

# LOCAL LEADERSHIP AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



ANNUAL REPORT 2015



Dear Friends,

Since 2000, Riecken Community Libraries have provided access to information for underserved, often remote and very poor communities in Guatemala and Honduras through a network of community libraries that are open and free to all. This access to information forms the foundation for a lifeline that our work makes available to hundreds of thousands of library visitors of all ages each year, over half of whom are women and girl. Through books, training, and programs relevant to each community's needs, the libraries are a source for connection and inspiration to discover and engage with the world beyond the boundaries of their community.



We believe that community libraries democratize access to information, create opportunities for social change, and serve as agents of human and community development. In that light, the work of Riecken Community Libraries falls into the large categories of literacy and education on a day-to-day basis. But with an eye toward long-term results, we support the development of capacity – literacy, leadership and infrastructure – to help lift up a region in dire need of safe places and safe choices for people of all ages.

These libraries are critical to human development in the region as well, with buildings that are often the heart of their communities, busy with programs that augment local schools, early childhood development and nutrition, preservation of cultural identity and respect for diversity, and the creation of opportunities to help build a sustainable world.

We have been intimately involved with the growth and development of four generations of Central Americans, and are proud of the empowerment we see in so many of their creative ideas and accomplishments. Likewise, our organization continues to build on our work of nearly two decades, stimulating the minds of those who come through our doors and motivating their quests for better lives.

Let us share our 2015 work with you now!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "William Cartwright".

William Cartwright  
President  
Riecken Community Libraries

## 2015 at a Glance



Community libraries in  
the Riecken Network



Users visiting



Local volunteers

GUATEMALA

12

67,000

466

HONDURAS

53

246,000

1,627

# PROMOTING COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP AND SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

One of the greatest successes of Riecken Community Libraries is the high level of community volunteerism they motivate. One factor in this is the degree of trust that the communities have in the leaders who manage Riecken libraries. Another motivating factor is the high level of knowledge and skills transmission generated by the libraries themselves.

The Riecken Foundation encourages training workshop participants in a way that results in a multiplier effect. This allows strengthened local capacity in the design, facilitation and evaluation of participatory training.



*"This encourages us to volunteer. When they asked me to be part of the Board, they told me there was no salary except the satisfaction of serving the community. I said I was willing and in the short time we have been communicating and collaborating with the librarian. Moving forward! I love working for the community."*

Ana Elizabeth Gomez  
Treasurer of the Board Directive  
Library of San Antonio  
Sulaco, Honduras



## General Information



Volunteers

New volunteers

Volunteer hours

1,749

160

67,104

9,766

1,544

234,288

# SKILLS DEVELOPMENT FOR READING, CREATIVITY AND CRITICAL THINKING



The most effective way to promote the spirit of discovery is through the promotion and love of reading. This spirit of discovery drives a willingness to try new things, take on new projects and participate in the social life of the community. Additionally, reading leads to new ideas, opening doors to prosperity.

With the organization of the digital reading club in Honduras, we strengthen the local social fabric for the promotion of rural adolescent girls and women as readers. This strengthens their analytical and critical thinking skills - as well as leadership skills - and results in knowledge and awareness of their civil rights, so important in regions where women's rights are often abused.

*"Ananias Lopez is 38 years old and is a person with a high degree of intellectual disability. Since February he has visited the library every afternoon hoping to learn the colors, and also to learn to read and write, unfortunately for his problem he was not admitted in school. Ananias is an example as their desires to learn they do visit the library; it is never too late to learn when it is willing and eager to learn."*

Ananias and Janeth Lopez Ramos  
Library of Liberty (Morales, Guatemala)



## General Information

	Users in reading promotion	Users less than 12 years	Users 13-22 years	Users over 23 years
GUATEMALA	8,882	25,769	26,132	14,814
HONDURAS	38,829	107,056	90,572	48,012

# SKILLS DEVELOPMENT FOR TEACHERS

The Riecken Community Libraries support the improvement of educational quality through complementary resources and centers of local education, democratization of access to information to excluded population and supporting teacher training in the use of computer programs, computer software and Internet as an educational tool.

