

EDUCATION ENDURES



Room to Read®

ANNUAL REPORT 2019





It all starts with education.

Education is the most effective tool for solving the world's greatest challenges, including poverty, environmental degradation, racial injustice and inequality. In schools, young people learn the skills that enable them to become changemakers and solve difficult problems in new ways. These skills help them define their place in the world and seek a fulfilling future.

As our world faces an increasing number of crises and threats to children's access to quality education, we at Room to Read are committed to making sure that education endures. We know that a quality education will prepare every generation of students to become adults who are equipped to create a safer and more just world.

We have incorporated illustrations from our original children's books throughout this report. At Room to Read, we know books give children new ways of looking at the world and themselves, helping them to develop as global citizens. Stories can connect and inspire us all, regardless of where we come from.

EVERYONE SEES / MIMI NINAONA

*Written and illustrated by Dani Jones
South Africa, Tanzania and Zambia*

The world is full of many things to see. The mouse sees the hen and her chicks in the morning. The cat chases the bird in the day. But who sees at night when the sky gets dark?



“Together, we can ensure that education endures for millions of children, so that they can turn their obstacles into opportunities and be well-equipped to play a role in solving tomorrow’s challenges.”

– Dr. Geetha Murali

Dear Room to Read Family,

At Room to Read, we’ve always known that education is the solution to the world’s most pressing problems. What we didn’t know in 2019, as we wrapped up our most successful fundraising year on record, was that a truly monumental challenge — the COVID-19 pandemic — was looming large and would soon threaten education for young learners around the world. By the end of March 2020, more than 1.6 billion children were out of school, and Room to Read had to swiftly pivot our activities to help children continue their learning — outside of the classroom. Turning obstacles into opportunities has become a guiding principle for our team, so even with the challenges of the pandemic, we’ve found plenty of openings to do just that. In many of the countries where we work, for example, Room to Read has taken to the airwaves, broadly distributing our educational materials through local and national radio networks. Our work to facilitate learning through one of the most accessible media channels available — broadcast radio — will likely extend well beyond the pandemic.

In order to reach more children, more quickly, we also fast-tracked the buildout of our online digital learning platform, [Literacy Cloud](#), adding more than 900 children’s book titles in 19 languages. In addition, we have launched a video series featuring international celebrities and other influencers reading a diverse selection of Room to Read storybooks from across the globe. Access to an assortment of content written by local authors from a variety of countries feels especially relevant in the current climate. As more voices call for racial justice across borders, diverse children’s books can be a powerful tool to open hearts and minds, helping young readers recognize our shared humanity.

Our partnership with Kappa Alpha Psi, the second oldest collegiate historically Black fraternity, is helping us to broaden children’s exposure to diverse books in the United States. Through our Hands-on-Books program, student volunteers from Kappa Alpha Psi, trained by Room to Read, share our books from South Africa with children in under-

resourced schools across North America. This innovative initiative has taken off quickly and was even featured on the *Today* show in February 2020.

We ended 2019 by hosting Michelle Obama and a celebrity delegation at a Room to Read partner school in Vietnam, thanks to the partnership of The Obama Foundation’s Girls Opportunity Alliance, bringing added recognition to our efforts.



We also launched new regional boards in California and the Middle East, increasing the reach of generous investors who are committed to our impact.

Overall, 2019 was a remarkable year, made even more remarkable because we can now see how well our five-year strategic plan, Vision 2025, and the planned initiatives within it, have helped us respond to the challenges brought on by COVID-19. I look forward to continuing to implement this strategic blueprint for the future, improving learning and life outcomes for children, and reaching for our bold goal of benefiting 40 million children by 2025.

Such bold goals would not be attainable without the support of our passionate global network of advocates and investors. We are particularly grateful this year because we know that you are helping Room to Read do our work, even as you endure your own pandemic-related hardships. Together, we can ensure that education endures for millions of children, so that they can turn their obstacles into opportunities and be well-equipped to play a role in solving tomorrow’s challenges.

Dr. Geetha Murali, Chief Executive Officer



“We know our team has the expertise and dedication to meet this moment. We also know that never has it been more urgent and obvious to ensure that all children have the education they need to contribute in meaningful ways to their communities. Our collective commitment to this work makes positive change possible.”

– Mary Byron

Dear Friends,

As I sit down to write to you about Room to Read’s work in 2019, it feels like I’m writing about a lifetime ago. I try to imagine what it might be like to be a child living through this pandemic, and I realize I would have been devastated because I loved school. I loved reading and learning, and so my heart goes out to the more than 1.6 billion children whose education has been disrupted — and to their parents as well.

Seeing illustrations from Room to Read’s children’s books throughout this report reminds me of the joy and hopefulness I felt as a young girl starting a new book. Even during challenging times, we can find inspiration in the stories we read. Books can help ensure that education endures. Across the globe, Room to Read is responding with the same thoughtful approach that is a hallmark of our work. We are learning, along with school systems everywhere, how to deliver our programming remotely to reach more children with books that capture their imaginations, to mentor girls and keep them safe, and to provide remote capacity-building for educators, authors and illustrators.

I was first drawn to Room to Read more than a decade ago by their work to end gender inequality through education. I have a passion for leveling the playing field for women and girls, and I know firsthand the power of education to change limiting norms. Last year, we completed the first external evaluation of our girls’ life skills interventions in India. This important study found that girls enrolled in our program had lower dropout rates and significant improvement in decision-making, creative problem-solving and building relationships.

2019 was another watershed year in our journey to end illiteracy. Room to Read’s literacy work benefited more than 2.2 million additional children through improved literacy instruction and access to high-quality children’s books. Students checked out more than 16 million books. As you’ll see through the report, the Room to Read team continued to expand our efforts to end illiteracy in more places and in new ways.

“Education is oxygen to us,” said a young woman I met on a visit to Room to Read’s work in Cambodia at my first board meeting five years ago. Those words have stayed with me because that was true for me too. A love of education was a connection, a shared value, some common ground between a technology executive from America and a teenager in Siem Reap. This love of education unites all of us in the Room to Read family, along with our conviction that World Change Starts with Educated Children.®

As we look forward, we are certain of some things. We know our team has the expertise and dedication to meet this moment. We also know that never has it been more urgent and obvious to ensure that all children have the education they need to contribute in meaningful ways to their communities. Our collective commitment to this work makes positive change possible. Thank you for being such an important companion on our journey.

Mary Byron, Board Chair

Our Reach

GLOBAL

CHILDREN
BENEFITED

CUMULATIVE:
18.8M+

WHERE WE WORK

COUNTRIES:
16

COMMUNITIES:
40,800+

GIRLS' EDUCATION

GIRLS BENEFITED

NEW IN 2019:
33,090+

CUMULATIVE:
114,900+

ACTIVE PROGRAM
PARTICIPANTS

2019:
76,210

SECONDARY
SCHOOL
GRADUATES

NEW IN 2019:
2,610+

CUMULATIVE:
9,590+

LITERACY

CHILDREN
BENEFITED

NEW IN 2019:
2.2M+

CUMULATIVE:
17.8M+

LITERACY
PROGRAM
SCHOOLS

NEW IN 2019:
2,630+

ACTIVE:
20,030+

CUMULATIVE:
40,800+

CHILDREN'S BOOK
TITLES

NEW ORIGINAL IN 2019:
108

NEW ADAPTED IN 2019:
210

CUMULATIVE:
1,684



AN UNFORGETTABLE ADVENTURE / MỘT CHUYỆN PHIÊU LƯU

Written by Trương Huỳnh Nhu Trân and illustrated by Lê Thanh Xuân
Vietnam

It's naptime, but Ti wants to go on a journey instead! So he climbs into his toy boat and sails away on a big adventure.

[Read this story online through Literacy Cloud!](#)



A SNAPSHOT OF OUR WORK IN 2020

COVID-19 Response

Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, students are missing out on crucial learning, as schools close or operate on reduced schedules. Education is a fundamental human right and during this time of crisis, we must protect the opportunity for all children to learn. Only through education can people build the skills and resources they need to best respond to societal challenges like this one.

Although the rest of this report is focused on Room to Read's 2019 activities, we are including a brief update on our successful program adaptations in light of the pandemic, given that it is an urgent and developing issue in 2020.

Room to Read is dedicated to making sure that education endures.

