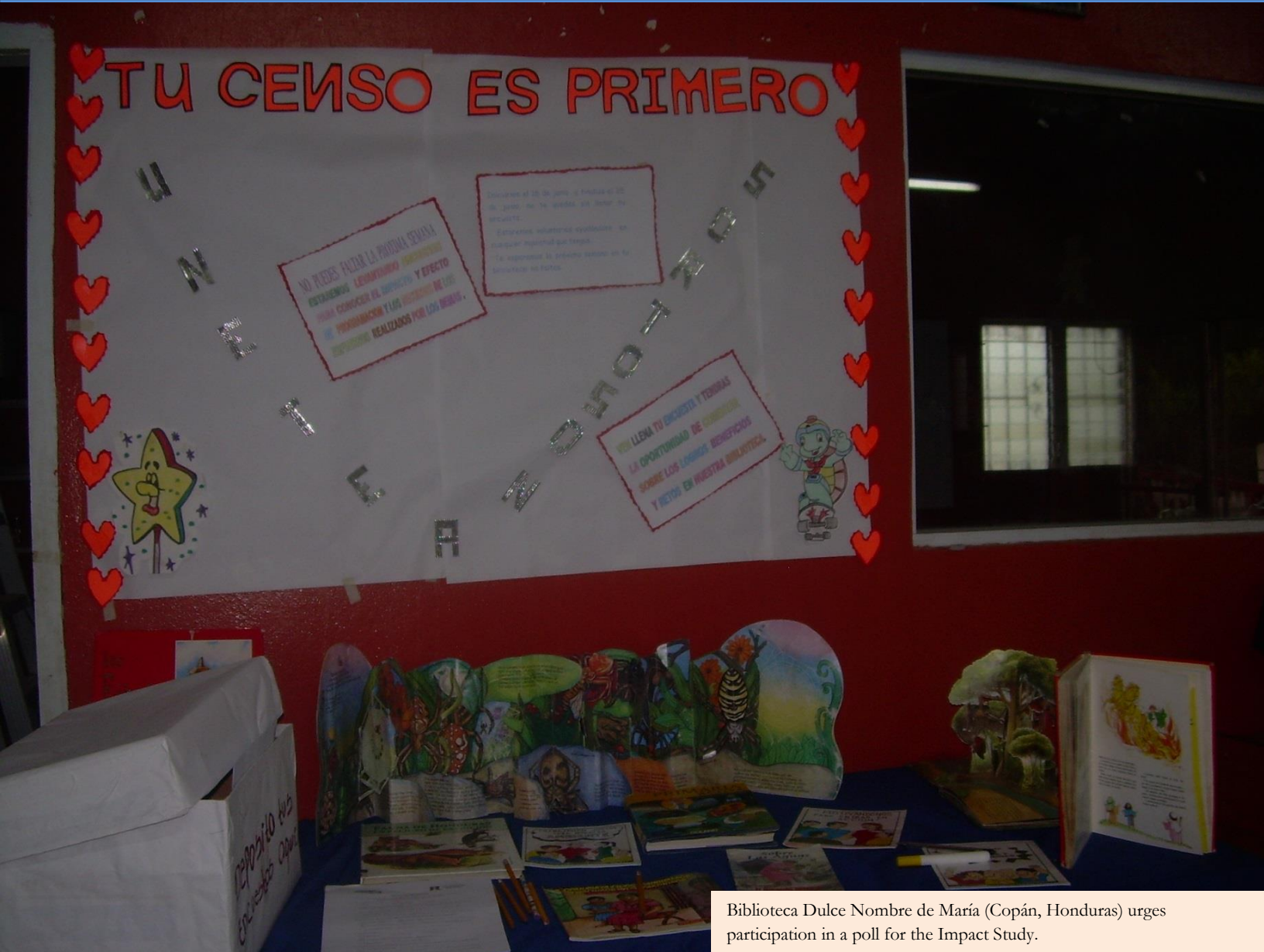
- Child Aid
- Fundasistemas
- Juárez & Associates / USAID
- Inherit: Passed to Present
- Centro Cultural La Azotea
- TechCamp Guatemala
- LUSH Charity Pot
- Burns Fazzi – Brock Foundation