Riecken Community Libraries in Honduras created the formation of small classroom libraries with the provision of over 5,000 books and delivered 95 kits of storybooks. More than 1,200 public school teachers were trained in the application of Riecken Libraries techniques for reading aloud and conducting creative writing classes in Spanish.

With the participation of more than 90 public schools, community libraries in Honduras organized the contest of children's stories "Letters are Fun" in which more than 326 children's stories were involved.

With this initiative, they supported libraries improving reading skills and creative writing and school performance in the Spanish class of schoolchildren from 1st to 6th grade of elementary school.



*"I am a beneficiary of the multiplier effect by Prof. Juan Carlos Banegas who received training for the Beyond Click program (Más Allá del Clic). He taught us many things. For example, I was unaware of the use of the computer for word processing and now I can make my own attendance lists. In this multiplier effect attended by 12 partners including the director, the goal we have set is to train students and parents who attend our school."*

Prof. Clemente Corea Martinez  
Vicente Cáceres Education Center, Community Clearing  
San Antonio de Sulaco (Honduras)

## General Information

Joint school activities	Volunteer teachers
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GUATEMALA

218

2,394

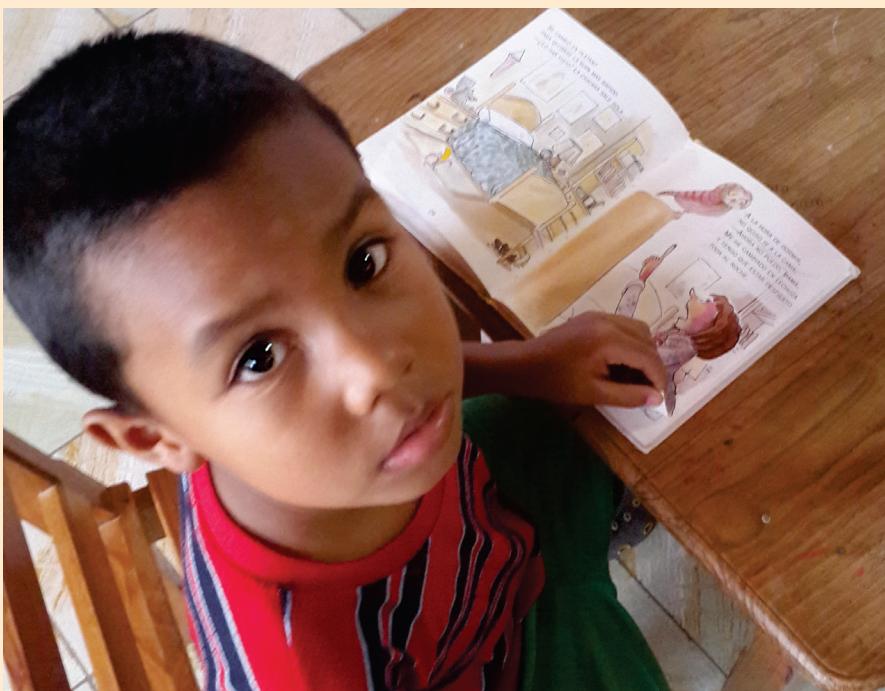
HONDURAS

670

10,830



# PROMOTING EARLY CHILDHOOD HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT



Reicken Community Libraries are betting that growth of young children is best achieved in a healthy environment, at home, in school and in the community, key areas where critical knowledge and values for life are acquired.

The libraries offer best practices for infant feeding through reading programs in coordination with health center programs that are responsible for the height and weight measurement of children and mothers over time, key indicators in child development. The interaction between mothers and parents with the children, against a backdrop of community support is essential to the program success.

*"I participate in the early stimulation reading program with a focus on nutrition and I'm delighted. I participated in this past year and I learned a lot about nutritional issues. I have had many experiences to share with other mothers and bring my daughter. I loved one of the sessions in which the library taught children to recognize letters and colors. Another subject I liked was the recipe for making soya sausage. What I learn here, I will implement at home because I know it's beneficial for my family."*



Nelly Villamil  
mother in Copan Ruinas

## General Information

Health Promotion Participants

2,307

Environmental activities Participants

903

People in activities outside

2,302

3,964

2,704



GUATEMALA



HONDURAS

# EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN AND YOUTH WITH ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

The Riecken Community Libraries Network in Guatemala promotes local initiatives for social entrepreneurship that generate income, promote good health, literacy, policy advocacy, and more. These initiatives inspire the participation and leadership of women and youth in rural communities in community development processes such as production initiatives, political action, social participation and entrepreneurship skills. And of high value in today's society, they train in and promote the use of technology in entrepreneurship.

