



DG Reading Room Resource &
Education Foundation

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Annual Report 2024-2025

Rooted in Community, Building Futures
Through Stories of Change







Rooted in Community, Building Futures Through Stories of Change

Every community carries stories.

Some are narrated and passed down across generations. Others unfold quietly in classrooms, libraries, village paths, conversations, and moments that often go unnoticed. These everyday stories shape who we become and, over time, shape the communities we build together.

This annual report is a collection of those stories.

It reflects another year in the journey of the Dumigaon Reading Room Resource and Education Foundation—a journey that began with a small community library and has gradually grown centred on reading, learning, creativity, research, and community engagement. While our programmes have expanded over the years, the heart of our work has remained unchanged: creating spaces where children and communities can discover the joy of learning, the freedom of asking questions, the agency to imagine new possibilities, and a sense of belonging.

Throughout these pages, you will meet children who find confidence through books, teachers who embrace new ways of learning, young artists who inspire creativity, youth volunteers who give their time generously and team members who dedicate their lives to the work. Their journeys remind us that meaningful change rarely happens all at once. It grows steadily through relationships built on trust, shared learning, and the willingness to invest in one another.

The year 2024-2025 has been one of thoughtful growth. We expanded our outreach to more government schools, strengthened our literacy and science programmes, deepened our engagement through Art Workshops and community activities, and continued to create platforms for research, storytelling, and dialogue through the Sikkim Project and Reading Himalaya. Alongside these milestones, we continued learning and reflecting on our challenges, refining our programmes, and strengthening our organisation for the years ahead.

This report is therefore, more than a record of activities or achievements. It is an invitation to witness the quiet yet powerful ways in which stories, books, curiosity, and communities can transform lives. Every page reflects the collective efforts of children, parents, educators, volunteers, partners, supporters, and our team, whose belief in this shared vision continues to make this work possible.

As you read these pages, we hope you will see not only what has been accomplished over the past year, but also the possibilities that lie ahead. For we believe that when communities are rooted in learning, compassion, and shared purpose, they build futures where every child has the opportunity to read, imagine, create, and thrive.

These are our stories of change. They belong to all of us.





Note from the Founder-Director

When the Dumigaon Reading Room first opened its doors in March 2019, I could not have imagined the journey it would set in motion. What began as a simple dream of creating a community library has gradually evolved into an organisation that works alongside children, educators, researchers, artists, volunteers, and communities to nurture a culture of reading, learning, creativity, and reflection.

This transformation has not happened because we set out to become bigger. It has happened because we continued listening to the children who needed support beyond access to books, to teachers who welcomed new ways of engaging young learners, to communities that embraced the library as a shared space, and to our team, whose dedication and willingness to learn continue to shape our work.

The year 2024-2025 has been one of purposeful growth. We expanded our outreach to more government schools, strengthened our literacy and science programmes, created new opportunities for children to explore creativity, and deepened our commitment to research, storytelling, and community engagement. Alongside these milestones, we continued investing in our team and organisational systems, recognising that lasting impact depends not only on meaningful programmes but also on strong institutions.

As I reflect on the past year, I am reminded that the most significant milestones are often the quiet ones. They are found in the child who picks up a book with curiosity, the teacher who rediscovers the joy of learning, the volunteer who returns each time with renewed enthusiasm, or the parent who begins to see the library as a part of their lives. These moments may never appear in statistics, yet they remain the truest measure of our work.

Looking ahead, I envision DGRREF continuing to grow as a community-rooted institution that nurtures readers, thinkers, creators, and responsible citizens. We remain committed to strengthening community libraries as vibrant learning spaces, fostering research and dialogue across the Eastern Himalaya, and building an organisation that is guided by learning, collaboration, and accountability.

To our children, parents, teachers, volunteers, partners, donors, Advisory Board Members, and our dedicated team, thank you for your trust and belief in this shared vision. As you read this report, I invite you to look beyond the programmes and achievements to the relationships that have made them possible. Together, we are building futures where every child has the opportunity to read, imagine, create, and thrive.

Prava Rai
Founder-Director
Dumigaon Reading Room Resource and Education Foundation



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Our Story

A Journey from Books to Community Transformation

Prava Rai
Founding Director

When the library was first opened, there was no formal inauguration or fanfare. Through quiet word of mouth, I informed the children of Dumigaon and local school students that a library had been built to share books and provide reading material for everyone.

The response was immediate and heartening. Children arrived eager to help unpack boxes of books, piling them onto tables before carefully arranging them on the shelves. I still recall the palpable excitement among them as they flitted about helping, curious and animated, handling books that many had never seen before.

What remains even more vivid in my memory are the village elders who came to visit. They touched the books gently, almost reverentially, and asked where they had come from and what wonders lay hidden in their pages. Many of them could not read.

Then came a second realisation. Many of the school-going children who visited the library every day could not read well enough to enjoy the books before them. The very people for whom the library had been built were unable to access the worlds contained within its shelves.

I felt disappointed because all my efforts to build a community library to provide books for all faced a huge hurdle. Our mutual frustrations - the children's and mine - gave rise to the idea of starting a reading programme. The challenge was how to begin and who could guide us?

I approached Mrs Reshma Thapa-Gurung, an experienced educator and literacy mentor, and requested her to train our team to become reading facilitators. At the same time, we began reaching out to schools in the surrounding areas to build partnerships.

From this understanding emerged our reading programme. Thus was born our outreach initiative, Reading for Joy.

We chose to work with children in rural government primary schools, where access to books and reading support was limited. Beginning with just four schools in 2021, the programme has steadily expanded and today reaches nine schools. Alongside reading, we also began providing learning support in Nepali and Science, helping children strengthen their language skills and scientific temperament.

Our Science component is supported by the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation, Delhi which funds a dedicated fellow who works through DGRRREF with the participating schools.

Strengthening the Library

As our educational programmes grew, we also strengthened the library itself. Books were systematically catalogued and classified according to professional library standards. This ongoing process created opportunities to engage trained librarians and contribute to the development of library science in Sikkim, a discipline that is still emerging.

With the guidance of Deena Subba, Librarian at Sikkim University, we refined our cataloguing and classification systems and laid the foundation for a more effective and accessible library.

During this period, we were fortunate to receive support from Bookworm Trust, Goa, an outstanding resource institution dedicated to children's libraries and reading promotion. Their training and guidance helped us deepen our understanding of how libraries can become vibrant centres of learning and community engagement.

Beyond Books: Building Community Spaces

Over time, our vision expanded beyond books and reading. Through our Art Workshops programme, the library has become a community space for creativity, dialogue, and cultural expression.

We organise art workshops, poetry-writing sessions, and educational programmes, often in collaboration with local and external partners. These activities have enabled the library to reach a much broader public and create opportunities for learning beyond the classroom.

Sikkim Project: The Land and Its People

In 2021, we launched the bilingual web journal the Sikkim Project, drawing upon three years of research and documentation that I had conducted on the culture, history, and heritage of Sikkim.

Registered under a Creative Commons Attribution-Non Commercial 4.0 International License, the platform has evolved into an important repository of knowledge on Sikkim and the Eastern Himalayas. It has provided emerging writers, researchers, and scholars from the region with opportunities to publish their work and engage in meaningful conversations on issues that matter to our communities.

Reading Himalaya: Expanding the Vision

Our efforts have also led to the establishment of a sister organisation, Reading Himalaya, under the leadership of Dr Mona Chettri, from Sikkim, Dr Rinan Shah from Darjeeling and Dr Anisa Bhutia from Kalimpong, West Bengal.

In a short span of time, Reading Himalaya has developed into a leading platform for research and public engagement on development-focused issues related to the Eastern Himalaya.

Apart from research, Reading Himalaya provides research capacity-building and mentorship to young scholars from the region.

Looking Ahead

What began as a small community library has grown into a grassroots movement dedicated to reading, education, research, and cultural preservation.

Yet the need remains immense. Across our region, many children still lack access to books, reading support, creative opportunities, and spaces where learning can flourish.

We look to the future with optimism and conviction. Our experience has shown that meaningful social transformation begins at the grassroots level—one child, one reader, one book, and one community at a time.

With continued support, we hope to expand our reach, deepen our impact, and ensure that many more children and communities can discover the opportunities that knowledge, creativity, and learning make possible.





Timeline



2016

- Building the foundation of the DG Reading Room Resource and Education Foundation



2019

- DG Reading Room Resource and Education Foundation opens to the public.



2021

- RGF became a partner.
- Reading for Joy launched.
- Sikkim Project launched
- Sunday Sessions started.
- Professional team development began.



2022

- The existing programmes continued.
- Sunday Sessions became more focused.



2023

- Art Workshops started.
- DG Reading Room Resource and Education Foundation registered as a Section 8 Company
- Winter Programme began.
- Newsletter began.
- Sister Organisation-Reading Himalaya launched.



2024

- Outreach expands to nine government schools.
- Contact with Bookworm Trust, Goa made.
- Summer Programme began.



2025

- Bookworm Trust, Goa became partner.
- Reading Himalaya expands its initiatives.



Organisational Overview

The Dumigaon Reading Room Resource and Education Foundation (DGRRREF) is a not-for-profit company based in Dumigaon, South Sikkim. Registered as a Section 8 company under the Companies Act (2013) in September 2023, the Foundation is dedicated to fostering community engagement across the region. Its journey began with the idea of the Reading Room, a community library envisioned over many years. Designed by Goa-based architect Indrajit Chatterji and executed by Gangtok-based architect Kailash Pradhan, the construction began in 2016 and officially opened to the public in March 2019. The Reading Room laid the groundwork for what would become a broader initiative. Since then, the Foundation has grown and evolved, expanding its vision and reach.