### Honduras

- Spanish Cultural Center in Tegucigalpa – CCET
- Federation of Non-Government Organizations in Honduras (FOPRIDEH)
- Secretary of State's Office of Education
- Secretary of State's Office of Social Development
- Secretary of State's Office of Planning and External Cooperation
- Volunteer network of Honduras (UNDP)

Riecken Foundation program officer facilitating a training session (Honduras)





Biblioteca Dulce Nombre de María (Copán, Honduras) urges participation in a poll for the Impact Study.

# Monitoring & Evaluation



The Riecken Foundation considers vital the scientific measurement of the effects and impact of programming in the Riecken Community Libraries. We also consider vital a high level of participation and involvement by volunteers and librarians to address the needs of each community.

In 2012, we conducted an internal institutional assessment, which collected qualitative information on the role of the Riecken Community Libraries in Honduras and Guatemala. We succeeded in capturing a picture of their situations, which provided a broad perspective on the whole Riecken network.

We also commissioned an independent outside evaluation of the community library network in rural Honduras and Guatemala to measure the advance (or retreat) of the Riecken library model, to determine how building a community library network may have produced a new development paradigm, and how much or little the access to information and technology may generate social capital among both users and librarians.

These institutional analyses, internal and external, had similar concrete findings and reached similar conclusions. Adding to those findings, an external consultant, Community Science, delivered expert consultant advice on monitoring processes. With these studies, Riecken is better able to identify what must be done to achieve our mission of prosperity and democracy in Central America.

The following pages will show some specific outcomes regarding the Riecken library model in its current state and on the programming development that enriches the 64 community libraries.



Girls in the Biblioteca Mi Nuevo Mundo (Huitán, Guatemala) participate in an Impact Study poll.



Community library model



Social participation

416 ACTIVE VOLUNTEERS



6 members in each governing board  
20 hours monthly of volunteer work

Economic potential \$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$

MORE THAN \$119,000

placing an economic value on volunteer work  
\$ 1.20 hour / day (minimum wage)  
Average 8 hours per week per volunteer

