



*"Anak-anak dari masyarakat kurang mampu di seluruh Indonesia menjadi suka membaca."
"Children in poor communities across Indonesia learning to love reading."*



A student in Nusa Tenggara Timur learning to form letters (photo: Yayasan Tangan Pengharapan)

Annual Report 2017

OVERVIEW

“Gathering Momentum”

2017 has been a great year for Saya Suka Membaca. We’ve been working hard to bring high quality literacy teaching to more children from poor communities in more places across Indonesia, and to improve the quality of everything we do.

The main theme has been growth – in the number of teachers and children served, the number of books we’ve sold, and the number of people visiting our website. A highlight has been the increase in the number of children who are learning to read with SSM, from 850 children in 2016, to more than 1800 in 2017, far exceeding our target of 17% growth to 1000 children. A key part in this growth has been in new partnerships such as our work training and equipping teachers of Yayasan Tangan Pengharapan (YTP), an organisation with nutrition and education centres across Indonesia serving some 5,000. They’ve started using our materials with more than 400 children, and it’s been exciting seeing how well their teachers and children have responded to the SSM.

2017 has also seen our financial position continuing to strengthen, with generous donations from individuals and partner organisations, some wonderful fundraising efforts by SSM volunteers, and sales of our reading books to other groups.

We’d like to say a heartfelt “thank you” to all our donors and partners, and of course to our wonderful staff and volunteers. We’re proud of the work we’ve done together and excited about what 2018 has in store.

Salam literasi,

Stuart Patience
on behalf of Yayasan Tunas Aksara
Program Saya Suka Membaca

Our Vision

“Children in poor communities across Indonesia learning to love reading”

Saya Suka Membaca [I Love Reading] remains focused on our vision: “children in poor communities across Indonesia learning to love reading.” We believe that literacy is the most powerful learning tool that we can give to children, and one of the most empowering skills that anyone can learn.

It’s important to be clear what we’re talking about when we say ‘reading’: we don’t simply mean kids knowing some letters and being able to a few words. We’re talking about literacy in the deep sense of being able to read with fluency and with critical understanding, and able to write both to communicate and to think. These are the skills that unlock the doorway to the world of education and lead to transformed opportunities for children from poor communities.

The combination of great curriculum, great teaching and story books that are culturally relevant and designed to support beginner readers is what makes this possible, allowing children taught using SSM to experience the pleasure of reading successfully at an early stage, helping to develop their imagination and curiosity, as well as a positive attitude to school.

This vision is what Saya Suka Membaca is all about, and all of our resources are either focused directly on realising it, or on necessary supporting activities that enable us to work sustainably towards it. We’re always looking for ways to serve more teachers and children, more effectively, and more efficiently. And we’re delighted to be part of a growing movement of groups across Indonesia who understand the vital importance of pre-school and early primary literacy for this great country, and are committed to realising the same vision.

Team Saya Suka Membaca 2017

Staff

Derulan Lolivia Chair of Operational Board, Mentoring Coordinator and trainer / mentor

Riris Magdalena Treasurer, Training Coordinator and trainer / mentor

Mia Sumiatun Secretary, Administrator

Board Members

Didiek Kartiarso Chair of founding board

Stuart Patience Member, founding board

Kristen Hoatson Member, founding board

Jennie Hamlin Member, supervisory board

Sri Nurani Kartikasari Member, supervisory board

Sha-Rin Low Member, supervisory board

Endang Susanti Member, supervisory board

Volunteers and Consultants

Carli Bittner, David Day, Karen Day, Lidya Clarissa, Noelle Holler, Aliisa Lee, Amalia Lee, Tina Pilapel, Tri Prasetyaningtyas, Carolyn Wignall.

Donors and Partners (logos from website folder)

RTR, Provisi, Taman Bacaan Pelangi, YLAI, Mutiara Rindang, UOB, Asia Foundation, Let's Read, YPP, YBM, Citra Smart, HEAD foundation, UNICEF, YTP, Google, Techsoup

Report on Activities in 2017

Curriculum

“...effective, engaging, easy to use...”

