

GLOBAL BOOK ALLIANCE



Global Book Alliance Strategy

July 2021–December 2024

Closing the Global Book Gap, Opening the Door to Literacy

July 2021



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LETTER FROM THE INTERIM CHAIR

Over the last 30 years, as the global architecture for international development evolved toward the current Sustainable Development Goals, the achievement of literacy outcomes by all children has remained fundamental to our success: literacy is critical to individual and community well-being and is the foundation for all further learning.

Knowing as we do that children learn to read, by reading, the Global Book Alliance was formed in 2018 to help address the extreme dearth of reading materials in languages that children use and understand across many areas of the Global South, with a Mission to “transform the lives of children in developing countries by working with partners to identify, promote and support innovations, best practice and policies that will change the way books are created, procured, provided and used.”

We achieved significant progress on the objectives of GBA’s first Strategic Plan (2018-20) through flagship programs such as the establishment of the Global Digital Library (GDL) that gives free access to thousands of titles in more than 80 languages as well as the Begin with Books campaign that creates high quality materials to be shared on the GDL; and through the development and testing of a book supply chain analysis tool that looks holistically across a country’s entire book supply chain to diagnose key challenges to local publishing and distribution. Building on that success, it is now our pleasure to launch GBA’s second, 3-yr Strategic Plan (2021-24) , “Closing the Global Book Gap, Opening the Door to Literacy” wherein the Alliance recommits to a Vision of “a world in which all children are achieving literacy and have access to quality books in a language that they understand and with which they can learn to read, read to learn and develop a love of reading” through work on a set of key objectives:

- Increasing availability of quality children’s books in local languages and in print and digital formats (are the right books being developed that serve all children, regardless of gender, language or learning disability?);
- Increasing access to quality children’s books at school, in the community, and at home (once developed, are those books truly accessible by all?);
- Improving use of books by children, teachers, parents and caregivers (once in the child’s hand, do educators have the skills to ensure effective use of the materials?)

A fourth objective addresses “Improving the knowledge and capacity of the global community and country-level stakeholders to strengthen book supply chains and close the global book gap”. This is a critical point in helping ensure countries everywhere have sustained access to the books – fiction and non-fiction, print and digital –that focus on their own realities and are relevant to their unique linguistic and cultural contexts. This requires strong local publishing, in addition to the global distribution of reading material through the GDL and other means. Enhancing knowledge and capacity also means greater understanding of the processes of learning to read – and teaching to read -- and the kinds

of books that children need at each stage as they develop their literacy skills and become life-long readers: leveled books and decodable books that range from picture books and big books to anthologies and chapter books. A wide variety of genres and types of writing that serve different purposes and have different structures. Further, multiple copies of these books are required so that they can be used by children in classrooms, libraries, or their home environment.

This is an ambitious plan, but one where the potential for significant return on investment has never been greater. We welcome your involvement and invite you to join us. To that end, please visit us at www.globalbookalliance.org

—**Scott Walter**; Interim Chair of the Global Book Alliance

GLOBAL BOOK ALLIANCE STRATEGY AT A GLANCE



VISION

A world in which all children are achieving literacy and have access to quality books in a language that they understand and with which they can learn to read, read to learn and develop a love of reading.



MISSION

To transform the lives of children in developing countries by working with partners to identify, promote and support innovations, best practice and policies that will change the way books are created, procured, provided and used.

OBJECTIVES

OBJECTIVE 1	OBJECTIVE 2	OBJECTIVE 3	OBJECTIVE 4:
Increase availability of quality children's books in local languages and in print and digital formats	Increase access to quality children's books at school, in the community, and at home	Improve use of books by children, teachers, parents and caregivers	Improve knowledge and capacity of the global community and country-level stakeholders to strengthen book supply chains and close the global book gap



HOW

- The Alliance will fill existing gaps in the field in three ways: a) by advocating and communicating on the global book gap and promising solutions; b) by collecting and disseminating promising practices; and c) by managing the production of global public goods.



WHO WE ARE

- The Alliance is a partnership of donor agencies, multilateral institutions, and civil society organizations committed to bringing books to every child in the world by 2030.

I. THE GLOBAL BOOK GAP

The global community¹ has made an inspiring commitment to ensuring quality education for all—and universal literacy is a central component of this charge. The Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Sustainable Development Goals each establish that children have the right to a healthy, sustainable future and to quality education, specifically calling for the eradication of illiteracy. Ensuring access to books is a fundamental component of eliminating *learning poverty* (being unable to read and understand a simple text by age 10²), an aim shared by partners around the world. Studies have shown that the quantity of books at home is closely linked to a child’s total years of schooling³ and literacy outcomes. A study of families with children under age 5 in 28 countries in the Global South found that the likelihood of being on track in literacy acquisition almost doubled if *at least one book* was available at home, compared to homes with no books available.⁴



It is impossible to learn to read without books and the opportunity to practice reading with the support of knowledgeable teachers, parents, and caregivers. However, many children live and learn in “book deserts,” without access to essential learning resources—including both print and digital textbooks and supplementary reading materials. Even fewer children have adequate access to these materials in languages they use and understand, despite overwhelming evidence that children are best able to learn to read in familiar languages.⁵ This is the *global book gap*, a major barrier to delivering quality education to children worldwide.