Volunteer potential

97%

LIBRARIES WITH IDENTIFIED NEW VOLUNTEERS

82 LIBRARIANS  
71 / 11 - WOMEN / MEN



Education Level  
80% HIGH SCHOOL  
10% UNIVERSITY

Human Capital



60% GOVERNING BOARDS

KNOW THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES AS BOARD MEMBERS

100% TRAINED IN LIBRARY MANAGEMENT & READING PROMOTION

SOCIAL FABRIC

89% LIBRARIES  
PERCEIVED AS A VITAL FORCE

100% HAVE PARTNERSHIPS FOR EDUCATION HEALTH



40% LIBRARIES INVOLVED IN MAKE DECISIONS PUBLIC





# 64 RIECKEN COMMUNITY LIBRARIES

Biblioteca Gabriela Mistral Biblioteca Pública Allen Andersson Biblioteca Irradiando Cultura Biblioteca Innovando Cultura Biblioteca Camino hacia el éxito Biblioteca Pública Esquías Biblioteca Aprender Haciendo Biblioteca Pública Lejamaní Biblioteca Robert Warren Biblioteca Arturo Flores Aguiluz Biblioteca Pública Minas de Oro Biblioteca Nuevo Amanecer Biblioteca Pública de Rancho Grande Biblioteca Pública San José Biblioteca Poeta Roberto Sosa Biblioteca Comunal Dulce Nombre de María Biblioteca Manantial del Saber Biblioteca Fuente del Éxito Biblioteca Luz del Saber Biblioteca Comunitaria Fuente del Saber Biblioteca Pública Fray Abel del Pilar Pérez Biblioteca Democracia en Marcha Biblioteca Diamante de Sabiduría Biblioteca Visión al Futuro Biblioteca Nuevo Amanecer Biblioteca Allan Anderson Biblioteca La Llave mágica de la mente Biblioteca Ventanas abiertas al futuro Biblioteca Pública Alvaro Contreras Biblioteca Flor del saber Biblioteca Pública Riecken El Guante Biblioteca Pública Riecken Guatemalita Biblioteca Fuente de Sabiduría Biblioteca Pública El Porvenir Biblioteca Riecken de Tatumbla Biblioteca Llano de la Virgen Biblioteca Comunitaria de la Libertad Biblioteca Comunitaria Sendero de la Sabiduría y el Descubrimiento Biblioteca Fray Abel del Pilar Pérez Biblioteca Fuente del saber Biblioteca Arco Iris del Saber Biblioteca Pública Santa María Biblioteca "Fuente de Sabiduría" Biblioteca Sendero de Luz Biblioteca Comunitaria de Huitán Bibliotecas Una Luz para el Futuro Biblioteca Técnica Popular Riecken Biblioteca Nueva Generación Biblioteca Casa del Saber Biblioteca Oasis de la Sabiduría Biblioteca Horizontes del Saber Biblioteca Ciencia y Cultura Biblioteca Minerva Biblioteca Camino del Saber Rija'tzuul Na'ooj Biblioteca Pública Riecken Biblioteca Comunitaria K'ak' No'jib'al Biblioteca Popular Virtud y Ciencia Biblioteca Nueva Visión Biblioteca Allan Anderson Biblioteca Nell y Raquel Biblioteca Popular Riecken

## ADVOCACY AND SUSTAINABILITY



Local government support

**LIBRARIES**

TOTAL SUPPORT **53**

PARCIAL SUPPORT **8**

NO SUPPORT **3**

## Sustainability



**9 OUT OF 10**

**LIBRARIES**

SUPPORT THEMSELVES WITH  
LOCAL GOVERNMENT SUPPORT

**4 OUT OF 10**

**LIBRARIES**

REPORT ACCOUNTS TO THE GOVERNMENT

Relationship

**73%**

**LIBRARIES**

OPTIMAL LOCAL  
GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

Strategies for

LIBRARY / GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIP

INTEGRATED ACTION PLANS

PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL DECISIONS



## SOCIOECONOMIC REALITIES

**61%** USERS WITH MONTHLY  
INCOME BELOW \$100.00



FOR EVERY 10 USERS:

**3 HOMES HAVE A DIRT FLOORS**

**3 HAVE USE OF A COMPUTER**

**9 HAVE A CELLPHONE AT HOME**

**8 LIVE WITH FATHERS OR MOTHERS**

**2 LIVE IN FAMILIES WITH 5 MEMBERS**

**3 HAVE FEWER THAN SIX BOOKS AT HOME**

## ECONOMIC INVESTMENT

**\$ 1.68**



MONTHLY INVESTMENT  
PER USER

**FOR EVERY \$1.00**

**INVESTED IN PROGRAMMING**

**\$ 0.80 RESERACH**

**\$ 0.67 COMPUTING**

**\$ 0.84 READING FOR PLEASURE**



**THREE WAY COOPERATION  
ANNUAL CONTRIBUTION**

**\$ 2,700: LOCAL GOV.**

**\$ 2,915: COMMUNITY LIBRARY**

**\$ 3,264: RIECKEN FOUNDATION**

Internet

**6 OUT OF 10  
LIBRARIES**

WITH POSSIBILITY OF A  
MODEM CONNECTION



**OUT OF EVERY 10  
LIBRARIES**

**4 USER FEES  
2 GOVERNMENT SUPPORT  
2 LOCAL FUNDRAISING**

**43 LIBRARIES  
PRACTICE AT PREVENTIVE**

**MAINTENANCE  
EQUIPMENT CONDITION**

**49% GOOD CONDITION**

**19% MARGINAL**

**21% POOR CONDITION**

Collections



**41 LIBRARIES  
WITH OUT-OF-DATE  
COLLECTIONS**

Infrastructure

**63 LIBRARIES  
WITH  
INFRASTRUCTURE  
PROBLEMS**

Buildings

**HUMIDITY  
ROOFS  
FURNITURE**

Association

**53**

**LIBRARIES IN THE NETWORK**

**33 DELEGATES ARE GOVERNING BOARD**

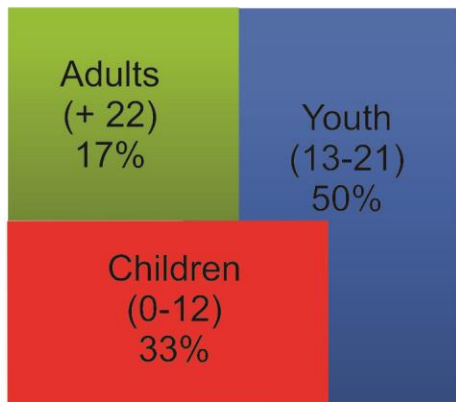
**11 DELEGATES ARE LIBRARIANS**

**11 LIBRARIES**

**IN PROCESS OF ORGANIZATION**

## Services and programs

### User profile



55% female  
45% male  
51,200 visits per months (network)  
800 visits per month (per library)

2012  
VISITS  
614,400



**100%**  
LIBRARIES

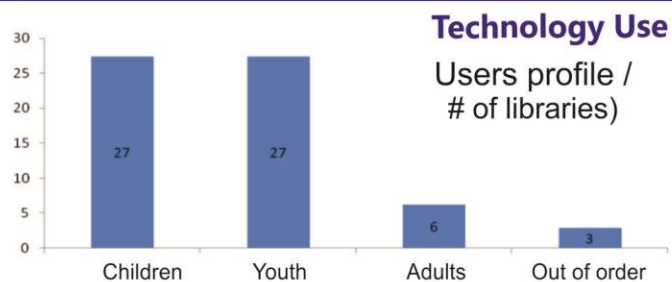
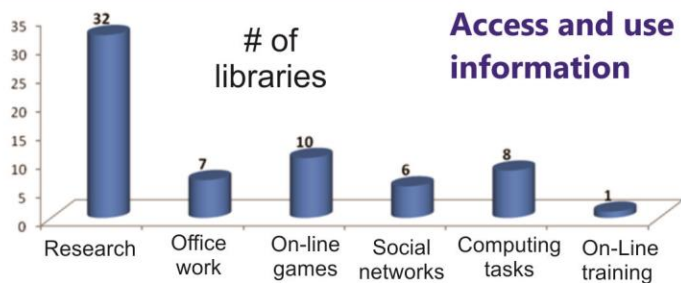
WITH PROGRAMS FOR ALL