In each country where we work, Room to Read has quickly pivoted to support children who are out of school to continue their learning. Room to Read's remote learning activities are an essential lifeline to the world's most vulnerable children. Our education interventions do not depend on internet connectivity because this is largely unavailable in the communities we serve. According to UNESCO, half of the students out of school worldwide due to the COVID-19 pandemic don't have access to a household computer, and 43 percent have no internet at home. In low-income countries, the disparities become more pronounced: In sub-Saharan Africa, 89 percent of learners do not have access to household computers, and 82 percent lack internet access.¹ To facilitate learning in this environment, Room to Read provides human connectivity via the channels that are most accessible to children from low-income families. This work fills a critical gap. According to research by the Brookings Institution, fewer than 25 percent of low-income countries currently provide any type of remote learning for their children.² Across our program countries, we are focusing on the following adaptations to our literacy and girls' education programming:

¹ <https://en.unesco.org/news/startling-digital-divides-distance-learning-emerge>

² <https://www.brookings.edu/research/school-closures-government-responses-and-learning-inequality-around-the-world-during-covid-19/>

Literacy

- We are disseminating educational content through radio, the most commonly available and accessed technology across the globe. UNESCO reports that 75 percent of households globally have access to radio; therefore, the reach is significant.
- Since text messaging offers a scalable and accessible way of communicating in many countries, Room to Read has turned to texting to prompt and support parents to engage in literacy activities with their children.
- We are also distributing physical resources, like worksheets and books, to keep children learning during this time.
- For children and families who do have digital access, Room to Read provides a unique digital learning platform. Room to Read launched [Literacy Cloud](#) in English and Bahasa Indonesia in 2019, with over 200 storybook titles. Literacy Cloud includes high-quality local language book titles and a rich library of professional development materials for educators and children's book creators. Now, we have expanded our digital book portfolio with a



"Kishor loves watching Room to Read read-aloud videos. He even summarizes the story back to me after watching the videos, sketches the story and sends the sketch to his teacher. He keeps asking whether more videos have been posted." – Babu, Kishor's father

Kishor and his father from Sri Lanka share how the online read-alouds have helped him stay engaged with his education during school closures

library of more than 900 children's books from around the world, in 19 original languages. We are also sharing our digital book portfolio on local distribution channels, especially on national platforms that governments use to deliver learning materials to students and their families.

- We recently released read-alouds of original Room to Read titles on Literacy Cloud narrated by notable celebrities and business leaders. These unique stories from our collection give children insight into cultures outside of their own, helping to build empathy and understanding, particularly important skills during this difficult time.

Girls' Education

- While students are out of school during the pandemic, Room to Read staff are providing individual mentoring by phone and video calls to emotionally support girls and encourage their continued academic study at home. Our staff are also referring girls to official sources of information regarding staying safe and healthy, including those from governments and international health organizations. Once schools reopen, we will help girls navigate challenges related to returning to school.
- Room to Read staff are engaging more frequently with Girls' Education Program participants who we identify as at-risk. This risk is determined using our Risk and Response Tool, a powerful early warning system that helps our staff identify and immediately act on risk factors that are strongly associated with dropouts. We have updated the tool to reflect risk factors associated with this crisis and identify girls who need more intensive support leading up to schools reopening.



"While distance learning, I had the opportunity to share my feelings about the challenges that I am facing during this period. I am so thankful and very impressed that Room to Read never leaves us alone and is still supporting girls like me, even in this difficult time."

– Nousone

Nousone from Laos on how remote mentoring with her Room to Read social mobilizer has helped her during school closures

What We Have Accomplished

Our most recent impact through June 2020

Literacy

- Room to Read TV programs broadcast to more than **117 million** households
- Room to Read radio programs broadcast to more than **13 million** households
- More than **4 million** direct messages sent to teachers, students and families via email, text or messaging app
- Physical learning materials — including books and printed worksheets — delivered to **348,359** children
- Delivered **6,213** hours of virtual training and support to teachers, school leadership, authors and illustrators

Girls' Education

- About **486,500** messages sent to girls via email, text or messaging app
- More than **28,000** individuals reached through messages via email, text or messaging app
- More than **28,000** girls surveyed for dropout risk factors
- More than **72,000** individual remote mentoring sessions delivered to girls

Watch our read-alouds on our [YouTube channel](#), including:

- *Rescue the Princess*, title from Vietnam read by actor **Julia Roberts**
- *It's Catching Day*, title from Indonesia read by Disney Channel actor and Room to Read ambassador **Callan Farris**
- *The Little Elephant's Big Adventure*, title from Tanzania read by TV presenter for ABC (Australian Broadcasting Corporation) **Andrew Denton**

And many more!

OPPORTUNITY STARTS WITH EDUCATION



Room to Read's **LITERACY PROGRAM** helps students develop the reading and writing skills that provide a foundation for all future learning. In order to promote literacy, we support reading and writing instruction, publish and distribute high-quality reading materials and establish child-friendly learning spaces.

CLOUD PARTY / SHEREHE YA MAWINGU

Written by Alisha Berger and illustrated by André Ceolin
South Africa and Zambia

We see shapes in the clouds. We see a party! When it rains, will there be as much fun inside?

2019 Highlights in Literacy



China



The Philippines



Middle East



Tanzania



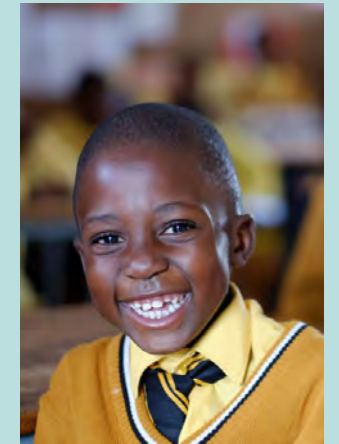
Sri Lanka



Laos



India



South Africa

Building Capacity for Local Authors and Illustrators in New Geographies

China and the Philippines: Publishing Books in New Languages

Room to Read added three new languages to our book publishing work in 2019 – Filipino, traditional Chinese and simplified Chinese – and we have now developed children’s book titles in a total of 42 languages. We expanded book offerings for children in these three languages through our collaboration with local publishers, authors, illustrators, designers and editors. Our book publishing staff led author and illustrator workshops in Manila and Beijing, developing 32 titles in these new languages. The books focus on diversity and inclusion, touching on themes that are often challenging for children to understand.

Middle East: Creating Books for Refugee Children with Sesame Workshop

In partnership with Sesame Workshop and the International Rescue Committee, we developed storybooks and educational materials for Syrian children who are refugees across Jordan, Iraq, Syria and Lebanon. Room to Read led workshops for authors and illustrators in Jordan, strengthening the local book publishing industry. We created and published

12 storybooks using Sesame Street characters from *Ahlan Simsim* (Sesame Street’s Arabic television show) along with worksheets. These materials are used in literacy, mathematics and socio-emotional learning instruction for children, providing crucial access to quality education.

Diversifying Our Storybook Offerings

Tanzania: Mathematics-Themed Storybooks Engage Readers in New Ways

Room to Read’s Africa Literacy Manager and the Tanzania team recently held a workshop where they focused on creating quality mathematics-themed stories and narrative nonfiction books. A member of the mathematics team from the Tanzania Institute of Education also attended the workshop and contributed to the content development.

Sri Lanka: Narrative Nonfiction Titles Make Learning Fun

To expand our book offerings, Room to Read developed our first narrative nonfiction books in Sri Lanka. This book type incorporates fact-based storytelling, which provides an engaging learning resource for young readers. We produced 10 beautiful titles for our partner schools in Sri Lanka and printed 26,000 copies.

Creating Sustainable and Systemic Change Through Government Engagement

Laos: Improving Reading Skills for Marginalized Groups of Children

The Learn to Read project in Laos, funded by USAID, launched in 2019 and will continue through 2022. In partnership with Save the Children, Humanity & Inclusion and the Laos Ministry of Education, we aim to improve early-grade reading skills for non-Lao-speaking students and children with disabilities across four provinces. Through this project, we are implementing oral language support and assessment, and pre-primary school support for more than 45,900 children in 875 schools. Our pre-primary support includes establishing reading corners in classrooms, developing 16 new storybooks for pre-primary students and creating teacher guides and professional development trainings for teachers.

India: Building a Culture of Reading for More Than Two Million Students

Our team in India held a far-reaching three-month campaign called “India Gets Reading” to raise awareness of the importance of literacy and build a culture of reading. We encouraged the public to “pledge reading time” and share that pledge on

social media. We also held events throughout the campaign, including a reading marathon across nine states around International Literacy Day. The campaign ultimately reached more than two million students in more than 30,000 schools and received high levels of engagement from community members, teachers and government officials.

Cambodia: Spreading Our Best Practices in Early-Grade Reading Across the Country

A large portion of our Grades One and Two instructional content has been adopted by the Cambodian government and incorporated into early-grade reading packages for government schools. To further support this process, RTI International contracted 14 members of Room to Read’s Literacy Program team in Cambodia to instruct national trainers across the country. The national trainers have continued to instruct teachers on early-grade reading, using Room to Read’s best practices.

