Background Information

Global Book Alliance: Books for Every Child /REACH for Reading Call for Proposals is a joint initiative by the Results for All Children (REACH) trust fund, housed at the World Bank and the Global Book Alliance, a multi-partner alliance. Funded by Norad, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, REACH supports efforts toward more and better education services, especially to those most excluded, by helping country systems focus more sharply on results. The Global Book Alliance aims to transform the development, procurement and distribution of books, with an initial focus on books for reading instruction and practice in the primary grades and in underserved languages. Our shared vision is an education system in which all children have access to a quality education where they develop the key skill of literacy during the early grades. Currently, 250 million children of primary school age around the world have not acquired this foundational skill. To address this global learning crisis, the Global Book Alliance/REACH for Reading Call for Proposals will fund a series of innovative interventions in low and middle income countries, using results-based financing mechanisms to increase efficiency and align incentives.

Objectives of the Global Book Alliance/REACH for Reading Call
Education is a powerful driver of development and one of the strongest instruments for reducing poverty, raising incomes, promoting economic growth and shared prosperity, and for improving health, gender equality, peace, and stability. With 57 million children not in school today and 250 million not learning the basics in reading and mathematics, ending extreme poverty and boosting shared prosperity depends on more effective investments in quality education and learning.

The Global Book Alliance is a partnership between USAID, Norad, DfID, host country governments, other development partners, the private sector and NGOs to transform the development, procurement and distribution of books, with a focus on books for reading instruction and practice. Neither textbooks nor essential decodable and leveled readers in languages children need are available to young learners in most of the developing world. The Global Book Alliance builds on experience gleaned by USAID, Norad, DfID and other partners over more than a decade of implementation of multilateral funds in the health sector, including funds to increase access to essential drugs, vaccines, bed nets and reproductive health commodities, along with similar work in agriculture and other sectors.

The Global Book Alliance/REACH for Reading Call for Proposals seeks to support innovations that get the right books to all children at the right time, using results-based financing modalities. Multiple studies have shown that facilitating access to appropriate textbooks and reading materials is one of the most high impact and cost-effective ways of

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1 Other terms for “underserved languages” are mother tongue languages, first languages, local languages and national languages. For the purpose of this Call for Proposals, underserved languages are defined as languages that children speak and understand when they come to school but which do not have an adequate supply of high quality textbooks and supplementary materials that are consistently delivered to learners. These can be smaller languages or very large languages. In general, this Call will support underserved languages which are also official languages of instruction in public primary schools.
increasing learning outcomes at primary school level in low and middle income countries\textsuperscript{2,3,4}. However, most young readers in the developing world do not have access to high-quality books due to a lack of content in appropriate languages, high costs and inefficient supply chains.

**What is Results-Based Financing?**
Results-based financing is an umbrella term that refers to any program that rewards the delivery of one or more outputs or outcomes by one or more incentives, financial or otherwise, upon verification that the agreed-upon result has actually been delivered. Incentives may be directed to ministries, provinces, districts or service providers such as publishers, printers and supply chain providers (supply side), program beneficiaries such as students and teachers (demand side), or both. It can refer to donor financing, government financing, private sector financing or any combination of these.

**What type of solutions will be considered?**
REACH for Reading will fund high quality, robust, cost-effective and scalable experiments, designed to transform the quality and availability of textbooks and reading books through results-based financing models. Given the transformative potential of technology, ICT and digital interventions to increase efficiencies along the book chain, from content delivery to production to supply chain logistics, will also be considered. It is suggested that applicants consider lessons learned from other sectors, such as health and agriculture, as well as previous research and experience in book provision, in designing their proposals. The interventions we support will demonstrate the following:

a) **Relevance to Global Book Alliance Knowledge, Learning and Innovation Grant/REACH for Reading’s goals:** An intervention which reforms one or more aspects of the way books are developed, procured, produced, or supplied, using results-based financing. A focus on primary grade books for reading instruction and practice in underserved languages is required, although interventions will preferably be applicable to other types of textbooks and supplementary books as well.

b) **Technical soundness:** A clearly defined theory of change, grounded in evidence, about how the intervention could impact book development, procurement, production and/or supply while increasing cost-effectiveness. An emphasis on strengthening country systems or developing complementary, government-endorsed, private sector systems where appropriate is preferred.

c) **Methodological rigor:** Meticulous plans for rigorous evaluation of the intervention, which will inform the global evidence base.

d) **Strategic opportunity for long-term engagement:** Potential for scale up within country after the completion of the grant cycle, and/or scope for the model to be scaled up in other countries or regions.

e) **Government and partner commitment:** Applications will only be considered from countries with existing reading programs and/or reforms. Priority will be given to teams including government and partner representatives working


in or across countries where the government can demonstrate support for using results-based financing mechanisms.

The solutions may be at any of the following stages of development:

1) **Proof of concept**: Development and piloting of an intervention that targets beneficiaries in a developing country context in order to assess the technical and financial viability of the proposed intervention.

