

TRISHAW BOOKS – MYANMAR

“Bringing knowledge to communities”

Context

Frequentation of libraries worldwide is decreasing; meanwhile online platforms are more frequented than before. Libraries have deployed digital tools to help remote access to their resources, in order to attract the digital natives and promote cultural resources. Their aim was to avoid entertainment only resources.

But these tools, expansive and complicated to implement, are mostly setup by wealthy structures. Small libraries, with small budget, are excluded of this digital evolutions. They are especially excluded of these services if they are located in **remote areas, far from any internet access**, or if they have not digital skills internally available to implement these services. Our device is designed to strengthen libraries with no or small internet access, including intermittent access. This is the case for a small library in a temporary settlement, including IDP or Refugees camp.

The Ynibox device allows a library to implement easily digital catalogue and tools, educational and cultural contents, without an internet access.

There are few libraries in Myanmar. They are mostly located in large cities, and rarely in the neighbourhood's. And essentially these are intended for public university and / or expatriates (French and Goethe insitute, British Council, international schools). Public libraries are almost non-existent in rural areas.

In Myanmar according to UNESCO only 50% of children's are enrolled on secondary schools. There is also a lack of financing, and schools are often poorly equipped and books are often out-of-date. The vast majority population of Myanmar lives in the countryside, in rural areas. The education problem affects especially the families living in those areas, where educating a child means also pay the schools fees for materials, and especially books, but also transportation. In the big cities this is also a problem, especially in the poor areas.

Trishaw Books is an initiative of mobile libraries to promote education in various areas. The main objective is to bring knowledge and culture to communities who, because of the areas they live or because lack of funding, cannot access to formal and quality education.

In a nutshell

The basic idea is to build a library on wheels that resume the pattern of a trishaw and lottery ticket sellers: a small handcart and three-wheeler that carries books, games, mats and cushions and a digital tool that allows access to electronic resources stored locally (without internet access).

This library is powered by 2 or 3 people and propose its services (on-site consultation) to places in need: public and monastic schools, orphanages. Initially, the pilot project would be in Yangon, on a short schedule, before considering scale-up and migration to rural areas.

Values and vision

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This initiative proposed a sustainable project that can be replicable, by anticipating running costs, with limited HR expenses (and use of volunteers), through a sustainable design.

Objectifs

The main objective of this project is to promote education and bring reading and access to knowledge to vulnerable people living in Myanmar, who often don't have access to formal education structures.

Secondary objectives include capacity building of staff of formal education structures, training of librarians, and the development of a mobiles library layout in remote zones of the country.

Beneficiaries

The direct beneficiaries will be the children's of two Yangon Townships and 4 public schools, including 1 orphanage. They remain to be counted, but one can expect (for two months of circulation) about 150 beneficiaries.

The indirect beneficiaries are more numerous since each household can enjoy books and benefit from knowledge acquired: 750 people at least.

How we work

The mobile Ynibox is present 1 day per week in a school. Six institutions are visited weekly, and one day is off for coordination and reporting. An

employee provides digital and cultural mediation, another mediates with children (storytelling) and the teacher or supervisor or a student's parent is invited to participate in the animation. Students and residents are invited in groups of thirty or less, to enjoy books, games and any digital tools in a dedicated area within their institution (part of the court, for example). A case of a few dozen books remain in place and will be renewed at the next crossing.