South Africa: Sharing Our Expertise Nationally

Our South Africa team was invited to serve on national reference groups for the National Reading Coalition — a coordinating platform for reading initiatives in South Africa.



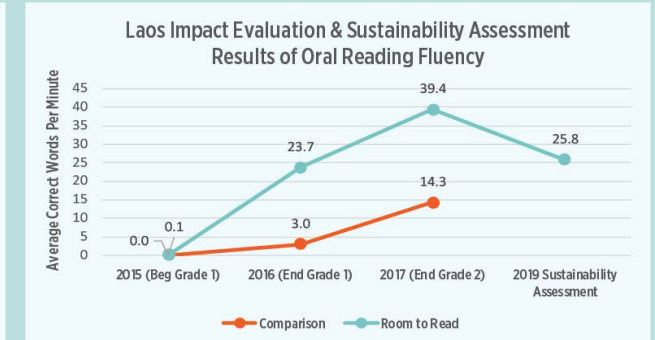
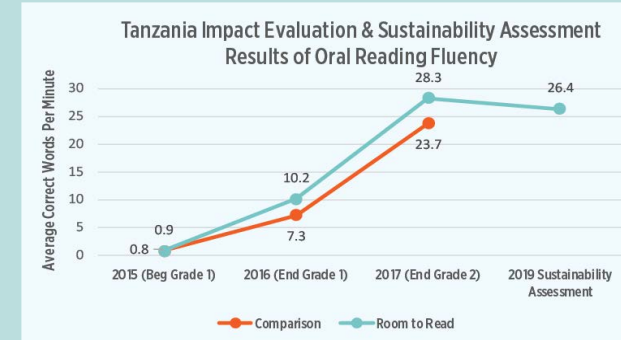
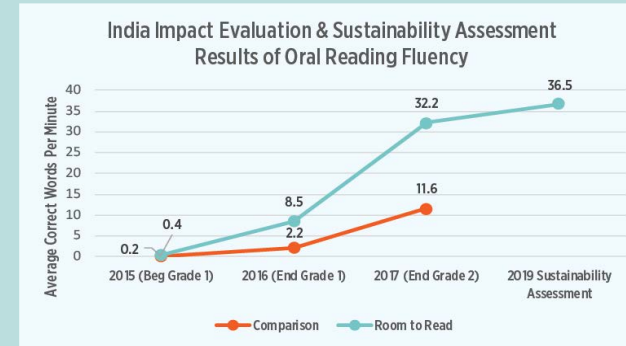


Bangladesh



Laos

Sustainability Assessments



Advocating for Students in Greatest Need Through Our Expertise

Examining Equality of Learning Outcomes: New Applications of Traditional Methods

With the increase in reading assessment data over the past decade, it has become clear that education systems are not delivering quality education to all children. There have been substantial efforts to highlight inequality in educational outcomes in recent years, and the data available to support these analyses for the early grades has grown exponentially in the past decade. The data tells us that children from poor rural households are not receiving the same learning opportunities as other children and that there can be great disparities in learning outcomes across schools.

Against this background, Room to Read and RTI International are partnering to conduct a learning equality study to further explore if and how our early-grade

reading interventions are influencing the equality of outcomes. We aim to propose new ways to investigate and communicate inequality in learning outcomes within the sector.

The first phase of the study will focus on the following questions:

- What impact did programs have on student reading outcomes? How did this vary by student, household and school characteristics?
- In interventions where we see large increases in reading levels, are all children benefiting from improved reading skills or is the intervention widening the gap between students in the same classroom?
- How have programs shifted equality of learning outcomes for students and schools?

We will host a technical webinar for peer review and publish a working paper in 2020.



Bangladesh: Literacy in Refugee Camps

In the Cox's Bazar region of Bangladesh, home to the world's largest settlement of refugees composed of the Rohingya people from Myanmar, Room to Read is leading a project analyzing the literacy skills of the camp's children. We've helped build the capacity of trainers and assessed the skills of teachers in the camps. We shared our findings with our partners in Cox's Bazar to help formulate appropriate education interventions.

Sustainability Assessments: Understanding the Impact of Our Literacy Program Over Time

To better understand how Room to Read's Literacy Program benefits children over time, we conduct sustainability assessments. Measuring the reading skills of a new cohort of Grade Two students several years after our active support has ended, these assessments allow us to determine how the schools are maintaining or improving upon learning levels, as compared to the results of our earlier impact evaluation following two years of support. In 2019, we conducted sustainability assessments in India, Laos and

Tanzania and noted some encouraging results.

In India, students' reading skills continued to increase in the two years following the initial evaluation – indicating that schools are sustaining effective practices and producing desired learning outcomes.

In Tanzania, a context with generally low reading outcomes, we see that the schools in our sample maintained improved reading skills, with just a minor decrease in oral reading fluency. This is a significant accomplishment in a country with crowded classrooms and very limited resources.

Lastly, the sustainability assessment in Laos revealed that the average oral reading fluency of students in Room to Read classrooms dropped one year after our active support. However, these fluency levels are still much higher than those historically seen in comparison schools in Laos.

The findings from these assessments have provided valuable insight into the impact of our Literacy Program and encouraged us to explore new ways to promote the sustainability of learning outcomes. Please see the graphs above featuring our data from these assessments.



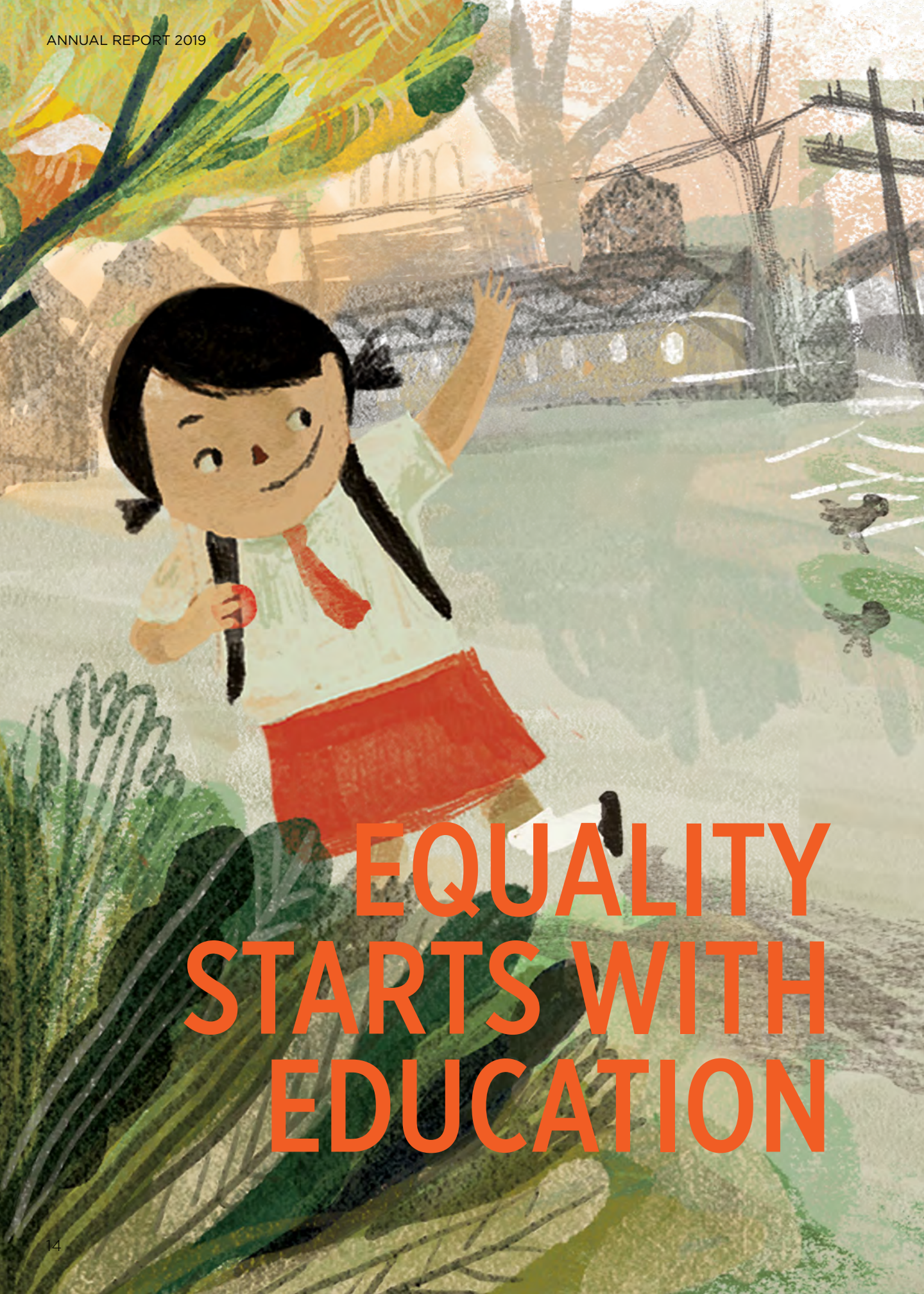
“If we want to change our future in this country, we should start with the kids. When they read, they understand more about themselves. When they grow up, they can contribute more. Together, we can make a change for society, and that's the vision I wish for – to bring about change in the country in the future.”

