

Yayasan Literasi Anak Indonesia



ANNUAL REPORT 2021/22

(This report has been prepared post-pandemic to reflect the activity of the Yayasan over a 2 year period after YLAI and schools re-opened)

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INTRODUCTION



YLAI is a non-profit organization that aims to promote a reading culture, a love of reading and literacy skills for elementary school-aged children throughout Indonesia.

Our mission

- To develop and implement an innovative learning model of literacy for primary school children in Indonesia through training that addresses best practices in reading and writing
- To develop classroom and school libraries that support students' love and habit of reading through training of principals, teachers and librarians, and provision of engaging books.



YLAI has developed in depth reading approaches based on standards recognised internationally that address the needs of early grade children to become independent readers. We use a systems approach, by improving the learning environment, implementing integrated and student-centred active learning, as well as conducting ongoing monitoring and evaluation for principals and teachers. YLAI provides training programs for teachers, principals, and educators on innovative reading methodologies that support the implementation of a robust reading program in early grade classrooms. We measure the effectiveness of our programs on student learning by collecting baseline and endline data, conducting diagnostic assessments to measure individual student progress in reading decoding, comprehension and vocabulary mastery. We monitor our school programs for effectiveness and impact.

YLAI also trains educators and librarians to develop, implement and manage child-friendly libraries in primary schools. We work with children's book writers and illustrators to develop quality, culturally appropriate reading books at the right level, to support classrooms and libraries throughout Indonesia.



YLAI's literacy program and framework aims to serve as a catalyst for change in the Indonesian education system through development and implementation of a robust literacy program based on best practices recognised internationally. The reading/writing culture in Indonesian schools is very weak. There is a lack of formal teaching of reading using child-friendly books in the Indonesian curriculum, and students are not introduced to explicit reading programs in the early years of their primary education. Young students do not have access to engaging, child-friendly and culturally relevant books in their classrooms, and Indonesian teachers are not explicitly trained to teach reading/writing skills and strategies to young children.

YLAI therefore aims to change this situation. The overall goals of YLAI's programs are therefore to cultivate a love of reading in children and to empower them to become competent readers through continuous reading practice and developmentally appropriate instruction. Developing teacher competency and the reading environment in the classroom through targeting training is central to YLAI's mission. For example, YLAI developed a levelled reading series for classes 1-3, which was a very new idea in the teaching of reading in Indonesian schools. It uses developmental steps to allow students to progress in reading at their own pace, and is supported by lesson plans and micro-learning videos. This levelled system is also present in our child-friendly libraries to support teachers and students to select appropriate books at the right level.

The goals of YLAI's Literacy Training Program are based on three areas of focus:

1. **Balanced Reading Program:** YLAI develops targeted and specialized training for school principals, teachers, and regional facilitators in continuous professional development and skills in teaching basic literacy "at the right level" in the primary classroom. Balanced Reading Program comprises four modules, namely Phonics, Interactive Reading, Shared Reading, and Guided Reading, which are delivered through classroom-based instruction.
 - a) Phonics module focuses on building basic phonemic awareness, so students gain the foundational skills in reading and writing
 - b) Interactive Reading module involves the use of high-quality illustrated books to help students develop listening, oral participation, vocabulary, and higher-order thinking skills.
 - c) Shared Reading module uses Big Books so teachers can model the reading process and guide students through increasing comprehension and vocabulary skills.
 - d) Guided Reading module requires teachers to work with small groups of students using levelled reading books (TARL, Teaching at the Right Level) to guide and monitor children's reading accuracy, vocabulary, and comprehension skills.



- 2. Integrated Classroom and School Library Development:** YLAI provides training on developing and managing classroom reading corners and child-friendly school libraries to guide school principals, teachers, and librarians in building a reading culture in primary schools. Teachers are trained to use the library to support student's reading exposure and abilities and connect to their classroom programs. The training also requires teachers to use e-learning skills to raise broad awareness about how to use great storybooks to help children grow in their reading habit and skills



- 3. Storybook and Resource Development:** YLAI aims to support writers and illustrators to create engaging children's interactive, and levelled reading books which are developmentally and culturally appropriate for young children. Teachers need to create a print-rich environment in the classroom and understand how to provide appropriate reading materials and resources to support student learning. YLAI also aims to support teachers through the development of program-supported resources in the form of lesson plans, training modules, reading videos, and video tutorials.

