We work with communities to build a love of reading
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Why in Oaxaca

Oaxaca ranks as the second poorest state in Mexico with more than 75% of the population living in extreme poverty (just behind Chiapas), and lacking basic services such as healthcare, water, food and education. According to Human Development Index (HDI) in 2015, Mexico’s index was 0.76, while Oaxaca was 0.66, comparable to India, Palestine and some countries in Africa. With 3.5 million residents, Oaxaca is the home of 33% of Mexico’s indigenous population. A third of Oaxacan residents still speak one of the fourteen languages and ninety dialects.

LPP, as many other NGOs, was born as a wish to help others. In 1998 Tom Dunham and Jim Breedlove, two American expats living in Oaxaca, Mexico, were inspired to share their love of reading with children for whom books were out of reach. In 2000 LPP became a legal organization in Mexico; today it works with 71 Oaxacan libraries, all of them located in rural communities and marginal urban areas.

Libros Para Pueblos (LPP) program is very unique. While there are other organizations in Oaxaca donating books or working in reading promotion, LPP is the only one that offers a long-term partnership with libraries located in the poorest areas of Oaxaca and includes important components, such as: continuous use of knowledge, tools for reading promotion, training, monitoring and evaluation, development of library administration skills, interchange of experiences, etc.

The LPP model is strong and flexible at the same time. We are always exploring new and innovative ways to promote reading, based on available resources. We are also working to make related technologies accessible, such as the internet and the use of tablets for e-books and educational videos and games.

LPP continues to rely on volunteers, but as it grew, the need for paid staff became apparent. In 2014, we hired its first Executive Director. In 2015, we reorganized our corporate structure; LPP is now a civil association recognized by Mexican law and the majority of the board is Mexican. As a result, contributions are now tax-deductible in Mexico, as well as in Canada and the US.
Letter from the President

Enid Lynn
Libros Para Pueblos President

As LPP finishes two decades, we have much to celebrate. Most significant is the increased role of our wonderful staff in all areas of organizational operations. The future is more secure having a knowledgeable and dedicated team responsible for key LPP functions.

During the year, volunteer participation increased and oversight was strengthened as new members were welcomed to leadership positions: Pat Leone, with a strong background in finance has joined the Executive Committee as Treasurer and leads the Finance Committee with Mike Bronn and John Dumser. Mary Stecher and Elizabeth Templeton joined Kay Burch, Doug Harmon and Sharon Callahan contributing their time and talents to the Development Committee.

Thanks to our generous and committed donors, all 71 libraries were sponsored, many sponsoring beyond their initial five years. Two major campaigns were successfully completed to renovate and furnish offices and meeting space for LPP on the roof of the OLL (Oaxaca Lending Library), giving the organization a permanent home for the first time. Alejandro Rojas, generously donated funds to support: the inauguration of three new libraries, the Technology Program that provided 70 tablets to 13 libraries along with necessary support programs, and the base-line study that will position the organization to apply more effectively to foundations and government agencies.

After a brief hiatus, monthly tours to LPP libraries are now a regular occurrence organized and lead by Mike Bronn, Sharon Callahan and Siobhan Grogan.
Upcoming bi-monthly tours are posted on the OLL E-Blast each week and on oaxacaevents.com.

Doug Harmon, Treasurer of the Oaxaca Lending Library Foundation and President of Friends of Libros Para Pueblos expertly manages the donations of a growing number of supporters together with FLPP Treasurer, Ken Ingram. Lynda Wilde graciously serves as the CANFRO coordinator to LPP on behalf of our many Canadian donors. Jim Corrigan in San Diego continues to receive and process donations made to LPP through the OLLF.

Special recognition must go to Sandra Thompson who continues to serve as LPP’s strategic planning consultant, to Alan Goodman and Kathy Mazzetti who chaired the “Building Our Future” campaign and to Kathryn Bertelli, whose leadership gift made the new offices a reality.

While we celebrate accomplishments of the past year, we remember the loss of individuals who contributed so much to the history of LPP.

