

Girls' Education Program Fact Sheet



Education is a human right, yet millions of girls globally are not in school.



Room to Read's Girls' Education Program helps girls cultivate the skills they need to navigate economic and social barriers blocking their path to leading fulfilling lives of their own choosing.

By supporting girls to complete their education and gain crucial life skills, and by partnering with governments to scale and sustain this model, Room to Read is supporting a new generation of educated young women to become leaders in their families, communities and the world.

THE NEED FOR GENDER EQUALITY IN EDUCATION

- Barriers to education disproportionately affect girls and dramatically limit their life options. Whether a girl stays in school has an astounding effect on her quality of life and that of her future family.
- Following COVID-19 pandemic school closures, UNESCO estimates that 11 million girls may never return to school, adding to the 130 million girls already out of school before the pandemic started.
- Gender inequity is more pronounced by secondary school. In many countries, this is when girls' enrollment drops sharply. In historically low-income countries, 66 girls complete upper secondary education for every 100 boys.
- Every year of additional schooling can transform a girl's future. Girls who stay in school are much more likely to marry later, live healthier lives, ensure their own children gain an education and earn significantly more income. Each additional year of secondary school is estimated to boost a girl's future earnings by nearly 20 percent.

OUR APPROACH

Life Skills Education

- Our research-based life skills curriculum follows girls through secondary school, helping them build competency in areas such as resilience, leadership, collaboration, critical thinking and decision making.
- Through classes, workshops and extracurricular activities, girls learn how to apply key skills in their daily lives and become better equipped to handle challenges — from gender discrimination and food scarcity to finding time to study.
- Our curriculum is also disseminated more broadly via television, radio, and publishing and media partnerships.

Individualized Support & Mentoring

- Essential to our program are social mobilizers, local women hired as mentors to work one-on-one with girls and their families to ensure that girls stay in school, participate in life skills activities and navigate the challenges of adolescence with the ability to make their own life choices.
- Program support is tailored to each girl's individual need and grade level in addition to local conditions in her community.

Family and Community Engagement

- Social norms, expectations and challenges can significantly affect a girl's ability to stay in school. Room to Read engages with families and communities by hosting workshops, events, and other activities to raise awareness about the importance of education and the resources that exist to support girls' learning, especially during crises.

Material Support

- For some families, the cost of a school uniform or safe transportation is prohibitive to sending their daughters to school. We provide need-based material support for school costs such as tuition fees, school supplies, uniforms and exam preparation services so parents don't have to make the choice between putting food on the table and investing in education.

OUR Gender Equality RESULTS

3.4M
girls supported
through
life skills curriculum
and mentorship
globally.



In 2021, the pass rate
for gatekeeping exams
(high-stakes, nationally
administered exams) was

98%,
and school dropout was a
mere 4%.

An independent research
study in India found a
25%
reduction in school dropout rates
among program participants, in
addition to a positive, statistically
significant impact on
key life skills.



A survey of program
alumnae found that
83%
were employed or in
tertiary education five years
after graduation.

OUR DIFFERENCE

Ongoing support throughout a girl's education

- Our program is one of the longest interventions of its kind, providing support to girls for up to seven years (Grades 6–12). This depth of engagement allows girls to build upon and strengthen their life skills as they advance each year, fostering better long-term outcomes.

Locally Adaptable

- Our local, in-country teams hold trusted relationships with communities and are typically from the community in which they work. This local presence enables Room to Read to better meet the needs of students and quickly respond during crises that create barriers to learning.

Trusted government partner for impact at scale

- Room to Read is often the only non-government organization invited by governments to join advisory committees to inform nationwide life skills curriculum and gender-aware approaches to education.

Engaging boys in gender equality

- Our program goes further by supporting young people of all genders to think critically about the gender inequalities, roles and dynamics that affect their lives and to challenge norms that perpetuate gender inequality in their families and communities.

OUR REACH

Room to Read has benefited more than 39 million children and has worked in 23 countries around the world to help young learners unlock their full potential through education.



INVEST WITH CONFIDENCE

Fiscal Excellence

For every US \$1 donated to Room to Read, 86 cents goes to our programs. We've earned Charity Navigator's highest four-star rating 16 times, an achievement that less than 1 percent of charities can claim.

Educational Leadership

- UNESCO Prize for Girls' and Women's Education
- HundrED Global Collection recipient — ranked #1 for impact and scalability out of more than 3,400 education-focused organizations
- UNESCO Confucius Prize for Literacy
- World's Children's Prize Honorary Laureate
- Library of Congress Literacy Awards, Rubenstein Prize and Special Response Award for outstanding work addressing pandemic-related challenges

Questions? Contact us at info@roomtoread.org

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