Our approach is not limited to teacher training, providing books and reading materials to schools and students, but it extends to building a strong community eco-system around literacy with the local education departments that supports and empowers both teachers and students.

To achieve this, we have established regional facilitators in each of our target areas. These facilitators are composed of education office staff, supervisors, school principals, and teachers who work together to promote literacy and ensure the program's success. They provide regular training and assistance to schools and teachers, focusing on improving their knowledge and skills in teaching literacy effectively.

Our regional facilitators also invite the school community, including principals, teachers, and librarians, to manage reading books by displaying, caring for, and rotating/storing them. We believe that involving the community in managing books creates a sense of ownership and responsibility, which leads to the books being used and valued more by students.

In addition to managing books, the school parent community is also invited to work together to provide a child-friendly learning environment. This includes creating spaces that encourage reading and learning, such as setting up comfortable reading areas and organizing reading clubs. By involving the community in these efforts, we aim to create a supportive environment that fosters a love for reading and learning.



We see the community as a critical partner in building a strong literacy program in schools. By building a strong community eco-system around literacy, we can empower teachers, engage students, and create a sustainable program that has a long-lasting impact on the lives of those we serve.

EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE

YLAI's Balanced Reading Program was developed out of extensive research from international curriculum models into best practice in early grade literacy methodology. This research informed the basis of the program's approach to improve Indonesian students' reading accuracy, fluency, and comprehension skills. Our approach is aligned with evidence-based, internationally recognised standards and requires teachers to support student learning by following a scope and sequence aligned with learning outcomes established in the Indonesian curriculum, as well as use high-quality instructional materials, and regular formative and summative assessments to monitor student progress.

As a result of its well-researched approach, in 2015 YLAI's levelled reading program was rolled out by USAID Prioritas in 7 provinces of Indonesia to support their basic education initiative. Regular program evaluations indicated that teachers were excited to observe the changes in their students' reading habits through the introduction of engaging books, but they needed more guidance through training to support the teaching of skills. YLAI developed a robust training program across different modalities of reading, and now provides extensive in-depth training modules used in pilot programs (see www.literasi.org).



EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE

Over the past 7 years, YLAI has become a leader in early grade literacy programs in Indonesia, and our work has gained recognition with MoE and organisations working in the field of early literacy development in Indonesia. We work closely with the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Research and Technology and the Regional Education Office to develop a sustainable model of training in literacy teaching for primary schools.



In **2019** YLAI partnered with DFAT(AUSAID) INOVASI, and the local Districts of Education to carry out a pilot program in 15 schools in the region of Sumba in the Eastern Islands. In West and South-West Sumba, amongst the more remote and poverty-stricken districts of Indonesia, 2500 students in classes 1-3 increased their comprehension scores by 20% over a 6-month period in 2019 during our pilot program. This program was extended to 30 schools over the next 3 years, in a cost-sharing model with the local district.

In **2020** YLAI's innovative literacy program was adapted by MoE for the Emergency Curriculum for classes 1-3 during the two years of Covid-19 pandemic. As a result, this need for a well-developed reading program is now being followed in MoE's new curriculum "Kurikulum Merdeka", where YLAI has been at the forefront of providing its expertise. Our innovative model of early literacy is already gaining increasing recognition on the MoE platform, Merdeka Mengajar, to guide teachers in best classroom literacy practices.

EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE

In **2021** YLAI was selected to represent Indonesia in the UNESCO Hamdan Prize for Teacher Development. Education and Culture Minister, Nadiem Makarim, is seeking to transform school leadership, improve teacher education and introduce a flexible curriculum that is adjustable to the needs and learning progress of each student.

In **2021** YLAI was selected at the highest level by the Indonesian Ministry of Education (MoE) as an NGO to participate in a pilot program, Program Organisasi Penggerak (POP), to implement YLAI's Balanced Reading program in 180 schools in 6 districts of Bali and East Java. The purpose of this initiative was to share best practice in literacy for early grades, especially in the area of foundational skills, in order to effect change in the approach to teaching literacy in the nationwide curriculum, "Kurikulum Merdeka".



INCLUSIVE PRACTICE

YLAI believes that every student, regardless of their background or abilities, can successfully learn to read and write when given access to the sound teaching and supportive resources. Through YLAI's training, teachers are expected to respond to the unique identities and social needs of the communities they serve. GEDSI (Gender Equality, Disability, and Social Inclusion) aspects are considered in every training and in lesson planning activities carried out in class. Teachers are required to differentiate their lessons to meet the diverse needs of students. YLAI also places high importance on working in remote and challenging areas of Indonesia, such as Sumba, Central Sulawesi, Papua where we ensure that our programs work in those contexts, and can be adapted for students in diverse situations and cultural settings.

