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## **GKCDFI FUNDING PROPOSAL AND REQUEST**

Brief Purpose of Funding Request: **Advancement in Reading and Learning+ (ARAL+)**

Date Submitted: June 10, 2024

Requested Amount (in PHP): ₱150,000.00  
(Includes GKCDFI retention)

### **PROJECT BRIEF**

**PROJECT NAME/PURPOSE: Advancement in Reading and Learning+ (ARAL+)**

**AMOUNT REQUESTED: P 150,000.00**

#### **REQUIRED INFORMATION:**

Advancement in Reading and Learning+ (ARAL) is a community-based literacy program designed to address the critical issue of reading illiteracy among Filipino children aged 7-13. **Our three-month program aims to enhance reading skills, which are foundational for overall learning.** By improving literacy, we support the development of critical and analytical thinking skills.

Learning is a life-long process. The children must practice and read regularly so setting up **a mini-reading corner with a bookshelf stocked with age-appropriate books**, especially the ones that promote positive Filipino values will give the children access and opportunity to read more books after they graduated from the program.

To further enhance their learning, **a one-day leadership and empowerment camp or a purpose play activity open to all youth in the community**, giving the children the opportunity to interact with the other youth, thus, enhancing their self-esteem.

ARAL+ aligns with GK's Mission 2050 by breaking the cycle of poverty through education. Targeting 7-13-year-olds in underserved communities, ARAL enhances literacy, empowering the young poor for future success. This initiative supports our vision of zero poverty and exclusion, fostering a generation of competent, confident individuals. This will lead to more productive, caring communities and ensuring no family is left behind. By capacitating the young poor, ARAL lays the foundation for a nation free from all forms of poverty.

#### **Current Situation and Need:**

The Philippine education system is grappling with low-quality outcomes, as highlighted by poor results in international assessments such as PISA and TIMSS. Despite high attendance rates, the quality of education remains low, with a considerable proportion of students below minimum proficiency levels. Reading skills among Filipino youth have significantly declined, particularly during the pandemic. In the 2018 PISA, the Philippines ranked lowest in reading out of seventy-nine countries. Only one out of 5 Filipino learners aged fifteen reached minimum proficiency in reading. Furthermore, only 10% of Grade 5 learners achieved the minimum reading

proficiency by the end of primary education. World Bank estimates that learning poverty in the Philippines is at 90.9%, meaning most 10-year-olds cannot read or understand a simple story.

Socioeconomic status heavily influences educational outcomes, and the pandemic has exacerbated these challenges by forcing an unprepared shift to remote learning. Additionally, issues like bullying, ineffective use of learning time, and inadequate teacher training persist.

### **Objectives:**

1. **Improve Literacy Rates-** Enhance reading and comprehension skills among children aged 7-13 in targeted communities.
2. **Reduce Learning Poverty:** Decrease the percentage of children unable to read and understand age-appropriate texts.
3. **Support Academic Success:** Provide a solid foundation for learning other subjects by improving literacy.
4. **Empower the Young Poor:** Equip children with the skills needed for future academic and career success.
5. **Engage Community and Parents:** Foster community involvement and parental support to reinforce learning at home.
6. **Utilize Volunteers Effectively:** Train and deploy volunteers to deliver high-quality reading instruction.
7. **Create Safe Learning Environments:** Establish well-equipped, supportive spaces for learning in targeted areas in the Philippines.
8. **Monitor and Evaluate Progress:** Conduct regular assessments with the help of the partner schools to track improvements in reading proficiency and adjust the program as needed.
9. **Promote Sustainable Impact:** Ensure long-term benefits by fostering a culture of reading and continuous learning in the community.

### **Community Profile:**

The ARAL program will specifically benefit children aged 7-13 in targeted impoverished communities. These areas have been severely affected by learning poverty, which was exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic lockdowns. By improving reading proficiency, ARAL will provide these children with the critical skills needed for academic success and further learning. This will help break the cycle of poverty, opening greater opportunities for their future and laying a solid foundation for learning other subjects.

### **Outcomes and Measurable Indicators:**

A predicted quantifiable outcome for the ARAL initiative is that at least 50% of participating children aged 7-13 will show a 50% improvement in reading and comprehension skills by the end of the program. Additionally, the program aims to reduce the learning poverty rate in the targeted communities by 5% within one year. These measurable outcomes will demonstrate the effectiveness of ARAL in enhancing literacy, academic performance, and overall educational success.