In Guatemala, 970 women have strengthened their social skills through programs in Riecken Community Libraries. With stronger social skills and willingness to be actively involved in the community, they have learned to organize fairs featuring handicrafts and other products, wherein the women take advantage of dialogue opportunities with visitors to raise awareness about gender discrimination and violence against women.

In Honduras, leaders of youth groups are strengthening their leadership and social and entrepreneurial skills to develop income generation initiatives aimed primarily at which those contributions allow them to continue studying.

## General Information

Users aged 12-22 years	Users are women	Youth are women
37.35%	52.66%	51.05%

Youth participating in activities

 GUATEMALA	2,018
 HONDURAS	8,553

*"This project has impacted me because I learned about ethics and leadership skills when I came to the Riecken Foundation and Zona X. It helped us develop as leaders in the community."*

**María del Cielo Ortega**  
student, Technical Institute Japón Gonzalo Barahona  
(Community Library of El Porvenir)



# BRIDGING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE

Riecken Community Libraries has always played a strong role in bringing access to technology and training in its use to many who otherwise, simply would not have any other resources. In 2015 we were able to expand programs that put technology training, mobile devices, office software, and safe, effective use of social networks into the hands of teachers, students, and all library users, especially where Internet is available.

Developing a sense of ownership of the technology assets and the advantages of their use has been key to leadership development in some communities, particularly where entrepreneurship skills have been of high interest. The training of librarians and youth as facilitators of technology use has been game changing as a leadership development tool.

Thanks to the financial support of our funding partners the library network has become quite savvy in alternate modes of providing content where the Internet is not available in Honduras. For example, Raspberry PI provides content on drives that can be updated regularly, and tablets are becoming more and more common.



*"In the program where we learned new technology skills, there is a training multiplier effect. I took what I learned to 15 children who had never used a computer and were afraid to touch it. They did not even know it was a computer - an amazing experience. Their teacher continues to bring them to the library. At the other school, the School Jose Trinidad Cabanas, 40 children learned to use a word processor and educational games installed on computers."*

## General Information

	Computer users	New digital users	Online users	Offline users
GUATEMALA	35,864	673	18,178	17,686
HONDURAS	147,689	1,749	78,822	68,867

Dennis Murillo  
Librarian Community Las Pilas  
(Honduras)



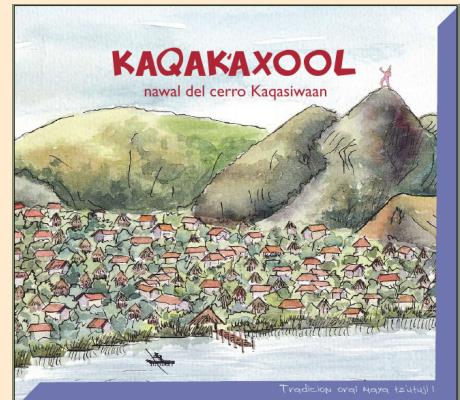
# STRENGTHENING CULTURAL IDENTITY AND CELEBRATING DIVERSITY

Rural Mayan communities in Guatemala have strong ties to their ethnic identities and the natural environment. Identifying local cultural routes has been performed by youth groups from the Riecken Community Libraries using global positioning technology, in coordination with local schools, municipalities and community elders. These routes were drawn to engage local youth in the management of sacred places, natural spaces, and locations of educational or other special value to the community.

The libraries very often operate in indigenous and ethnic communities, ensuring that resources and services of the libraries are available to everyone – indigenous and non-indigenous people alike – aligned with the values of equality for all, and appreciation for culture, language and local identity regardless of ethnicity. To this end, more than 120 people from Mayan communities in Guatemala have organized to preserve the oral tradition of their communities and promote their intangible cultural heritage. The libraries have trained young local volunteers in data collection, research and analysis of local oral histories and traditions with which children's books will be/were? developed in Mayan language.