The Foundation, at its core, believes that stories have the quiet power to transform lives. Our efforts thereby grow from a simple yet profound idea that reading, reflection, and curiosity can help children and communities to flourish. Thereby, the Reading Room offers its space and resources to nurture lifelong readers, thoughtful citizens, and rooted, imaginative learners and changemakers. This initiative expands into our flagship programme Reading For Joy, which spreads the joy of books and reading in government primary schools with the aim of strengthening literacy competence both in Nepali and English. Furthermore, to ensure meaningful engagement with children within the library and in schools, the in-house training programme strengthens the professional and skill development of the reading teachers. Additionally, our creative wing, Art Workshops, centres around a shared space for knowledge, exploration and building deeper connections with ourselves, our communities and the environment. And our collaboration with the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation, Delhi, further supports science and environmental awareness among children.

Meanwhile, our commitment to knowledge and storytelling also extends into the digital world through Sikkim Project: The Land and Its People, a bilingual (Nepali-English) website that explores the interconnectedness of Sikkim's landscapes, histories, and communities, including Darjeeling, Kalimpong, Bhutan, and the Dooars. Finally, the Reading Himalaya, our sister organisation offers Research & Policy Consultancy focusing on society, environment, development, and politics of the Himalayan region.

Together, these strands form the Dumigaon Reading Room Resource and Education Foundation, an evolving ecosystem that values the power of quiet stories, shared spaces and sustained learning in shaping our communities and hopeful futures.



Our Vision

We envision a reflective, just, and sustainable society where every child, youth, and community in the Eastern Himalaya has access to inspiring learning spaces that nurture imagination, empathy, critical thinking, and lifelong learning. Rooted in the region's cultural and ecological richness, people are empowered to engage thoughtfully with one another, their environment, and the wider world as curious, responsible citizens.

Our Mission

To foster a culture of reading, reflection, and responsible citizenship among children, youth, and communities in Sikkim and the Eastern Himalaya. We create inclusive learning spaces that provide free access to books, creative programmes, and opportunities for dialogue, strengthening literacy, critical thinking, and artistic expression. Through research, advocacy, and collaboration with educators, artists, researchers, and grassroots organisations, we promote social engagement, environmental awareness, and equitable, sustainable development across the region.

Our Values



Reading as a
pathway to lifelong
learning

Inclusion and
equitable access

Creativity as a form
of expression

Communities as
partners in change

Learning rooted in
local cultures and
lived experiences

Curiosity as the
foundation of
learning

Reflection and
critical engagement



Our Theory of Change

Every programme at DGRREF begins with a simple belief...

Children learn best when they are curious, supported, and surrounded by opportunities to explore.

Rather than treating literacy, science, creativity, environmental learning, and community participation as separate areas of development, we bring them together into holistic learning experiences that respond to the diverse interests and potential of every child. By creating joyful, inclusive, and community-led learning environments, we help children develop the knowledge, confidence, curiosity, creativity, empathy, and life skills they need to thrive.

Our Catalysts for Change

We strengthen children's learning by investing in the people, places, and partnerships that make education accessible, joyful, and relevant.

Our work is driven by:

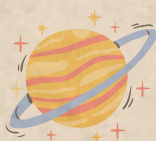
- Community partnerships
- Dedicated volunteers and facilitators
- Evidence-informed learning approaches
- Inclusive learning spaces
- Books and learning resources
- Parent and community participation

Building a Community-Led Learning Ecosystem

A reflective, just, and sustainable society where every child, youth, and community in the Eastern Himalaya has access to inspiring learning spaces and opportunities for lifelong learning.



Foundational Literacy & Reading Culture



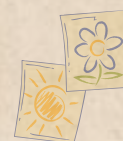
Science & Environmental Learning



Community Engagement & Ownership



Access to Books & Learning Resources



Creativity, Arts & Experiential Learning



Our Pillars

Our approach is implemented through five interconnected pillars that together create a comprehensive learning ecosystem.



Foundational Literacy & Reading Culture

Building strong reading habits and literacy skills through storytelling, guided reading, reading comprehension, communication, and joyful reading experiences that foster a lifelong love for books.



Access to Books & Learning Resources

Providing year-round access to the Reading Room, community library services, diverse age-appropriate books, and welcoming learning environments that encourage curiosity and independent learning.



Creativity, Arts & Experiential Learning

Encouraging imagination, self-expression, confidence, and holistic development through arts, storytelling, cultural activities, and experiential learning opportunities.



Science & Environmental Learning

Fostering scientific temper, innovation, and environmental stewardship through hands-on science activities, nature-based learning, and exploration of local ecosystems.



Community Engagement & Ownership

Strengthening community participation in children's education by engaging parents, educators, volunteers, and local stakeholders in shared learning, leadership, and collective ownership of educational spaces.



Our Ecosystem

A Community-Centred Learning Ecosystem

Our five programme pillars come together to create an interconnected ecosystem of learning that extends across schools and community spaces.

At the heart of this ecosystem is the DGRREF, which is more than a library; it is a vibrant community learning space where children discover the joy of reading, express themselves creatively, explore science and nature, build meaningful relationships, and develop the confidence and curiosity to become lifelong learners. By engaging families, educators, volunteers, and local communities, we ensure that learning is continuous, inclusive, and community-led, creating opportunities for every child to learn, explore, create, and thrive beyond the classroom.





Our Impact

What Changes?

For Children

Children demonstrate improved literacy, reading fluency, and comprehension, alongside stronger and more consistent reading habits and increased use of library spaces. They show greater confidence in expression, communication, and creativity, as well as enhanced curiosity, critical thinking, and problem-solving abilities. Our programmes also nurture a stronger scientific temper and environmental awareness, while fostering empathy, resilience, and attitudes that support lifelong learning.

For Families

Families become more actively engaged in their children’s learning journeys, with reading and learning increasingly integrated into everyday home life. There is greater encouragement and sustained support for children’s education and development.

For Communities

Communities show stronger participation through volunteering and local leadership, alongside growing shared ownership of learning spaces. This has contributed to a vibrant culture of reading, learning, and collective engagement.

Long-Term Impact

Children, young people, and communities cultivate the literacy, confidence, creativity, empathy, and critical thinking needed to pursue meaningful educational pathways, care for their environment, strengthen their communities, and contribute to a reflective, just, and sustainable society in the Eastern Himalaya.

Contributing to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Primary Contributing SDGs



Cross-Cutting Contributions





Year at a Glance

2024–2025 Highlights

The past year has been one of consolidation, expansion, and deeper community engagement. While our work remained rooted in literacy and children's learning, we also strengthened our efforts in science education, creative expression, research, library development, and institutional capacity building.



Children Reached

- 200+ children through Reading for Joy
- 100+ children through the Science Programme
- 70 participants in the Winter Programme
- 50 participants in the Summer Programme
- 50+ children attended Sunday Sessions



Schools Partnered

- 9 Government Schools



Learning Spaces

- 20 Library Visits
- 130 Outreach Visits
- 26 Sunday Sessions
- 28 Science Sessions
- 6 Art Workshops



Resources

- 5,000+ Books and a growing children's collection
- Professional library cataloguing system strengthened



Community

- Volunteers from Sikkim and Goa
- Partnership with the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation
- Continued mentoring through Bookworm Trust, Goa
- Expansion of community engagement initiatives



Knowledge Platforms

- Continued publication of the Sikkim Project
- Strengthening Reading Himalaya
- Capacity building of the DGRRREF team



Our Programmes

Bringing Our Learning Ecosystem to Life

DGRRREF acts as the Foundation from which our work extends into literacy, library development, science and environment education, creative arts, research, public engagement, and community partnerships.

Guided by five programme pillars, we work across schools and community spaces.

Through integrated, holistic, hands-on, experiential learning, we support children to build knowledge, confidence, curiosity, creativity, and deeper connections with their communities.

Programme	Primary Pillar
Reading for Joy (English & Nepali)	Foundational Literacy & Reading Culture
Library Visits (Reading For Joy)	Access to Books & Learning Resources
Sunday Sessions	Community Engagement & Ownership
Art Workshops	Creativity, Arts & Experiential Learning
The Winter & Summer Programme	Creativity, Arts & Experiential Learning
The Science Programme	Science & Environmental Learning







Reading for Joy

Bringing the Joy of Reading into Classrooms

Reading for Joy is the foundation's flagship outreach programme, rooted in the belief that every child deserves the opportunity to experience the joy of reading. The programme was formally launched on 19th November 2021 through an induction meeting with teachers and heads of four government schools, following their positive responses to our initial outreach efforts to explore their participation. The schools comprised Purano Namchi-Government Primary School, Gurungoan-Junior High School, Salghari-Secondary School and Assangthang-Secondary School, now a PM Shri School. Following this, introductory reading sessions were conducted in the schools, primarily with grade four and five students. And by early 2022, all four schools had joined the programme, marking the beginning of a shared effort to foster a culture of reading among children. From 2024 onwards, the programme expanded its reach from seven to nine partner schools with the inclusion of Bikmat Senior Secondary School and Tinik Chisopani Junior High School.

The programme focuses on the primary section (Classes I to V), providing students with access to books, learning resources, and engaging reading experiences in both English and Nepali. Over time, the sessions have evolved to include more focused and specialized activities designed in response to the literacy needs and learning levels of the children.

The outreach facilitators organise reading activities twice a month per school across two terms each year. The first term runs from March to May and second term from August to November. In addition the students visit the library once a month for a dedicated library session. The sessions include a range of activities such as interactive read-alouds, shared reading, shared inquiry, vocabulary development, storytelling, sight-word activities, and creative writing exercises.



Programme Reach

Children Reached: 210

Target Group: Classes I-V

Sessions Conducted: 130

Partner Schools: 9 Government Schools

- Assangthang Secondary School
- Bikmat Senior Secondary School
- Compound Primary School
- Dhargoan Primary School
- Gurunggoan Junior High School
- Nandugaon Senior Secondary School
- Purano Namchi Primary School
- Salghari Secondary School
- Tinik Chisopani Junior High School

Key Outcomes

Expansion from 7 to 9 Schools

The programme expanded from 7 to 9 partner schools during 2024-2025, extending joyful reading and literacy opportunities to more children across the community.