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- 1 The *global community* is defined as the public sector (e.g., Ministries of Education), the private sector (e.g., book publishers), multilateral and bilateral donors, international nongovernmental organizations, and other civil society entities.
 - 2 World Bank (2021, April) What is Learning Poverty? <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/education/brief/what-is-learning-poverty>
 - 3 Evans, M. D. R., Kelley, J., Sikora, J., & Treiman, D. (2010, June). Family scholarly culture and educational success: Books and schooling in 27 nations. *Research in Social Stratification and Mobility*, 28(2), 171–197.
 - 4 Bornstein, M. H., & Putnick, D. L. (2012). Cognitive and socioemotional caregiving in developing countries. *Child Development*, 83(1), 46–61. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8624.2011.01673>
 - 5 UNESCO’s International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP). (n.d.). Language of Instruction. *IIEP Learning Portal*. <https://learningportal.iiep.unesco.org/en/issue-briefs/improve-learning/language-of-instruction>

FIGURE A. THE GLOBAL BOOK GAP

- **Literacy proficiency is poor.** Worldwide, 617 million children and adolescents are not achieving minimum proficiency levels in reading and mathematics.⁶
- **Most children don't have enough textbooks at school.** A survey of primary schools in 11 developing countries found that 15–20% of grade 4 students did not have access to a textbook or had to share one.⁷ Supplementary reading materials are in even shorter supply.
- **Most children don't have enough books at home.** A secondary analysis of UNICEF Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey data from 35 countries showed that only half the children between 36 and 59 months had at least one children's book at home.⁸
- **Enough titles are not always available in the right languages.** A study of children's reading materials in African languages showed that although some materials were available in all 200 languages studied, most languages were represented by very few titles (e.g., 40 languages had only one identified title).⁹
- **Typically marginalized populations¹⁰ are not well-served.** Materials that are accessible for readers with visual or hearing impairments are in short supply. Other marginalized populations, such as girls, often lack sufficient representation in the books that are available, as highlighted in the 2020 UNESCO GEM Gender Report.¹¹

6 UNESCO. (2017, September). *More Than One-Half of Children and Adolescents Are Not Learning Worldwide*. Fact Sheet No. 46. <http://uis.unesco.org/sites/default/files/documents/fs46-more-than-half-children-not-learning-en-2017.pdf>

7 UNESCO. (2016, January). Policy Paper 23: Every child should have a textbook. *Global Education Monitoring Report*. <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000243321>

8 Manu, A., Ewerling, F., Barros, A. J., & Victora, C. G. (2019). Association between availability of children's books and the literacy-numeracy skills of children aged 36 to 59 months: Secondary analysis of the UNICEF Multiple-Indicator Cluster Surveys covering 35 countries. *Journal of Global Health*, 9(1), 010403. <https://doi.org/10.7189/jogh.09.010403>

9 RTI International. (2015). *Survey of Children's Reading Materials in African Languages in Eleven Countries—Final Report*. U.S. Agency for International Development. https://ierc-publicfiles.s3.amazonaws.com/public/resources/Report_Survey%20of%20Children%27s%20Reading%20Materials%20in%20African%20Languages%20in%20Eleven%20Countries_Global_05_2016.pdf

10 The Global Book Alliance recognizes that the factors leading to vulnerability and marginalization vary by context and thus uses a broad definition of *marginalized and vulnerable populations*, which include but are not limited to girls; children with disabilities; members of linguistic, cultural, and religious minorities; and those displaced by conflict or crisis.

11 UNESCO. (2020). A new generation: 25 years of efforts for gender equality in education. *Global Education Monitoring Report*. <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000374514>

The challenges hindering the achievement of equitable and quality education for all children have been compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic that began in 2020, which has exacerbated inequalities in access to learning opportunities and has further highlighted the limitations children face in accessing reading materials, in both print and digital formats. Efforts around the globe to protect learning during the pandemic have increased awareness of the importance of accessing and using books at home, not as an “extra” but as an essential component of the teaching and learning process.

Fortunately, there are compelling examples of continued and even increasing commitment to foundational learning and literacy by members of the global education community. A number of initiatives—including the World Bank’s Foundational Learning Compact and Read at Home Initiative and the global education targets to improve girls’ literacy established by the G7—both raise awareness of the importance of solving the global book gap to improve literacy and learning for all children and contribute credibility to this effort. Strong, productive partnerships with those who are dedicated to investing in books and literacy efforts across the world will be key to accomplishing the four strategic objectives laid out in the Global Book Alliance’s 2021–2024 strategy.



II. THE GLOBAL BOOK ALLIANCE

Formed in 2018, the Global Book Alliance (GBA) is a partnership of donor agencies, multilateral institutions, and civil society organizations committed to bringing books to every child in the world by 2030.¹² The Alliance was formed to bring together global education partners to coordinate efforts to address the global book gap and to help end illiteracy. The GBA aims to close the global book gap by supporting initiatives that sustainably increase children’s access to high-quality reading materials (see inset), such as efforts to encourage robust local markets for books, strengthen local and regional publishers, and ensure that children are able to access books that are developed. To help book markets develop, the Alliance addresses challenges across the entire book supply chain (or book chain - see Figure B), including title development, publication, procurement, distribution, and use; the Alliance also works to support improved data collection and forecasting to inform efforts across all these phases. During its first strategy period (2018–2020), the Alliance helped to identify and test innovative approaches and worked to develop new tools to help understand and close the global book gap.

