



KEEPING LEARNING ALIVE

Annual Report
2020



Some global problems seem insurmountable — hunger, disease, inequality, poverty — but there is one tool that can help fix them all,

EDUCATION.

In school, 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. 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.

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COUNTRY DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



Dear Friends,

2020 marks 20 years of Room to Read's journey and our commitment to the belief that World Change Starts with Educated Children®. An organization which has its humble beginnings in the Lamjung district of Nepal has now supported children in 20 countries around the world in literacy and gender equality. Today, as the world faces immense global crises such as climate change, gender inequality and the COVID-19 pandemic, our commitment toward literacy and girls' education has strengthened more than ever. Even during the most challenging times, education is one thing that cannot be taken away—it endures for all who receive it and strengthens communities by creating a generation of people who are resilient and compassionate.

Learning was disrupted for over 8.6 million schoolgoing children in Nepal. For millions of children in vulnerable communities, school closures meant an end to their education and their dreams. Girls are especially at risk of dropping out of school due to the gender norms and role that they play in communities and homes. To facilitate learning in this environment, we quickly pivoted our programs and reached children and families through the channels that are most accessible to low-income communities, including telephone, radio, and text messaging, as well as hard copies of self-learning materials. This year, 263,000 children and families benefited from our distance learning programs across Nepal.

In April, weeks after the nationwide and local lockdowns enforced in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, we created reading development episodes through local community radio stations. In 2020, 592 radio-based

episodes on literacy development and life skills were broadcast through 24 radio stations, reaching 263,000 households in seven districts.

Most children where Room to Read works are first generation learners, which means parents have a tough time helping with learning practice. As children were spending all their time at home, Room to Read recognizes the key role of parents and caregivers in helping children continue to learn. A total of 11,958 calls were made to parents in seven districts to ensure learning continued.

School closures have jeopardized years of progress made in girls' right to education and gender equality as they face unprecedented pressure to drop out of school, marry early and also face possible gender-based violence. We know that when a girl is equipped with essential life skills, they have the power to negotiate their key life decisions—which is much needed during the challenging times through the pandemic. Our local mentors in the communities stayed in close contact with the girls and their families to encourage learning at home and we broadcast 55 life skills episodes through radio stations.

The pandemic brought unprecedented upheaval; but our thanks must go to our supporters and partners who have been with us during these trying times. I would like to thank the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology; Center of Education and Human Resource Development; Education Review Office; Curriculum Development Center; Social Welfare Council; Local Government offices along with the Education Development and Coordination Units; Padnako Lagi Kotha board members and partner NGOs for their partnership and collaboration. My deepest appreciation to our hardworking and dynamic team because of whom we have been able to keep children learning at home and safe from dropping out of school.

We would like to invite you to review our results from 2020 and be assured that our commitment to education is stronger than ever in the coming years.

