



**LitWorld**  
**Be the Story.**  
litworld.org

# 2022 Annual Report

**LITWORLD STRENGTHENS KIDS AND COMMUNITIES THROUGH THE POWER OF STORIES.**

We seek to deepen our global understanding of the power of literacy and voice to achieve equity, opportunity, and joy.

Since 2007, we have partnered side-by-side with [more than 50 local organizations and global institutions](#), reaching hundreds of thousands of children and community leaders in over 30 countries through our in-depth LitClubs and LitCamps, and tens of millions with advocacy campaigns such as World Read Aloud Day.

## OUR IMPACT THIS YEAR

**19**

partners running programs  
in 16 countries

**166**

LitClubs impacting  
2,556 LitKids

**1.8K**

people benefitting from  
12 community projects

**438**

families impacted by  
29 Moms LitClubs

**174**

teens served through 12  
LitCorps Teen Programs

**24.9K**

lives changed  
through LitWorld

# Letter from our Board Chair

Dear LitWorld Friends and Family,

Writing these letters is always daunting. How do you capture an entire year in a few short paragraphs? A year of changing lives, of helping voices find their words, of creating safe spaces for children whose worlds have been turned upside down. As I grapple with succinctly capturing the spirit of 2022 for LitWorld, I find myself returning to one of the [7 Strengths](#), **courage**.

In 2022, the LitWorld team demonstrated magnificent courage. Anxhelina Prenika and Amber Peterson stepped up as co-Acting Executive Directors, steering the organization through internal transitions while delivering flawlessly on their 'day jobs.' They, alongside the entire LitWorld team, ensured that no partner went unsupported, no kid went unserved.

In 2022, LitWorld partners showed their courage every day. Not only did they ensure that thousands of LitKids had a safe, stable place to find their voice and tell their story, but they did so while taking on transformative [Innovation Projects](#).

[Art of A Child](#) in Uganda, one of our ten Innovation Partners, empowered 100 LitMoms by providing agribusiness opportunities that enabled these women to financially support their families. This project, like the other Innovation Projects implemented in 2022, demonstrates the direct (and transformative) correlation between storytelling, empowerment, and independence.

In 2022, LitKids showed how [LitClubs](#) helped cultivate their courage. We could not be prouder of both current and alumni LitKids who are already leaving their indelible mark on the world.

It's fitting that 2022 was LitWorld's 15th year. For this 'teenage moment' marks a pivotal milestone for LitWorld as we look ahead. On behalf of the LitWorld Board of Directors, I am thrilled to welcome LitWorld's new Executive Director, Caitlin Cassaro. Though Caitlin has only been with LitWorld for a few months, she has already demonstrated that she too leads with courage. The courage to honor where LitWorld came from, while painting a vision of - and road map for - expanded impact. The courage to dig into programming and strategy, ensuring that both reflect latest best practices while being built for scale, adaptability, and impact.

LitWorld may be 15 years young, but we're just getting started. Through the journey we've been on and all that lies ahead, we are so grateful to have partners like you. Our individual courage is powerful; our collective courage is unstoppable.

With gratitude,



Samantha Siegal  
*Chair, LitWorld Board of Directors*



# Our Program Model

**OUR APPROACH FOCUSES ON UNIVERSAL INNER STRENGTHS, LEVERAGING LITERACY AND STORYTELLING TOOLS TO BUILD EMPATHY AND RESILIENCE.**

We leverage our [unique 7-strengths curriculum model and social-emotional skill-building](#) to address the root causes of illiteracy. Our programs encourage self-expression, community, and confidence, using literacy as a tool and pathway for self-empowerment. When kids have access to spaces where they are free to explore their identities, discover their strengths, and express their dreams, they become empowered to create lasting change in their lives, in their communities, and beyond. Our award-winning, child-centered programs such as [LitCamp](#) and [LitClub](#) are designed to develop each of the 7 Strengths that are inherent in every child.