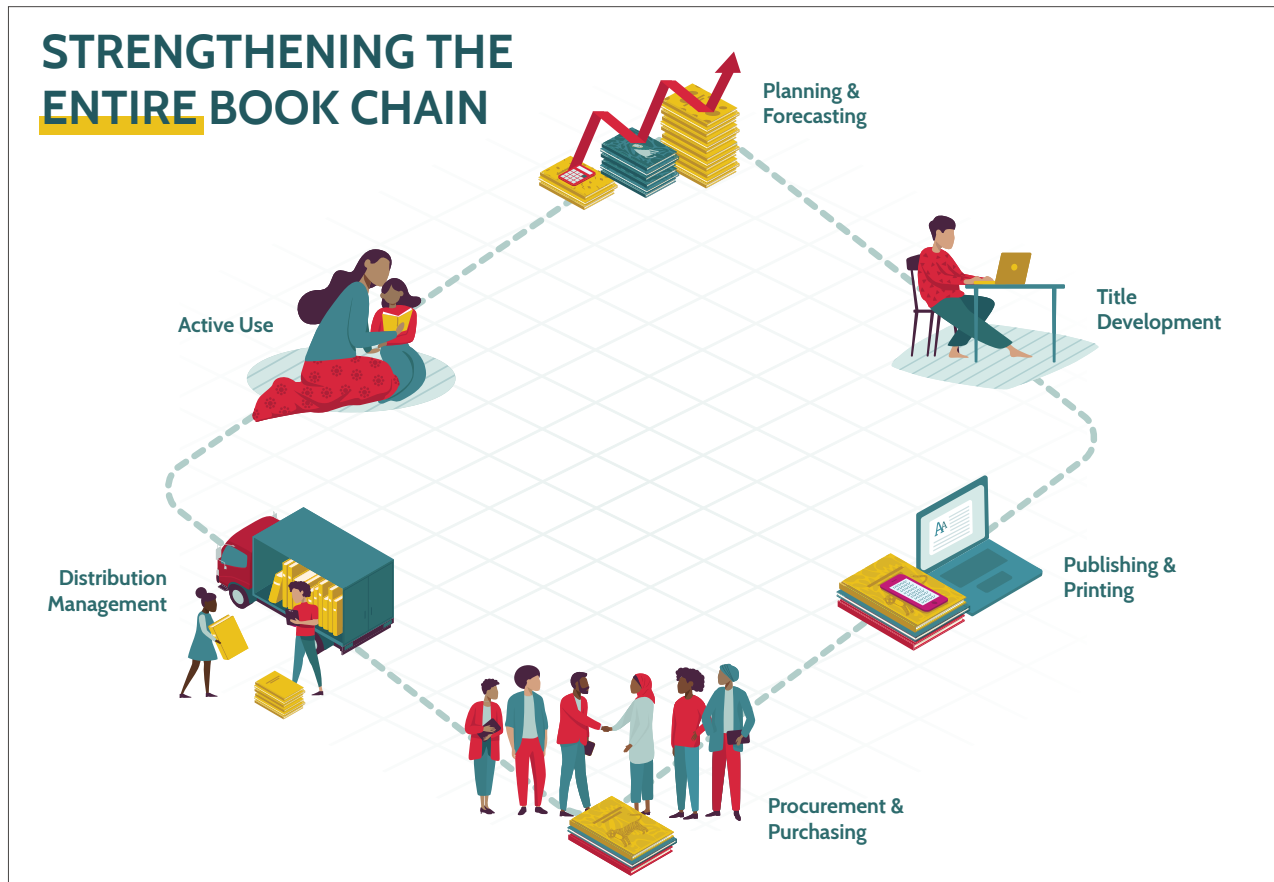
What are “high-quality children’s books”?

Diverse types of children’s books are important for supporting the development of literacy skills, and different standards may apply to various types of children’s books. For example:

- Books should convey positive values, including equitable representation of vulnerable and marginalized groups
- Books should be developed to meet accessibility standards that allow them to be produced in formats that can be used by children with disabilities
- Books designed for particular instructional uses should link to school curricula and standards, such as the scope and sequence for teaching letters and letter sounds
- Books should be relevant to the child, reflecting their language and culture, and written at an appropriate reading level

¹² The Global Book Alliance includes the Secretariat, the 12 organizations that comprise the Alliance’s Steering Committee, and any actors with whom the Alliance has an established partnership.

FIGURE B. THE BOOK SUPPLY CHAIN



GBA First Strategic Plan (2018–2020)

In its first strategy period, the GBA convened its 11 founding Steering Committee members¹³ to launch activities to strengthen the *book supply chain*—the system that publishes, prints, distributes and utilizes books. In pursuit of its stated goal to **ensure that all children have access to books by 2030**, the Alliance focused on achieving three objectives: increased book availability, improved access to books, and enhanced knowledge and confidence in the use of books (see Figure C). The Alliance made significant progress across these three objectives and learned valuable lessons through the implementation of the Strategic Plan and its four flagship initiatives: the Global Digital Library, Support to the Publishing Sector, the Begin with Books prize, and Country-level pilot initiatives.

¹³ The 11 founding Alliance members are All Children Reading: A Grand Challenge for Development; the Association for the Development of Education in Africa; the UK’s Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office; the Global Partnership for Education; the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation; Save the Children; the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO); the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF); the United States Agency for International Development (USAID); the World Bank; and World Vision. Since its founding, Code has also joined the Alliance.

FIGURE C. GBA 2018–2020 STRATEGY OVERVIEW

<p>Goal: By 2030, all children have access to high-quality local-language books at the right reading level and to the teaching and support they need to use the books effectively to develop and sustain their literacy skills.</p>		
<p>Objective 1: Increased Availability of quality children's book titles in local languages in both print and digital formats.</p>	<p>Objective 2: Improved Access by children at school, in the community and at home to quality books in languages which they understand.</p>	<p>Objective 3: Enhanced Knowledge skills and confidence in the use of books in support of literacy and learning.</p>
<p>Intermediate Result (IR) 1: A canon of 50 culturally and linguistically appropriate children's book titles will be available for each year of literacy development (ages 3–11) for users of 500 languages (approximately 80 percent of the population).</p>	<p>Intermediate Result (IR) 2: Fifty percent of children who do not use the language of instruction in their school (140 million) will have access at school, in their communities or at home to books in a language that they understand.</p>	<p>Intermediate Result (IR) 3: Promising practices in supporting the attainment of skills, knowledge and understanding related to effective book use for literacy and learning will be identified, documented and shared, contributing to policy and practical change.</p>

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Between 2018-2020, the Alliance made progress toward these intermediate results, planned for completion by 2024.