Pushkar Shrestha
Country Director
Room to Read Nepal

OUR REACH

CUMULATIVE NUMBERS

3.5 Million

Children Benefitted

24,317

Number of teachers trained

9,058

Girls benefited through
Girls' Education Program

658

Secondary school graduates

9,948,849

Books distributed

4,535

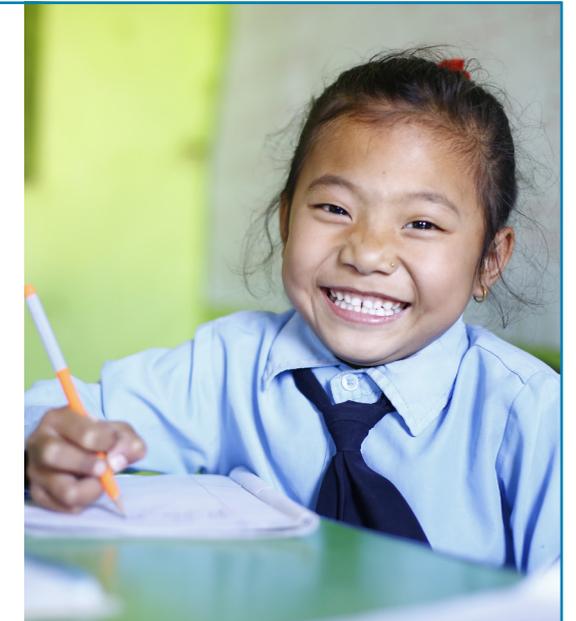
Libraries established

4,399

Active program
participants

3,969

Life-skills sessions
conducted



OUR RESULTS IN 2020

263,00

Households reached through
24 community radio stations

226,845

Total minutes of individual
mentoring sessions to **4,147 girls**

150

Digital books published in
digital library, LiteracyCloud.org

11,958

Households reached through
with hard copy materials

10,231

Total number of text
message to parents

622

Total number of radio
episodes aired



20 YEARS OF PROGRESS IN EDUCATION

Room to Read has its humble origins in Nepal where we began bringing donated books to rural communities. Today, we are a global organization transforming the lives of millions of children in low-income communities around the world by focusing on literacy and gender equality in education.

Education is a great equalizer: children learn they can make a change in their family, their community and the world. Education persists and addresses many of the world's greatest challenges such as disasters, gender inequality and even crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic. As Room to Read celebrates its 20th anniversary, we are committed to literacy and girls' education more than ever before.



1998-2000

Start of Room to Read from Bahundhada in Lamjung District

Room to Read's Founder John Wood (then Director of Business Development for Microsoft) visited a school on his trek through Nepal where he discovered the school which had only a handful of books. The journey of Room to Read began when John in collaboration with Dinesh Shrestha (Co-Founder) returned to Nepal with 3,000 books. Similarly, we began School Construction Program in 2000 with the goal of creating a child-friendly learning environment.

2002

Expanding with Education for Girls

A scholarship program for children was established in which they were supported with tuition, stationery and mentoring. Beginning in 2003, this initiative developed into the Girls' Education Program in order to assist girls stay in school longer and realize their full potential.

2003

First Children's Storybook Published

One of the greatest challenges in getting children to adopt the habit of reading early on is a lack of high quality, age-appropriate children's books in their local language. Room to Read's Literacy Program responded to this need by going into book publication

2006

Expanded Reading Room Project in Collaboration with the Government of Nepal

Three libraries in Bara, Kaski and Nawarparasi Districts were constructed, and 111 libraries were established in government schools across Nepal.

2007

Storybook Writers' Workshop

Room to Read conducted its first ever writers' workshop by partnering with local talent across Nepal, and providing them with professional development workshops on the art and science of creating quality children's books.

2008

Supporting Kamalari Girls in Bardiya

We supported girls who were freed from being Kamalari — bonded laborers — facilitating their schooling and providing them with life skills. 926 girls were guided by local mentors in negotiating major life decisions and completing their secondary education.

2009

Introduced Reading Skills Program

The Reading Skills Program (RS) was developed and executed to improve the basic reading and writing skills in early graders to raise them into an independent reader. It comprised a systematic curriculum design, creation of level-appropriate resources, professional development for teachers, library management, and a frequent monitoring and coaching support system to improve reading skills and habit.

2010

10 Year Anniversary

We celebrated "Year of Tens," marking our ten-year anniversary with the opening of our 10,000th library in Nepal.

2020

Response to COVID-19

In response to the COVID-19-related school closures, we adapted, innovated and created distance learning resources supporting children to continue learning at home.

2017

School Building Construction

Following the earthquake in 2015, sixty schools were constructed as a post-disaster response activity, helping schools and communities to build back better through education, which started in 2016.

2015

Responding to Earthquake Crisis

After Nepal's devastating earthquakes, we started planning to rebuild schools and launched the "Nepal Earthquake Fund." 100,000 copies of children's storybooks and learning packages were distributed, aiming to help children relieve the stress cause by the disaster and its aftermath.

2014

Started Individual Mentoring Sessions

Local mentors provided mentoring sessions to help girls navigate the challenges of adolescence, giving them the ability to make informed decisions.

2012

Creating a Learning Environment

Besides transforming schools into child-friendly learning environments we also built safe and healthy learning spaces through the repair and renovation project in government funded schools in eight districts.



LITERACY PROGRAM

Raising early readers into lifelong learners

Being able to read and write is essential. Written words are gateways to knowledge and opportunity that are only accessible to those with the ability to decipher them. Yet, the National Assessment for Reading and Numeracy (NARN) report shows that only 19% of Grade 3 children are able to meet the national benchmark on reading (ERO, 2021).