## LITWORLD'S 7 STRENGTHS



# Our Partnership Model

**WE WORK WITH GLOBAL PARTNERS TO DELIVER INNOVATIVE, BEST IN CLASS PROGRAMS.**

[LitWorld's network of on-the-ground partners](#) are what make our work possible, bringing our programs to millions of children and communities in over 30 countries.

We activate, amplify, and connect community-based organizations and leaders to achieve depth and scale. And we prioritize building trusting, collaborative relationships with partners to ensure we meet the unique needs of each community we serve and create lasting change.

## WHERE OUR WORK HAPPENS



# Our 2022 Partner Network

## WITH OUR LOCAL PROGRAM COORDINATORS

### **Kadam Foundation, Canada**

Reema Malek

### **Museo Rayo, Colombia**

Jhoanna Gomez

### **Dominican DREAM, Dominican Republic**

Anis Carracasco Lopez

### **Children of Haiti Project, Haiti**

Dominique Ade

### **Un Mundo, Honduras**

Denis Espinal

### **Centre for Development, India**

Prasad Chacko

Meera Rafi

### **Women's Organization in Rural Development, India**

M. Rajmohan

### **Kenya Connect, Kenya**

Esther Muinde

James Musyoka

### **Kenya Education Fund, Kenya**

Sheila Awino

Prisca Mawia

### **Rift Valley Reading Association, Kenya**

Margaret Muthiga

### **LEAD - Monrovia Football Academy, Liberia**

Oretha Togbe

Sona Traore

### **LEAD - Morocco, Morocco**

Zahra Benfares

### **Hogar Luceros del Amanecer, Nicaragua**

Aleyda del Rosario Rios Herrera

### **Seeds of Hope Foundation, Pakistan**

Faraz Javed

Monica Sorenson

### **Project Pearls, The Philippines**

Peachy Abellon

### **Ready for Reading, Rwanda**

Jean Marie Habimana

### **Art of a Child, Uganda**

Remie Bishanga

Susan Tusabe

### **Springboard to Opportunities, Mississippi, USA**

Sarah Stripp

### **Broadway Housing Communities, New York, USA**

Jael Sanchez

### **International Rescue Committee, New York, USA**

Patrick Curran

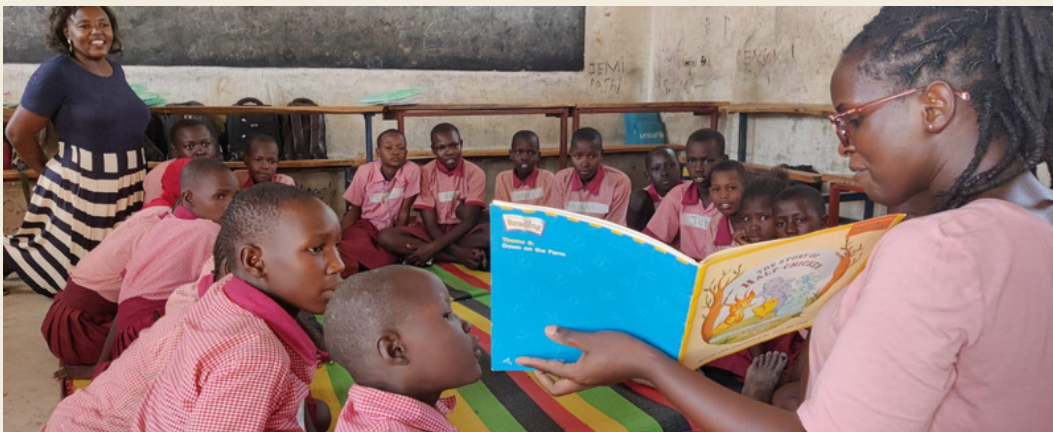
### **Reach All Therefore Zambia, Zambia**

Priscilla Mwambo

# 2022 Program Highlights: World Read Aloud Day

**STORIES ARE HUMANKIND'S GREATEST RESOURCE AND THE KEY TO SUSTAINABLE SOCIAL CHANGE.**

Our programs provide space for joyful learning, self-expression, community-building, and social change. Here are just a few highlights from the year.