100% Positive Response in Reading Enthusiasm Across Partner Schools

All partner schools reported that children became more enthusiastic about reading and eagerly looked forward to read-aloud sessions and library visits.

Adoption of Interactive Teaching Practices in 1 School

Teachers at Dhargoan Primary School incorporated interactive discussion and vocabulary-building strategies introduced through the programme, reporting improved classroom participation and learning outcomes.

80% Improvement in Student Participation and Confidence

Most partner schools observed greater student participation, with children demonstrating increased confidence in raising their hands, asking questions, sharing observations, and contributing to classroom discussions.

The Story of Mapping Memories

Sometimes, the most ordinary days leave behind the heaviest thoughts.

It was a regular session at Purano Namchi Primary School, a small school about 3 km from our library. I was conducting an activity called Heart Mapping with students from Grades I, II, and III. The children were asked to draw a large heart, divide it into sections, and fill each one with something that brought them joy: their favourite people, food, place, or memory.

The classroom quickly filled with excitement. Crayons, pencils, and erasers covered the desks as everyone eagerly began drawing. A few minutes later, Avin raised his hand.

"Ma'am, what is the spelling of fav-raaa-tee?"

"Favourite," I smiled, writing it on the board for everyone to copy.

As the children worked, I quietly moved around the classroom, stopping now and then to admire their drawings.

Chan had drawn his parents and siblings under "Favourite People." Rosh had filled her page with temples, flowers, Shiva Ji, and Char Dham. "It's my favourite place," she said with a smile.

Then I came across Avinash's worksheet. Under "Favourite Memory," he had drawn a familiar scene: mountains, a bright sun, green hills, a house, and a small one-room structure standing nearby.

I knelt beside him.

"Is this your home?"

"Yes."

"It looks beautiful. Is this Purano Namchi?"

He shook his head.

"No. It's Rimbi. I don't live there anymore. I live with my mom."

Pointing to the smaller structure, I asked, "Is that a temple?"

He looked at his drawing and replied quietly,

"No. That's our toilet."

Then, without hesitation, he added,

"That's where my dad committed suicide."

For a moment, I froze.

Before I could respond, he simply said,

"I don't have a father."

Almost immediately, another child spoke.

"Ma'am, I also don't have a dad. He was killed by my own mother."

Then another voice followed.

"My dad was swept away by the river while fishing."

One after another, stories surfaced.

These were children in Grades I, II, and III-children who were barely eight years old. What had begun as an activity about happy memories became a window into lives carrying unimaginable loss.

What struck me most was not only what they shared, but how naturally they shared it. There was no drama or hesitation-just simple facts woven into the stories of their lives. That day, I collected the worksheets and quietly walked out of the classroom.

Not because I did not care, but because I had no words.

As a facilitator, I did not know how to console them. I did not know what the right response was. Their stories stayed with me long after the session ended.

We often see children laughing, playing, drawing, and colouring, and assume life is simple for them. But behind those small smiles can be experiences far heavier than we can imagine.

Sometimes, all it takes is a heart-shaped worksheet for an entire world to quietly reveal itself.

-Nisha Subba

English Language Facilitator | Programme Coordinator

Note: Names have been changed to protect the identity of the children.







Reading for Joy (Nepali)

Strengthening Literacy Through the Mother Tongue

The inclusion of Nepali language as a part of the outreach programme (Reading for Joy) was introduced to strengthen children's foundational literacy in their mother tongue and ensure that every child develops basic reading and writing skills.

While the Reading for Joy programme began with bilingual read-aloud sessions, our work with schools revealed that many children lacked confidence to read and write in Nepali despite the language being spoken widely across the state and serving as the mother tongue for many students. In response, we introduced dedicated Nepali literacy sessions that complemented English reading activities through the use of age-appropriate Nepali picture books.

Throughout the year, sessions evolved to meet the learning needs of different age groups. For students in Classes I to III, activities focused on building foundational literacy using strategies like read-aloud, phonics, vocabulary-building exercises, singing, and light reading sessions. For older students in Classes IV and V, the sessions encouraged reading and writing activities on a deeper level through a collection of thematic books such as *Sundar Ban*, *Hami Jastai Biruwa Haru*, *Aghi Aghi Pani Pachi Pachi Nani* and more. Children explored various themes carried out through discussions, storytelling, role-play and art.

As the Nepali sessions progressed over the year, many students gradually improved their reading and writing skills while learning to express themselves in their mother tongue.



Programme Reach

Children Reached: 210

Target Group: Classes I-V

Sessions Conducted: 130

Partner Schools : 9 Government Schools

- Nandugaon Senior Secondary School
- Bikmat Senior Secondary School
- Assangthang Secondary School
- Salghari Secondary School
- Gurunggoan Junior High School
- Purano Namchi Primary School
- Dhargoan Primary School
- Compound Primary School
- Tinik Chisopani Junior High School

Key Outcomes

Increase in Student Engagement

9 out of 10 teachers observed that children became more actively engaged in learning after interactive and activity-based reading replaced passive silent reading sessions.

Growth in Language and Vocabulary

Children across all six schools demonstrated that integrating Nepali and English through bilingual literacy strengthened reading skills, expanded their vocabulary, and encouraged them to compose their own original rhymes in Nepali.

Improvement in Teamwork and Environmental Awareness

All schools reported that story discussions, collaborative learning, and creative craft activities successfully strengthened teamwork while helping children understand practical lessons on environmental care and wellbeing.



The Story of Never Giving Up

Sudan, a resident of Dumigaon, faced a significant setback after receiving a compartment (failing the subject, but not the class year) in Nepali in his Class X board examinations. Reading and understanding the language had always been difficult for him, and he knew he needed additional support.

Determined to improve, Sudan began visiting the library every day after school. He spent hours practising independently while regularly seeking guidance to clarify his doubts.

Through consistent effort, perseverance, and the right support, Sudan successfully cleared his compartment examination. His journey reminds us that when children are provided with encouragement, dedicated mentors, and a supportive learning environment, they gain not only stronger literacy skills but also the confidence to overcome challenges they once believed were beyond their reach.

-Suveksha Thapa
Nepali Language Facilitator

Note: Name has been changed to protect the identity of the child.







Reading For Joy (Library Visits)

Discovering the Library as a Space for Learning

Library Visits provide students from the partner schools with regular opportunities to experience the library as a welcoming space for reading, exploration, and joyful learning. The sessions and activities are designed to encourage children to move beyond textbooks by engaging with books, stories, and hands-on activities.

As a mandate of the programme, students from each school visited the library once a month, where they explored the library space, discovered new books, and participated in interactive learning experiences. Read-aloud sessions remained at the heart of every visit, complemented by activities such as DEAR (Drop Everything and Read), shared reading, phonics, simple writing exercises, bio-poem writing, and circle games that encouraged participation and collaboration.

The library also became a space for interdisciplinary learning. Children participated in science and language activities, including nature walks where they explored their surroundings using their five senses, singing sessions featuring the Sikkim anthem Jaha Bagcha Teesta Rangit, mystery box games that encouraged observation and vocabulary development, alphabet scavenger hunts to help them navigate the library independently, and Roll and Retell activities that strengthened reading comprehension and storytelling skills.

Each visit was designed not only to improve literacy but also to help children see the library as a place where learning is enjoyable, interactive, and rooted in curiosity.



Programme Reach

Children Reached: 210

Partner Schools: 9 Government Schools

Library Visit Sessions Conducted: 20

Target Group: Classes I–V

Key Outcomes

Improved Reading and Writing Skills

Nearly 60% of participating children demonstrated improvement in their basic reading and writing skills over the course of the programme.

Growing Confidence in the Library

Around 80% of children became familiar with the library space and confidently navigated it independently, exploring books and learning resources on their own.

Active Participation

Approximately 70% of children participated actively during guided reading sessions and responded positively to interactive learning activities.

Challenges & Learnings

Until September 2024, the Library Visit sessions were facilitated by the Outreach Team. As part of strengthening internal capacities, responsibility for the programme was gradually transferred to the Library Team.

While the transition initially presented challenges in planning and facilitating sessions, regular practice, reflection, and collaborative learning helped the team build confidence and strengthen the quality of the programme. The experience reinforced our belief that children's librarianship extends beyond managing books, it is about creating meaningful learning experiences that encourage children to explore, question, and connect with the world around them.

Library Sessions with a Few Partner Schools



Tinik Chisopani Junior High School



Nandugaon Senior Secondary School



Dhargoan Primary School



Assangthang Secondary School



Bikmat Senior Secondary School



The Story of finding a Safe Space

Meera, a young girl from the Adivasi community, quickly became one of the children who left a lasting impression on us during the Library Visit sessions. Living away from her family while working for a household that supported her education, she arrived at the library with an eagerness to learn that was evident in every visit.

Meera loved books and stories. She remembered the titles of books we had read together and often recalled details from previous sessions with remarkable enthusiasm. Her curiosity and excitement reminded us how meaningful access to books can be.

One day, while talking about how much she enjoyed coming to the library, she quietly said, "I wish I could bring my blankets and bedding here and stay here forever."

Her words stayed with us. They reminded us that the library had become much more than a place to read. For Meera, it had become a space where she felt safe, welcomed, valued, and free to imagine a different future.

-Phunchokla Bhutia

Library Session Facilitator | Library Assistant

Note: Name has been changed to protect the identity of the child.





Reading for Joy

Overall Challenges & Key Learnings

Key Learnings

- Working with young children reminded us that attention spans are short, and passive reading alone is rarely enough to sustain engagement.
- Children engaged more meaningfully when literacy was taught through interactive, activity-based learning. Interactive activities, storytelling, role-play, hands-on crafts, and small-group learning proved far more effective in maintaining children's interest and participation.