Our Literacy Program aims to tackle this challenge and help children become independent readers — not only with reading skills but also with the habit of reading that will serve them throughout their lives. We pioneered a method of encouraging early learning and development, now being implemented by five partners in seven districts to help millions of children succeed in school.

Room to Read has been a global leader for decades in building literacy in early grade children. We lead early grade literacy development programs in government-funded schools through our library intervention and innovative instruction classes that help children to become independent readers. In 2020, we adapted our program to reach millions of children through distance learning methods, most accessible locally.

CONTINUING LEARNING AT HOME

School closures have been a central part of the government's response to contain the spread of the COVID-19 virus. Millions of children (globally as well as here in Nepal) were or are still out of school and while distance learning strategies were and are being implemented, access in Nepal to the most marginalized groups of children remains uncertain. In 2020, Room to Read adapted its program and reached low-income communities with alternative learning programs using a range of modalities including radio, text messaging, phone and physical workbooks. In all, 188,000 households were supported to avoid learning loss in children due to extended school closures.

With more than 90% of students out of internet reach, we provide caregivers, students and teachers with easy learning material. To facilitate the challenges raised due to the COVID-19 pandemic, local government has supported Room to Read to take forward the distance learning program. Room to Read will continue reaching the most vulnerable communities in Nepal to develop their reading and writing skills, providing a foundation to create learners for life.

TOP RESULTS



188,000

Total households reached by radio programs



537

radio episodes broadcasted through 28 community radio stations



38,757

text messages sent with literacy development tips



35,514

children receiving non-digital materials



15,268

phone calls to parents with literacy development tips and creating healthy learning environment.



416

teachers trained on distance learning

“

Prasamsa, 8 years old: When the schools closed to contain the spread of the virus, Prasamsa made sure that she was learning at home and also helped others learn. Prasamsa recorded a read aloud of a children’s storybook every week and broadcast it through Room to Read’s radio-based program supporting thousands of children who did not have access to books to read. “I enjoy reading stories—they sometimes makes me laugh, while other times they help me to learn about the world around me. I started to record stories so that others can have access to these books and enjoy them too.” Prasamsa, at such a young age understands that literacy has the power to help communities grow.

[Watch the video here.](#)



1. Radio Schooling

Identifying the need to address the critical learning gap in children during the pandemic, Room to Read developed a radio-based learning program aired through 24 community radio stations. For those without internet connectivity, radio is still the most commonly available and accessed technology to reach the most vulnerable communities in Nepal. The radio-based learning program broadcast, known as “Radio School”, was developed in Nepali language with contents on early grade learning, literacy development tips, and storytelling for children. The program also supplies caregivers with home-based learning activities they can practice with their child.

[Watch the video here.](#)

2. Development and Distribution of Workbooks

Physical workbooks are the only source of learning for some children during school closure. Room to Read successfully delivered physical workbooks to 11,000 children in seven program districts. The learning resource is designed to help parents and teachers through a simplified teaching model, and with contents that are the most important to build children’s literacy skills. The workbook was created with communities in mind who have limited or no access to the internet at home. It provides them with condensed learning material with curriculum-related exercises.

3. Teachers’ Development and Training

Room to Read provided essential training and innovative distance learning methods to 416 teachers helping them to continue supporting children’s learning. The trained teachers stay in close contact with parents and caregivers with instructions on positive parenting, reading development tips and creating a healthy learning environment.

4. Connecting with Parents through Telephone

Parents and caregivers need to be supported to provide children with a safe and encouraging learning environment, especially during times of uncertainty. Due to school closures, children are spending the majority of their time at home and it is important that parents are provided with essential information on positive parenting and supporting children to continue learning at home. Room to Read’s literacy facilitators stay in constant touch with the parents and caregivers through texts and phone calls, supporting them to engage in literacy activities with their children. These 10-15 minute sessions provide parents with literacy development tips, skills on positive parenting and encourages them to create a healthy learning environment at home.

A follow-up call is also conducted to ensure that the reading activities and study timetable are being practiced. These sessions provide a safe space for

parents to share their challenges related to children’s learning activities and to gather suggestions from the facilitators.