## WORLD READ ALOUD DAY

[World Read Aloud Day](#) (WRAD) 2022 was our 13th global celebration of reading aloud, sharing stories, and advocating for literacy as a human right that belongs to us all. We leveraged our newly created WRAD Virtual Activity Hub to share book lists, activity guides, printables, and more with over 70,000 unique visitors. We also streamed a full day of virtual conversations, read-alouds, and workshops featuring authors and educators such as Tami Charles, Jonathan Fenske, Bassem Youssef, Andrea Davis Pinkney, Carmen Agra Deedy, Lucille Colandro, Sofia Sanches, and Joana Pastro. In partnership with Scholastic, we reached over 57 million readers from Abu Dhabi to Zambia. Around the globe, through partnership and LitWorld virtual events, more than 95,000 participants took part in WRAD celebrations.

In partnership  
with Scholastic

**57M**

readers  
participated in  
World Read  
Aloud Day 2022



# 2022 Program Highlights: Our Partner Network

The LitWorld Global Network is our international consortium of on the ground, grassroots organizations committed to celebrating children and their stories. Since 2007, more than 50 partners in over 30 countries have worked with us to discover and share best practices around program implementation, and create thought leadership in delivering literacy education and social emotional learning.

Each quarter, Network Partners come together for webinars to share their work, collaborate with each other, build relationships, and tap into training and best practices. This year we led sessions on Grant Writing and Finding Funding Sources, LitWorld Programming and Technology, Developing and Implementing Programming for Teens, Moms' LitClubs and Entrepreneurship, Social Media Presence, and more.

## **MEET SAJIDA RASHEED, ONE OF OUR LITMOMS FROM SEEDS OF HOPE FOUNDATION IN PAKISTAN**

Sajida has been in a [LitMom Club](#) for the last three months. Born into a poor family, Sajida shared that her own mother was always too busy with chores to teach her any trade skills. "As a mother now, I realize how important it is to empower our daughters...I made a promise to myself to give special attention to their education and to any skill they are interested in learning...My message to all mothers is to empower your girls for a healthy future."



# 2022 Program Highlights: Innovation Projects

[LitWorld's Innovation Partners](#) represent a diverse cross section of LitWorld's implementation partners from around the world. With them, LitWorld is able to test new ideas, programs, and projects, as well as provide in-depth reporting on LitWorld program health. Each year, Innovation Partners implement special Innovation Projects - opportunities for LitWorld and our Innovation Partners to explore targeted and specific work in their communities. Innovation Projects help us examine and determine best practices for our programs and ways of working across our network and organization.

This year, each of our ten Innovation Partners implemented projects that supported existing programming and furthered sustainable change in the communities where we operate. These projects ranged from initiatives focused on reaching remote communities, to supporting mothers and other caregivers as literacy leaders and agents of change in their communities, to finding ways to engage community stakeholders in the important work of supporting LitKids and their growth.





# Innovation Project Snapshot: Museo Rayo



**Museo Rayo** has been a LitWorld partner since 2015. Serving remote communities in and around the mountainous Roldanillo area of Colombia, access to reliable transportation to deliver both programming and resources has long been a challenge for this partner. As a result, the Traveling Ray mobile libraries Innovation Project was born. Using a book backpack that the team designed, the Traveling Ray project allows mentors to travel with books, activities, and other resources on mopeds to reach remote spaces and deliver programming there. The project experiments with and examines both the material resources of the mobile libraries and the training and development that must go alongside their implementation and use, and begins its second year of implementation in 2023.

With our 2022 Innovation Project implementation, we learned so much about how to really listen to and work with our partners to create lasting change. Our innovation Projects impacted more than 1800 community members and resulted in the development of adult literacy programs, community gardens, women's finance co-ops, 7 strengths training programs, and a variety of other innovations that we look forward to investing in, studying, and refining in the years to come.

# Looking Forward

I joined LitWorld in January 2023, and am honored to be part of the LitWorld Family! I have had a wonderful few months thus far, getting to know the LitWorld partner organizations and many of our generous supporters. Presenting our first in-person gala alongside staff and the gala committee, hosting the incomparable Marley Dias, has been the highlight of the year so far! This was a truly beautiful and joyous occasion. I look forward to many more beautiful and joyous LitWorld events, and am excited to expand on the wonderful work that is already in place.