In 2017 we began a major overhaul of Year 1 of the Saya Suka Membaca curriculum. Our previous syllable-based approach to teaching children to learn to read was an improvement on the spelling-based model that is most common in Indonesia, but children who were slower to learn still really struggled to make the jump to reading pairs of letters. In response to this, we’ve integrated a phonics-based approach to letter learning into the curriculum so that children become more familiar with letter shapes and sounds (as opposed to letter names) before beginning to blend them. This approach is common in many countries, but seems revolutionary to many teachers here; the reason that we didn’t use it in earlier versions of the curriculum is that teachers found it too alien, and we struggled to persuade them that it would work.

As SSM has become more established, however, our relationships and trust with the teachers we serve has grown, and we were delighted that the teachers of Yayasan Bina Mandiri were willing to pilot this new method of teaching letters, which we call *Bunyi Huruf* [letter sounds]. After many trials and modifications in response to feedback, we have a module that works, and teachers report that their children are making good progress. We are hugely grateful to the teachers of Bina Mandiri for their patience in the ‘trial-and-error’ phase of curriculum development, and to Carolyn Wignall for her excellent contribution in helping us to develop a set of activities and resources for effective phonics teaching in Bahasa Indonesia. We will complete the evaluation of *Bunyi Huruf* in 2018.

Teacher Training and Mentoring

“...Skilled and caring teachers...”

Our core staff has remained the same throughout 2017. What has been exciting is a number of new partnerships, including Nona Mauboy, a teacher with partner charity Yayasan Pendar Pagi, joining us for one day each week in order to learn how to become an SSM trainer. Jean Christensen and Putuh Evi from Yayasan Tangan Pengharapan also undertook an intensive training-of-trainers course so that they could take SSM to their team of teachers working across Indonesia. We have a great deal to learn about training trainers – especially challenging when our curriculum is being revised and our core training package is necessarily in flux – but it has been a delight working with such committed and gifted partners, and trust that these early steps in training trainers are a sign of things to come!

In 2016, our team trained 10 teachers. In 2017, we trained 33 at in-house trainings, and another 24 in partnership with Yayasan Tangan Pengharapan in Kupang, Nusa Tenggara Timur. Pak Jean, YPP’s trainer, then delivered a highly condensed version of SSM training – an overview of *Bunyi Huruf* – to another 290 teachers on the island of Sumba as part of YTP’s program there. He reports huge need and great demand for further training, and we hope to be able to bring a more complete version of SSM to Sumba in future.

This increased rate of training has allowed us to dramatically increase the number of children being taught to read with SSM, from less than 800 in 2016, to more than 1800 in 2017, far exceeding our target of 25% growth to 1000 children! A large chunk of this growth – 532 children – has come

through our partnership with Yayasan Tangan Pengharapan, a reminder of just how effective good partnerships can be in increasing our impact.

Good curriculum and training are the foundation of effective teaching, but ongoing mentoring makes a real difference in helping teachers to improve the quality of their classroom practice. The number of mentoring visits the team made in 2017 increased to 148, compared with less than 100 in 2016. We are always looking for ways to scale our work and help more teachers, but remain committed to mentoring teachers and building long-term partnerships where we can.

Reading books and materials

“...levelled... ...relevant... fun to read...”

In 2017 the Book Production team continued the hard work of preparing more of our titles to be printed in full colour, both in A5 format and as A4 ‘Big Books’, which are vital tool for enabling teachers to engage whole classes when reading, and for modelling the reading process to kids who are unfamiliar with the culture of books.

We are also gradually working to improve the quality of our books by writing new stories and phasing out weaker titles. In 2016 we wrote five new stories; in 2017 we wrote, or made major changes to an additional ten stories. Our new partnership with UOB includes an agreement to write a new book with a financial literacy theme – watch this space!

High quality illustrations make a huge difference in turning great stories into captivating books. We’re blessed with several amazing illustrators who are helping us to complete more books to a higher standard.

Support Functions

We will always remain focused on the end goal of improving literacy outcomes for children in poor communities. Yayasan Tunas Aksara's support functions play a key role in enabling our front-line work, and allowing us to do so sustainably for the long term.

Sales

In 2017 we distributed over 6,000 books – most of them purchased by partner organisations – more than triple the number we sold in 2016. In addition to continuing to supply books to Room to Read's Indonesia-wide library program, we supplied more than 1,200 books to UNICEF's Library Revitalisation Program based in Papua, and to 30 schools of Yayasan Pelita Harapan. We're delighted that our books are being read across Indonesia by groups that share our vision and see the need for these vital resources.