5. Public Service Awareness Messages

Public Service Announcements (PSAs) were created to encourage students to continue learning at home while schools are closed. It was aired to help people cope with the COVID-19 scenario, to stress the necessity of continuing education, and to promote a good learning environment at home. These messages have been broadcast on community radio stations in seven districts, reaching 263,000 people.

6. Digital Library (Literacy Cloud)

Literacy Cloud is Room to Read’s digital library with hundreds of free children’s storybooks in the Nepali language. The Literacy Cloud also hosts audio video storybooks narrated by Room to Read’s literacy facilitators which follow child-friendly story-reading patterns in a lively tone and at a comfortable pace. The released materials help children continue to develop the skill and habit of reading, despite COVID-19 related school closures.

7. New Book Titles Published

Room to Read continues the production of Children’s Books and has created ten new age-appropriate children’s storybooks in the Nepali language. These are carefully designed to develop literacy skills, as well as to foster excitement in children about reading. A workshop was conducted to support writers and illustrators to create child-friendly stories.

COVID-19 Books: As part of the project ‘Children during the time of COVID-19,’ two children’s books in Nepali language — ‘Tiger ko Naya Ghar’ (Tiger’s New Home) by Tanka Chaulagain and ‘Chalk ra Patiko Gau Yatra’ (Chalk and Board’s Village Trip) by Bhabasagar Ghimire — were created. The books narrate and illustrate how the virus has affected our communities and discuss the emotions of people in a way that children can comprehend. The stories touch the nuanced factor of kindness to help children navigate their way in the current world through a benevolent lens.

[Read Tiger’s New Home here.](#)

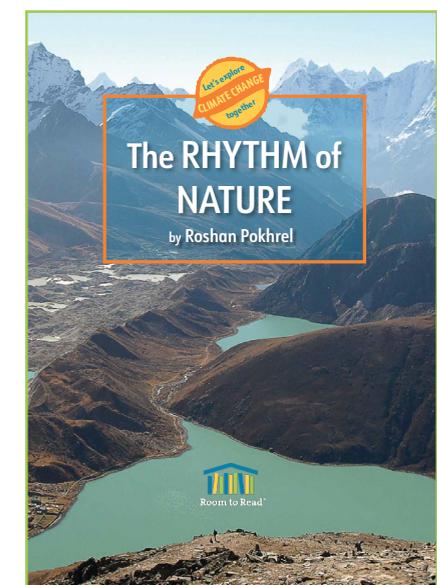
[Read Chalk and Board’s Village Trip here.](#)



Climate Books: We know that education has the power to provide solutions to the world’s most pressing challenges—including climate change. Non-fiction books can be a window into the world we live in, and they can benefit young readers to unlock their curiosity; which could lead to future learning and discoveries.

In 2020, Room to Read published a four climate book collection, one of which, “The Rhythm of Nature,” written by Roshan Pokhrel, introduces the reader to Nepal’s natural ecology and biodiversity. Its goal is to teach children about the value of nature and how climate change affects biodiversity and communities in general. It also explains how to deal with climate change and what individuals can do to promote a sustainable environment.

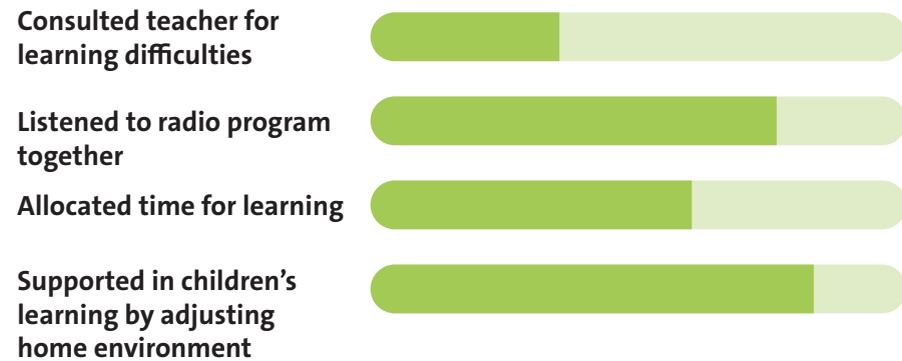
[Read The Rhythm of Nature here.](#)



KEY IMPACT OF PHONE SUPPORT TO PARENTS

A survey was conducted to assess the impact of distance learning initiatives conducted during school closures. It states that 82.1% of parents indicated that their children’s study time improved because of the phone assistance that provided them with instructions on literacy development and a safe learning environment. The survey further found 76.90% parents agreed that they encouraged listening to the radio program to continue learning at home.