- Progress toward **Objective 1** was steady: The Alliance established the first of its flagship initiatives, the Global Digital Library (<http://digitallibrary.io>), an online repository that hosts openly licensed high-quality children's books in underserved languages. With leadership by Steering Committee member Norad (the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation), the platform currently hosts over 6,200 materials in more than 80 languages and continues to grow. The Alliance also supported the development of new book titles through the Begin with Books challenge, led by All Children Reading: A Grant Challenge for Development. This ongoing effort is in the process of developing over 2,300 new titles in 21 spoken and signed languages¹⁴ freely available for use and adaptation.
- Both the Global Digital Library and Begin with Books incorporated a specific focus on access issues outlined in **Objective 2**. Of the 21 languages in which books are being produced under the Begin with Books challenge, nine are signed languages. The Global Digital Library complies with global standards for accessibility, incorporates alt text, and uses file formats that allow conversion into e-Braille (.BRF) files.

¹⁴ Spoken Languages: Enga; English; French; Hiri Motu; Lao; Lomwe; Soninke; Senoufo Mamara; Tamang; Tok Pisin; Tumbuka; Yao. Sign Languages: Fijian; Filipino; Jakarta; Malawian; Malian; Nepali; PNG; Samoan; Somali.

- The first strategy period has also seen substantial efforts to advance progress on the use of books among underserved communities, a focus of **Objective 3**—including pilot initiatives funded through the World Bank’s REACH Trust Fund and a growing set of resources shared on the GBA website.
 - » In support of all three objectives, the Alliance developed and tested a Book Supply Chain Analysis Tool that looks holistically across the entire chain to diagnose key challenges that limit book access and to inform responses that lead to sustained improvements to the system.
- All of these activities benefited from a formal commitment from engaged partners, a reliable funding stream, and dedicated support from the GBA Secretariat.

CHALLENGES

The Alliance faced some challenges in achieving progress toward the original objectives. Most significantly, expected funding levels to the Alliance were never realized, due in part to competing priorities for global education funding. Some activities that had hinged on centralized or pooled funding therefore had to be scaled back or reconsidered within this operating context. This lean operating model, led by a small Secretariat, had implications for other elements of the Alliance’s work as well, limiting systematic and large-scale



outreach to key stakeholders, including Ministries and publishing sector representatives. As a result of these operating challenges, the Alliance gradually transitioned from a model built on central funding to one characterized by global coordination and collaboration among partners. The first strategy period involved learning and adaptation by the Alliance to operationalize efforts under this adapted model.

The new 2021–2024 Strategic Plan outlined in this document builds on the accomplishments of the first strategy period and aims to mitigate these challenges. The Plan emphasizes a more streamlined and coordinated effort of joint action that builds on the **resources, knowledge, credibility, and networks** of Steering Committee members and other potential partners, and draws on the Alliance’s strategic position within the broader landscape of those working across the sector.

III. GBA STRATEGIC PLAN OVERVIEW (2021–2024)

In the 2021–2024 strategy period, the GBA will convene actors and institutions at the global, regional, and national levels to tackle the immense challenge of strengthening the book supply chain and ensuring books for every child. Working in partnership with our Steering Committee and partners from multiple sectors, particularly book publishers and Ministries of Education, the Alliance will achieve gains across four objectives:

- **Objective 1:** Increase the availability of high-quality children’s books in local languages and in print and digital formats
- **Objective 2:** Improve access to high-quality children’s books at school, in the community, and at home;
- **Objective 3:** Improve use of books by children, teachers, parents, and caregivers
- **Objective 4:** Improve the knowledge and capacity of the global community and country-level stakeholders to strengthen book supply chains and close the global book gap

The new Strategic Plan reflects analysis of the Alliance’s key role in the sector, its strengths and challenges, and opportunities for impact in order to support the Alliance’s ongoing pursuit of its vision and mission:

- **Vision:** A world in which all children are achieving literacy and have access to quality books in a language that they understand and with which they can learn to read, read to learn and develop a love of reading.
- **Mission:** Transform the lives of children in developing countries by working with partners to identify, promote, and support innovations, best practices, and policies that will change the way that books are created, procured, provided, and used.

IV. 2021–2024 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

The Alliance’s 2021–2024 Strategic Plan is the result of significant analysis and collaboration, including input from its Steering Committee members, Secretariat staff, and interviews with more than 36 key stakeholders over the course of eight months. The GBA completed a retrospective analysis of the accomplishments and challenges it experienced in its first strategy period and of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats related to the Alliance’s work and approach. The analysis reinforced the importance of an ongoing focus on the three original strategic objectives: (1) increased availability, (2) increased access, and (3) improved use. It also revealed the need for more explicit attention and work in the area of improving knowledge and capacity across the book supply chain. This analysis helped to inform the Alliance’s approach in the new Plan, suggesting that the GBA should take advantage of its strategic position to fill existing gaps in the field in three ways:

- by advocating and communicating on the global book gap and promising solutions;
- by collecting and disseminating promising practices; and
- by managing the production of global public goods. The identification of these cross-cutting areas of work—considered in light of the four strategic objectives—led the GBA to establish a set of activities that it will pursue during the 2021–2024 strategy period (see Figure D).



The GBA’s work is rooted in the understanding that an effective supply of books requires high-quality title development in languages and formats that children can use and understand, access to those titles by publishers and printers, and a functioning supply chain to deliver books to their potential readers. The Alliance’s strategic objectives and related activities have been developed to address those key components that contribute to an effective supply of books and capitalize on the Alliance’s unique position to convene the global community, collectively advocate for change, and collect, test, and share promising practices and global public goods.

The Alliance’s work targets key stakeholders who are most likely to have an interest in and be able to support the transformation of the book supply chain: book publishers, Ministries of Education, multilateral and bilateral donors, and international and national nongovernmental organizations. These groups will be partners in planning and implementing the strategic objectives and activities, as well as beneficiaries of their outcomes.