2) **Testing impact and delivery**: Testing a proven concept for results and cost efficiency and/or market viability, as well as refinement to build paths to sustainability and scale.

3) **Scaling-up**: Adaptation of a rigorously evaluated and cost-effective innovation to new contexts and geographical areas, nationally or regionally.

Examples of eligible activities include (but are not limited to):

- **Data and Planning**: The lack of data on book demand and provision limits the ability to plan procurement, secure adequate, timely financing, negotiate with suppliers to reduce costs, pinpoint inefficiencies, and evaluate progress. A potential grant might condition financing on the creation of an open-data system and/or a mechanism that supports and incentivizes improved use of available country data systems for book provision, resource mapping, gap analysis and procurement planning, and/or related activities.

- **Content Production**: The very recent emphasis on learning outcomes and awareness of literacy as a foundational skill, combined with limited financing, low demand, limited authorship capacity, and licensing and copyright issues, contribute to an inadequate supply of appropriate titles in underserved languages. A potential response to this call might pilot an intervention that works with publishers, authors, NGOs, Ministries of Education and other stakeholders involved in the content development process to accelerate title production. The aforementioned intervention could test whether results-based financing (e.g. through performance-based contracting) has the ability to increase access to and distribution of books in underserved languages (small or large) regionally or within countries where improved and expanded content is a critical need.

- **Procurement and Financing**: Ineffective procurement processes, along with fragmented and unpredictable financing, are the source of many inefficiencies. Proposals in this category might focus on developing standard technical specifications, multi-donor/government bidding documents, and innovative, results-based approaches to procurement, financing and resource mobilization, or related activities.

- **Book Supply Chain**: Ineffective supply chains are the source of significant inefficiencies. While supply chain and distribution issues vary by country, common challenges include a lack of demand forecasting, poor supply chain management systems and resulting loss and damage of books. Proposals might focus on the development of a results-based supply chain and/or a monitoring system that focuses on known points of vulnerability along the book value chain (i.e. within the functional areas of supply planning, forecasting and/or distribution).

- **Implementation/process evaluations**: Proposals will be considered for impact evaluations, process evaluations and longitudinal studies (under three years) for results-based financing mechanisms already underway related to book production, financing, procurement, supply chains, use and learning outcomes. Partnership between applicants and lead organizations implementing the intervention to be evaluated must be demonstrated in the proposal.
• Develop results-based financing oriented components within World Bank or other multilateral operations (country projects) or other development partner-funded projects that strengthen country systems or appropriate, complementary private sector systems to improve book design, inventory, production, procurement, or distribution.

• Provide technical assistance to support countries in developing results-based financing oriented approaches to catalyze their reading programs by increasing the quality, accessibility and/or affordability for national or regional approaches to books and reading.

Who will we fund?
All grants will be World Bank-executed, together with public and private partners. REACH for Reading will consider applications from (1) Governments; (2) Non-governmental organizations; (3) Teams within multilateral and bilateral development partners; (4) Academics; (5) Civil Society organizations; and (6) Consortia including one or more of categories 1-5 (preferred).

How will funding be managed?
Activities financed through this call for proposals will vary in scope, scale and duration. The maximum budget for an activity financed through this call for proposals is expected to be $500,000. Duration will be from six months to three years (longitudinal evaluations only). A World Bank Task Team Leader (TTL) must be identified for each proposal selected for financing. For teams applying within the World Bank, the TTL will be responsible for the activity implementation and budget and for delivering the results specified in the proposal. Successful teams from outside the World Bank will be matched with a World Bank TTL.

Eligible Expenditures
The Trust Fund funds may be used to finance:
(a) Associated Overheads
(b) Consultants Fees Individuals with Indirect Costs and Firms
(c) Contractual Services
(d) Equipment and Office Premises Lease Cost
(e) Equipment Purchased (including reading materials)
(f) Extended Term Consultants - with Indirect Costs
(g) Media, Workshops, Conference and Meeting
(h) Staff Costs - with Indirect Costs
(i) Temporary Support Staff Costs - with Indirect Costs
(j) Travel Expenses

Application process
Applications can be submitted online and found at http://www.worldbank.org/en/programs/reach. Applications close on 6 PM EST, Tuesday, November 22, 2016. The link will take you to the application form where you will be asked to outline your research. After an initial review of submissions by a Selection Panel consisting of representatives from the Global Book Alliance and the World Bank, a small number of teams will be invited to interviews. Interviews will take place in person for DC-based candidates, and via video conference for all other teams. The interviews will be conducted by representatives from the Global Book Alliance and the World Bank. Teams who are successful at the interview stage will be made an offer with attached conditions. If this offer is accepted, teams will be asked to submit additional documentation. Successful grantees will be required to submit progress reports quarterly for monitoring and evaluation purposes. The funds will be made available in tranches, as pre-agreed success criteria are met.