Parent’s support to children in education



“
Meet Laxmi, the mother of a student benefited by Room to Read’s Literacy Program. A Room to Read’s literacy facilitator is in contact with Laxmi to support her with reading activity tips and creating a healthy environment for her children to continue learning at home. “My daughter reads stories aloud to me. I cannot read and write but it makes me proud that my daughter can. I might not be able to teach her, but I can stay beside her when she studies and support her in that way.”

STORY FROM THE FIELD

Workbook as a Lifeline to Continue Learning



Shristi, 7, expresses her love for learning: “I enjoyed learning and reading stories in the library with my friends, but now that schools are closed, I have little to do. I miss my friends and my school,” she says, adding “My parents cannot read or write and have a difficult time assisting me with my school lessons,” continues Shristi. Like many children in rural Nepal, Shristi is staying home, as schools have been closed to avoid the spread of the Coronavirus. With the limited support of her family to continue learning, Shristi initially did not enjoy staying at home.

“I wished I could lend a hand with my sister’s studies. She enjoys learning, but I wasn’t able to support her enough due to unavailability of study materials and lack of skills,” shared Salina, Shristi’s elder sister. Salina, a sixth grader, had a hard time assisting her sister in continuing her education at home. “However, when I received the literacy development workbook from Room to Read through the literacy facilitator, I was able to support Shristi’s education. It has easy instruction to navigate the assignments and understand the context.”

The majority of children supported by Room to Read are ‘first-generation’ learners in their family. To address the education gap faced by children, and to support parents and caregivers to continue learning and teaching at home, Room to Read provides self-learning workbooks geared at early

grade children. While children are spending all their time at home due to extended school closures amidst the pandemic, Room to Read recognizes the importance of parents and caregivers in helping children continue learning. In this context, these exercise books are designed to help parents and teachers with a simplified teaching model, and with contents that are the most essential in building children’s reading skills. “The workbook comes with instructions that are easy to understand and follow, hence it is easier for me to guide my sister to complete her assignments,” Salina explains. “We also get regular phone guidance from Room to Read’s team with home learning advice. This helps us understand about a safe learning environment and ways to develop literacy skills.” These initiatives have aided children in continuing their education at home while also inspiring parents and caregivers to provide stimulating and healthy learning opportunities for their children.

To date 11,000 copies of workbooks have been delivered in five districts of Nepal. During school closures, physical workbooks are the only source of learning that some children can rely on. Room to Read is supporting some of the most disadvantaged communities and ensuring that education continues. With these workbooks we have been hope to the doors of children desperate to learn and make a better life for themselves and their families.



GIRLS' EDUCATION PROGRAM

Keeping girls in school so they can reach their potential

The Girls' Education Program intervenes at a time when girls are especially vulnerable to falling behind or dropping out of 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.

Room to Read's Girls' Education Program ensures that girls complete secondary school and have the skills to negotiate key life decisions. Our program reinforces girls' commitment to their own education, works with them to develop essential life-skills and increases support for girls' education among their parents, school staff, and communities. Our trained local mentors work with girls and their families to ensure that they stay in school, participate in activities, and navigate the challenges of adolescence with the ability to make their own life choices, both personally and professionally.

6.1 ENSURING GIRLS ARE SAFE AND LEARNING

In 2020, learning was disrupted for millions of children, particularly in hard to reach communities. In areas where Room to Read works, girls were particularly at risk of dropping out of school due to the gender role that they hold in their families. As families deal with unprecedented financial hardship, many choose to marry their daughters early or have them drop out of school to help with household work. In this context, the risk of intra-family disputes and gender-based violence also increases; negatively impacting girls' self-confidence, wellbeing, and ability to negotiate key life decisions. Thus, the Girls' Education Program pivoted its priorities to keeping girls safe and informed during the pandemic through the most powerful tools available locally, including radio, telephone and mobile messaging.