### **Measurable indicators to determine the success of the ARAL+ initiative include:**

1. **Pre- and Post-Assessment Scores:** Comparing reading and comprehension test scores before and after the program to measure at least a 50% improvement among 50% of participants.
2. **Attendance Rates:** Tracking consistent attendance to ensure students fully engage with the program.
3. **Parental Feedback:** Collecting feedback from parents on their children's reading habits and confidence levels.
4. **Reduction in Learning Poverty:** Measuring a 5% reduction in the learning poverty rate in the targeted communities within one year.

### **Program Implementation:**

Gawad Kalinga (GK) manages the ARAL+ program in collaboration with local public schools through memoranda of agreement. The GK Operations team oversees community organizing, orientation, material procurement, logistics support, meal preparation, and volunteer coordination. Volunteer teachers from partner schools lead the 12-week program and assessments using DepEd tools. Community leaders assist in facilitating reading sessions. Support is extended by volunteer networks, universities, corporations, and organizations. The GK Area Development Officer spearheads youth empowerment initiatives, utilizing modules from GK Institute, customized as required.

1. **Community Orientation and Consultation:** Engage the community to gain support and enroll learners.
2. **Teacher and Volunteer Training and Deployment:** Assess and improve teacher qualifications and training to ensure high teaching quality.
3. **Assessment and Enrollment:** Assess learners' reading skills in their first language to identify those needing the most intervention.
4. **Literacy Groupings:** Organize classes based on reading level, with small class sizes (1:3 or 1:5) to provide focused support.
5. **Class Schedule:** Conduct classes every weekend for 12 weeks (about 3 months) from 8:00 AM to 10:00 AM.
6. **Learning Space Setup:** Equip classrooms with necessary materials including tables, chairs, pencils, erasers, paper, scissors, glue, and a storybook reading corner.
7. **Volunteer Engagement:** Recruit and orient volunteers on lesson implementation, study plans, and maintain a communication log sheet.
8. **Parental Involvement:** Hold regular parents' meetings before/after enrollment and conduct monthly assessments. Encourage parents to volunteer, even in preparing snacks for the children.
9. **ARAL+ Appreciation Day** – a mini event dedicated to celebrating the hard work, dedication and achievements of everyone involved in the ARAL+ program. It will help strengthen community bonds and inspire future participation in ARAL and other GK activities. Official opening of the reading corner/mini library. Conduct of fun and engaging literacy games and activities for learners and group activities to promote teamwork and collaboration among participants.
10. **Youth Empowerment Camp** – a dynamic, interactive event designed to inspire, educate and empower young individuals in the community. This camp focuses on building leadership skills, fostering personal growth, and enhancing the participants' ability to contribute positively to their communities. Activities may include Interactive leadership workshops, team building exercises, community service projects, Inspirational talks/panels and/or skill-building workshops, creative expression (through art, music, drama or writing), and reflection and feedback.

**To raise awareness of the ARAL+ program in the community, we plan to:**

1. **Community Meetings:** Host orientation sessions to inform residents about the program's benefits and enrollment process.
2. **Partnerships with Schools:** Collaborate with local schools to identify eligible children and spread the word through school communications.
3. **Social Media Campaigns:** Utilize social media platforms to reach a wider audience and engage with parents and community members.
4. **Flyers and Posters:** Distribute printed materials in community centers, schools, and public areas.
5. **Parent Ambassadors:** Engage parents of enrolled children to share their positive experiences and encourage others to participate. Securing their approval to utilize their testimonies in the social media campaigns.

**Sustainable Impact:**

1. **Parental Involvement:** Foster strong parental support to improve students' test scores, especially for lagging students.
2. **Effective Use of Learning Time:** Review and optimize how learning time is utilized in schools to improve educational outcomes.
3. **Teacher Training and Deployment:** Assess and improve teacher qualifications and training to ensure high teaching quality.
4. **Learning Environment:** Maintain the created safe, disciplined, and supportive learning environment to enhance academic performance.

**Budget Description Per area:**

1. **Community Organizing/Social Preparation/Monitoring/Meetings** = **P20,000.00**  
(inclusive of transportation and communication expenses)
2. **3-month Intensive Reading & Comprehension Lessons** = **P50,000.00**  
(Inclusive of teacher's honorarium and training, materials & meals for learners, ARAL Appreciation Day)
3. **Learning Space Set Up** = **P30,000.00**  
(Equip classrooms with necessary materials including tables, chairs, pencils, erasers, paper, scissors, glue, and a storybook reading corner)
4. **Youth Empowerment Camp (Cost per camp)** = **P50,000.00**

*Note: If the donor wishes to set up a learning hub or a child and youth development center in the community, it requires an additional capital expense. Cost varies depending on size, design, set-up, and location etc.*