In this new year, we take the dedicated hard work and input from our international partners to further our program evaluation protocols. Now, working with [SEED Impact](#), we will develop and implement literacy growth and social/emotional evaluative metrics across programs, internationally and locally.

We are also thrilled to once again partner with and support New York City community-based organizations to provide in-person programming during after-school hours. This fall, we'll enter the classrooms and community centers with an updated version of our unique 7 Strengths curriculum model.

While leaning into local programming, we continue our dedication to support and grow our international programming partner organizations and initiatives, now and in the future.

Stay tuned, there's so much more to come!



Caitlin Cassaro  
*LitWorld Executive Director*

## MEET JONATHAN, A LITKID AT READY FOR READING IN RWANDA

Jonathan is a LitKid at Ready for Reading in Rwanda. His mentors state that he began as a shy and introverted child, but since joining LitClub, "He is a supportive boy in his team as he is able to stand and speak in front of his fellow members and inspire them to speak in public with confidence." We are so proud of kids like Jonathan!



# The 2022 LitWorld Team

## **LISA MEADOWCROFT**

Executive Director through  
April 2022

## **AMBER PETERSON**

Acting Co-Executive Director from May  
2022  
Director of Program Innovation

## **ANXHELINA PRENIKA**

Acting Co-Executive Director from  
May 2022  
Director of Operations & HR

## **MARIYA OHULCHANSKA**

Program & Partnership Associate

## **HANNAH POLAUF**

Communications Associate

## **ILANA SOLOMON**

Development Manager

## **MONICA VALENTIN**

Operations & Development Associate



# LitWorld Leadership

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Christine J. Chao
- Katherine Cook
- Nicholas Drayson, Treasurer
- Alice Goh
- Ernest Morrell
- Julie Padilla
- Steve Records
- Samantha Siegal, Chair
- Nadeige Sterlin
- Caleb Stratton
- Cora Walker

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- Kwame Alexander
- Madeline Boskey
- Olivia Chase
- Ralph Cummins
- Aimee Deutsch
- Sherrie Dulworth
- Jodi Harris
- Sarah Iannucci
- Megan Karges
- Beth Shair
- Lori Vehmas-Falkin

### EMERITUS BOARD

- Sue Atkins
- Sabrina Conyers
- Ellen Fredericks
- Nicole Nakashian

### LITWORLD FOUNDER

Pam Allyn



# 2022 Financial Highlights

<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	\$1,150,361
PROGRAM INCOME	\$763,024
DONATIONS & OTHER INCOME	\$387,337
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	\$923,917
PROGRAMMING	\$529,934
FUNDRAISING	\$214,693
MANAGEMENT	\$179,290
<b>ASSETS</b>	\$1,907,726
<b>LIABILITIES</b>	\$11,396
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	\$1,896,330

## MEET SHIRLEY, A LITCLUB MENTOR AT KENYA EDUCATION FUND

Shirley joined her first LitClub in 2013 and is now an Early Childhood Education teacher at Ayany Primary School in Kibera. According to Shirley, "LitClubs helped me to know where I belong and how to appreciate myself and the people around me. It helped me to know that I'm worth something and I can be whoever I choose to."



# Thank You to Our Generous Supporters

We are beyond grateful to all of our generous and dedicated supporters who make our work possible every day.

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Scholastic, Inc.

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# Thank You to Our Generous Supporters



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Ted Goetz

We couldn't have  
done it without your  
generous *support.*

Thank you



PHOTOS PROVIDED BY LITWORLD PARTNERS: LEAD - MONROVIA FOOTBALL ACADEMY, REACH ALL THEREFORE ZAMBIA, UN MUNDO, MUSEO RAYO, SEEDS OF HOPE, READY FOR READING, AND KENYA EDUCATION FUND

Follow our progress all year on social media or  
by joining our email list at [www.litworld.org](http://www.litworld.org)

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