We also love to see books by other groups! One exciting development this year has been providing five of our titles to The Asia Foundation's Let's Read Asia program, an online, multi-lingual reading resource that aims to get quality books into the hands of children across Asia. One great feature of this website is community translation – three of our books have been translated into Nepali! We hope to see increasing numbers of translations into Indonesia's regional languages in future, so that more kids can enjoy reading in their mother tongue.

Physical books are highly specialised 'devices' that will remain the core of teaching children to read for the foreseeable future, but we're thrilled about the potential of innovations like Let's Read to enrich Indonesia's literacy environment. Let's Read is designed to allow offline access and even printing of books, and as more and more communities come online, even the poorest communities will benefit from free access to such a wide range of reading material.

PR and Fundraising

2017 saw the launch of a new version of the Saya Suka Membaca website at www.sayasukamembaca.org. Partnership with Google Adwords sponsorship from the Google for Non-Profits program has seen the website get huge amounts of traffic – more than 250,000 hits in 2017! This has become an important channel for both users and supporters of SSM to learn out about our program – so much so that we're already planning a redesign so that we can better serve our visitors with online materials and training. This will be a key focus of our PR efforts in the second half of 2018.

Financial

SSM's charitable 'business model' has gradually shifted from a purely donation-driven, charitable approach in which we provided SSM to partners at no cost, to a more mixed funding model. We continue to rely extensively on donations, but we're able to make the support we receive go much further by asking partner groups to pay to cover printing costs, and the costs of the training that they receive, as well as by selling our books. As a result, we're able to serve more children and teachers for less money. 'Cost per child served' is a key indicator for us, and this has dropped from Rp. 570,000 (US\$42) in 2015 to Rp. 212,000 (US\$15) in 2017. Asking groups to pay for the materials

and services we provide has another positive effect by requiring us to make sure that the program is affordable and worth paying for, forcing us to keep on improving the quality SSM while finding ways to bring costs down.

As a result of these changes, we finished 2017 in better financial shape than ever before. Money remains tight of course, but we are increasingly able to budget for expansion.

See appendix 1 for our 2017 financial information.

The Year Ahead – Strategic Goals for 2018

Our overall goal for 2018 remains the same - helping more children to learn to love reading. Many of these key goals are continuations from last year's annual report.

Our priorities are as follows:

1) Building the Team

Investing in the team so that we work well together, focused on the vision, mission, and values of the Yayasan, and are able to do our jobs to a high standard.

2017 will see us introduce personal development plans, and clearer goal-setting and accountability for our team. Having clear management systems in place is absolutely critical if we want to be able to grow sustainably. More importantly, our desire to invest in people as we train and mentor teachers must absolutely be demonstrated within our own team.

2) Developing our program

Continuing to improve the quality of our program and our ability to deliver it.

2017's review of *Bunyi Huruf* will continue into 2018. We will continue to improve this new component of our curriculum in response to teacher feedback, finalising version one in mid-2018. In addition, the extent of the changes will require us to thoroughly review our teacher training package. We aim to develop the team's capacity to deliver high-quality training in Jakarta and beyond, such that by the end of 2018 we have the capacity to conduct monthly trainings on- or off-site for up to 20 teachers at a time, with the aim of developing a model for training larger groups in 2019.

As discussed above, we also aim to have our curriculum and materials (except for story books) available online by the end of 2018, with a set of complementary training videos. Based on the number of visitors to our website and comparable videos on YouTube, we think it's realistic to aim to reach 20,000 teachers (100,000 downloads or views) in 2019.

3) Grow to increase our impact

So that we can move towards achieving our vision

As shared above, 2017 saw the number of children being taught with SSM more than double from 850 to 1,800. We're aiming to double again in 2018, to 3,600 kids. Achieving this will need more of everything – new teachers using our program in new ways in new places, new donors, sponsors and volunteers, and almost certainly new members of staff. We're excited – and only slightly daunted by this prospect. Onwards and upwards!

Appendix 1 – Financial Information

Total Expenditure 2017: Rp 381,933,646



Expenditure vs Income 2017 (IDR)