YOUTH - CHILDREN

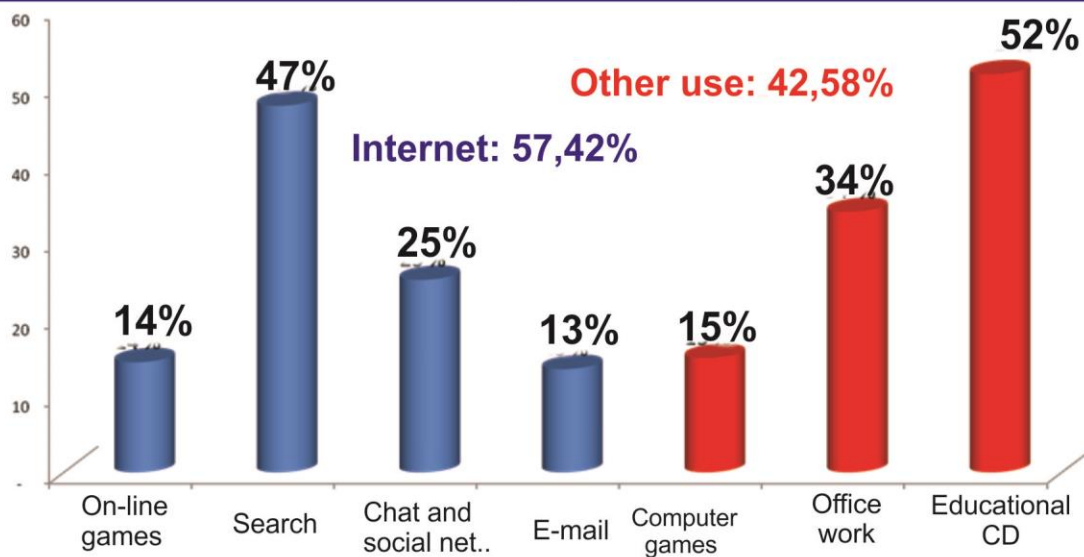
**32** WITH INTERNET CONNECTION

**44** WITH READING PROGRAMS  
STORY HOURS / BOOK CLUBS

**32** WITH OUTSIDE LENDING  
8 WITH RESTRICTED LENDING



### Technology habits



## Library extensions

### Discovery activities

**44** LIBRARIES  
SPONSOR OFF-SITE ACTIVITIES



**36** LIBRARIES  
SPONSOR LOCAL INITIATIVES IN  
SAFETY, ENVIRONMENT, HEALTH,  
AND LITERACY



## Board of Directors



William Cartwright // President & CEO

James N. Wilson // Chairman



Allen Andersson // Treasurer

Joan Fuetsch // Secretary



Elisabeth Dávila // Director

Malcolm Butler // Director



Sam Featherstone // Director

James Coyne King // Director



Richard Strock // Director



## Management Team

Paco Alcaide // Regional Director Honduras - Guatemala

Romeo Rodríguez // Development Officer

Ilse Zamora – Valeria Ordóñez // Financial Officers

Alba Estrada // Project Officer

Francklin Sierra - Dasil Mejía- Bertha Cuyún – Israel Quic // Program Officers

Zobeyda Romero – Esther Galo – Diana Rubio // Regional Coordinators

Blanca Reyes // Maintenance & Logistics

### **Message from the Chairman of the Riecken Community Libraries Board of Directors**

Organizations that are tested by a crisis are frequently strengthened by the adjustments that are required. Riecken's trial began in 2008 when the financial status changed for its founder and sole benefactor, Allen Andersson. Although there were a few outside grants, no one expected the network of

libraries to survive the severe loss of funding. Remarkably, none of the 64 Riecken Community Libraries closed.



**James Wilson**  
**Chairman of the Board**

This was possible because Allen established each library in partnership with its local community. Riecken provided programming and technical support while the communities contributed volunteers and maintenance. Therefore, the Riecken libraries had enough community support to remain open while the Foundation responded to the funding crisis.

The response began when a group of Allen's friends and associates wrote \$10,000 checks in December of 2008 so that Riecken's president and CEO, Bill Cartwright, and essential staff could be paid. Some of these donors joined Riecken's Board of Directors and helped establish a "survival" plan. Fundraising became everyone's priority and just enough money was raised through grants and donations to pay the bills for the next three years. Unfortunately, the pared-down budget didn't include much programming and technical assistance for the libraries. However, two grants funded annual conferences so the 64 libraries could send delegates to meet with each other and the Riecken staff. We were also able to train and develop the smaller management team and improve the network-wide system of reports. The Board's oversight role was also elevated during this period.

The crisis ended in early 2012, partially when The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation made a substantial four-year grant to Riecken. This grant was the result of a lengthy process that involved meetings in Seattle and visits to Honduras and Guatemala. This grant currently funds 40 percent of the core budget required to support the existing libraries, which means that Riecken still needs individual donors and foundations. The Gates grant allowed Riecken to leverage other grants to help it and the libraries grow.

As a result of the additional funding, we were able to retrain librarians, revitalize community library boards, develop and distribute bilingual books and provide coordinated programming to the library network. In addition, Riecken was able to contract a comprehensive external *Impact Study* to measure the impacts and status of the library network. Three new Directors were added to the Riecken Board, increasing its membership to eight. A Board Technology Committee was recently established to improve Internet access to information and educational tools.

The past four years were challenging, but Riecken did more than survive the loss of funding from its founder. Riecken's operations are now more efficient, its leadership is more effective, the Board is more engaged and the 64 community libraries are more self-reliant. Most importantly, our funding is more broadly based.

Annual Report 2012  
Opportunities for change,  
Riecken Community Libraries in action

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