In an area characterized by precarious educational levels, limited opportunities for youth and high levels of violence (impact area of drug trafficking) of Honduras, we have strengthened a network of mobile libraries in ten Maya-Chorti villages. This creative network is managed by young volunteers who create and facilitate activities in children's reading and community organization, in coordination with the Chorti Mayan leaders.



*"I am a Maya woman Tzutujil, single mother and artisan from the community of San Juan la Laguna (Guatemala). I am 24 years, suffered from domestic violence and am a survivor of this social problem that most women are reluctant to denounce. My difficult past has contributed to my life's purposes: I want a degree in social work in order to support and help change lives of other women, paid for by creating and producing textiles. I consider myself as an innovative, responsible, flexible, ambitious woman. I participate in the women's program [through the Riecken Libraries] so I can support other women in my community, and continue studying. Through my participation, I've gotten a scholarship, thanks to BFB (Burns-Fazzi-Brock Foundation), by the flanged support women in my community."*

Yeimi Tay San Juan la Laguna

# SUSTAINING LIBRARIES THROUGH SELF-GOVERNMENT

2015 was a year of significant strengthening of the associative network structure of the Community Libraries in Honduras and Guatemala. Autonomous in their management of the Riecken Community Libraries in their country, these networks bode well for long-term sustainability of the libraries' viability.

In Guatemala, The Association of Innovative Libraries "Weaving Wisdom" ("Tejiendo Sabiduría") (Abits) approved their statutes of creation and elected a Board of Directors and an audit board.

In Honduras, the Community Library Network Association (ARBICOH) adopted its rules of procedure and established the guidelines of the Code of Ethics to enable self-regulation and transparency. This network is organized into nine geographic regions and has strengthened their coordination and communication mechanisms for representation, management and negotiation of libraries to local authorities in each area.

*"The role of the community libraries network and, specifically its board, is essential to the management, maintenance and positioning of community libraries. ARBICOH should support the individual Riecken Libraries in various regions, motivating all volunteers to remain functional in their boards. At the national level, we must try finding sponsors to join us in managing projects and encourage donors to continue investing in the library network."*



## General Information

61

Local governments partnering with 65 Riecken Community Libraries

301,392

Volunteer hours committed to community leadership activities (a value of more than \$370,700 USD)

**Jose Leon Arrazola**  
Vice-Chairman of the Board  
ARBICOH

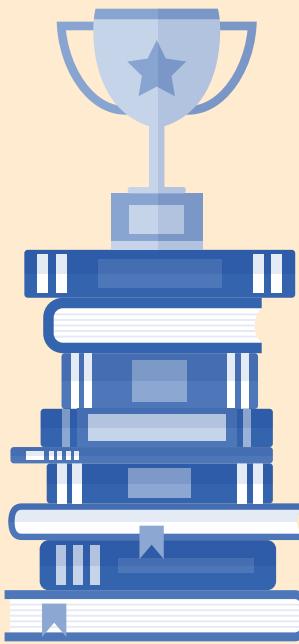


# AWARDS

## IDB / NEXUS / My Blood (Mi Sangre) Foundation

Drawing winners of the Young New Realities Initiative

Guatemala Youth, agents of social cohesion, won the online competition among more than 100 innovative solutions from across Latin America and the Caribbean