Challenges

- Children entered the programme with different literacy levels, requiring facilitators to continuously adapt activities to meet individual learning needs.
- Heavy rainfall, landslides, and school holidays disrupted travel, reduced school visits, and limited instructional time.
- At Tinik Chisopani Junior High School, children required additional support due to weaker foundational literacy skills.
- Compound Primary School presented unique challenges, with Classes I–V learning together in a single classroom supported by one trained teacher and one volunteer.

Reflections

- These experiences reinforced the importance of flexible programme planning, differentiated instruction, and preparing alternative activities for weather-related disruptions.
- They also highlighted the need for targeted literacy support and continued partnerships with schools facing resource constraints to ensure continuity.





Sunday Sessions

A Free Library Space for Learning, Exploring, and Growing Together

Sunday Sessions were created to provide children from nearby villages with a welcoming space where they could come together every week to read, explore books, discover new interests, and learn through play. The sessions are open to children between the ages of 3-16, offering opportunities for learning beyond the classroom, while fostering friendships, creativity, and a sense of belonging within the library community.

Throughout the year, Sunday Sessions encouraged children to engage with books through a wide range of creative, experiential, and seasonal activities. Children imagined and designed their ideal library spaces, created personalised library cards to track their reading journeys, shared book talks, and explored different genres through book-tasting activities that introduced them to new authors and stories.

Special occasions provided opportunities to connect reading with the world around them. Sessions celebrated Friendship Day, National Librarian's Day, Nepali Bhasha Manyata Diwas, National Sports Day, and National Nutrition Week through debates, skits, games, science experiments, storytelling, and discussions inspired by books. Seasonal themes also shaped children's learning as they explored the rainy season through stories, created Teru Teru Bozu weather charms, and enjoyed a film screening together.

Creativity remained at the heart of every session. Children participated in guided drawing inspired by stories, Halloween-themed activities, face painting, book charades, science explorations, and nature-based art using leaves and flowers to create natural colours. During the Book Hospital activity, children learned how to repair damaged books, understand the different parts of a book, and take shared responsibility for caring for the library.

A visit to Azing Farm further inspired children to create their own books, connecting observation, storytelling, and creative expression. Towards the end of the year, a dedicated reflection session provided children with an opportunity to share their interests and ideas, helping shape future Sunday Sessions.

Programme Reach

Children Reached: 51

Sunday Sessions Conducted: 26

Target Group: Children aged 3–16 years from nearby villages

Key Outcomes

72% Average Attendance

A majority of children participated consistently throughout the year, reflecting sustained interest and regular engagement in Sunday Sessions.

Greater Confidence and Participation

Approximately 58-60% of participating children demonstrated increased confidence in asking questions, expressing their ideas, and contributing to group discussions.

Creative Expression and Exploration

Around 75% of children are actively engaged in art, craft, storytelling, book-based activities, and hands-on learning experiences, strengthening both creativity and confidence.

Challenges & Learnings

One of the greatest challenges was designing sessions for children across a wide age range. Attendance varied from week to week, making it difficult to predict the number of participants and their ages. Activities that engaged older children were not always appropriate for younger participants, while simpler activities sometimes failed to challenge older children.

This experience reinforced the importance of planning age-appropriate activities and, where possible, organising smaller groups that allow children to participate at a pace suited to their interests and developmental stage. It also highlighted the value of maintaining flexibility, ensuring that every child feels included regardless of age or ability.



The Story of Quiet Changes

Sunny was a bright, energetic boy who attended Sunday Sessions regularly. Confident and full of energy, he often wanted things to go his way and sometimes found it difficult to manage his emotions or consider others' perspectives.

After one incident in which he became upset and stopped attending sessions for a time, we were unsure whether he would return. When he eventually came back, we noticed a quiet but meaningful change. He remained the same lively child, but he had become calmer, more patient, and increasingly considerate towards others, particularly younger children.

This transformation became especially visible during the Book Hospital activity. Sunny took great pride in repairing damaged books, carefully organising materials, and helping care for the library. He approached every task with patience and enthusiasm, always willing to lend a helping hand. Watching him take responsibility for something shared reminded us that community spaces do more than encourage learning—they help children develop empathy, responsibility, and a sense of belonging.

-Phunchokla Bhutia
Library Session Facilitator | Library Assistant

Note: Name has been changed to protect the identity of the child.







The Science Programme

Inspiring Curiosity Through Experiential Learning

The Science Programme seeks to make science learning engaging, accessible, and curiosity-driven by encouraging children to explore scientific concepts through observation, experimentation, and discovery. Supported by the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation (RGF), the programme promotes its flagship initiatives, Sadbhavana with Nature and GenNext STEP (Generation Next Science, Technology, and Entrepreneurship Practice). While Sadbhavana with Nature encourages children to build a meaningful connection with the natural world, GenNext STEP fosters a love for science and entrepreneurship through hands-on experiments, interactive workshops, and nature-based exploration. By making science enjoyable and rooted in real-world experiences, the programme nurtures the next generation of thinkers, innovators, and problem-solvers while promoting scientific temper and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) education through science kits that make learning more interactive and meaningful.

During 2024-2025, the programme was implemented across six government schools, reaching children from primary and upper-primary classes (Grades I-VIII), running parallel with the outreach programme Reading For Joy. A few library sessions were also conducted for the primary-grade students during their library visits and a few more additional science sessions enabled children from neighbouring villages and other schools to participate in inclusive, hands-on learning experiences.

Throughout the year, children explored a wide range of scientific concepts that complemented their school curriculum while encouraging inquiry beyond textbooks. Sessions covered topics such as parts of plants, the human heart, the human skeleton, the digestive system, the human eye, Newton's Disc, surface tension, sink and float, air pressure, magnetic compass, kaleidoscope, gliders, teeth models, and other foundational science concepts. Mathematics was also integrated into the programme through engaging activities that helped children develop basic mathematical understanding in enjoyable and practical ways.

Rather than relying on traditional classroom instruction, the programme encouraged children to learn by doing. Through experiments, teamwork, observation, discussion, and scientific investigations, children were given opportunities to ask questions, test ideas, and connect science with their everyday lives. Science kits provided by the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation, together with locally available materials and creative lesson planning, enabled children to experience science as an exciting process of exploration rather than simply another school subject.

Programme Reach

Children Reached: 109

Target Group: Grades I-VIII

Science Sessions Conducted: 28

Partner Schools: 6 Government Schools

- Nandugaon Senior Secondary School – 36 children (7 sessions)
- Assangthang Secondary School – 21 children (4 sessions)
- Salghari Secondary School – 16 children (7 sessions)
- Gurunggoan Junior High School – 9 children (6 sessions)
- Bikmat Senior Secondary School – 16 children (3 sessions)
- Tinik Chisopani Junior High School – 11 children (1 session)

Key Outcomes

Expanding Access to Science Learning

The programme reached 109 children across six government schools, providing hands-on science learning experiences that complemented classroom teaching and introduced children to practical STEM education.

Growing Interest in Science and Mathematics

Approximately 85% of participating children demonstrated greater interest in science and mathematics through activity-based learning, experiments, and interactive discussions.

Greater Confidence and Participation

Around 80% of students showed increased confidence in asking questions, sharing observations, and actively participating during science sessions.

Learning Through Exploration

Nearly 90% of children enthusiastically engaged in experiments, collaborative activities, and scientific investigations, reflecting the effectiveness of experiential learning.

All 109 children gained exposure to practical science activities that reinforced concepts from their school curriculum.

Challenges & Learnings

Implementing hands-on science sessions presented several practical challenges. Large class sizes, particularly at Nandugaon Senior Secondary School, made it difficult for every child to participate equally in experiments. While the science kits provided by the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation greatly supported the programme, additional resources were required to conduct all planned activities effectively.

Integrating science sessions into school timetables also required close coordination with teachers, who occasionally faced challenges adjusting their regular classroom schedules. In addition, visiting each school only twice a month limited opportunities to observe long-term changes in children's learning and made it difficult to distinguish programme outcomes from regular classroom teaching.

These experiences reinforced the importance of sustained engagement, adequate learning resources, and strong collaboration with schools. They also highlighted that hands-on, inquiry-based learning can significantly enhance children's curiosity and participation, even within resource-constrained educational settings.





The Story of Curiosity-Inspiring Science

One of the most rewarding aspects of the programme was witnessing the gradual transformation in children's curiosity and confidence. During the initial visits, many students were hesitant to participate and rarely asked questions, often viewing science as a subject that required memorising facts rather than exploring ideas.

As activity-based lessons and simple experiments became a regular part of the sessions, this began to change. Children started asking thoughtful questions, eagerly sharing their observations, and participating more actively in discussions and investigations. Their growing enthusiasm demonstrated that when science is experienced through exploration and discovery, children become more confident learners who are willing to question, experiment, and think critically about the world around them.

-Sumiran Basnett

Science and Maths Facilitator | RGF Programme Associate







Art Workshops

Nurturing Creativity Through Art

The art workshops were born from a simple observation...that children love art!

What began as occasional art workshops gradually evolved into something much more meaningful. As we watched children return eagerly to every session, experimenting with colours, sketching, painting, and expressing themselves in their own unique ways, we realised that creativity deserved a permanent place within DGRREF's learning ecosystem. Then a series of workshops were conducted by Suveksha Pradhan and Carien Rai either on a second or 4th Saturday since 2022.

From April to December 2024, six art workshops were facilitated by local artists and supporters who generously shared their knowledge and skills with children. Sanjeevni Rai introduced participants to creative painting on wooden panels and pebbles, encouraging them to see that art can be created using the world around them. Suveksha and Carien continued to guide children through watercolour painting and sketching, demonstrating how simple techniques could transform everyday drawings into expressive works of art. Later, Carien, along with Shrawan Rai, a local artist, encouraged children to explore sketching while also supporting those interested in experimenting with watercolours. Ashok Rai concluded sessions on light, shadow, and advanced watercolour techniques, helping children deepen their artistic understanding.