The Alliance’s strategic objectives and related activities have been developed to address the key components that contribute to an effective supply of books and capitalize on the Alliance’s unique position to convene the global community, collectively advocate for change, and collect, test, and share promising practices and global public goods.

Closing the Book Gap

The Alliance’s work to close the global book gap makes an important contribution to global efforts to end illiteracy by supporting sustainable improvements in children’s access to the reading materials needed to practice reading skills. By the end of the 2021–2024 strategy period, the Alliance will have done the following:

- Increased the focus and urgency with which the global community works to address the global book gap
- Supported more Ministries, donors, and other purchasers in sourcing materials from local book-publishing industries
- Increased children’s access to materials in the Global Digital Library
- Engaged the global community to more systematically measure access to books as part of the ongoing effort to assess progress on literacy
- Expanded the GBA website to serve as a clearinghouse of high-quality resources on addressing challenges in book provision
- Supported increased access for the most marginalized learners to books that support their learning

The Alliance’s activities to achieve these outcomes are outlined in Figure D.

FIGURE D. PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK: GBA STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES, 2021–2024

Mission	To transform the lives of children in developing countries by working with partners to identify, promote and support innovations, best practice and policies that will change the way books are created, procured, provided and used.			
Objectives	Increase availability of quality children’s books in local languages and in print and digital formats.	Increase access to quality children’s books at school, in the community, and at home	Improve use of books by children, teachers, parents and caregivers	Improve knowledge and capacity of the global community and country-level stakeholders to strengthen book supply chains and close the global book gap
Activities	Advocate and communicate to the global community on the need for long term, sustainable book supply planning and financing to support thriving local publishing markets	Advocate and communicate to the global community for the equitable representation of marginalized and vulnerable populations in print and digital textbooks and supplementary reading materials	Gather comprehensive data on the needs of target Global Digital Library users to inform approaches to increase the use of the Global Digital Library	Advocate and communicate to the global community on the urgency to close the global book gap for all children, especially marginalized and vulnerable populations, and on practical approaches to address the book gap
	Advocate and communicate to the global community to promote awareness of and submission of books to the Global Digital Library	Convene a community of practice to create guidance and toolkits that support the development of accessible and inclusive textbooks and supplementary reading materials	Advocate and communicate to the global community to use books available on the Global Digital Library	Finalize the GBA Book Supply Chain Analysis Tool and disseminate as a global public good

continued >>

Activities (cont'd)	Develop collections of original and translated early grade (1-3) reading materials for distribution on the Global Digital Library	Increase the accessibility of the Global Digital Library through the sourcing of additional high-quality materials and adaptations that increase the Global Digital Library's capacity to serve users with disabilities	Collect and disseminate approaches to increase the frequency and improve the quality of reading by and with children, parents, caregivers, and teachers	Develop a Book Supply Chain Strengthening Toolkit
	Increase the number of titles on the Global Digital Library that are available for professional printing			Convene a community of practice to establish and recommend the uptake of a set of global indicators to measure book availability, access, quality and use
Operations	GBA's operations are strengthened through the addition of new Alliance members, partnerships, and diversification of funding sources.			

OBJECTIVE 1: Increase availability of quality children's books in local languages and in print and digital formats.

During the first strategy period, the Alliance established the Global Digital Library and steadily increased the number and quality of books available on this platform. The GBA also launched the Begin with Books challenge led by All Children Reading to support innovative approaches to rapidly develop new titles in underserved spoken and signed languages.

Under its new Strategic Plan, the Alliance will build on this work. Efforts will continue to encourage the contribution of high-quality content to the Global Digital Library in both digital and print-ready formats. The Alliance will focus on strategic investments that will respond to the needs of target Library users, such as increasing the number of materials available for

Who can use the Global Digital Library?

The GDL is an online repository, but its materials can be read in digital or print formats. For example:

- A child might read a book on a parent's cell phone
- A teacher or reading club leader might print PDF copies for short-term specific uses
- Students may access GDL books on tablets provided by their school
- Ministries or development partners may procure large print runs of books from the GDL for distribution to schools

professional printing, and creating collections of materials that will be useful and easy for Ministries of Education, program implementers, and others to use off the shelf.

The Alliance will also redouble its efforts to encourage investments in building thriving local publishing sectors for children’s books by launching new efforts to support and promote the efforts of local and regional book publishers and advocacy efforts that support Ministries of Education to plan for and implement practices to strengthen local book sectors, including committing predictable, long-term financing for book provision and sourcing books from local and regional publishers.

FIGURE E. OBJECTIVE 1 PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK

Activity	Description	Indicator
<p>Objective 1: Increase availability of quality children’s books in local languages and in print and digital formats.</p>		
<p>Activity 1.A</p>	<p>Advocate and communicate to the global community on the need for long term, sustainable book supply planning and financing to support thriving local publishing markets</p>	<p>1.A.1 Plan for a global advocacy and communications campaign on sourcing reading materials from local and regional book publishers produced</p>
		<p>1.A.2 Progress in implementation of key activities and deliverables identified in the advocacy and communications plan (for example, increased number of resources, presentations, direct communications, and social media activities developed by the Alliance)</p>
		<p>1.A.3 Number of national education sector plans that prioritize sustainable book access through evidence-based practices (such as sourcing materials from local and regional publishers, including essential reading materials in book procurement planning, and ring-fencing book budgets) and an increase in the extent to which progress can be measured through associated indicators</p>
		<p>1.A.4 Number of local and regional publishers’ early grades reading catalogues promoted on the GBA website</p>