To this end, all books developed by YLAI are engaging, and culturally relevant, and written/illustrated entirely by Indonesian authors and illustrators. In 2018 YLAI worked with teachers and writers from 6 districts of Papua to develop a series of books for the Papuan cultural context. YLAI has also developed storybooks for our library program based on Indonesian folk tales, to bring awareness for children of the richness of their own traditions. YLAI's community-responsive approach to literacy development ensures that its literacy initiatives are sustainable and have a lasting impact on the communities we serve. By involving parents and community members, prioritizing inclusivity and accessibility, and incorporating local cultural values, YLAI is able to create a more engaged, empowered, and literate community.

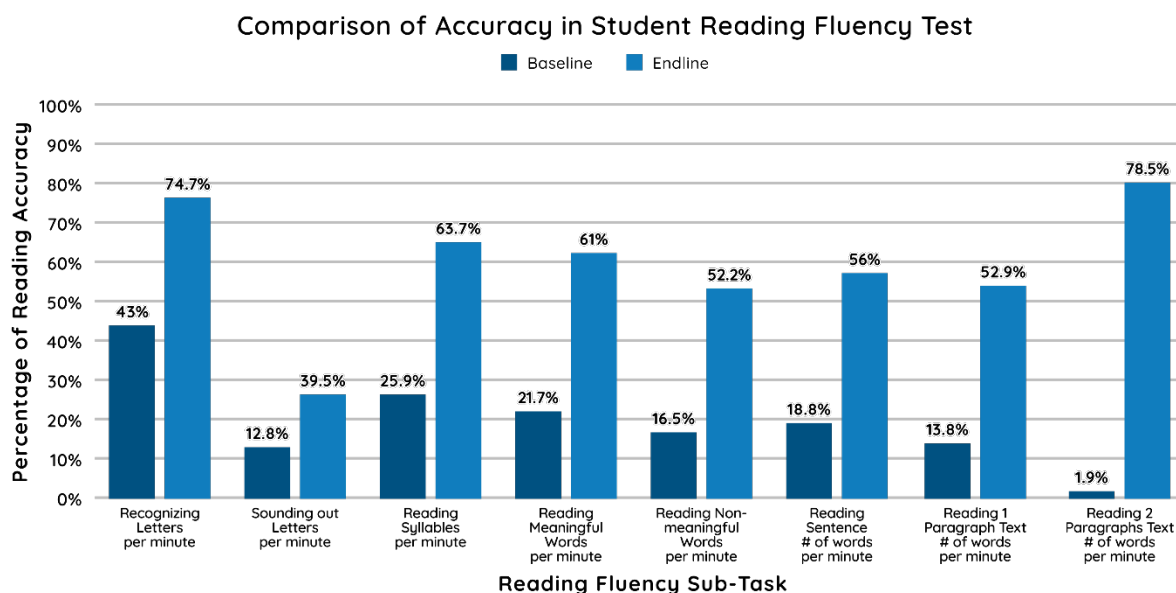


YLAI provides a clear roadmap for teacher support in schools, and guidelines to measure impact. YLAI's program's success can be attributed to its ongoing program evaluation and student diagnostic assessments which have demonstrated a significant overall improvement in students' reading skills. One of the key assessments used to measure student reading levels and growth is our diagnostic "running record" assessment. Prior to administering this assessment, classroom teachers in the Indonesian government schools are generally unaware of their students individual reading abilities. Teachers are able to pinpoint the reading level and ability of a student in both decoding and comprehension, and this has been a very useful tool for teachers to group their students for instruction at the right level.



YLAI provides detailed reporting and informed data to its partners on all aspects of the programs. Field officers monitor teacher performance and provide regular professional development meetings. West Sumba Regency, for example, demonstrated the impact of our program on increased student literacy levels, and significant improvements in teaching practices and activities, including the proportion of teachers who prepared lesson plans based on students' abilities. Results also showed an increase in the proportion of school principals who developed literacy improvement policies and strengthened the role of school committees.