–Linh Truong, Field Manager, Room to Read, Vietnam



“I learned many different instruction activities and methods that I use every day in class. My class has become more interactive than ever, and my students are having fun learning.”

–Laxmi, Teacher, Nepal



EQUALITY STARTS WITH EDUCATION



Girls in the countries where we work face many obstacles to completing their education. Our **GIRLS' EDUCATION PROGRAM** intervenes at a time when girls are especially vulnerable to falling behind or dropping out — secondary school. With a focus on teaching girls important life skills and providing mentoring opportunities, we ensure that girls are prepared to overcome common obstacles and succeed in their education and their lives after graduation.

EPI'S NEW FRIEND / TEMAN BARU EPI

*Written by Nila Tanzil and illustrated by Nabila Adani
Indonesia*

Epi wants to play with her new neighbor. Her name is Fatima, and she is from Afghanistan. How will Epi play with Fatima, who speaks a different language? What will the two girls discover about each other?

[Read this story online through Literacy Cloud!](#)

2019 Highlights in Girls' Education



Bangladesh



Nepal



Laos



Tanzania



Vietnam

Raising Awareness About the Challenges Girls Face

Bangladesh: Holding Community Conferences to End Child Marriage

The prevalence of child marriage in the communities in which we work in Bangladesh continues to be a devastating obstacle for girls trying to complete their education. To mitigate this risk, Room to Read collaborated with government leaders and educators to address child marriage through grassroots initiatives. Four program schools in the Natore Province organized community conferences, during which program participants led discussions with parents, local leaders, teachers and other stakeholders about ending child marriage. As a result, over just a six-month period, Room to Read helped to prevent 58 cases of child

marriage, enabling those girls to stay safe and continue with their education.

Bangladesh: Putting a Spotlight on Sexual Harassment Through a Documentary

Our Girls' Education Program team in Bangladesh created a documentary about the prevalence of sexual harassment, a major issue the girls we work with face. Featuring program participants, their male peers, teachers and Room to Read staff, the documentary increased awareness about this important problem and received government praise.

Nepal: Educating Students About Menstruation

Our team in Nepal published a menstruation handbook that will be distributed to schools nationwide. The booklet, developed with technical support from the National Fertility Care Center, answers questions on

menstrual health, hygiene and rights.

Laos: Engaging Local Communities to Prevent Human Trafficking

Room to Read collaborated with district public health offices and police authorities to organize six community events on human trafficking. Families came away from these events with a deeper understanding of the risks of human trafficking that their daughters might face and how to prevent these dangerous situations. We also provided training on human trafficking prevention to program staff and teachers, in partnership with Village Focus International.

Innovative Approaches to Strengthening Girls' Life Skills

Tanzania: Girls Put Their Financial Knowledge to Work

Room to Read partnered with the local government to host a large event honoring International Day of the Girl in the Pwani Province. Girls who have taken part in our unique financial education curriculum, which we developed in partnership with Credit Suisse and Aflatoun International, gave their final presentations and sold their creative handmade products through

a market simulation. As the girls sold soap, pottery, jewelry, reusable sanitary napkins, doormats and more, they demonstrated newly acquired skills like marketing, creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship. The event was covered on local television.

Vietnam: Career Preparation for Girls

In life skills camps for girls in Grade 12 in Vietnam, we invited representatives from 17 well-known businesses (including banks, schools, tourism services, healthcare organizations and agricultural businesses) to provide realistic demonstrations of their recruitment practices. Program alumnae were also invited to share their professional experiences and provide career advice to students. These

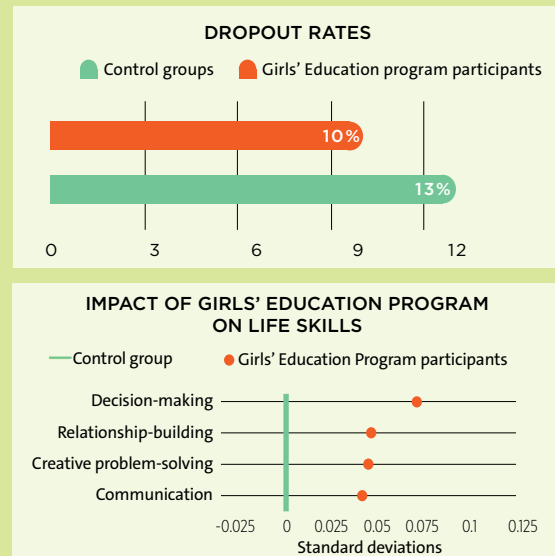
exercises will help girls enter their careers with confidence after they graduate from the Girls' Education Program and secondary school.



"Now I have lots of friends in school. They even share their lunches with me, which makes me very happy. This is all thanks to Room to Read's life skills sessions where my social mobilizer, Chandrika, taught us skills like empathy and how to support one another despite individual differences."

—Ishini, Girls' Education Program participant, Sri Lanka





Life Skills Evaluation



India



Cambodia



India



Vietnam

Testing Our Program's Effectiveness: Learnings from Our Life Skills Evaluation

Room to Read partnered with independent researchers from American University, the University of Illinois at Chicago and Dartmouth College to evaluate the effectiveness of our Girls' Education Program through a rigorous, randomized controlled trial study in Rajasthan, India. The study included both Room to Read-supported schools and comparison schools, with a total sample of 2,400 girls across 119 schools. Data was collected over a two-year period.

The evaluation found that girls who participated in our program had a 25 percent lower dropout rate and showed higher levels of grade progression than girls in control schools. Furthermore, the evaluation used an extensive range of questions to measure key life skills. As shown in the graph above, the program made a positive and statistically significant impact on critical life skills, including decision-making, relationship-building, creative problem-solving and communication, ultimately giving participants greater agency over their lives. These results reaffirm that our program has a measurable impact on its two primary goals: helping girls to stay in school longer and developing the skills that enable them to thrive.

This evaluation was funded by Echidna Giving, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Atlassian Foundation International, the U.S. Department of Labor and other private investors. Visit our website to read the [full Rajasthan Life Skills Evaluation report](#).



Preparing to Incorporate Boys Into Our Gender Equality Work

In 2019, Room to Read completed a research pilot study in Cambodia to help inform our upcoming plans to engage with boys through our life skills and gender equality work.

The study sought to answer the following questions:

- Where do we find the biggest gaps in boys' life skills?
- To what extent are these gaps similar to those observed in girls in the same context, and what are the key differences that our program should take into account?
- What do boys and others in their communities think about gender roles and the challenges boys face, in particular in their life skills development?

We conducted a version of our Life Skills Assessment that we administer to female Girls' Education Program participants with 90 boys. We supplemented this assessment with a set of questions focusing specifically on boys' gender attitudes.

The quantitative Life Skills Assessment survey results showed life skills, knowledge and attitudes that were broadly similar to Cambodian girls of the same age. However, there were some notable differences:

- Girls showed higher scores in empathy while boys scored higher in creative problem-solving.
- Boys were more likely to feel that boys' education was more important than girls' education.
- Boys were also less likely to agree that one should seek a trusted adult if one is being abused.
- Most boys showed respect for girls' bodily autonomy.

- The vast majority of boys believed that men should control household roles and resources.

We also led a series of discussions at a school in Prey Veng Province with boys, girls and their caregivers. Participants in the discussion, regardless of age and gender, tended to express egalitarian attitudes in the abstract, but more gender-normative views about specific details surrounding the behavior and roles of men and women.

We are using this pilot study to collect information that could help us build a life skills and gender transformative life skills curriculum for boys. As we explore the possibility of integrating boys into our gender equality work, this data will be invaluable.

Creating Systemic Change Through Government Engagement

India: Sharing Our Life Skills Expertise with Teachers

In partnership with UNICEF, Room to Read leveraged our expertise in life skills education to create instructional packages for government school teachers. Our staff worked closely with experts at Delhi University to develop three instructional packages that are meant to serve both girls and boys in a variety of age groups. By training

teachers through this project, we'll be able to help children without access to our programs develop the life skills they need to succeed in school and beyond.

Vietnam: Providing Mentoring Training for Teachers

Our team in Vietnam collaborated with the government on a pilot project to train teachers on mentoring practices. We created a curriculum and resources, training 98 teachers who were then able to provide an even more supportive environment in program schools. Mentorship provides girls with guidance and emotional support as they navigate different obstacles to receiving an education. It also helps identify girls who are at risk of dropping out of school and provides an opportunity for educators to intervene.