Every workshop became a space for exploration rather than perfection. Some children preferred watercolours, while others enjoyed sketching with pencils. Some drew landscapes and flowers, while others created manga characters or painted the Indian flag.

Every child expressed themselves differently, yet each one approached the blank page with curiosity, confidence, and imagination. The paintings that now hang across the library are more than artwork; they are reminders of learning, creativity, and the joy of creating together.

As the programme continues to grow and find relevance in the hearts of the children, the next step is to instil an understanding of art as a lens to explore and engage with environmental and social issues while discovering its power to inspire awareness and meaningful action.

Programme Reach

Art Workshops Conducted: 6

Facilitators

- Sanjeevni Rai
- Suveksha Pradhan
- Carien Rai
- Shrawan Rai
- Ashok Rai

Participants

- 13 April 2024 – 26
- 13 July 2024 – 27
- 10 August 2024 – 60
- 14 September 2024 – 18
- 9 November 2024 – 15
- 14 December 2024 – 15

Children participated from Dumigaon, Alley, Dhargoan, Salghari, and Namchi.

Key Outcomes

Building Creative Confidence

The workshops created a safe and joyful space where children freely explored different forms of artistic expression while developing confidence in their own creative abilities.

Strengthening Artistic Skills

Participants demonstrated noticeable improvement in colour blending, watercolour techniques, sketching, and shading, producing increasingly refined and expressive artwork over successive workshops.

Connecting Communities Through Art

The workshops brought together children from both rural and urban communities, creating opportunities to learn from one another, build friendships, and share creative experiences across diverse backgrounds.

While every child progressed in their own way, Krish Rai and Anish Rai showed particularly remarkable growth in both confidence and artistic ability throughout the workshops.



Challenges & Learnings

One of the main challenges we faced was addressing the different interests of the children. For example, when we invited an artist who specialised in watercolour, children who preferred sketching often found the session boring or irrelevant. It was difficult to plan activities that catered to everyone's interests, especially when some children openly expressed that they did not enjoy a particular activity.

Another challenge was encouraging the children to value the art supplies. Since the materials were provided free of cost, many of them did not use them carefully. It was challenging to help the children understand the importance of respecting and taking care of resources that were being made available for them.

These challenges became valuable learning experiences for us. They helped us become more considerate of the diverse interests and needs of the children. We also introduced stricter housekeeping rules to ensure that art supplies were used responsibly and that the children cleaned up their workspaces after each session.





The Story of Building Confidence through Creativity

For us, the greatest success of the workshops was never measured by the paintings themselves. It was reflected in the atmosphere of each workshop-in the laughter shared around the tables, the willingness of children to try something new, and the confidence that grew with every brushstroke.

Not every painting was perfect. Some were little more than colourful strokes, while others were careful sketches or imaginative scenes. Yet every child picked up a pencil or a paintbrush, experimented without fear, and discovered new ways to express themselves.

Today, many of these artworks continue to hang on the walls of our library. They serve as lasting reminders that creativity is not about creating perfect art; it is about creating spaces where every child feels free to imagine, explore, and express who they are.







Winter Programme

Keeping the Joy of Learning Alive During Winter Breaks

The Winter Programme was first introduced in 2022 to address the "winter slide"-the learning loss that many children experience during the long school holidays when opportunities to read, write, and engage in meaningful learning become limited. What began as a small initiative in Dumigaon for children from Classes I to V has gradually grown into an annual community programme that supports children's learning, creativity, and overall development throughout the winter break.

The 2024-2025 Winter Programme was conducted from 6 January to 30 January 2025 over four weeks, bringing together 70 children from Kindergarten to Class X. Participants travelled from Dumigaon, Lower Dumigaon, Dhargoan, Assangthang, Salghari, Alley, and Namchi, creating a vibrant learning community where children of different ages learned alongside one another.

Throughout the programme, children participated in a wide range of literacy activities designed to strengthen reading habits and language skills. Interactive Read Alouds, Shared Inquiry, Vocabulary Instruction, DEAR (Drop Everything and Read), Storytelling, and Library Education encouraged children to engage meaningfully with books while fostering curiosity, confidence, and a love for reading.

Science sessions complemented literacy learning through hands-on exploration and experimentation. Activities such as Elephant Toothpaste, Volcanic Eruption experiments, and Bird Feeder Creation encouraged children to observe, question, and discover scientific concepts through experience rather than memorisation.

Creativity also formed an integral part of the programme. Children participated in arts and crafts activities, staged a skit based on *The Forgotten Garden*, learned crochet, and attended a special art workshop facilitated by local artists Carien Rai and Ashok Rai, who introduced participants to watercolour painting and sketching techniques.

One of the most memorable moments of the programme was the introduction of the Nepali library song, "Swagat Cha Sabai Lai Hamro Pustakalaya Ma" ("We Welcome Everyone to Our Library"), written and composed by our Nepali Facilitator, Suveksha Thapa. Performed during the orientation programme, the song quickly became a favourite among the children, who enthusiastically learned and sang it throughout the winter programme, creating a shared sense of belonging and identity within the library.

By bringing together literacy, science, art, craft, music, and experiential learning, the Winter Programme transformed the school holidays into a joyful space where children continued learning, exploring, and growing together.

Programme Reach

Programme Duration: 6-30 January 2025 (4 Weeks)

Children Reached: 70

Target Group: Kindergarten-Class X

Participating Villages

- Dumigaon
- Lower Dumigaon
- Dhargoan
- Assangthang
- Salghari
- Alley
- Namchi

Key Outcomes

Expanded Community Participation

The programme experienced an 80% increase in participation, reaching more villages and engaging a larger number of children than in previous years.

Holistic Learning Opportunities

All participants were exposed to diverse learning experiences across six thematic areas- literacy, science, art, craft, music, and exposure-based learning-creating a balanced and enriching holiday programme.

Improved Accessibility

Transportation support significantly improved participation, with 100% of programme locations where transport was provided reporting higher and more consistent attendance.

Challenges & Learnings

Bringing together children from Kindergarten to Class X created a vibrant learning environment, but also presented challenges in designing activities that were equally engaging and appropriate for every age group. Daily attendance also varied despite prior enrollment, requiring facilitators to adapt sessions based on the number and age of participants present each day.

Although participation remained strong throughout the programme, approximately 20 children did not maintain regular library visits after the programme concluded. This highlighted the importance of developing stronger post-programme engagement strategies to help children remain connected to the library beyond the winter break.

The experience reinforced the value of flexible programme design, age-appropriate learning groups, and sustained follow-up with children and families to ensure that the enthusiasm generated during the Winter Programme continues throughout the year.





The Story of How a Song became a Shared Identity

One of the defining moments of the Winter Programme was hearing children enthusiastically sing "Swagat Cha Sabai Lai Hamro Pustakalaya Ma" as they gathered at the library each morning. Written and composed by our Nepali Language Facilitator, Suveksha Thapa, the song quickly became more than an opening activity-it became part of the identity of the programme.

Children learned the lyrics with excitement, sang together during sessions, and carried the song home to their families. It created a sense of belonging that extended beyond individual activities, reminding us that learning communities are built not only through books and lessons but also through shared experiences, traditions, and joyful moments that children remember long after the programme ends.







Summer Programme

Learning, Exploring, and Creating Together During the Summer Break

The Summer Programme was introduced for the first time in 2024 to provide children with meaningful learning opportunities during their summer vacation while encouraging creativity, curiosity, and community engagement. Conducted from 3-6 July 2024, the four-day programme transformed the library into a vibrant learning space where children could read, create, experiment, perform, and learn together beyond the classroom.

The inaugural programme brought together 50 children from Kindergarten to Class X, representing Dumigaon, Lower Dumigaon, Alley, Gurunggoan, and Dhargoan. Bringing together children from different age groups created opportunities for collaborative learning, allowing younger and older participants to share experiences, learn from one another, and build friendships across communities.

Throughout the programme, children participated in a diverse range of activities designed to nurture literacy, creativity, scientific thinking, and environmental awareness. Reading, writing, music, drama, and science sessions encouraged children to explore new ideas while developing confidence and curiosity through interactive learning experiences.

One of the highlights of the programme was a student-led skit that raised awareness about natural disasters, particularly landslides and water scarcity-issues that directly affect the local community. This learning extended beyond the library through a field walk, where children observed how landslides occur and explored the rainwater harvesting systems installed at the library, helping them connect environmental concepts with real-life experiences.

Environmental sustainability formed another important part of the programme. Through activities centred on the 4Rs-Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, and Rethink-children explored practical ways to reduce waste and extend the life cycle of everyday materials. Live demonstrations and hands-on upcycling activities encouraged participants to think critically about responsible consumption and environmental stewardship.

While older children explored community and environmental themes, younger participants engaged in age-appropriate literacy activities, including sight-word learning, interactive read-alouds, reading and sharing sessions, and music activities conducted in both English and Nepali. These sessions strengthened early literacy skills while ensuring that learning remained enjoyable, inclusive, and developmentally appropriate.

The success of the first Summer Programme demonstrated the value of creating engaging educational spaces during school holidays and reaffirmed the library's role as a place where children can continue learning, exploring, and growing together beyond the formal school year.

Programme Reach

Programme Duration: 3–6 July 2024

Children Reached: 50

Target Group: Kindergarten – Class X

Participating Villages

- Dumigaon
- Lower Dumigaon
- Alley
- Gurunggoan
- Dhargoan

Key Outcomes

95% Participation and Engagement

Approximately 95% of participating children reported enjoying the programme and actively engaged in the activities throughout the four days.