Carmen “Betty” Sanchez, our first Regional Coordinator, was recognized posthumously by Huajuapan de Leon as an “Exceptional Citizen” for her work with Libros Para Pueblos bringing libraries to smaller pueblos in the Mixteca. Beverly Carlson, Penny Pomeroy and Spence Grogan are fondly remembered as dedicated volunteers and library sponsors. Janet Stanley, LPP’s first President, introduced so many to the work of the organization and left a legacy for us all to follow. The children’s section of the new 2018 library in San Jeronimo Tecoatl, the first in the Cañada region, will be named for her and is a fitting memorial as she was an intrepid traveler to the far reaches of the state.

2018 will be ushered in with a 20th anniversary celebration, organized by the Development Committee and the exciting establishment of a new German foundation “Libros Para Mexico” that will accept tax-deductible donations for LPP and for IBBY, a Mexican reading promotion organization.

The accomplishments are exciting but none so important as inspiring a growing community of readers, thousands of children and adults, throughout the State of Oaxaca, thanks to the efforts and generosity of so many.
2017 was a very exciting year, full of challenges and important achievements. We have raised our work standards in order to increase and document the level of impact in our mission.

This is the first stage of a three-year strategic plan. The objective for 2017 has been to review and strengthen the work procedures that were already in operation and incorporate new ones, especially those related to creating a culture of data. As a result, at the end of 2017, we significantly improved the staff’s performance. 70% of new procedures have focused on improving internal and external communication, as well as clarifying roles and responsibilities of regional coordinators and library managers. The improvements have been significant in the vast majority of cases. However, raising the standards has caused us to stop the relationship with two libraries that did not respond well to these new working conditions. Despite this loss, we have identified new libraries as excellent candidates that will be integrated in subsequent years, responding to the need to provide increasingly professional services for its users.

We have incorporated in our work model a strong component of monitoring and evaluation which is an essential piece in the current LPP’s program for a number of reasons, such as: to provide proof to donors (in the form of quantitative and qualitative data) that their funding has a positive impact, or provides “value for money”; to ensure that good work practices are in place and project goals are achieved according to plans; to obtain materials for communication and outreach activities. With the financial support of our main donor in Mexico, we have initiated collaboration in a baseline study with the group of experts “True Roots International”. The results will be presented in the annual report 2018, but the stage of obtaining field information was completed at the end of 2017, with the application of 421 surveys in 100% of the libraries. 30,953 data points were collected that allow us to have a clearer and scientific idea of the greatest areas of impact that LPP and libraries have achieved in recent years.

Finally, I want to thank all the national and foreign volunteers who joined our efforts in the different stages of our work. If 2017 has been an exciting year, I have no doubt that 2018 will be an even better year for LPP.
Libros Para Pueblos

Who are we?

Libros Para Pueblos has worked since 1998 promoting reading in the state of Oaxaca through the creation of libraries and reading spaces for children and youth. Each year we deliver thousands of new books and train librarians on how to promote reading. We currently work with 71 rural and urban libraries in Oaxaca, and have a network of nine passionate promoters of reading who serve as Regional Coordinators, responsible for providing direct support and inspiration to librarians.

Our Vision

“Lives inspired through reading”

Our Mission

Libros Para Pueblos works in partnership with communities in Oaxaca, Mexico to establish libraries for children, to provide free access to books and technology, and to promote reading for pleasure and discovery.
Library Locations

Regions where we work in Oaxaca State

1. Mixteca
2. Cañada
3. Papaloapan
4. Valles Centrales
5. Sierra Norte
6. Istmo
7. Sierra Sur
8. Costa

71 Libraries supported in 2017

26 Community Libraries
14 School Libraries
5 NGO’s Libraries (include the mobil library)
26 Municipal Libraries

For more specific information about Libros Para Pueblos libraries, please click HERE.
Members

**BOARD MEMBERS**
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Tere Hernández  
Central Valley Region  
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Liz Eny Bernal  
Coastal Region  
Norma Emma Calvo Ruiz  
Gabriela Ivette Cruz  
South Sierra Region  
Yanina Vázquez

In memorian  
Carmen Beatriz Sánchez Ramírez
### Income

Donations from sponsors, organizations and other individuals are received directly to Libros Para Pueblos, A.C. or through the Foundations that support LPP: Oaxaca Lending Library Foundation, Friends of Libros Para Pueblos and CANFRO. Contributed donations were supplemented by other income from tours and special events.