TOP RESULTS



64

girls' education and life skills-related radio episodes broadcast



152,000

households reached via radio programs with life skills related episodes



28,132

household reached with awareness-generating text messages



30,412

sessions of individual mentoring conducted



4,147

girls received virtual mentoring



7,603

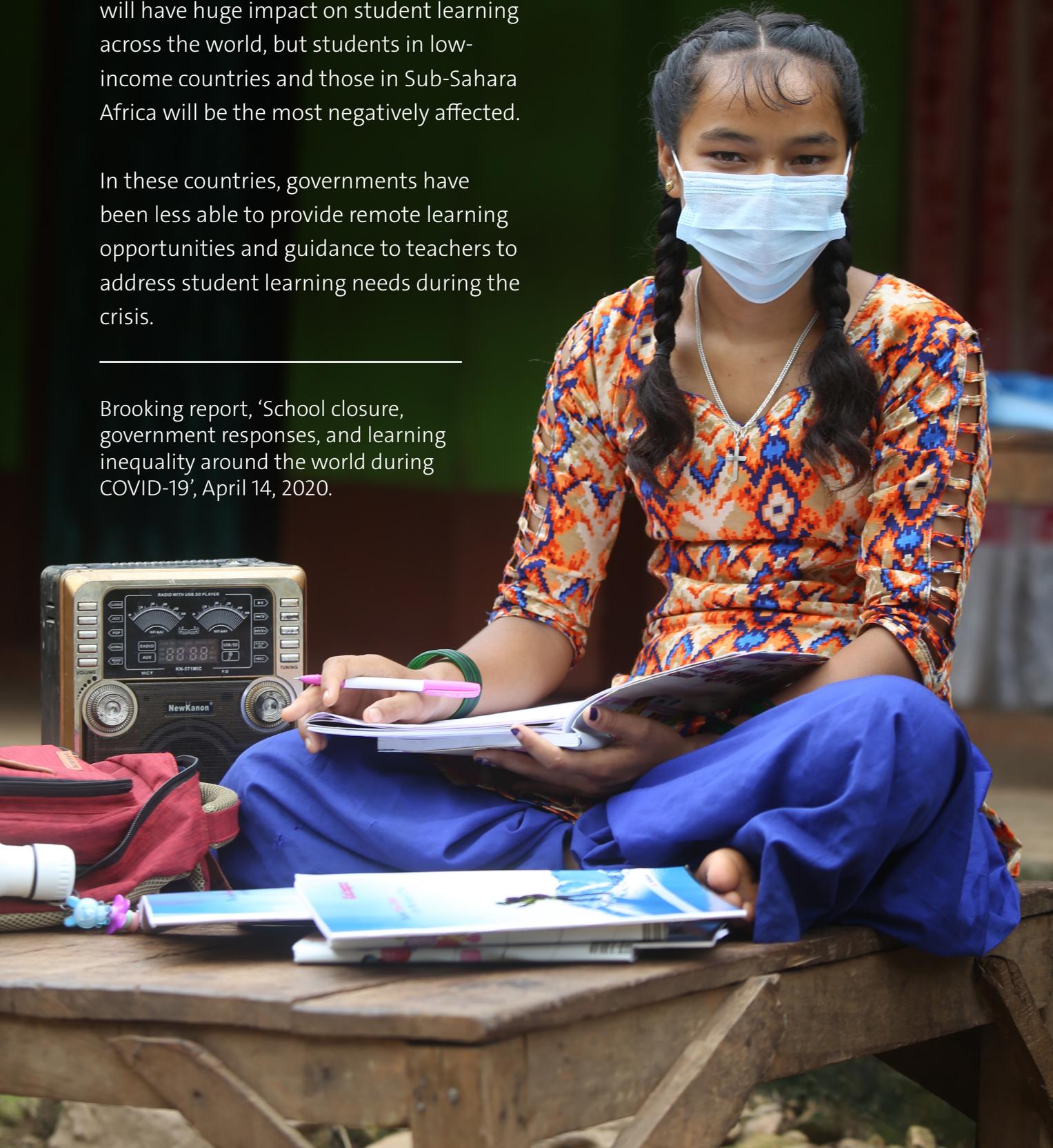
hours of mentoring conducted by social mobilizers

“

Data suggest that the COVID-19 pandemic will have huge impact on student learning across the world, but students in low-income countries and those in Sub-Saharan Africa will be the most negatively affected.