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Activity	Description	Indicator
Activity 1.B	Advocate and communicate to the global community to promote awareness of and submission of books to the Global Digital Library	1.B.1 Development of a global advocacy and communications strategy promoting the Global Digital Library
		1.B.2 Progress in implementation of key activities and deliverables identified in the advocacy and communications plan (for example, an increased number of resources, presentations, direct communications, and social media activities developed by the Alliance)
		1.B.3. Number of partners who contribute materials to the Global Digital Library by creating original content or adapting existing materials
		1.B.4 Number of books submitted to the Global Digital Library over the course of the strategy period
		1.B.5 Number of additional underserved languages ¹⁵ for which books are submitted to the GDL over the course of the strategy period
Activity 1.C	Develop collections of original and translated early grade (1-3) reading materials for distribution on the Global Digital Library	1.C.1 Number of languages for which collections of early grade reading materials are developed
		1.C.2 Number of collections of early grade reading materials available in formats that can be professionally printed
Activity 1.D	Increase the number of titles on the Global Digital Library that are available for professional printing	1.D.1 Number of existing titles adapted for professional-quality printing
		1.D.2 Number of new titles contributed to the Global Digital Library in formats that allow for professional-quality printing

OBJECTIVE 2: Increase access to quality children’s books at school, in the community, and at home

In the first strategy period, the Alliance emphasized increasing children’s access to books through, among other efforts, the focus on accessible book formats for children with disabilities on the Global Digital Library and through the All Children Reading/Begin with Books Challenge.

In the next strategy period, the Alliance will double down on this effort in a multi-pronged approach that includes both advocacy and communications efforts and the provision of tools and resources to support good practice.

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¹⁵ *Underserved languages* are those languages in which the existing supply of reading materials is inadequate to support the frequent, varied reading practice that is necessary for literacy development.

First, the Alliance will advocate to the global community, including book publishers and purchasers, regarding the need for more equitable representation of marginalized populations in all kinds of books. Second, the Alliance will convene a community of practice to share guidance and tools to support increased development of accessible books. Combined, these efforts will support broader investment across the sector in the use of platforms and modalities that ensure the greatest access to books, and that these books include positive and equitable representation of marginalized populations. Finally, the Alliance will continue work to incorporate best practices in accessibility into the Global Digital Library, drawing on the guidance and recommendations shared by the community of practice.

FIGURE F. OBJECTIVE 2 PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK

Activity	Description	Indicator
Objective 2: Increase access to quality children’s books at school, in the community, and at home		
Activity 2.A	Advocate and communicate to the global community for the equitable representation of marginalized and vulnerable populations in print and digital textbooks and supplementary reading materials	2.A.1 A plan for a global advocacy and communications campaign on the equitable representation of marginalized and vulnerable populations in reading materials produced in consultation with diverse stakeholders
		2.A.2 Progress in implementation of key activities and deliverables identified in the advocacy and communications plan (for example, an increased number of resources, presentations, direct communications, and social media activities developed by the Alliance)
		2.A.3 Level of engagement with deliverables of the advocacy and communications strategy (e.g., attendance at relevant events, number of times that work products are accessed via the Global Book Alliance website and other means)

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Activity	Description	Indicator
Activity 2.B	Convene a community of practice to create guidance and toolkits that support the development of accessible and inclusive textbooks and supplementary reading materials	2.B.1 Community of practice established, work plan developed, and deliverables (how-to notes, guidance) finalized for distribution
		2.B.2 Level and types of engagement with disabled persons' organizations, and people with disabilities in development of tools and guidance
		2.B.3 Number of members ¹⁶ who participate actively in the community of practice (i.e., attend at least two thirds of the meetings)
		2.B.4 Number of deliverables (e.g., tools, guidance, resources), including high-quality existing materials and newly developed materials, shared by the community of practice
		2.B.5 Number of times guidance, tools, and other work products are accessed via the Global Book Alliance website and other means
Activity 2.C	Increase the accessibility of the Global Digital Library through the sourcing of additional high-quality materials and adaptations that increase the Global Digital Library's capacity to serve users with disabilities	2.C.1 Number of new materials available on the Global Digital Library with accessibility features for users with disabilities
		2.C.2 Number of recommendations from the community of practice incorporated into the Global Digital Library

Objective 3: Improve use of books by children, teachers, parents, and caregivers

Recognizing the leadership role that program implementers take in improving the use of books on the ground in many countries, the Alliance plans to use its strategic position in an approach that focuses on high-level advocacy, partnerships, and sharing of resources and guidance. The Alliance will invest in efforts that respond to the needs of target users of the materials on the Global Digital Library, based on research and analysis of current usage. The GBA will advocate to Ministries of Education and others to use the books in the Global Digital Library and will engage directly with Ministries to support the use of these books in their education systems.

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¹⁶ In addition to GBA Steering Committee organizations, intended members of this community of practice include Ministry officials, industry representatives, representatives of organizations for people with disabilities, and others with relevant technical expertise.

Building on the wide expertise of its member organizations, the Alliance will also convene a community of practice to collect and share promising practices for improving book use by children, teachers, parents, and caregivers. Working through Steering Committee members and other partners, the Alliance will work to support adoption of policies and practices that integrate the use of children’s books into sector planning, teacher training, education programming, and awareness-raising efforts. This effort will avoid the one-size-fits-all “silver bullet” approach to increasing the frequency and quality of reading and will instead allow for flexibility and localization of approaches according to each country’s needs.