TOTAL: $1,655,158

### Expenses

70% of expenses were devoted to books presented to new and existing libraries and the programs that support the library managers including: the annual conference, regional workshops, support of the Program Coordinator and the work of the Regional Coordinators.

TOTAL: $1,636,706
Our Impact

Library Program

What we do

We develop advocates for discovery and the joy of reading by providing free access to new appealing books for children and young people in rural and urban areas in the state of Oaxaca.

In 2017, 5,831 books were distributed to expand the collections of already-existing libraries in the LPP network, and 2,710 more books were distributed to new libraries in the network.

All books are carefully chosen, both for their quality of content and for the materials with which they are made. We choose books that are of interest to children and young people, whose diverse themes include: environment, gender, general culture, science, short stories, etc. We do not include books with religious or political themes.

Our achievements in 2017

• 71 libraries supported in six Regions of Oaxaca (Mixe, Mixteca, Sierra Norte, Sierra Sur, Valles Centrales, La Costa) and a mobile library in Llano Park in Oaxaca City.
• Over 8,541 print books and 5,900 digital books were delivered in 2017 spread across the 71 libraries.
• An average of 198 children served each week in village libraries (more than 14,000 in total).
• A manual for new librarians, and scheduled support visits by Regional Coordinators to all libraries.
• Improvement of new-library application process
• 3 new libraries inaugurated.

What’s next?

• 2018 will be a year dedicated to strengthening the capacity to provide quality services to users of libraries in the LPP network
• Strengthen the capacity of library managers
Technology Program

What we do
We provide free access to technology for research, reading and communication to expand children’s access to new content and skills.

Our achievements in 2017
• The tablet project is currently operating in 14 libraries
• More than 6,000 digital books and 4,000 videos and educational games that support library activities

What’s next?
• In 2018 we hope to exchange experiences among children who are part of digital clubs in different regions of Oaxaca. These exchanges will promote a sharing of learning experiences and ideas for expanded use of technology.
Librarian Development Program

What we do
All libraries enrolled in the LPP library network have automatic access to this program. It consists of a series of trainings held throughout the year, in order to provide library managers with the basic tools and knowledge they need to perform their function within the library. This program has a component for monitoring and evaluating the impact generated by the LPP programs. For this it relies on the work of eleven Regional Coordinators (volunteers) who are responsible for making two to three visits each year to the libraries, in order to give on-site support. They verify the functioning of the libraries, support the solving of problems related to the organization and promote improvement of operations and services.

Our achievements in 2017
• This year we opened a new Regional Coordinator position. Now there are 11 Coordinators
• Two people from each library attended one regional training workshop.
• An annual conference was held with the participation of 142 people receiving two additional training or workshops. (two people per library).
• 3 meetings of Regional Coordinators were developed with specialized training in leadership issues, team-work building, reading promotion, among other topics.

What’s next?
• In 2018 the quality and number of specialized workshops for the promotion of reading will increase. In order to provide both regional coordinators and library managers with greater tools and methodologies to increase the impact of their work.
The Mobil Library

What we do
In 2017 the mobile library project was formalized. It consists of bringing books into the hands of children who, due to the nature of their parents’ work, are accompanying them for a long part of the day. This is a widespread occurrence for children whose families run small businesses in the open-air markets.

These children are mostly between the ages 6 and 11. While the older ones assist their parents, the younger ones are left with nothing to do. The mobile library offers children and their parents a more productive alternative to their free time. This project began in 2016 with the support of several volunteers who contributed to the design and construction of prototypes that would adapt well to difficult work conditions.

Our achievements in 2017
• 1300 books were read through the mobile library
• 50 regular users (30 kids and 20 adults)

LPP’s Tours

What we do
The tours organized by LPP in 2017 have been an important strategy for the dissemination of our mission. Through the tours, many people have been able to observe firsthand the operation and activities of our working model. They share time with children from libraries that are no more than two hours away from the city of Oaxaca. The experience is combined with activities that allow visitors to immerse themselves in a cultural experience that helps them to better understand the local context.