## Regional Center for Book Development in Latin America and the Caribbean – CERLALC

Regional Project Portfolio Reading and Writing, 2014-2015

## Organization of Iberoamerican States – OEI

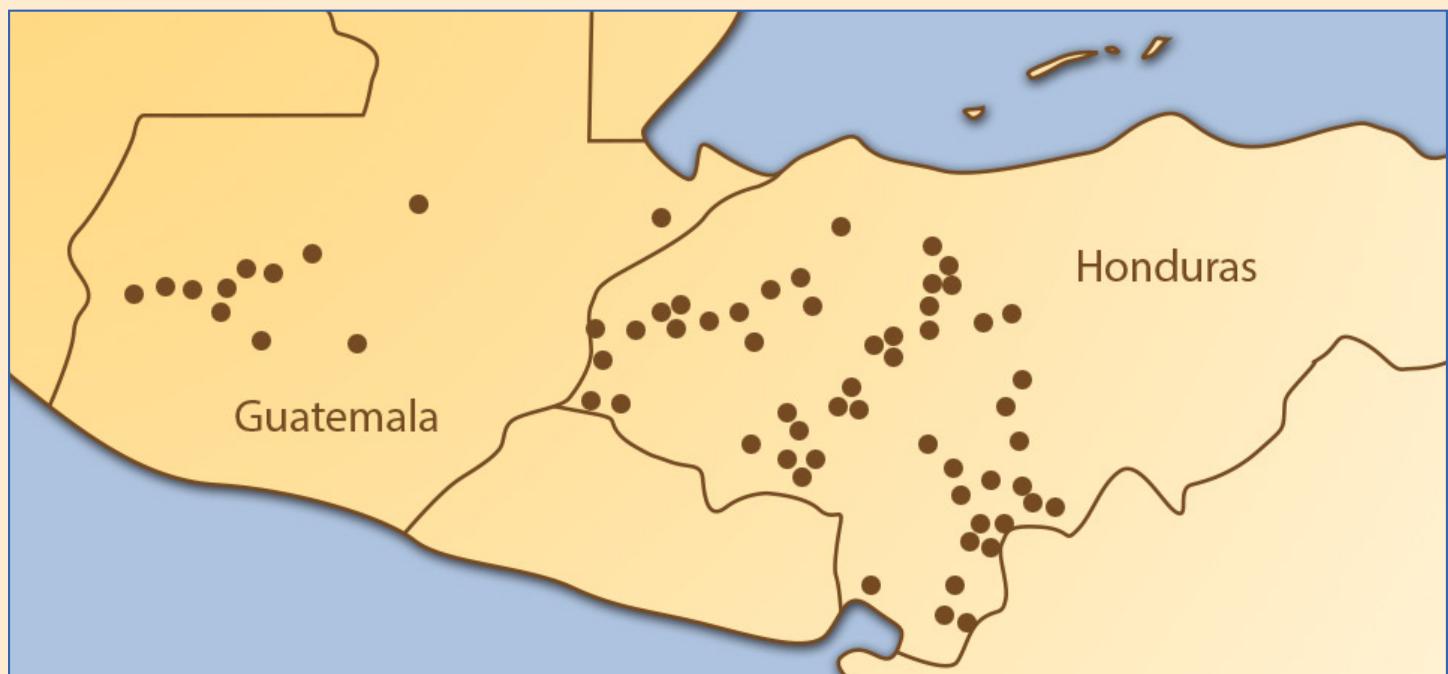
Second Prize in the Ibero-American in Education of Human Rights that recognizes our work in defense and promotion of human rights through education

## Lee Network

Network of Institutions of Central America, Mexico and the Caribbean to promote the exchange of experience in mediating reading for pleasure

## UNESCO – Institute for Lifelong Learning

Recognition of Riecken Community Libraries in “Reading – Effective Lifelong Practice”



Riecken Community Library locations throughout Guatemala and Honduras

# FUNDING PARTNERS

## Amazon.com

Through private support, Amazon.com provided Kindles for remote villages where the Internet was not available, providing digital books for girls e-reading clubs.



## Burns-Fazzi-Brock

BFB has worked with the Riecken Foundation for three years on individual projects to strengthen women's leadership skills. Starting in 2015 BFB/Riecken launched a broader women's leadership program in five communities in Guatemala. The programs will provide financial literacy training and funding for concrete women lead development projects. All projects will be based out of the local Riecken library.



## Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

In 2012 the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation provided a multi-year institutional grant to the Riecken Foundation to help strengthen foundation systems and goals.



## Friends of Riecken

Each year Riecken Foundation board members and their contacts make significant contributions to support core costs and technology programming.



## Inherit: Passed to Present

Inherit works with five Riecken Libraries in Guatemala to strengthen cultural identity. Youth groups in each community use GPS devices and technology to map sacred and cultural sites. These maps are published and posted on the internet.



## The International Foundation

The International Foundation supported librarian training throughout the Riecken Library network. Specifically the International Foundation helped rural librarians learn about technology and its effective and creative uses.



## John Brown Family Foundation

The John Brown Family Foundation provided two years of funding to Riecken Community Libraries technology programs to help reduce the digital divide in rural Guatemala and to help establish systems to monitor and measure effective use of technology tools.



