Worldreader Kits
Planning a Community Launch Event

Sign announcing a launch event at Upendo Academy in Tanzania
Why Hold a Community Launch?

Holding a community launch event is a key part of launching a new Worldreader program. During the event, activities include speeches from prominent community members, presentation of certificates to teachers who have completed training and signing of pledges by the parents of those students who are receiving the devices. Not only does the event provide an opportunity to celebrate the start of the project, but it also helps to develop community support and buy-in, even from people who are not directly impacted by the e-readers. Because influential community members are invited to attend, some even to speak, awareness of the program spreads quickly throughout the local community. When community members understand what the program is and why it is important, they begin to take ownership and responsibility for protecting the project. We’ve observed that this sense of responsibility helps to minimize risk of theft or of other possible negative events that could impact the program. In addition, it can afford students the opportunity to read more because parents are able to learn about the program and why it is important. Once parents learn about the program, they sign a pledge card as a show of support for the project.

Crowd listening eagerly at a launch event in Suhum, Ghana
Timing

The launch event should be held on or immediately after the last day of training. We strongly recommend that the event be held after training is complete because it is important to present the teachers with their Worldreader certificates in front of the audience so that they can be recognized for completing the Worldreader training program. We also do not recommend allowing time to pass between the last day of training and the launch event because the event is important for generating community buy-in, protecting the students and devices and ensuring support for a successful project. If the program launches without anyone informing others who might be interested or curious, there is a risk that someone could try to block the project from launching or spread misinformation about the project or devices. In addition, this allows you to efficiently launch a new project by doing training and a launch event within the same week.

![Teachers show off their certificates at Upendo Academy in Tanzania](image)

Who Attends

Once the venue has been selected and confirmed, begin thinking about who should be invited to the event. This will certainly include students and parents from the school, particularly those students who will be using the e-readers and their parents, as well as teachers, administrators and other project staff. The guest list should also include some distinguished guests, who can be invited to give a short speech. These guests will vary based on who the influential people are in your community, but we recommend inviting people like the village chief, the district education officer, local politicians, school board representatives, local media and other community leaders,
both civic and religious. Be cautious when inviting local officials and attempt to adhere to local politics wherever possible. The last thing you want is an offended local politician to deal with. When inviting distinguished guests, it may help to have a speech topic in mind so that you can ask each one to touch on a slightly different area of the project.

A distinguished guest gives a speech at a launch in Marfokrom, Ghana

In addition to all those mentioned above, you are more than welcome to invite Project Managers from other nearby Worldreader projects, should you wish to. Please contact Worldreader and we will provide contact details for other Project Managers. We’ve found that it can be helpful for Project Managers to get to know one another because they are able to share lessons learned and provide some guidance when needed. If a Worldreader representative is attending your launch event, we hope that you will accommodate a few of our guests, such as additional Worldreader staff, potential partners or others who are curious about what an e-reader program looks like. Please be in touch with Worldreader to find out if there are any special guests we would like to invite.

Thank you for reading the first few pages of our Community Launch Guide. This document is part of the Worldreader Kits program, and the full version is provided exclusively to Worldreader Kits partners. Go here find out more about how to bring our program to your school:

http://www.worldreader.org/partner-with-us/in-your-school/