This program was externally assessed, as are all YLAI programs, using baseline/endline data. Validation was delivered through the use of the Early Grade Reading Assessment (Ex. EGRA) by a professional M&E organisation (Ex. NINOS) in Jakarta, Indonesia. In West and South-West Sumba, amongst the more remote and poverty-stricken districts of Indonesia, 2500 students in classes 1-3 increased their comprehension scores by 20% over a 6-month period.



2019-2021 South West Sumba

South West Sumba Regency, for example, demonstrated the impact of our program on increased student literacy levels, and significant improvements in teaching practices and activities, including the proportion of teachers who prepared lesson plans based on students' abilities. Results also showed an increase in the proportion of school principals who developed literacy improvement policies and strengthened the role of school committees. In West and South-West Sumba, amongst the more remote and poverty-stricken districts of Indonesia, 2500 students in classes 1-3 increased their comprehension scores by 20% over a 6-month period. (See SUMBA REPORT, 2019)

2021-2023 Program Organisasi Penggerak (POP)

Program Organisasi Penggerak (POP), a pilot program with MoE to implement YLAI's Balanced Reading program in 180 schools in 6 districts of Bali and East Java begun in 2021, will reach completion in August 2023 with endline data collected by MoE. In addition YLAI is also conducting its own standardised impact data through an external sources, NINOS, Jakarta, in partnership with INOVASI, DFAT. These results will be available in August 2023. Results from this pilot program will be used to provide a model of best practices in early literacy to effect change in the approach to teaching reading in the nationwide curriculum, "Kurikulum Merdeka". In addition ongoing data from formative assessments has been collected by YLAI to inform student progress and reading levels.

2017-2022 Child-friendly libraries

Between 2017 and 2022, YLAI has worked as an implementing partner with Room to Read (<https://www.roomtoread.org/indonesia/>) to establish over 150 child-friendly libraries in local primary schools. In 2022 YLAI opened 60 libraries in the district of Denpasar in Bali, and the number of teachers, and students who directly benefitted from the program was recorded, as well as the comparative number of books checked out by students over a 6 months period. Students' book check-out progressed from less than 500 books per month, to over 12,000 books per month. YLAI has continued to document its work, provide stories from the field. (see www.literasi.org) and present webinars to inform thousands of teachers on the importance of developing a habit and love of reading.





YLAI has actively worked to create a sustainable model of early literacy for Indonesian government schools that aligns with the learning outcomes of the Indonesian curriculum. The model we advocate is based on **"I do, We do, You do"** where we develop a working partnership with local education departments through a Memorandum of Understanding. We aim in the first phase to introduce our programs with independent funding sources, through government, and partnerships funding, such as USAID Prioritas, INOVASI DFAT, Room to Read, UBS Optimus, and William & Lily Foundation, Indonesia. We then move to a co-sharing model within the second or third year of implementation, and ultimately release responsibility for the total program to be used independently by school districts through their own funding sources. To support this, our organisational structure provides key support in the field through project managers, and field coaches, with regular communication to and reporting from the local education departments and schools. One key example of this is our Balanced Reading Program in the remote districts of West and South West Sumba. In 2018 we began this program as a pilot program under INOVASI, with funding from DFAT Australia. Now, after 5 years of expansion into 30 schools the districts are co-sharing costs, with the aim to continue the programs independently. We are committed to creating a self-sustaining initiative that will work in the Indonesian school system and continue to improve literacy outcomes for Indonesian children in the early grades of elementary school.



YLAI recognises that in order for our classroom and child-friendly library programs to be replicable, they need to be relevant to the Indonesian school setting with ownership by local school districts. Training is delivered by YLAI's teacher trainers alongside local district facilitators to ensure the continuity of the programs, which are also strengthened in the field through regular support, mentoring and evaluation by local field officers. The importance of professional development workshops cannot be understated as they are the mainstay to ensure teachers share their experience and receive refresher training. This ensures that the programs remain relevant and up-to-date with the latest educational needs. Regular and on-going coaching is also provided to schools through micro-learning videos and webinars to support teachers in schools.

As a result, this systems approach allows for the scaling of programs in school districts, where schools can call on local facilitators to provide upscaled training, as well as use their own funding (BOS) to purchase the required books and resources. The other area of significance for replicability are the impact results collected over the recent years of work in regions such as Sumba, Bali, East Java. These have demonstrated a significant increase in student reading proficiency in decoding and comprehension, and this evidence of growth in student learning has now resulted in a high level of confidence in YLAI's programs, with a strong desire on the part of these districts to see the programs continued into 2023 and beyond.