Cambodia: Launching Life Skills Teacher's Guides

The Girls' Education Program team is contributing to the development of the national life skills teacher's guide, and some of our life skills topics for Grades Seven to Nine will be integrated into the soft skills component of the national life skills curriculum. This means that girls across the country will have access to our life-changing interventions, helping them to negotiate challenges, focus on their studies and prepare for life after graduation.



"Without Room to Read, I would have no idea about my future, and I'm sure that many girls and their families impacted by the Girls' Education Program would want to say thank you to Room to Read as well. I want to be a part of Room to Read and work to support children and girls like me. I really want to see kids who are born in poor families have better futures."

-Phouttaphone, Girls' Education Program Graduate and Room to Read Literacy Coach, Laos

PARTNER ENGAGEMENT



NANAY'S FAVORITE PLACE / PABORITONG LUGAR NI NANAY

Written by Weng Cahiles and illustrated by Aldy C. Aguirre

Philippines

Nanay has a lot of fond memories in her favorite place. Will we ever get to visit that place?



PARTNERS AND AMBASSADORS

The Obama Foundation's Girls Opportunity Alliance

In **Vietnam**, Room to Read and the Obama Foundation's Girls Opportunity Alliance collaborated to showcase the power of life skills and girls' education. Pulling together a community of supporters and champions for girls' education, Former U.S. First Lady Michelle Obama visited one of our partner schools and met with leaders of local girls' education organizations as well as beneficiaries of our Girls' Education Program.

We hosted Julia Roberts, Lana Condor, Ngô Thanh Vân (Veronica Ngo), YouTube's Liza Koshy and the *Today* show's Jenna Bush Hager along with Mrs. Obama to share firsthand the depth of life skills training and

the life stories of current participants and alumnae of Room to Read's Girls' Education Program. The delegation also met with local representatives from education-focused nonprofit organizations.

In addition, Room to Read Vietnam representatives participated in the Obama Summit in Chicago and The Obama Foundation's Asia-Pacific Leaders Program conference in Malaysia, where they actively engaged in important discussions about the future of girls' education around the world.

A variety of prominent media outlets covered the visit and our work, including the [the Today show](#), [People Magazine](#), [Vogue UK](#) and [The Obama Foundation](#) itself.



1



2



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Lilly Singh [1]

Lilly Singh, YouTube star and host of NBC's *A Little Late with Lilly Singh*, visited our Girls' Education Program in Mumbai, **India**. During this trip to Mumbai, Lilly was able to meet with our Girls' Education Program participants at Saint Joseph High School.

While there, she screened a film with our participants, held a group discussion and learned more about life skills and mentoring sessions from our program staff and girls. Lilly had previously hosted a July 2018 Room to Read event in South Africa and spoke at our October 2018 San Francisco Benefit.

Callan Farris [2]

We have named Callan Farris, a young actor, musician, student and Disney Channel star, a Room to Read ambassador. Our CEO, Dr. Geetha Murali, made the announcement on May 21 at the Pasadena Public Library during an event featuring Callan Farris and *New York Times* bestselling children's book author Stuart Gibbs. Callan has committed to fundraising US\$35,000 to support Room to Read's Literacy Program and Girls' Education Program in **India**.

Kappa Alpha Psi [3]

Room to Read launched a partnership with Kappa Alpha Psi, the second oldest collegiate historically Black fraternity with over 150,000 members across the United States and international chapters in Nigeria, South Africa, the West Indies, the United Kingdom, Germany, Korea and Japan.

Through our joint Hands-on-Books Program, Kappa Alpha Psi members visit U.S. public schools and introduce Room to Read's storybook titles. Volunteers receive instruction from Room to Read on how to engage children through reading. Equipped with that knowledge – and our global children's book collection – they pay regular visits to local schools and read books aloud, conduct reading activities and donate books to the schools' libraries. Through the program, children in low-income communities in the **United States** are provided with a window into cultures that might be unfamiliar, helping to foster global citizenship.

This is our first project in the U.S., which strategically combines our unique knowledge and global perspective on children's books with Kappa Alpha Psi's strong commitment to education and relationships with public schools. Our partnership was featured on [the Today show](#) in early 2020.

Miss Universe Sri Lanka and Miss Universe Vietnam [4]

H'Hen Niê, Miss Universe **Vietnam** and Room to Read ambassador, joined program participants in Grade 12 at their life skills camp in the Tra On District. She delivered an inspiring speech to motivate the girls to reach for their dreams.

Miss Universe **Sri Lanka**, Ornella Gunesekeere, also became a Room to Read ambassador, using her platform to promote our Girls' Education Program.



4



4



5



6

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

Gender Breakfasts Hosted by Girls' Education Team in San Francisco [5]

Girls' Education Program Director Lucina Di Meco (pictured above with co-founder Shruthi Jayaram) is the co-founder of The Gender Breakfast, a monthly meeting hosted at Room to Read offices where gender equality professionals can meet and learn from each other. This diverse group of more than 140 professionals, including policy makers, philanthropists, nonprofit workers, advocates, researchers, strategic advisors and journalists, works globally, nationally and in the San Francisco Bay Area. The community helps members to build their own capacity and collaborate. This ongoing series is a partnership between Room to Read, Dalberg Advisors and Echidna Giving.

Life Skills Assessment Technical Workshop Hosted by Research, Monitoring and Evaluation Team

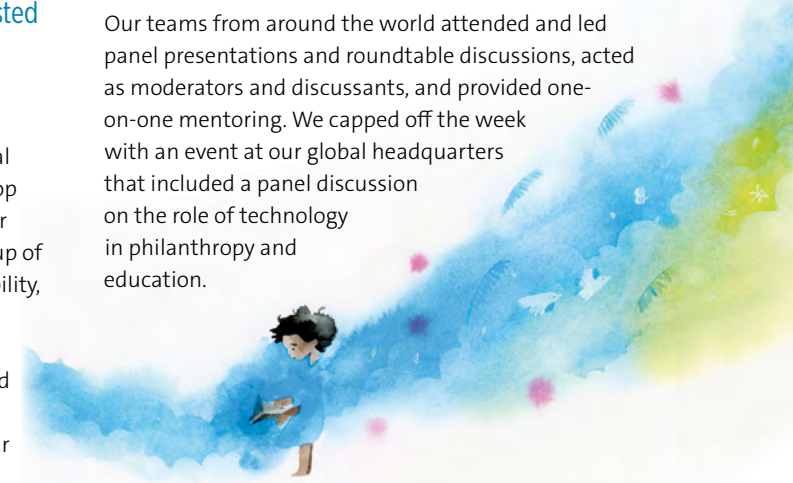
Room to Read hosted a group of experts for a two-day Life Skills Assessment Technical Workshop in **Washington, DC**, along with the Center for Universal Education at the Brookings Institution. The workshop brought together representatives from several other implementing organizations as well as a select group of researchers to discuss topics such as research reliability, validity, bias mitigation and contextualization. Participants shared lessons learned on common challenges and discussed promising approaches and future directions for development. Room to Read also shared the findings of an independent two-year

randomized controlled trial evaluation. That evaluation employed a range of life skills-related measures, and its conclusions helped further inform the discussion over the ensuing two days. Our learnings from this Life Skills Evaluation are detailed in the *Girls' Education* section of this report.

CIES Conference and Event [6]

Room to Read had a robust showing at the 2019 Comparative and International Education Society (CIES) conference in **San Francisco**. Our staff participated in 20 panels highlighting program insights and results from across our portfolio. We presented on best practices in book publishing; measuring life skills; taking libraries to a national scale; improved monitoring for better evaluations, teacher motivation, literacy training and coaching support; integrating financial literacy into girls' education programming; and much more.

Our teams from around the world attended and led panel presentations and roundtable discussions, acted as moderators and discussants, and provided one-on-one mentoring. We capped off the week with an event at our global headquarters that included a panel discussion on the role of technology in philanthropy and education.



Supporter Highlights



Room to Read Founders and Our Alumni Network

In recent years, we have held an annual Room to Read Alumni Event for current and former staff members from our global office teams hosted by the chair of our Emeritus Board, Hilary Valentine. In 2019, this event brought together many members of the Room to Read family, including our three co-founders – Erin Ganju (Co-founder and current Managing Director at Echidna Giving), Dinesh Shrestha (Co-founder and current Director of Field Operations at Room to Read) and John Wood (Founder and Board Member at Room to Read and Asia Partner at Concentric Equity Partners).



Our founders shared stories about the early days of Room to Read, celebrated our many accomplishments and reflected on our upcoming 20th anniversary. Room to Read prides itself on our engaged and dedicated community of founders, board members, alumni, staff and supporters.