FIGURE G. OBJECTIVE 3 PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK

Activity	Description	Indicator
Objective 3: Improve use of books by children, teachers, parents, and caregivers		
Activity 3.A	Gather comprehensive data on the needs of target users to inform approaches to increase use of the Global Digital Library	3.A.1 Completion of report on analysis of user needs
		3.A.2 Number of recommendations from report taken up by the Alliance
Activity 3.B	Advocate and communicate to the global community to use books available on the Global Digital Library.	3.B.1 Plan for Global advocacy and communications campaign to increase the use of Global Digital Library books produced
		3.B.2 Progress in implementation of key activities and deliverables identified in the advocacy and communications plan (for example, an increased number of resources, presentations, direct communications, and social media activities developed by the Alliance)
		3.B.3 Level of engagement with deliverables of the advocacy and communications strategy (e.g., attendance at relevant events, number of times that work products are accessed via the GBA website and other means)
		3.B.4 Number of users accessing materials on the Global Digital Library annually over the course of the strategy period
		3.B.5 Number of Ministries with whom the GBA engages directly to increase the use of Global Digital Library materials as part of education sector planning

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Activity	Description	Indicator
Activity 3.C	Collect and disseminate approaches to increase the frequency and improve the quality of reading by and with children, parents, caregivers, and teachers	3.C.1 Production and publication of a global public good to share approaches to increasing the frequency and quality of reading, including strategies for caregivers with low or no literacy
		3.C.2 Number of times that guidance, tools, and other work products are accessed via the Global Book Alliance website and other means

Objective 4: Improve knowledge and capacity of the global community and country-level stakeholders to strengthen book supply chains and close the global book gap

Despite growing awareness of the need for teaching and learning materials, the global community’s knowledge of and capacity to implement approaches to increase the number and quantity of books is still lacking. In its first strategy period, the Alliance made progress toward knowledge and capacity building through its incipient advocacy work to close the global book gap and through its piloting of the Book Supply Chain Analysis Tool in five countries.

In the next strategy period, the Alliance will redouble these efforts by launching a systematic advocacy campaign that raises awareness about the problems associated with the global book gap and proven and promising approaches to address these problems—including, but not limited to, practices related to procurement reform, technical specifications, and tracking distribution. This strategy period will also see the finalization and dissemination of the Book Supply Chain Analysis Tool as a global public good.

The Alliance will also begin working to fill knowledge and capacity gaps that have been identified as serious barriers to progress: (1) a lack of systematic data on book availability, access, quality, and use, and (2) a lack of concrete tools that Ministries of Education, donors, and nongovernmental organizations can use to help address and strengthen the weaknesses in book supply chains, as identified through analyses.

Finally, the Alliance will coordinate a Book Supply Chain Strengthening Toolkit that will bring together deliverables from multiple activities under this objective to support improved practice (see Figure H).

FIGURE H. BOOK SUPPLY CHAIN STRENGTHENING TOOLKIT

Purpose	Illustrative Toolkit Components
<p>The GBA’s Book Supply Chain Toolkit lays out an innovative, evidence-based approach to strengthening the book supply chain at the country level as an essential ingredient in improving the reading skills of children in low- and middle-income countries around the world. The Toolkit is a complement to the Book Supply Chain Analysis, which diagnoses the strengths and weaknesses of a country’s book supply chain, and will be made available as a global public good.</p>	<p>Tools and strategies to shape demand and to source books from local and regional book publishers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A guide for integrating book-related interventions into strategic planning processes ➤ A compendium of initiatives to strengthen each component of the book supply chain ➤ A database of technical experts in book procurement, publishing practices, track and trace, and other key areas in the book supply chain ➤ Key Performance Indicators to measure progress towards strengthening each component of the book supply chain



FIGURE I. OBJECTIVE 4 PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK

Activity	Description	Indicator
Objective 4: Improve knowledge and capacity of the global community and country-level stakeholders to strengthen book supply chains and close the global book gap.		
Activity 4.A	Advocate and communicate to the global community on the urgency to close the global book gap for all children, especially marginalized and vulnerable populations, and on practical approaches to address the book gap	4.A.1 A plan for an advocacy campaign to raise awareness of the global book gap and book procurement reform (including best practices)
		4.B.2 Progress in implementation of key activities and deliverables identified in the advocacy plan (for example, an increased number of resources, presentations, direct communications, and social media activities developed by the Alliance)
Activity 4.B	Finalize the GBA Book Supply Chain Analysis Tool and disseminate it as a global public good	4.B.1 Book Supply Chain Analysis Tool finalized and shared via the Global Book Alliance website.
		4.B.2 Number of times the Book Supply Chain Analysis tool is accessed via the Global Book Alliance website and other means
		4.B.3 Number of country-level stakeholders to whom targeted outreach related to the Book Supply Chain Analysis Tool is conducted over the course of the strategy period
Activity 4.C	Develop a Book Supply Chain Strengthening Toolkit	4.C.1 Publication of a toolkit, based on both existing and new tools, that lays out an innovative, evidence-based approach to strengthening the book supply chain at the country level, as a complement to the Book Supply Chain Analysis Tool
Activity 4.D	Convene a community of practice to establish and recommend the uptake of a set of global indicators to measure book availability, access, quality, and use	4.D.1 Community of practice established, work plan developed, and deliverables finalized
		4.D.2 Number of members who participate actively in the community of practice (i.e., attend at least two thirds of meetings)
		4.D.3 Number of global education actors who incorporate recommended indicators into their education reporting practices

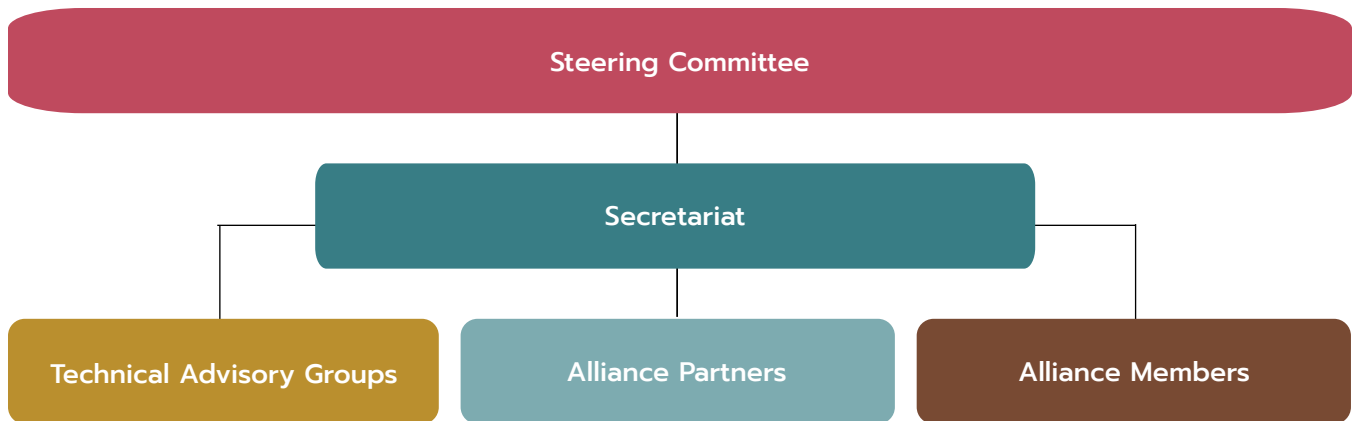
V. GOVERNANCE, OPERATIONS, AND PARTNERSHIPS