## The Peterson Foundation

The Peterson Foundation works with Riecken libraries to promote the effective and creative use of technology to help improve quality of education in Honduran communities. The program is called Mas Alla de Clic (Beyond Click) and is in its third year. This valuable program helps reduce the digital divide.

## The SG Foundation

The SG Foundation generously supports technology programs in Honduras. The SG Foundation grants help provide educational programming and technology to Honduran youth via the Riecken libraries. SG is a supporter of urban programs in difficult situations in Honduras.

## The Strachan Foundation

The Strachan Foundation works with Riecken Community Libraries to help reduce the digital divide and to improve educational technology programs in rural Honduras. The programs help develop technology skills in youth, teachers and local parents. The Strachan Foundation also works with youth and building leadership skills using technology.

## Study.com

Study.com supports the work of Riecken Community Libraries in Honduras and Guatemala, through the a program that encourages girl readers to become girl leaders, providing women and girls with books, technology, training and dynamic programs ranging from early childhood nutrition to leadership development to support for local entrepreneurs.

## USAID/AIR

The United States Agency for International Development with projects from various areas of the Honduran Ministry of Education have worked with together with the Riecken Community Libraries to improve the quality of education in Honduras. The joint programs promote reading and writing for pleasure in schools based on programs used in the community libraries.

# FINANCIAL REPORT

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.

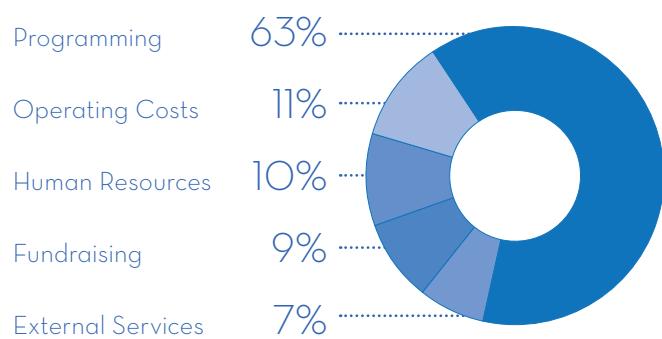
## THE FRANCES AND HENRY RIECKEN FOUNDATION, INC.

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

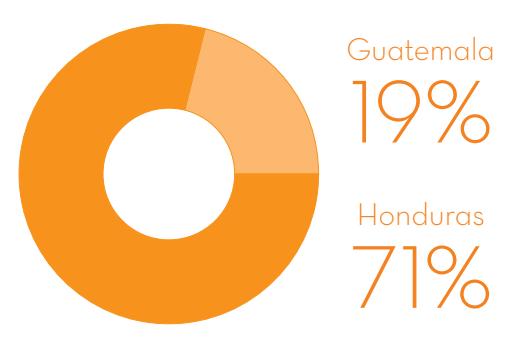
	2015	2014
<b>Changes in Unrestricted Net Assets:</b>		
Revenues, Gains, and Other Support –		
Contributions	\$ 69,904	\$ 183,669
Fundraising	–	390
Grants	566,273	409,633
Interest and dividends	2,689	1,888
Other revenue	–	54,871
Net assets released from restrictions	19,100	12,729
<b>Total Revenues, Gains, and Other Support</b>	<b>657,966</b>	<b>663,180</b>
Expenses:		
Library programming	66,775	60,629
Librarians	2,873	15,014
New libraries	62	23,808
Board of Directors	31,337	31,561
Volunteers	13,180	2,102
Salaries	269,413	219,090
Benefits	25,072	30,121
Other staff expenses	41,782	58,317
Followup and monitoring	23,674	58,290
Financial expenses	4,839	7,369
Building expenses	26,290	33,818
Vehicle expenses	19,935	6,419
Office expenses	25,565	26,764
Professional services	54,134	37,371
Riecken donations	–	1,626
Local Directors	386	33
Miscellaneous business expenses	16,721	8,231
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>622,038</b>	<b>620,563</b>
<b>Total Change in Unrestricted Net Assets</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>(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>\$ 309,234</b>	<b>\$ 292,406</b>

See Independent Auditor's Report and Notes to Financial Statements

#### INVESTMENT BY CATEGORY



#### INVESTMENT BY COUNTRY





## Changing Lives Through Access to Information

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