92% Attendance

The programme maintained an average attendance of 92%, reflecting sustained enthusiasm and commitment from participating children and their families.

Improved Accessibility Through Transportation Support

Around 35% of participants received transportation support, enabling children from distant villages to attend the programme regularly.

90% Showed Interest in Learning through the Programme

Nearly 90% of participants expressed interest in taking part in future Summer Programmes, demonstrating the programme's relevance and positive impact on children.

Challenges & Learnings

Introducing the Summer Programme for the first time required careful planning to accommodate children from Kindergarten to Class X, each with different interests, abilities, and learning needs. Designing activities that were both age-appropriate and engaging for such a diverse group required facilitators to remain flexible and responsive throughout the programme.

The experience reinforced the value of offering varied learning opportunities that allow children to choose, explore, and participate in ways that match their interests and developmental stages. It also demonstrated that holiday programmes can play an important role in strengthening children's connection with the library while creating meaningful opportunities for learning beyond the classroom.





The Story of Joyful Learning During the Summer

The Summer Programme showed that meaningful learning does not stop when schools close for the holidays. Throughout the four days, the library became a lively community space where children of different ages learned side by side, explored new ideas, and built friendships through shared experiences.

Whether they were performing a skit, experimenting with science, reading together, creating music, or discovering ways to care for the environment, every activity encouraged children to participate with confidence and curiosity. The excitement they brought to each session-and their eagerness to return for future programmes-reminded us that when children are given joyful and engaging opportunities to learn, holidays become more than a break from school; they become opportunities for growth, discovery, and community.



Overall Learning Outcomes & Impact



**Cultural
Consciousness**

**Reading &
Literacy**

**Creativity &
Expression**

**Scientific
Curiosity**

**Lifelong
Learner
Mindset**

**Responsible
Citizenship**

**Socio-
Emotional
Learning**

The Little Girl Who Knocked on the Library Door

Ashu, as I often joke with her, is someone I have known since she was still in her mother's womb. Her parents worked for me briefly, and even after they moved away, they remained only a few terraces down the road. By the time our library was built, Ashu was barely a toddler.

She became one of our most regular visitors. In fact, she was among the little children who helped unpack the first boxes of books when they arrived. Looking back, I believe that was when her fascination with books began.

Many mornings, Ashu would arrive before the library opened. Standing outside, she would call out in her small voice, "Please open the library." I would ask her, "Why?" and she would answer without hesitation, "I really want to read a book." I would unlock the door and switch on the lights. Ashu always headed straight for the children's section, where the large illustrated books were kept. Although she could not yet read, she would sit quietly for long stretches, turning the pages and studying every picture with complete concentration.

Then, one day, her parents separated. Her younger sister went to live with their mother, while Ashu remained with her father. Suddenly, the world she knew was no longer the same. During difficult times at home, she would often make her way to the library. It became more than a place filled with books. It became her sanctuary, a safe and familiar space where she could find comfort and peace.

When our reading programme began, Ashu eagerly took part. Over the years, she developed into a confident reader and now reads fluently in both Nepali and English. The last time I spoke with her on the phone, she proudly told me that she was reading "The Blue Umbrella" by Ruskin Bond.

Ashu has grown alongside the library. From a little girl who turned pages for the pictures to a young reader discovering new worlds through books, her journey reminds me of the quiet but lasting impact a library can have on a child's life.

-Prava Rai
Founding Director

Note: Name has been changed to protect the identity of the child.



Beyond Programmes

Building Knowledge, People, and Community

While our programmes focus on creating meaningful learning experiences for children, DGRREF's work extends beyond classrooms and libraries. We believe that sustainable social change also depends on strengthening people, generating knowledge, documenting local histories, and creating spaces where communities can learn from one another.

Over the past year, we continued investing in research, capacity building, and storytelling, recognising that these efforts not only enrich our programmes but also contribute to a deeper understanding of the Eastern Himalaya and the communities we serve.

The Sikkim Project

Documenting the Stories of the Eastern Himalaya

The Sikkim Project was established to create an accessible platform for documenting the history, culture, environment, languages, and contemporary realities of Sikkim and the wider Eastern Himalayan region. It emerged from the belief that local knowledge deserves thoughtful documentation and wider public engagement.

Through bilingual publications, essays, interviews, oral histories, and collaborative writing, the platform brings together scholars, practitioners, artists, educators, and community members to preserve stories that are often overlooked in mainstream narratives.

Over the past year, the Sikkim Project continued expanding its collection of articles while strengthening its editorial processes and contributor network. New writings explored diverse themes, including local histories, education, environmental change, culture, language, and community life, creating opportunities for meaningful dialogue between academic knowledge and lived experience.

Beyond publishing, the project also serves as an educational resource, encouraging readers to engage critically with the region's past and present while fostering appreciation for its cultural and ecological diversity.

Key Highlights

- Continued publication of original bilingual content.
- Expanded network of contributors and collaborators.
- Increased readership and public engagement.
- Strengthened editorial and documentation processes.

Looking Ahead

The Sikkim Project will continue developing as a trusted knowledge platform that preserves local histories, encourages research, and makes regional knowledge more accessible to wider audiences.

Archive



DANCING INDIGENEITY IN THE EASTERN HIMALAYA: SAKELA SILI AS WORLD MAKING

October 20, 2024

Sakela Sili is a dance form specific to the Kirat Rai (Khumbu) community of the transborder Eastern Himalayan region located in...

[Read More](#)



RHODODENDRON: COMMUNITY AND CONSERVATION

September 20, 2024

In India, the rhododendron is the state tree of Sikkim and Uttarakhand, it is also the state flower of Nagaland. Locally...

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RENTING LAMP, LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

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What better to use the lens of CRJ100's governance culture being needed in this publication. Xuebo is the team I had's interested for Wilson-Popcorn. I took immediate means activities & anthropology.



and excellent (and standard) looks, but many that the computer is much less expensive. There is a lower tier of a Thermo asked for the field, but now when loaded it shows students have no access to sharing, you can see which, that's just how it should be that has been. Finally primary school teachers in Britain say they actually are sometimes involved in school? With a school?



regions in the post-laboratory region of India, I wish that more such schools are started widely in our region. I include a short, in and out program, it is helpful in the teaching.

[illegible]

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... differences that the two 100,000-acre watersheds would contain would be greater than the 100,000-acre watersheds themselves. The 100,000-acre watersheds would contain 100,000 acres of water, but the 100,000-acre watersheds would contain 100,000 acres of water.



What a fascinating exploration of BSM's off-camera life! The way you connected heart with science and culture is beautifully articulated. I can't wait to see another instal of these genius women at home and those from all over the world!



A beautiful collection of wonderful scenes. Thank you for this! A lovely light on the house and surrounding village of millions of women who live a joyful life in a peaceful environment. In this life.

Reading Himalaya

Creating a Space for Research and Dialogue

Reading Himalaya was conceived as a platform that connects research with communities. While academic work often remains confined to institutions, Reading Himalaya seeks to make ideas accessible by encouraging dialogue between researchers, practitioners, educators, students, and local communities.

The initiative provides opportunities to explore issues affecting the Eastern Himalaya through public conversations, collaborative learning, and interdisciplinary engagement. Rather than treating research as an isolated activity, Reading Himalaya encourages knowledge to become a shared community resource.

During the year, the initiative strengthened its identity through continued collaborations, public engagement activities, and preparations for future research partnerships.

Key Highlights

- Continued development of Reading Himalaya as a knowledge platform.
- New partnerships were initiated with researchers and practitioners.
- Growing engagement with regional issues and public dialogue.

Looking Ahead

Reading Himalaya aims to become an interdisciplinary platform where knowledge is shared openly, regional voices are amplified, and research contributes meaningfully to community learning and public discourse.

Nurturing Young Learners & Leaders

Investing in People

Meaningful programmes are built by people who continue learning.

Since 2021, DGRREF has consciously invested in building the knowledge, confidence, and leadership of its team. Rather than viewing professional development as occasional training, we see learning as an ongoing process embedded within everyday work.

Throughout the year, team members participated in mentoring, workshops, reading circles, reflection sessions, exposure visits, and collaborative planning processes that strengthened both individual capacities and organisational learning. Mentorship from Bookworm, Goa, guidance from literacy practitioners, librarians, educators, and researchers, and opportunities to work alongside experienced professionals have all shaped the way our programmes continue to evolve.

This investment has allowed team members to gradually take ownership of programme design, facilitation, library management, administration, documentation, partnerships, and organisational development.

More importantly, it has nurtured a culture where curiosity, reflection, collaboration, and continuous learning remain central to our work.

Capacity Building Highlights

- Literacy facilitation training.
- Children's librarianship mentoring.
- Science facilitation workshops.
- Documentation and report writing.
- Programme planning and evaluation.
- Research and knowledge-building opportunities.

As our organisation grows, we remain committed to strengthening the leadership of our team while creating opportunities for young professionals to build meaningful careers within community-based education.



Community Events



A mental health awareness session conducted by the Women, Child and Welfare Department, Namchi.

On 20th December 2024, a Mental Health Awareness session was conducted by Ms Neelam Subba, a mental health counsellor at the Women, Child and Welfare Department, Namchi. The session was attended by community members, parents and panchayat members. She focused on the critical issues of mental health and challenges faced in addressing them while discussing practical solutions.



Session by Bookworm Trust on the significance and possibilities of libraries with faculty and heads of schools.

Sujata Noronha, Founding Director of Bookworm Trust, Goa and her team led a workshop for teachers, staff and heads of schools across Namchi, Singtam and Gangtok on 17th March 2024. It focused on discussing the significance of libraries, books and shared purpose.

Exposure Visits

On January 31st, 2025, Bookworm Goa, as part of the LMS (Library Mentoring and Support) sponsored an exposure visit to Azing's Model Farm at Hathidhunga with an aim to create opportunity for children to relate to books they read with the world around them.