To achieve these outcomes, the GBA will continue to strengthen its operational structures, including ongoing refinement of governance structures to support the continuing growth and maturation of the Alliance, exploring new opportunities to expand the resources invested in ensuring children’s access to books, and drawing in new partners to provide fresh perspectives and expertise.

Governance

At its inception, the GBA has operated within a governance structure that includes (1) the Steering Committee, comprising 11 founding members and led by a Chair, (2) the Secretariat, and (3) GBA members serving in a variety of short-term capacities (e.g., Technical Advisory Groups). In Fall 2020, the GBA approved a revised governance structure that expanded on and clarified the original structure (see Figure J).

FIGURE J. GLOBAL BOOK ALLIANCE GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE



Under the revised structure, multiple groups of stakeholders will play important roles in the governance of the Alliance and the implementation of its work:

- The Steering Committee, including 12 organizations and led by a Chair and a Deputy Chair, holds decision-making authority for the Alliance. It sets strategy, selects and supports Alliance activities (including flagship initiatives), and identifies best practices.
- The Secretariat maximizes the Alliance’s impact through strategic coordination, coordinated resource deployment, and operational support. The Secretariat is delegated authority from the Steering Committee for day-to-day management of Alliance business.

- Technical Advisory Groups, convened by the Steering Committee on an as-needed basis, provide expert guidance to the Alliance on focus areas of the book supply chain.
- Alliance Partners support the Alliance’s vision through funding, advocacy, and/or collaboration.
 - » Alliance Members receive information, updates, and other communication from the Alliance and may engage in activities and/or take up best practices.
- In the next strategy period, the Alliance will strategically consider the expansion of its Steering Committee from 12 to as many as 19 organizations, prioritizing new members from the Global South, as well as those from the publishing industry.

Operations

The Secretariat—housed at GBA Steering Committee founding member USAID—will continue to manage the Alliance’s day-to-day core functions and will coordinate partners’ efforts across the strategic objectives and related activities. The Alliance relies on the Secretariat to unify, energize, and organize efforts to maintain momentum in pursuit of its vision and mission. The Secretariat will manage efforts to *convene* the global community to solve the global book gap; *advocate* for and *communicate* promising practices to ensure a stronger book chain; and *partner* to co-design, fund, and launch initiatives that support the vision. The Alliance will work with current host USAID and a key group of advisors to develop a long-term strategy for hosting and fiscal sponsorship, with the overarching goal of identifying a long-term operational model that will ensure sustainability of the Alliance’s work.

Partnerships

Partnership is at the very heart of the GBA and its operational model. Steering Committee member organizations will work together to conceive and implement joint efforts to strengthen the book supply chain and to disseminate knowledge and promising practices. The Alliance will also partner strategically with other donor agencies, multilateral institutions, local and regional book publishers, other private sector actors, and civil society organizations to harness their strengths, expertise, and assets in strengthening book supply chains.

To accomplish its four strategic objectives and related activities, the Alliance will pursue partners who can support work to strengthen book supply chains through their *resources*, *knowledge*, *credibility*, and *networks*. The Alliance will use multiple criteria to identify potential partnerships for each of its strategic objectives and related activities, for example:

- The desired impact of the partnership from the perspective of both the GBA and the potential partner
- A potential partner’s affinity with the GBA’s strategic objectives and activities

- The potential partner’s purpose or intent for engaging in this work
 - » The level and type of resources, knowledge, credibility, and networks the potential partner can provide
- The GBA will formalize partnerships through the development of individual partnership plans and memos of understanding with detailed indicators of partnership impact and deliverables.

LOCAL AND PRIVATE SECTOR PUBLISHING PARTNERSHIPS

The Alliance recognizes the unique importance of local book publishers in resolving the global book gap. Sustainable change will rely on robust book markets and a supply of high-quality books in languages that children understand. In its next strategy period, the Alliance will work to (1) strengthen the knowledge of local private book publishers in low- and middle-income countries, (2) increase the involvement of book publishers in capacity-building efforts, and (3) coordinate partnerships with local and regional book publishers to strengthen book supply chains.

JOIN US

The Alliance’s work to ensure access to books for all children is an essential component of global efforts to eradicate illiteracy. Building strong local markets for these materials ensures the sustainability of efforts by partners around the world to strengthen foundational skills and eliminate learning poverty worldwide.

The Alliance envisions a world in which it is possible to walk into any classroom and see shelves populated by reading books in the local languages used by the school’s students. Opening any of these books will reveal stories reflective of community cultures and rooted in evidence-based practices for supporting literacy development. Teachers will be adequately trained and supported to incorporate reading materials throughout their lessons during each school day. Students will have ready access to books they can read not only at school but also in their homes and communities.

As the global community rallies around efforts to ensure universal literacy, access to reading materials will be at the heart of any successful strategy. Together, we can strengthen the local systems that fulfill the promise of high-quality educational opportunities for all children.

To find out more, visit our website at www.globalbookalliance.org.

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