



INT'L BOOK PROJECT

# THE GLOBAL FLYER

Summer 2019

## FINDING REFUGE IN READING

In light of the global refugee crisis, International Book Project has seen an increase in donation requests from refugee camps and schools throughout the Middle East. Shipping to migrant camps is nearly impossible due to logistic challenges, such as a lack of nearby ports, physical mailing addresses, and truckers willing to transport cargo inland. Due to these obstacles, International Book Project has been unable to send a large shipment to this part of the world before—but we were eager to try.

We found a well-established university capable of receiving a container of books in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. To take advantage of their geographic location, we combined their shipment with a request from a local non-profit that operates at several schools and refugee camps throughout the region. The local non-profit, Green Kids, was founded by Kurdish pop-star, Dashni Morad, to educate school children about protecting the environment. Green Kids quickly learned, however, that not all children have access to education. The priorities of their organization shifted to make learning opportunities available for all, including refugees and other under-served children.

Green Kids initiated several programs, including building libraries, opening art rooms, and teaching environmental education classes. To help fill their libraries, International Book Project shipped 63 boxes with more than 5,000 children's books. Many of the books went to camps, but some of the more advanced science and reading books were relocated to larger schools and universities working with Green Kids. According to Morad, the shipment "will help the children to grow and connect with the magical world of books." The shipment included easy readers, elementary and middle school textbooks, and picture dictionaries to help students learn English. So far books have been distributed by Green Kids to an elementary school in the Slemani region, a university in Halabja, and to Syrian refugees at the Qushtapa camp, benefiting more than 3,000 students. We hope to grow our partnership with Green Kids in the future and "continue to feed the dreams of children through books." Reports and photos of smiling kids excitedly reading their new books are heartwarming and truly highlight the transformative, life-changing, power of literacy.



Syrian children at Qushtapa refugee camp

*"...feed the dreams  
of children  
through books."*



Green Kids students reading books

# BOOKS AS BRIDGES IN 2019

During the 2018-19 school year, *Books as Bridges* connected more than 2,500 students across 12 unique countries from Guatemala to Nepal. Students were especially curious about their pen-pals' relationship with technology and the internet, their native languages, and family life. Impressed by their new friends' penmanship, American students worked hard to make their handwriting clear and legible, often adding colorful drawings and cartoons to their letters. High school students swapped social media handles so they could stay in touch on a more regular basis. In their final letter before summer break, students at Bumausi Primary School in Sironko, Uganda wrote:

***"All the letters we have written have made us bold to face our final primary exams and our English has tremendously improved. We wish you well as you go for your holidays and as you join new classes, but remember all of us here would love to hear from you again."***

By the end of the year, students learned that the immediacy of instant messaging cannot replace a physical letter that traveled thousands of miles before finally reaching its destination. International Book Project is endlessly proud of the new friendships, geographic diversity, and academic strides that marked this year's *Books as Bridges* group.



Liberty Elementary, Lexington, KY



San Andrés Iztapa, Guatemala

## EDUCATED GIRLS = EMPOWERED WOMEN

The impact one shipment can have on a generation of students



Primary school girl reading her new book

Gendered oppression is an ongoing issue facing young women in Nigeria, exemplified by the staggering 20% difference in literacy rates between men and women. Structural factors, such as child labor and forced marriage, prevent many Nigerian girls and women from receiving an education.

International Book Project receives countless applications from organizations working to bridge the educational gap between boys and girls. One such application was from an all-girls school in Abuja, Nigeria that noticed a frightening decline in their students' reading interest: "We cannot sit back and see the future fade away; we can't continue lamenting the standard of education and reading habits and yet do nothing about it."

### SOCIAL BARRIERS

# 44%

OF GIRLS IN NIGERIA

are forced into marriage before 18

### EDUCATIONAL BARRIERS

# 25 MILLION

NIGERIAN WOMEN

are unable to read

### GENDER INEQUALITY

# 20%

DIFFERENCE

in the literacy rate between men and women in Nigeria



Secondary school girls holding their favorite books

Moved by their compelling application, we started packing books right away—books about history, science experiments, math problems, princesses, and more! All together we sent 4 boxes, filled with over 140 books, that would appeal to the girls' varied interests.

