



ENHANCING LITERACY LEARNING FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

All Children Reading: A Grand Challenge for Development (ACR GCD) is a partnership of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), World Vision, and the Australian Government that advances edtech innovation and research to improve reading outcomes for marginalized children in low-resource contexts.

THE CHALLENGE

It is estimated that more than 93 million children live with disabilities globally.¹ Based on this estimate, more than 1 in every 20 children aged 14 or younger has a disability.² Of those children with disabilities who reside in countries with high poverty levels, 90 to 98% do not attend school in any form³ and fewer girls with disabilities attend school than boys.⁴

Education systems often do not accommodate these children's needs. A lack of suitable transport and infrastructure, inadequate teacher training, insufficient learning support, non-accessible assessments, or a dearth of high quality learning resources prevent children with disabilities from attending school or fully participating in it.

OUR APPROACH



SOURCING NEW SOLUTIONS



TESTING NEW IDEAS



SCALING WHAT WORKS

ACR GCD identifies and brings to scale the most promising edtech solutions for addressing barriers that prevent children with disabilities from learning to read. These efforts have significantly increased the amount of books and teaching materials available to children with disabilities, particularly in low-resource contexts.

AllChildrenReading.org | [@ReadingGCD](https://twitter.com/ReadingGCD) | [f@AllChildrenReading](https://facebook.com/AllChildrenReading)



1. UNESCO. (2015). Education For All Global Monitoring Report.
2. Unicef. (2013) The State of the World's Children: Children with Disability.
3. Matthew Schuelka. (2012) Global Trends in Meeting the Educational Rights of Children with Disabilities: From International Institutions to Local Responses.
4. WHO. (2011). World Report on Disability.

We identify, bring to scale and share evidence on promising solutions addressing barriers that prevent children with disabilities from learning to read.

SOLUTIONS

SOLUTIONS TO INCREASE ACCESS TO SIGN LANGUAGE

- **Studio KSL**, developed by eKitabu, is a platform that documents Kenyan Sign Language (KSL) in a visual glossary and produces KSL videos for integration into accessible books in Kenya.
- **World Around You**, developed by Rochester Institute of Technology's National Institute for the Deaf, is a platform that documents, collects and shares local sign and written languages in the Philippines.
- **Señas y Sonrisas** (*Signs and Smiles*), developed by Manos Unidas, includes the development of a corpus of Nicaraguan Sign Language (NSL) and a language learning mobile app with downloadable lessons as well as a literacy outreach program to train parents of deaf children in Nicaragua.

SOLUTIONS TO DRIVE INNOVATION IN ACCESSIBLE PUBLISHING

- **The Accessible EPUB Toolkit**, developed by eKitabu, guides content developers and publishers in the creation of accessible books in Kenya.
- **Bloom** software, developed by SIL LEAD, includes accessibility features that were tested in the Philippines with users creating books in two underserved languages, Cebuano and Tagalog.
- **Benetech** developed accessible, grade-level books for children in India who are blind/low vision by adding human-narrated audio in Marathi to stories that can be read on low-cost audio devices.

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY FOR EDUCATORS

- **Catholic Relief Services** leveraged assistive technologies to provide children in Lesotho who are blind/low vision with a streamlined, portable method for learning braille, and provided teachers with resources and training materials.

- **Institute for Disability Research and Training, Inc.**, and École Nationale Supérieure des Mines de Rabat developed assistive technology to enable users to easily create and publish educational materials in Moroccan Sign Language for students in Morocco who are deaf/hard of hearing.
- **Perkins International** developed training materials on inclusive education for local educators and distributed assistive technology literacy kits tailored to the needs of students in Ghana who are blind/low vision.
- **Resources for the Blind, Inc.** transcribed more than 181 accessible books and provided training and technology to the Department of Education, teachers, and parents in order to support students in the Philippines who are blind/low vision.

ACCESSIBLE EARLY GRADE READING ASSESSMENTS

- **EGRA Adaptation for Low Vision/Blindness**
ACR GCD conducted several of the first EGRA-braille adaptations to assess children with low vision/blindness in India, Lesotho, and the Philippines.
- **Early Grade Reading and Sign Language Assessment for Deaf/Hard of Hearing**
ACR GCD also coordinated the development of the first known adaptation of EGRA for children who are deaf/hard of hearing in Morocco, making the internationally-recognized literacy assessment accessible to children using Moroccan Sign Language.

RESEARCH

- **Supporting Technology-Based Innovations to Improve Early Grade Reading Outcomes for Students Who Have Low Vision or are Blind**
A summary report on the impact and potential for scale of three ACR GCD-funded projects focused on improving reading outcomes of students who have low vision or are blind.
- **Project Evaluations**
Evaluation reports of four ACR GCD-funded projects that piloted technology innovations to help children who are deaf/hard of hearing or blind/low vision learn to read.