Our achievements in 2017
• In 2017 we organized 6 tours, with the participation of 27 attendees.
The Oaxaca Film Festival

Once again LPP participated in the Oaxaca Film Festival. LPP’s Foundation Night was on October 13 with the showing of 7:19, a feature film about the 1985 Earthquake in Mexico City. The film was shown in collaboration with Cinepolis.

Testimonials

I was very impressed by the professionalism of the tour. Everyone was very direct in the discussions and presentations. And at the school, the teachers and staff were very qualified and confident. I was very impressed with the teacher who read aloud to the students. She seemed very confident and was certainly articulate. It was an excellent reading — and, of course, I approved of the subject matter of the book — the assessment of the variability of contemporary “gender roles”. The tour was rewarding and educational. The planning was excellent, and I think it answered any questions we might have had about the program.

Laurie Lewis
Attendee of an LPP tour to La Unión Tejalapam library.

Every time we organize an activity in the library, kids don’t want to go home even if it is late, because they want to do more. So at the end of the activity I bring them to their houses using the municipality’s patrol, and that is an extra adventure for them.

In the library each child reads aloud, when children read to a group they gain confidence. It is very gratifying that the reading generates results, improving their skills and intellect.

Nayely Carrasco Martínez
Library manager and municipal representative
I think that reading is important because it helps you to learn, relax and get distracted. I believe that every child should read a book because it is very important, also the books do not hurt your eyes as mobile devices, and you always learn something new that can be useful at school or with friends.
I’d like to say to all the donors to continue donating. There are many children like me who like to read and who are happy to do so.

Renata Cruz Velásquez
Library user

Advice, training and follow-up visits provided by LPP have been of enormous importance, thanks to that our library commission created a new system for classifying books and inventory.
We are guided by our belief that children are the most important, and that they deserve that our work be done with passion and love.
I would like to tell donors that the greatest satisfaction they can have is to be sure that the children are taking advantage of the library’s resources, enjoying the books, and learning from them. All this has a positive effect that spreads throughout the entire community.

Juan José Villareal Marcial
Ocotlán de Morelos Library.

Reading is very important. Every child should read because books help us to have a better understanding of the world. My parents love to see me when I read, because I learn about places I can not visit at this time. The books teach me a lot and I like that.
When I grow up I would like to help others who can not yet read and bring books to those who can not afford them.

Dafne Analí Maldonado Ventura
Library user of the mobile library.

The work we do in libraries is quite complicated, forming readers is not easy work, and is something that takes a long time. Possibly many of us will not get to see the results as long as we are alive. But I am sure that today we are creating impact in the lives of many children that go to our libraries. It would be a great pleasure that in the future someone can say: “because of the person in charge in my town’s library I like to read.”

Cristiam Omar Santos
LPP’s Regional Coordinator
Thanks

Contributors

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• CANFRO

• Oaxaca Film Festival
• Oaxaca Lending Library
• Oaxaca Lending Library Foundation
• Escuela Secundaria Moises Saenz
• Sandra Thomson

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Bob and Eiisa Hufnagel*
Jerry Kelch and Enid Lynn*
Barry and Jacque Scheinberg*

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Dan Walsh

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Thanks to the leadership gift by Kathryn Bertelli and the following, LPP has a permanent home at the Oaxaca Lending Library.
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Don Northey
Joseph Reid

If you have remembered LPP in your plans, please let us know.

Support through your on-line shopping with Amazon Smile. Register on line and .05% of all your purchases benefit LPP!
A Final Word...

The results achieved in 2017 would not have been possible without the combined effort of hundreds of people, some of them thousands of miles away and others working directly in the communities where the libraries are located.

With your support LPP generate benefits for thousands of children in remote places where they would not otherwise have access to good quality books.

If you are wondering what are some further ways that you can support Libros Para Pueblos, explore the different possibilities:

- Talk about your LPP experiences to encourage your friends to become involved
- Visit our website and subscribe to our newsletter
- Participate in one of our tours to libraries – bring a friend!
- Donate computer games, new or used digital cameras, tablets or board games to the libraries
- Consider the “Planned Giving Program” as part of your estate planning
- Make a donation for a specific activity/program
- Sponsor a Library!
- Pass this Annual Report on to your friends

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