A few months after the books left our warehouse, we received a touching report from the school reflecting on the immediate impact of the donation. The report told the story of students' rekindled passion for reading. In addition to improved reading habits, the girls' confidence soared. The books inspired them to create a reading club to share their thoughts and voice their opinions on book characters and story endings; some even becoming comfortable enough to read their favorite passages aloud to their peers. With ongoing education, these young women will continue to overcome social barriers and are on their way to brighter futures.

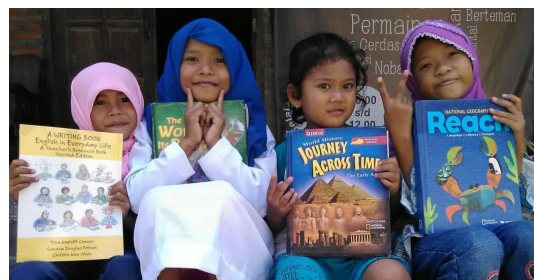
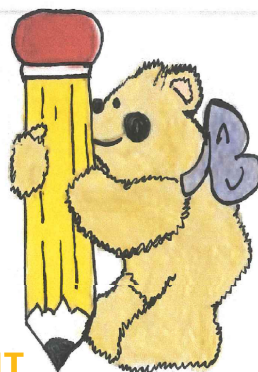


# IN THEIR OWN WORDS

## Partners express their gratitude

Since it is rare for International Book Project staff to travel around the world and meet our partners face-to-face, we love reading the thoughtful thank-you notes they send upon receiving their books. Shipments often travel thousands of miles over many months, so it is always rewarding to see photos of them delivered safely and surrounded by smiling faces. These are just a few of the letters and photos we receive that testify to the impact of our work—gestures like these motivate us to keep moving forward!

Dear International Book Project,  
I am Ana from Akhalkalaki's Georgian school  
I 12 years old I would like to thank you for  
giving us books One day, when we had club, me,  
Ani and Miss Kaitlyn carried your 5 boxes of  
books There were 300 books inside! These  
boxes were very heavy, but it was fun to see all  
of the books first! These books  
are helping me learn new words.  
So, they're very helpful for me.



Small shipment partner in Indonesia received 40 k-12 textbooks

*"The [books] were crucial in starting our town's first library because you guys give the best books! Thanks for really listening to our request and giving us current and bestseller books!"*

- Moalboal Town Library, Philippines



Pallet partner in Jamaica received 3,066 children's books

## LETTER FROM OUR BOARD PRESIDENT

Dear Friends of IBP,

Here at 1440 Delaware Avenue in Lexington, Kentucky, we have a big "books change lives" mission with a tiny and terrific staff. We like to say we are small, but mighty!

We need and appreciate your support as we work toward our goal of shipping 500,000 books annually by 2020 - adding to the more than 7 million we have shipped to 140 countries over 53 years. Our requesting partners are both far-flung and close to home: universities in Albania and Nigeria, the NGO Child Aid in Guatemala, Peace Corps Volunteers in Vanuatu and Zambia, San Bernardino County Schools, a First Nations school in Canada, in addition to Buckhorn Children and Family Services in Eastern Kentucky and refugee, veterans', and Habitat for Humanity families right here in Central Kentucky.

If you live nearby, come browse our bookstore where 100% of the proceeds support our shipping programs. Donate books or sponsor a small shipment to the country of your choice. Hold your meetings in our new public space as the local United Nations Association has, or meet regularly as *Read Around the World* (IBP's monthly book club), Dungeons & Dragons games, and Kentucky Peace Corps Association do. Get involved by volunteering in the warehouse. Our work would not be possible without the support of people like you!

Thank you! Vinaka vakalevu. Medaase.

Angene Wilson

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## Stay Connected

[www.intlbookproject.org](http://www.intlbookproject.org)

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International Book Project is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization | EIN: 61-6039627

## 2019 SHIPPING TO-DATE

