



# How far do you think they can get in life without books?

"I have always imagined that Paradise  
will be a kind of library"  
Jorge Luis Borges

"When I got [my] library card, that was  
when my life began"  
Rita Mae Brown

## The Dominican Republic at a Glance



- Capital: Santo Domingo
- Area: 18,815 sq miles (slightly more than twice the size of New Hampshire)
- Population: 9.2 million
- Language: Spanish (official)
- Religion: 95% Roman Catholic
- Currency: Dominican Republic Peso (RD\$)

## Imagine a 3<sup>rd</sup> grade classroom with students ranging from 8 to 16 years old

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- The Dominican Republic investment in education is 1.2% of annual GDP (Unesco 2007)
  - 85% of Dominican parents have never completed primary education
  - Early childhood education currently consumes only 0.06% of national education budget
  - 59% of high school age youth have dropped out of school.
  - In the late 1990`s the tourism boom in the Dominican Republic enabled it to become one of the fastest growing economies in Latin America, but as the economy moved forward poor children were left behind without the necessary skills to benefit from progress
  - This was most evident in public schools which faced difficulties that plague almost any educational institution in the developing world. Unqualified teachers, high teacher student ratios, shortage of desks, chairs and lack of materials such as paper, pencils or textbooks
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## The Vision

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- This library is the vision of a community that recognizes the need for a library where children and adults from the community come together to read, learn, share and experience the magnificent transformation books bring to a community in need
- The local community will oversee its own development with the public library, through volunteering and a community committee
- Our vision is for the community to not only have access to the books at the library – but also to have the opportunity to take them home and exchange them, instilling a key component of community, sustainability and responsibility
- The library will also provide a clean, ventilated, lighted working space for homework and independent research for the children of the elementary school right next door



## Minimum requirements to ensure the sustainability of the library

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- We have established a three year operational plan to ensure the future sustainability of the library
- Our main objectives include
  - Creation of a spacious, well ventilated space within the existing library
  - Furnish the library with shelving and appropriate equipment
  - Create an easy reference center
  - Catalog and bar code the books
  - Stock the library with a basic book inventory; for our teacher reference corner as well as books that are adapted to the different reading levels of our children community
  - Hire a full time qualified librarian for a minimum period of 2 years to run the library and train future local librarians
- A detailed budget is available upon request



## How can YOU be part of this DREAM

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- Spread the word: the more people involved the better
- Contribute with your talent and ideas
- Participate though fund raising events (more information available upon request)
- Purchase books online. Please refer to our wish lists for book selection. These wish lists will be updated regularly
  - <http://www.amazon.com/gp/registry/wishlist/3O23XSGAMA321>
- Donate online
  - <http://www.dominicandream.org/donate-and-join/monetarydonations.html>
  - Please make sure you designated your donation to the DREAM PUBLIC LIBRARY
- Honor / Private Donation (can be in the honor of a loved one and their name will be honored on a plaque in the Dream Center Library)
- Monetary Donation towards the yearly operational budget
- All donations are tax deductible

For more information: [mj@caribwind.com](mailto:mj@caribwind.com) / [info@www.dreamproject.org](mailto:info@www.dreamproject.org)

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## The DREAM PROJECT: a 360° approach

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- What began with the efforts of a small group of dedicated people is now an organization with thousands of supporters
- We created an environment of Give & Take. Everyone involved has benefited from the understanding of different cultures
- Local involvement has been the key to success. The DREAM Project initiative is based on the efforts of kids, parents, volunteers and sponsors like YOU



## The Location

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- The Community Public Library is located in the DREAM Center in the Colonia Nueva neighborhood in Cabarete (Callejon de la Loma). This center is situated within meters of a public elementary school
- In 2007, the DREAM Project opened the DREAM Center in this community and enrolled 120 children. The DREAM Project will continue to expand to allow every child the opportunity to receive a quality early childhood education. The DREAM Center will serve as the DREAM Project's model: a first class school in a developing nation



**THE LIBRARY IS HERE!**



## Proven Track Record

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- **215%:** Percentage increase in public school eighth grade enrollment since DREAM Project's involvement
  - **0:** Number of extracurricular activities offered to public school students in Cabarete in 2002
  - **643:** Number of youth currently participating in DREAM sponsored after-school programs
  - **98%:** Percentage of students living in Cabarete that had never used a computer before the DREAM Project's presence
  - **1,980:** Number of students and teachers who have received computer classes at DREAM computer laboratories
  - **1,460:** Number of children that have attended DREAM sponsored preschools
  - **500%:** The percentage in which preschool enrollment has increased in DREAM Communities in five years
  - **30:** Number of parents and teachers currently receiving training in Early Childhood Education
  - **375:** The number of children currently enrolled in a DREAM sponsored preschool
  - **7:** The number of preschool classrooms DREAM has constructed
  - **20:** The number of community members who are currently working in DREAM Preschool Programs
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## The DREAM PROJECT: a private initiative started in 2002

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- Incorporated as a legal non profit organization both in the US and in the Dominican Republic
- Target Population: largely functionally illiterate with the vast majority living in poverty (less than US \$2 per person per day) and some in extreme poverty (less than US \$1 per person per day)
- Today the DREAM Project has extensive programs in 7 elementary schools
- The most ambitious project to date is the newly built DREAM CENTER in Cabarete. The centre is being used to train teachers and community members thorough out the North Coast. It houses a model school, a computer lab, and soon a fully operational public library