Community Voices

Reflections from Those Who Walked With Us

“I like coming to the Reading Room because I enjoy the sessions and activities, especially the science and art programmes. I also love spending time and playing with my friends here.”

— Yama, Child Participant

“The Reading Room gives children a space to learn something meaningful beyond the classroom. I encourage parents to support the programme and enrol more children so they can benefit from these opportunities.”

— Dhargaon Head, Principal

“The children’s enthusiasm inspired us to get involved. We’re excited to volunteer our time and support the Reading Room through music and creative learning.”

— Anurag & Pritam, Community Volunteers

“After attending the Reading Room, I’ve noticed that Yama’s thinking has improved, and he is much more engaged in learning. Seeing this positive change has been truly encouraging.”

— Yama’s Father



Building The Organisation

Strengthening the Foundation for Long-Term Impact

As DGRREF continues to grow, we remain committed to strengthening the systems, partnerships, and governance structures that enable our programmes to thrive. We recognise that meaningful community work requires not only passion and commitment, but also accountability, transparency, and continuous organisational learning.

Throughout the year, we invested in improving our internal systems, strengthening policies, building strategic partnerships, and creating a stronger institutional foundation for the future.

Partnerships & Collaborations

Growing Together

The progress reflected in this report has been made possible through the generosity, guidance, and collaboration of individuals and organisations who believe in the transformative power of community learning.

Our partnerships extend beyond financial support. They are relationships built on shared learning, mutual respect, and a common commitment to creating meaningful opportunities for children and communities.

During the year, we continued strengthening collaborations with educators, researchers, artists, institutions, volunteers, and community leaders whose expertise has enriched our programmes and expanded our vision.



Team from Bookworm Trust, Goa and teachers of Dhargaon Primary School observing a discussion facilitated by the library staff who were undergoing an LMS (Library Monitoring Support) Programme organised by Bookworm Trust in 17th November 2024

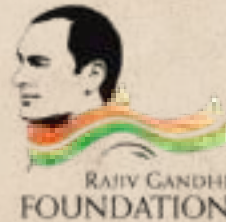
Our Partners

Knowledge & Programme Partners

Knowledge Partner



Programme Partner



Research & Knowledge Networks/Platforms



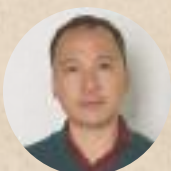
Academic Researchers/Scholars/Writers:

Ambika Rai | Anshu Chettri | Avinam Manger | Bibhusha Rai | Diksha Rai | Diksha Tamang |
Kalden Gyatso | Kalyani Rai | Pratiksha Thapa | Priya Yadhav | Rahul Ganguly | Dr Rohini Rai
Dr Suchan Pradhan | Upayan Chatterjee

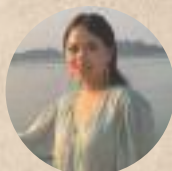
Educators/Facilitators:

Neelam Subba | Mental Health Counsellor, Women, Child and Welfare Department, Namchi.
Sujata Noronha | Founding Director of Bookworm Trust, Goa

Art Facilitators



Ashok Rai



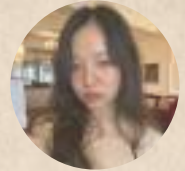
Suveksha Pradhan



Carien Rai



Shrawan Rai



Sanjeevni Rai

Institutional & Community Partnerships

Our work continues to be shaped by village communities, school teachers, educators, parents, volunteers, and children whose participation reminds us of our community-centred work.

Government Primary Schools

Assangthang Secondary School | Nandugaon Senior Secondary School
Bikmat Senior Secondary School | Purano Namchi Primary School
Compound Primary School | Salghari Secondary School
Dhargoan Primary School | Tinik Chisopani Junior High School
Gurunggoan Junior High School





Our Team

The People Behind the Journey

Every programme, every library session, every school visit, and every story shared reflects the dedication of people who believe deeply in creating opportunities for children.

Behind the work is a team that continues to learn, adapt, and grow together.

Executive Leadership



Prava Rai
Founding Director

Born in Kewzing, then West Sikkim, Prava spent her early years in Rabong. She was awarded a scholarship to study at Mt. Hermon School in Darjeeling in 1961 before pursuing higher education at Delhi University and Jawaharlal Nehru University.

Over the years, she has built a distinguished career across publishing, education, and rural development. She edited *The Book Review* for four years, taught for two years at the Institute of Mass Communication in Delhi, and worked with PRADAN, an organisation devoted to rural development, from 1986 to 1989.

While in Goa, she edited the Goa Heritage Action Group's journal, *PARMAL*. In 2015, she edited a special issue on Sikkim's culture and art for Mumbai's MARG Publications, which later evolved into Sikkim Project: *The Land and its People*.

As the Founding Director of the Dumigaon Reading Room Resource and Education Foundation (DGRRREF), she continues to champion literacy, community learning, and educational opportunities for children and young people in rural South Sikkim.



Reshma Thapa-Gurung
Director

Reshma Thapa-Gurung has over 21 years of experience in education as a teacher, divisional head at Taktse International School, and teacher trainer with experience in literacy interventions and reading programmes. Passionate about reading and literacy, she joined DGRRREF after being inspired by Ma'am Prava's vision for the Reading Room.

Motivated by the challenge of ensuring that children not only have access to books but also develop the skills to read and enjoy them, she joined the organisation to train Reading Room staff as reading facilitators and help foster a culture of reading within the community.

At DGRRREF, she aspires to contribute to programmes that strengthen children's learning outcomes and nurture a lifelong love of reading by working closely with teachers and school leaders to build sustainable reading cultures where every child can become a confident, independent reader.

Advisory Board Members



Amrita Laha
*Independent Researcher &
Conservation Sociologist*



Mona Chettri
*Researcher, Editor & Co-Founder
Reading Himalaya: Research & Policy*



Raman Shrestha
*Bookseller, Publisher
Rachna Books & Publications*



Salil Chaturvedi
*Writer, Poet, Accessibility Advocate & Curator
Serendipity Arts Foundation*

Core Team | 2024-2025



Amit Kumar
Librarian
DG Reading Room Library



Anushka Kharel
Administrative Assistant
DG Reading Room Library



Bibhusha Rai
Research & Editorial Support
Sikkim Project



Jit Kumari Rai
Library Assistant
Library Session Facilitator
DG Reading Room Library



Manisha Subba
Administrative Assistant
DG Reading Room Library



Nisha Subba
Programme Coordinator
English Language Facilitator
Reading For Joy



Phunchokla Bhutia
Library Assistant
Library Session Facilitator
DG Reading Room Library



Sumira Jogi
Trainee
Reading For Joy



Sumiran Basnett
Programme Associate, RGF
Science and Maths Facilitator



Suveksha Thapa
Nepali Language Facilitator
Reading For Joy

Team testimonials



Manisha Subba Administrative Assistant

Until 2024, I kept changing jobs, hoping I would one day find a place where I truly belonged. When I first walked into the Reading Room, it wasn't just the books that drew me in-it was the feeling that this place was different. Since joining, I have grown in ways I never imagined, both professionally and personally. For the first time, I found the confidence to share my own writing, connect with people, and feel that I am part of something meaningful.



Nisha Subba Programme Coordinator

I joined the DG Reading Room as a trainee with no professional experience and very little confidence. Through continuous mentorship, learning, and encouragement, I discovered not only new skills but also a deeper sense of purpose. The greatest lesson I learned here is that growth requires us to continuously unlearn, learn, and relearn. Today, every morning I wake up knowing that my work has meaning because I have the opportunity to positively shape children's lives.



Phunchokla Bhutia Library Assistant

When I chose Library Science, I imagined libraries as quiet places filled with books. Working at DG Reading Room completely changed that perspective. Here, I discovered that libraries are spaces filled with stories, laughter, curiosity, and human connections. I came here as someone who was shy and unsure of herself. Today, I confidently work with children, facilitate sessions, and continue learning every day. Looking back, I feel grateful that a place I once admired as a visitor eventually became the place where I found my own path.

Suveksha Thapa Nepali Facilitator

DGRRREF was my first job and my first teaching experience after completing my Master's and B.Ed. in Nepali. I am truly grateful for everything I learned during this journey. It changed the way I look at teaching. I learned that teaching can be joyful, creative, and meaningful. Spending time in the library and reading with children inspired me in many ways. I never knew I could write poems and short stories for children until I became a part of DGRRREF. It helped me discover a new interest in writing for children and grow both as a teacher and as a person. I will always be thankful to DGRRREF for giving me such a wonderful beginning to my career.

Bibhusha Rai Research and Editorial Support, Sikkim Project

Working with the 'Sikkim Project: The Land and Its People' (August 2023–May 2025) under the guidance of Prava Ma'am and Dr. Mona Chettri was a defining chapter in my life. Those two years shaped me both professionally and personally, deepening my skills as a researcher and writer while instilling the value of thoughtful collaboration and community-centred scholarship. I remain deeply grateful to the 'DG Reading Room Resource and Education Foundation' and its Team for the mentorship and unwavering commitment to preserving and sharing the rich histories and cultures of our Eastern Himalayas.

Sumiran Basnett Programme Associate (RGF)

Working at Reading Room has been an enriching experience. It gave me the opportunity to contribute to meaningful initiatives while growing both professionally and personally. The supportive work environment and collaborative team made it an ideal place for learning. One of the most rewarding aspects of this journey was working with people from diverse backgrounds, united by a shared commitment to educating young minds.

Education has always meant a great deal to me, and working closely with students gave me a deeper understanding of their struggles, interests, and aspirations. It also strengthened my understanding of the challenges within our education system and the importance of listening to and learning from children.