Legacy Society: Dr. Raji Ambikairajah

Dr. Raji Ambikairajah on her choice of making a legacy gift to the organization:

“The greatest impact that any of us can have is that which carries beyond our own lifetime. When we choose to pass the baton of opportunity, we make the seemingly impossible possible.

Room to Read’s holistic approach and ability to adapt and scale have built trust and a strong track record, as they edge closer to achieving their bold vision of eradicating illiteracy.

No matter where we are in the timeline of humanity, education will be the great leveler and the most effective tool in solving the world’s challenges and creating future changemakers. I have great belief that Room to Read will take the baton of opportunity and end the impossible.”



Peer-to-Peer Fundraiser: Elle Chassin

In lieu of gifts for her bat mitzvah, 13-year-old Elle Chassin created her own fundraiser with a goal of US\$3,000, which is enough to support 10 girls in low-income communities through one full year of secondary school. Elle even committed to contributing US\$300 of her own money earned through babysitting and other means.

Elle says, “For me, personally, I think that it shouldn’t matter what gender you were born with, you should have the same rights, the same jobs, and the same opportunities that every other human has.”



ORGANIZATIONAL FUNDERS

Organizational funders are critical to our success in improving the lives of children across low-income communities around the world. Whether through grants, employee engagement, cause marketing partnerships or in-kind donations, these partners help us scale our impact while meeting our shared goals.

Ananta Foundation enables the development and enhancement of projects critical to Room to Read's mission. To date, Ananta Foundation has invested US\$5.4 million in core support, helping Room to Read to progress toward our strategic goals and to reach more children than ever before with our life-changing programs.

 **Atlassian Foundation International** has donated more than US\$12 million toward Room to Read's programs. In 2019, Atlassian was the largest investor in our Girls' Education Program in Cambodia and the largest corporate investor from Australia. Atlassian staff also provide significant personal support to Room to Read through their "\$1 a Day" workplace giving program.


 **Bajaj Auto** has invested generously in Room to Read's Literacy Program in India. Through our partnership, Bajaj Auto has supported over 32,000 children, helping them to develop crucial literacy skills.

 **Bank of America - BA Continuum India (BACI)** has been a key partner of Room to Read since 2015. To date, BACI has contributed US\$1 million and helped more than 46,000 children and secondary school girls in India through our Literacy and Girls' Education Programs.

 **The Bertin Family Foundation** supports the implementation of Room to Read's Oral Language Unit in Laos. With this investment, Room to Read will be able to improve early-grade reading skills in the many regions in Laos where students are not native Lao speakers.

 **BNP PARIBAS** Since 2016, Room to Read has gratefully received over US\$1.8 million in funding from **BNP Paribas Group** and its employees globally. BNP Paribas Group entities supported our Girls' Education Program in India and Vietnam in 2019 through corporate social responsibility grants and employee engagement. This partnership has helped more than 4,460 girls to succeed in secondary school and develop key life skills.

 **The BURGER KING McLAMORE™ Foundation** has supported Room to Read through donations from BURGER KING® brand employees, franchisees and restaurant guests in select areas in Europe, the Middle East, Africa and Asia Pacific, as well as donations directly from the foundation. These investments have benefited more than 112,000 students in Room to Read's programs in Cambodia, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, South Africa, Tanzania and Zambia.

 In 2019, **Cartier Philanthropy** committed to


supporting Girls' Education in Cambodia and Bangladesh through a multiyear grant. Cartier Philanthropy is promoting the advancement of gender equality in education in these countries by impacting a total of 4,350 girls, changing the trajectory of not only the lives of these girls, but also those of their families and communities.

 Through its e for Education initiative, **Citi** donated US\$1 to education-focused nonprofits for every US\$1 million traded on various electronic platforms during the campaign. Room to Read and Citi have been partners since the inception of this campaign in 2013. In 2019, Room to Read was the recipient of a US\$1 million grant toward our areas of greatest need, the largest grant we have received to date from Citi's e for Education initiative.

 **CREDIT SUISSE** has been one of our largest corporate supporters since 2005, benefiting more than 140,000 children and funding multiple strategic projects, including the launch of Room to Read's technical assistance work. Room to Read is a key implementing partner in the Credit Suisse Financial Education for Girls Program, applying their model to our Girls' Education Program in Tanzania and Sri Lanka. Credit Suisse also donates office space for Room to Read staff in Asia and provides capacity-building through its Global Citizens Program.

 **دبي العطاء Dubai Cares** **Dubai Cares**, part of Mohammed

Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Global Initiatives, has funded the development and distribution of over 600,000 Arabic storybooks in Jordan and over two million local language books in Cambodia, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Tanzania and Vietnam as part of its Reading Nation campaign. Dubai Cares has also supported school reconstruction and Literacy Program activities in Nepal after the 2015 earthquakes. Dubai Cares is a key partner under Room to Read's Goalkeepers Quality Education Accelerator, helping to scale up our school library interventions throughout schools in Vietnam.

 In 2019, **Echidna Giving** invested in our Literacy and Girls' Education Programs. Echidna Giving is a leading thought partner for Room to Read in the areas of innovation, analysis, learning and systemic change.

 Through Goldman Sachs and **Goldman Sachs Gives**, the company and its senior executives have contributed more than US\$24.3 million to Room to Read. In 2019, Goldman Sachs supported our Literacy and Girls' Education Programs, benefiting more than 18,700 children.


 In 2017, **Google.org** committed to a multiyear grant that will help improve the early reading experiences of more than 200,000 Indonesian students in two ways: increasing access to Bahasa Indonesia children's stories through a new digital platform and training teachers on effective reading activities. The grant, coupled with Google.org's year-end employee giving contributions, is creating much-needed educational

opportunities for children around the world.


 Since 2016, the **IKEA Foundation** has invested generously in Room to Read's literacy work in Bangladesh and Indonesia. The IKEA Foundation has also supported Room to Read's first-ever girls' education-focused technical assistance project in India, providing thousands of girls with improved educational opportunities and the tools they need to navigate key life decisions.

 Since 2016, **IMC** has invested generously in Room to Read's Literacy Program in Tanzania. Throughout our partnership, IMC has contributed more than US\$6 million to Room to Read, helping to equip young learners with the powerful tool of literacy that will transform their own lives, as well as their communities and future generations.


 Believing that beauty begins in the heart and the mind, every **Tatcha** purchase supports girls' education around the world through their Beautiful Faces, Beautiful Futures Program. Since launching this partnership with Room to Read's Girls' Education Program in 2014, Tatcha has funded more than three million days of school for girls. These days provide support for girls within the program in and out of the classroom, including life skills coaching and mentorship to ensure a brighter, more beautiful future.

 **Townsend Press**, an independent publisher of acclaimed educational materials for students in grade school through college, has been a Room to Read partner since 2007. Townsend Press has funded local-language book publication, library development and our Girls' Education Program. Additionally, Townsend Press

has funded core operations and supported Room to Read through gifts-in-kind.

 **Room to Read works with UNICEF** in Bangladesh and India. In Bangladesh, Room to Read provides technical assistance in Cox's Bazar under the Implementing Education in Emergency Program for the children in Rohingya refugee camps, providing supplementary teaching and learning materials for educators as well as children's books and other reading materials for the children. Room to Read also works closely with UNICEF in India, supporting the scale-up and institutionalization of our literacy intervention in the states of Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh; additionally, the UNICEF national office supported our thought leadership work around girls' education and gender equality.

 In 2019, Room to Read worked on literacy projects funded by the **United States Agency for International Development (USAID)** in Cambodia, Honduras, India, Laos and Rwanda, benefiting millions of children. These investments enabled us to innovate and scale our work to new regions.

 The **World Food Programme** and Room to Read, with funding from the United States Department of Agriculture's McGovern-Dole Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program, are partnering to implement a three-year technical assistance project in Cox's Bazar from 2018 through 2020. In 2019, this project supported 45,012 children from 135 schools and 11 madrasahs, developed and published 10 new book titles, and distributed 182,248 books to 877 libraries. It also trained teachers on literacy instruction and library management and head teacher and local government officials on school management, leadership development, monitoring and supervision.

Top Organizational Funders 2019

\$500,000 and More

Atlassian Foundation
International
BNP Paribas
Citi
Credit Suisse AG
Dubai Cares
Echidna Giving
Goldman Sachs Gives
Google.org
IKEA Foundation
IMC
Tatcha
UNICEF
United States Agency for
International Development
(USAID)
World Food Programme

\$250,000 – \$499,999

Ananta Foundation
Bajaj Auto
Bank of America - BA
Continuum India Pvt Ltd
Bertin Family Foundation
BURGER KING
McLAMORESM Foundation
Caerus Foundation, Inc.
Cartier Philanthropy
The Townsend Foundation

\$100,000 – \$249,999

All The Sky Foundation
The Anne Wojcicki
Foundation
The Carroll Obremskey
Charitable Fund
Centre for microFinance
The Chin Family Fund
CMS
Dr. Ausbüttel & Co. GmbH
The Erol Foundation
The Estée Lauder

Companies Charitable
Foundation
The Høglund Foundation
The Hunter Family
Foundation
JAAM Foundation
The Lilac Foundation
Oracle
Steans Family Foundation
Travel Sentry
Troper Wojcicki
Foundation
The World Bank

\$50,000 – \$99,999

The Aall Foundation
ABeam Consulting Ltd.
Adani Foundation
Bloomberg
The Boeing Company
Boulé Foundation
Dodge & Cox
The Empowerment
Foundation
Gildan Activewear Inc.
Green Leaves Education
Foundation
The Gruber Family
Foundation
HT Parekh Foundation
The Hans Foundation
InMaat Foundation
KEEN X Sherpa: Innate
Boot
Kendeda Fund
The Koogle Foundation
Renshaw Foundation
RG Manudhane
Foundation for Excellence
Rising Tide Foundation
Robeco Foundation
The Spohler Foundation
The Spurlino Foundation
STUDY FOR TWO

Tokio Marine & Nichido
Fire Insurance Co., Ltd.
The Turning Leaf
Foundation
The Van Veenendaal
Family Fund
The Varvel Family
Charitable Fund
Vitol Foundation

In-Kind Donors

American Book Company
Books for Africa
Capco
Cisco Systems, Inc.
Credit Suisse AG
GS Sales
Gumdrop Books
Ketchum
Moët Hennessy Diageo
Oliver Wyman
Reliance Capital
Rosewood Hotel Group
Scholastic
Swire Hotels
Townsend Press



On behalf of Room to Read and the millions of children that we serve, we want to express special thanks to Emeritus Board Chair and California Board member, as well as long-time investor, **Hilary Valentine**, for her exceptional generosity in making a US\$5 million investment in Room to Read, which has provided seed funding for Room to Read’s Future Fund, to ensure Room to Read’s sustainability and impact long into the future. We are so grateful to Hilary, her husband Don Listwin, and their daughter Chelsea for their unwavering support of our mission.

We also wish to remember and thank Hilary’s father, **Don Valentine** (1932 - 2019), founder of Sequoia Capital and Silicon Valley legend. Don was a visionary investor in Room to Read’s Girls’ Education Program, and we are forever grateful for his kindness, generosity and support.



FINANCIALS

Our work is possible because of the generosity of our worldwide network. We are deeply committed to operating with the utmost financial efficiency and transparency, so you know your investments are providing the greatest benefit for the communities we serve.

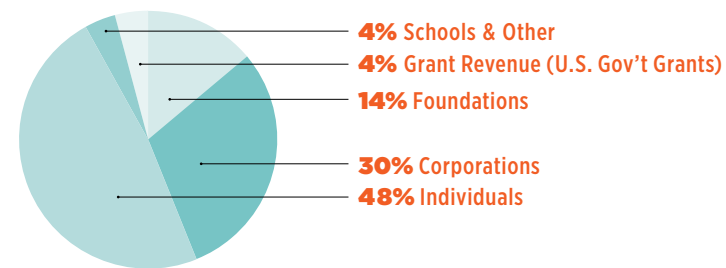
FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

CASH DONATIONS
US\$54.7
MILLION

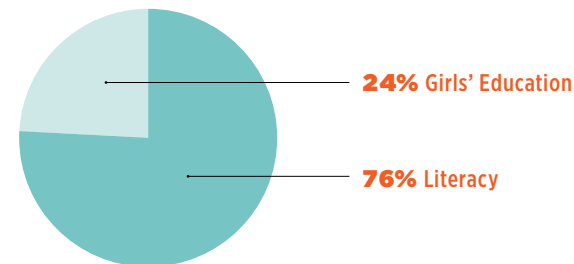
IN-KIND DONATIONS
US\$6.0
MILLION

SPENT ON PROGRAMS
87%

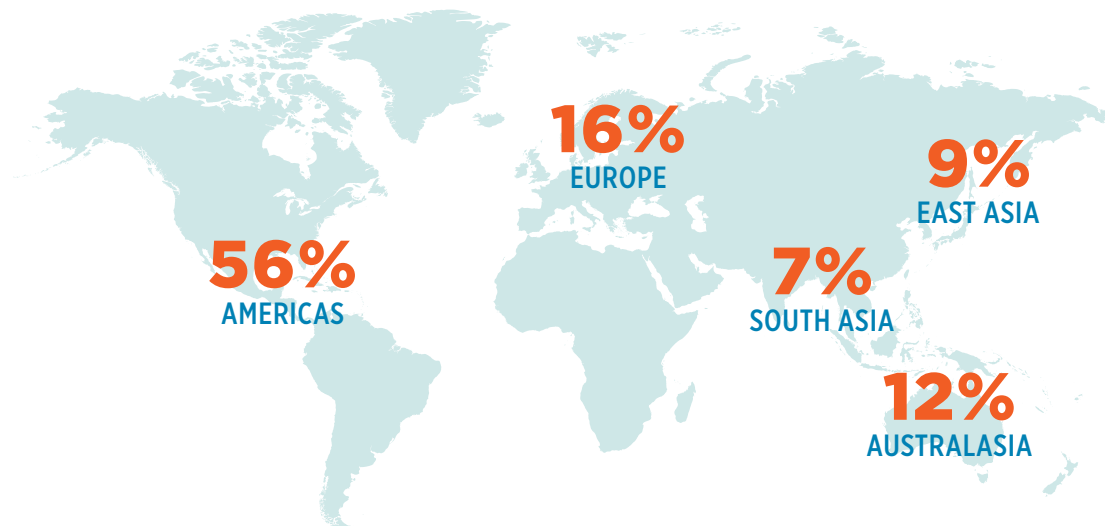
DONATIONS BY TYPE OF INVESTOR



PROGRAMMATIC EXPENSE BREAKDOWN



SOURCES OF REVENUE BY REGION



Statement of Activities

For the years ending December 31, 2019 and December 31, 2018 (USD)

Support and Revenue:	2019	2018
Corporations	\$15,976,393	\$13,372,443
Foundations	\$7,436,478	\$7,154,647
Individuals	\$26,536,366	\$26,463,290
Schools and Other	\$2,304,124	\$2,089,709
Total Donations	\$52,253,361	\$49,080,089
Grant and Contract Revenue	\$2,516,889	\$3,021,963
Donations In-Kind	\$6,009,462	\$2,759,734
Investment and Other Income (Loss), Special Event Expenses, Fees	\$(140,264)	\$(513,170)
TOTAL SUPPORT AND REVENUE	\$60,639,448	\$54,348,616

Operating Expenses:	2019	2018
Program Services		
Literacy	\$7,818,098	\$6,805,792
Girls' Education	\$2,168,816	\$1,954,295
Technical Assistance*	\$-	\$2,289,564
Donated Books and Supplies	\$4,923,350	\$1,599,672
Conferences, Travel and Meeting Costs	\$1,852,742	\$1,719,913
Information Technology Expenses	\$1,757,809	\$1,129,002
Monitoring and Evaluation	\$188,542	\$172,192
Professional Fees	\$2,031,915	\$1,506,436
Program Operating Expenses	\$1,969,135	\$2,654,227
Program Personnel Expenses	\$23,671,112	\$22,082,020
Total Program Services	\$46,381,519	\$41,913,113
Management and General	\$1,960,470	\$2,096,688
Fundraising	\$5,176,125	\$5,057,016
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	\$53,518,114	\$49,066,817

Translation adjustments	\$8,867	\$(909,656)
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Change in Net Assets Without Donor Restrictions	\$2,622,538	\$4,321,830
Change in Net Assets With Donor Restrictions	\$4,507,663	\$50,313
Net Assets Without Donor Restrictions at Beginning of the Year	\$12,196,255	\$7,874,425
Net Assets With Donor Restrictions at Beginning of the Year	\$10,616,113	\$10,565,800
TOTAL ASSETS AT END OF THE YEAR	\$29,942,569	\$22,812,368

*Technical assistance was set up to design and implement projects that allowed us to share our expertise and resources with partner organizations, in an effort to significantly increase the reach, impact and influence of our work. Based on the success of this program delivery model, technical assistance has been integrated into overall Room to Read operations under the Literacy and Girls' Education line items as of 2019.

Room to Read's financial statements have been audited by independent certified public accountants and are available on our website.