I am deeply grateful to Prava Ma'am for her inspiring leadership and for creating such a meaningful endeavour. I also sincerely thank all my colleagues for fostering a positive and supportive environment where everyone had the opportunity to learn and grow. I will always cherish the experiences and lessons I gained here, and I wish the organisation continued success in transforming young lives through education.



A Year of Growth

Our Learning Journey

One of DGRREF's greatest strengths is its commitment to nurturing people.

Rather than viewing professional development as a separate activity, learning remains embedded within our everyday work. Team members regularly participate in mentoring, reflective practice, exposure visits, workshops, reading circles, and collaborative planning processes that strengthen both individual and organisational capacities.

This year, our team continued expanding its skills in children's librarianship, literacy facilitation, programme design, administration, documentation, research, communications, and organisational development.

As our roles evolved, so did our understanding of community learning. Every new responsibility became an opportunity to learn alongside children, colleagues, mentors, and communities.

"Growth does not happen all at once. It happens through everyday experiences, taking ownership, embracing challenges, making mistakes, and learning together."



A Year in Photographs





Governance & Compliance

Accountability in Practice

Good governance enables organisations to remain responsive, transparent, and accountable to the communities they serve.

During the year, DGRRREF continued strengthening its governance systems by developing organisational policies, improving financial management processes, and ensuring compliance with statutory requirements.

Governance Highlights

- Board meetings are conducted on a half-yearly basis.
- Financial statements are independently audited.
- Strengthening organisational policies and manuals.
- Improved documentation and administrative systems.
- Continued investment in safeguarding, human resources, and organisational development.
- LMS Training for Library Assistant
- 15 in-house training by Reshma Thapa-Gurung



Financial Overview

Stewarding Resources Responsibly

Every contribution entrusted to DGRREF represents an investment in children's learning and community development.

We remain committed to ensuring that all financial resources are managed with integrity, transparency, and accountability. Throughout the year, resources were directed towards programme implementation, library development, staff capacity building, community engagement, research initiatives, and organisational strengthening.

Thank you to all our financial contributors!

Individual Donors

Prava Rai
Prabin Rai
Sujata Patel
Navaz Boman Patuck
Zahida Whitaker
Amrita Laha
Karma N Bhutia
Pria Chatterjee
Sanjeev Mukhia
Sara Ahmed
Tavora Vegtures
Minket Lepcha
Suman Dubey
Padma Rekha Sastri

Institutions & Foundations

Ankur Trust
Tinic Chisopani Junior High School
Taktse International School
Education Department of Sikkim

Financial Snapshot

DG READING ROOM RESOURCE AND EDUCATION FOUNDATION

(A Company Incorporated under Section 8 of The Companies Act, 2013)

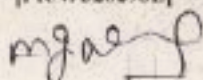
Company Limited by Shares

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31ST MARCH, 2025

	Particulars	Note No.	As at 31st March, 2025	As at 31st March, 2024
A	SOURCES OF FUNDS			
1.	SHARE CAPITAL	3	20,000.00	20,000.00
2.	<u>NPO FUNDS</u>	4		
	Unrestricted Funds		7,75,109.85	5,97,514.37
	Restricted Funds		-	-
			7,75,109.85	5,97,514.37
2.	<u>CURRENT LIABILITIES</u>			
	Other Current Liabilities	5	31,700.00	-
	TOTAL		8,26,809.85	6,17,514.37
B	APPLICATION OF FUNDS			
1.	<u>NON-CURRENT ASSETS</u>			
	Property, Plant & Equipment	6	16,751.00	27,919.00
			16,751.00	27,919.00
2.	<u>CURRENT ASSETS</u>			
	Cash and Bank Balances	7	8,10,058.85	5,81,965.37
	Other Current Assets	8	-	7,630.00
			8,10,058.85	5,89,595.37
	TOTAL		8,26,809.85	6,17,514.37
	Significant Accounting Policies and Notes on Accounts	1 & 2		

In terms of our report of even date

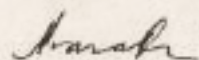
For RADS & CO.
Chartered Accountants
[FRN: 320298E]



Ashis Agarwal
Partner
Membership No. 303622

Place: Kolkata
Date: 30th day of August, 2025
UDIN: 25303622BMIBKD8721

Reshma Thapa (DIN : 091277875)



Prava Rai (DIN :10318477)

Financial Snapshot

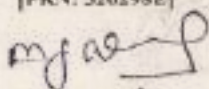
DG READING ROOM RESOURCE AND EDUCATION FOUNDATION
(A Company Incorporated under Section 8 of The Companies Act, 2013)
Company Limited by Shares

Statement of Income and Expenditure for the Year ended 31st March, 2025

	Particulars	Note No.	For the year ended 31st March, 2025	For the year ended 31st March, 2024
1.	INCOME			
	Donation & Contributions Received	9	27,64,500.00	10,01,000.00
	Total Income		27,64,500.00	10,01,000.00
2.	EXPENDITURE			
	Charitable Expenses	10	6,04,405.10	12,000.00
	Employee Benefit Expenses	11	17,07,500.00	3,82,000.00
	Other Expenses	12	94,093.00	7,978.00
	Administration Expenses	13	1,69,738.42	481.63
	Total Expenses		25,75,736.52	4,02,459.63
3.	Surplus/(Deficit) before Tax & Depreciation (1 - 2)		1,88,763.48	5,98,540.37
4.	Depreciation on Fixed Assets	6	11,168.00	1,026.00
5.	Tax Expenses - Current Tax		-	-
6.	Surplus/(Deficit) Carried Forward to Balance Sheet (3 - 4 - 5)		1,77,595.48	5,97,514.37
	Significant Accounting Policies and Notes on Accounts	1 & 2		

In terms of our report of even date

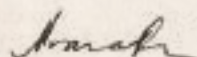
For RAD'S & CO.
Chartered Accountants
[FRN: 320298E]



Ashis Agarwal
Partner
Membership No. 303622

Place: Kolkata
Date: 30th day of August, 2025
UDIN: 25303622BMIBKD8721

Reshma Thapa (DIN : 091277875)



Prava Rni (DIN : 10318477)

Legal Status

Dumigaon Reading Room Resource and Education Foundation (DGRRREF) is a not-for-profit organisation incorporated on September 14, 2023, as a Section 8 company under the Companies Act, 2013.

The Foundation is governed by the applicable provisions of the Companies Act and operates exclusively for charitable and educational purposes.

It is registered under Section 12AB of the Income-tax Act, 1961, and has been granted approval under Section 80G, allowing eligible donors to claim tax benefits on their contributions.

Corporate Identity Number (CIN): U85499GA2023NPL016138

PAN: AAKCD3003B

12A Registration | AAKCD3003B24BL01

80G Registration | AAKCD3003B24BL02

Registered Office

C/o Prava Rai Kharad Tiswadi,
Chorao, Panjim Chorao, North Goa – 403102
Goa, India

Library Centre

Dumigaon, Assangthang, Namchi
Sikkim, India – 737126

Contact Us

Phone | +91 9832812897

Email | dgreadingroomfoundation@gmail.com



SIKKIM PROJECT
THE LAND AND ITS PEOPLE

sikkimproject.org



dgreadingroomfoundation.org



readinghimalaya.com



Looking Ahead

Building the Next Chapter

Each year marks both a milestone and a new beginning. As we look towards the coming year, DGRREF remains committed to strengthening the quality, sustainability, and impact of our work while thoughtfully expanding our reach across the Eastern Himalayas.



Strengthening Literacy and Learning

We will continue to expand our Reading for Joy programme to more government schools while enhancing bilingual learning resources that reflect local languages and contexts. We also aim to strengthen our children's library services, ensuring that more children experience reading as a joyful and meaningful part of everyday life.



Deepening Community Learning

Our focus will remain on nurturing community-led learning through stronger Sunday Sessions, the continued growth of Art Workshops, and new opportunities that bring together children, families, educators, artists, and local practitioners to learn, create, and connect.



Advancing Knowledge and Research

We will continue to build Reading Himalaya and expand the Sikkim Project as platforms for documenting the region's rich educational and cultural landscape. We also seek to strengthen collaborations with researchers and academic institutions to generate knowledge that informs both practice and policy.



Building a Stronger Institution

Alongside programme growth, we will invest in organisational sustainability by launching the Friends of DGRREF Community, strengthening fundraising efforts, developing staff leadership, and completing key organisational policies and systems. We will also explore FCRA registration to prepare for future international partnerships.



Our Commitment

Our vision remains unchanged: communities flourish when children are given opportunities to read, imagine, question, create, and grow. As we begin the next chapter, we do so with gratitude for our partners, volunteers, educators, and supporters whose trust makes this work possible. Together, we look forward to building stronger learning ecosystems and creating lasting opportunities for children across the Himalayas.

Acknowledgements

This report celebrates the collective efforts of everyone who has walked alongside us.

We extend our sincere gratitude to...

- Our children, whose curiosity inspires us every day.
- Parents and families who place their trust in us.
- Teachers and school leaders who welcome us into their classrooms.
- Artists, researchers, mentors, and volunteers who generously share their knowledge and time.
- Our Board of Directors for their guidance and stewardship.
- Our programme partners and supporters whose collaboration strengthens our work.
- Our donors and well-wishers whose generosity makes our programmes possible.
- And to every member of the DGRREF team, whose dedication continues to transform ideas into meaningful action.

This journey belongs to all of us.

Thank you for helping us build futures through stories of change.



Friends of DG Reading Room Become a part of the Community.



Join the Friends of DGRREF Community &
become a Monthly Supporter



Sign up! Use the QR code or [click here](#).

It only takes a minute to join the community
that can have a lasting impact.

Stay in touch with us, get updates on our
work and receive invitations to future
events, volunteer opportunities and
community initiatives.

"You do not have to do everything.
Sometimes all it takes is helping one child discover
one book."



[Contribute via Our Campaign Platform](#)





DG Reading Room Resource &
Education Foundation