BOARD AND LEADERSHIP

As of August 1, 2020

Board of Directors

Mary Byron (Chair), Owner, Cloud Nine Quilts and Former Partner, Goldman Sachs

Yusuf Alireza, CEO and Co-CIO, ARP Global Capital

Andrew Balls, Chief Investment Officer, Global Fixed Income, PIMCO

Mike Cannon-Brookes, Co-Founder and Co-CEO, Atlassian

Sabine Chalmers, General Counsel, BT Group plc

Dr. Luis Crouch, Senior Economist, RTI

Carl Huttenlocher, Managing Partner and Chief Investment Officer, Myriad Asset Management

Scott Kapnick, CEO, HPS Investment Partners, LLC

Dr. Elizabeth M. King, Nonresident Senior Fellow, Brookings Institution

John Lindfors, Managing Partner, DST Investment Management

Dr. Geetha Murali, CEO, Room to Read

Stasia Obremsky, Strategy Director for Contraceptive Technology Development, Rhia Ventures

John Ridding, CEO, Financial Times Group

Frank van Veenendaal, Former Executive Vice President, Salesforce

Susan Wojcicki, CEO, YouTube

John Wood, Founder, Room to Read and Asia Partner, Concentric Equity Partners

Emeritus Board

Hilary Valentine (Chair), Partner, Black & White Design

Christopher S. Beer, Founding Member, Ironmark Law Group

Craig Bruya, Former CFO, Microsoft Business Solutions

Erin Ganju, Co-Founder and Former CEO, Room to Read and Managing Director, Echidna Giving

Peter T. Grauer, Chairman, Bloomberg Inc.

Tim Koogle, Former CEO and Chair, Yahoo!

Alastair Mactaggart, President, Emerald Fund

Jerry del Missier, Founder and Executive Chairman, Copper Street Capital LLP

Kim Anstatt Morton, Advisory Board Member, Girl Rising

Dr. Fernando Reimers, Director of Global Education and International Education Policy, Harvard University

Muneer Satter, Chair, Satter Investment Management

Regional Boards

ASEAN

Mark Bedingham

Isabelle and Antoine Decitre

Phalgun Raju and Nicholas Nash

Ria and Helman Sitohang

Lynne and Michael Taylor

Justin Teo

John Wood

Agnes and Tony Zameczkowski

David and Catherine Zemans

Asia Pacific

Lauren and James Houghton

Laura Howard and Dieter Turowski

Camilla and John Lindfors

Tamiko M. Lippit and Carl

Huttenlocher

Amy Powell and John Wood

Kimberley Stafford and Ryan Korinke

Australia

Rita Azar and Bassam Aflak

Anna Baillie-Karas and Jason Karas

Jane and Andrew Clifford

Zahra and Brett Godfrey

Alison and Charles Gorman

Annie Todd and Mike

Cannon-Brookes

Donna Yip and David Torrible

California

Susan Breyer

Erin and Jitendra Ganju

Krista and Matthew Glotzbach

Diksha and Divesh Makan

Angel Mehta

Kim Anstatt Morton

Stasia Obremsky

Jesse Purewal

Mythili Sankaran and Shekar Ayyar

Pierre Towns

Hilary Valentine

Leslie and Frank van Veenendaal

Susan Wojcicki and Dennis Troper

India

Gaurav Dalmia

Mickey Doshi

Khazem Merchant

Sumati and Ravi C. Raheja

Jitu Virwani

Japan

Asami and Ben Ferguson

Ayako and Eric Golden

Yuri and Tomoya Masanao

Susan and Theo Seltzer

Fred Towfigh

Middle East

Malak Alireza and Ahmed El-

Maghraby

Shima and Mahdi Amjad

Farah Foustok

Dina Khreino and Yusuf Alireza

Nadia Logab and Malick Badjie

Salma Rachid and Amin Magrabi

New York

Samantha Barry

Mary Byron

Sabine and Richard Chalmers

Sara Eisen and Matthew Levine

Caryn Freiburger

Peter T. Grauer

Sonny Kalsi

Jaideep Khanna

Art Mbanefo

Marc Seidner

Switzerland

Jürgen Bauer

Iqbal Khan

Sarah and Aydin Kurt-Elli

Laura and Robert Schmoll

Maria Vigil and Marco Pagliara

Tina Wüstemann

United Kingdom

Sabine and Richard Chalmers

Raquel and Craig Dawson

Marisa Drew

Maria and Elio Leoni-Sceti

Jerry del Missier

Björn Nilsson

John Ridding

Erica Wax and Andrew Balls

Randy Work

Leadership Team Management Team

Dr. Geetha Murali, Chief Executive Officer

Shari Freedman, Chief Financial Officer

Laurie McMahan, Chief Development and Communications Officer

Nicole Sayres, Chief Operating Officer

Heather Simpson, Chief Program Officer

International Directors

Michael Bowers, Vice President, Program Operations

Dinesh Shrestha, Co-Founder and Director of Field Operations

Deepak Dogra, Director, Asia Program Operations

Paul Kilambya, Director, Africa Program Operations

Sourav Banerjee, Country Director, India

Vantha Chea, Country Director, Cambodia

Vanessa Francis, Country Director, South Africa

Shevanthi Jayasuriya, Country Director, Sri Lanka

Juvenalius Kuruletera, Country Director, Tanzania

Nuong Nguyen, Country Director, Vietnam

Rakhi Sarkar, Country Director, Bangladesh

Pushkar Shrestha, Country Director, Nepal

Norkham Souphanouvong, Country Director, Laos





Join us! To get involved, visit roomtoread.org/take-action

Invest in Education

A donation to Room to Read helps us to transform the lives of millions of children across the world through education.

Join Our Chapter Network

Room to Read has more than 11,000 volunteer chapter members across 35 cities globally. Our chapter network helps us succeed through fundraising, hosting events and increasing awareness of our cause. See our website to [find a chapter near you](#).

Establish a Matching Gift Program

A matching gift program is designed to support nonprofits that a company's employees are passionate about by matching the donations made by their employees. Thanks to matching gift programs, you can double or even triple your impact! Learn more [here](#) to see if your employer will match your donation today.

See Our Work in Action

A visit to one of our partner communities gives you one-of-a-kind access to our projects, the opportunity to meet our local teams and a chance to interact with the children, parents and teachers benefiting from our programs. Whether you have been a supporter for years or are just beginning to learn about our work, this unique, firsthand experience will change how you view your place in the world.

While travel restrictions remain in place, you can get a sense for our life-changing field trips through [this video](#).

Follow Us Online

Want to be a part of Room to Read's global community? Join us online to see how we're making illiteracy and gender inequality problems of the past.

- Facebook:** [/RoomtoRead](#)
- Instagram:** [@RoomtoRead](#)
- Twitter:** [@RoomtoRead](#)
- YouTube:** [/RoomtoRead](#)
- LinkedIn:** [/company/Room-to-Read](#)

Room to Read transforms the lives of millions of children through education, creating a world free from illiteracy and gender inequality.

We envision a world in which all children can pursue a quality education that prepares them to be fulfilled and make positive change — in their families, communities and the world.

DESIGN: Melanie Doherty Design

PHOTOS: Inner Cover: various photographers at Room to Read projects; Page 3: Thanh Tung Nguyen and Khang Thai (left), The Obama Foundation (middle), Sanjay Singh (right); Page 4 & 5: Saikat Mojumder, Nguyen Minh Duc, Julius Mahela, Julius Mahela, Thanh Le; Page 6: M. Babu (bottom); Page 7: Thouan Soulivong (bottom); Page 9: Willem de Lange; Page 10: (left to right) illustrated by Wang Xiaoxu, illustrated by Harry Monzon, illustrated by Sajida Jalal, Sala Lewis, illustrated by Hasithaka Ranatunga, Susan Sengmanithong, Amirtharaj Stephen, Willem de Lange; Page 12: Saikat Mojumder (top left), Susan Sengmanithong (top middle), Bittersweet Media (bottom); Page 13: Manish Prajapati; Page 15: Unknown; Page 16 & 17: (left to right, top) Andrea Borgarello, Meklay Yotkhamsay, Julius Mahela, Thanh Le; Page 18 & 19: (left to right) Deeapak Pradhan, Socheata Pors, Sanjay Singh, Thanh Le, Palitha Khamphila (bottom); Page 21: The Obama Foundation; Page 22: Rajendra Chanda (1), Getty Images for Room to Read (2), the Today show (3); Page 23: Lahiruni Kannangara (4, left), Danh Huu Hua (4, right), Florence Middleton (5), Heather Simpson (6); Page 24: Geetha Murali (top), courtesy of Dr. Raji Ambikairajah (middle), courtesy of the Chassin family (bottom); Page 29: Umeshi Rajeendra (top), courtesy of the Valentine family (bottom); Page 32: Nguyen Minh Duc



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