In these countries, governments have been less able to provide remote learning opportunities and guidance to teachers to address student learning needs during the crisis.

Brooking report, ‘School closure, government responses, and learning inequality around the world during COVID-19’, April 14, 2020.



“

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to the closure of educational institutions around the world and has turned many fathers like Fatta Bahadur into a teacher and a mentor. Fatta Bahadur helps his daughter in her studies and makes sure that she is continuing her learning at home. “Sparing a few hours of time for my daughter’s education is the best investment that I can make.”

6.1.1 Radio Programs to Keep Girls Informed on the Most Important Life Skills

Our essential life skill sessions through radio provided girls with skill sets inspiring them to continue learning at home. A range of learning development episodes were broadcast in collaboration with the local government and community radio stations. The radio episodes were curated by our local mentors with technical assistance from Girls’ Education Program experts with information to help cope with difficult situations that arose due to the pandemic. Through educational radio sessions, children from more than 152,000 households with limited internet access were able to continue their studies.

• Alumnae Storytelling

Role models have long been shown to increase girls’ aspirations for their own life. Our Girls’ Education Program alumnae stories were shared through various community radio stations focusing on the value of education and how our alumnae turned their challenges into strengths. It aimed to ensure that young girls are inspired listening to these real life stories and are encouraged to return to school once it resumes. The first 10 minutes of the 30-minute program is dedicated to the challenges that our alumnae had to face in the pursuit of their dreams and how education has acted as a backbone to their success in life. The remaining 20 minutes are dedicated to hearing from social mobilizers and

parents, as well as answering direct questions from our Girls’ Education Program participants.

• Stories of Successful Women

Because storytelling is a powerful tool for inspiring and encouraging behavioral change, the program invited prominent women from different walks of life to share their own stories of adversity and how education helped them achieve their full potential. The guests come from many fields, making it relatable and relevant to a wide range of people.

• Life-Skills Program

Our radio series “Shiksha Didi Sita Life-Skills” is an edutainment based educational radio program that teaches essential life-skills. It aims to build the capacity of girls that will help them to negotiate key life decisions, communicate with confidence, and persevere through obstacles. These skills are more important than ever during extended school closures when girls risk dropping out of school.

The main character “Shiksha didi” (which literally translates to “education sister”) represents our social mobilizers who support girls to learn about the importance of education and life-skills needed to make informed decisions and be confident. The learning content is presented in the form of a radio drama where our main character helps to solve unique challenges that girls’ face in their adolescent life. The idea is to make the subject matter relevant and interesting at the same time. It also has a section where the audience can send in their learnings and thoughts.

6.1.2 Remote Individual Mentoring through Phone (RIM)

Throughout the pandemic, girls are less likely than boys to participate in remote lessons and return to schools when they reopen. Our social mobilizers provided individual mentorship over the phone to 4,147 GEPPs (Girls' Education Program Participants). Through a 15-minute mentoring session we provided girls with emotional support during the crisis and encouragement to continue their academic study at home. These gatherings also provide a safe space for girls to discuss any issues they may be having, as well as to connect with parents to assist them in creating a positive learning environment at home.

6.1.3 Support Girls with Relief Materials

Room to Read, with support from the Lions Club and in partnership with local government, distributed relief packages in Banke, Bardiya and Tanahun to children at risk of dropping out of school. These relief packages make sure that the burden of food and financial difficulty is alleviated from the family so that girls can concentrate on their studies and continue learning at home.



6.1.4 Identifying and Supporting Girls Most at Risk

Local mentors under the Girls' Education Program ensure that they are meeting frequently with the participants who are identified as "at risk". This risk is determined using Room to Read's 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 updated this tool to reflect the risk factors that are associated with this educational crisis and identify girls who need more intensive support leading up to schools' reopening.

6.1.5 Engaging Parents to Support a Healthy Learning Environment for Young Girls

To set up a clear and consistent communication mechanism with parents, thus encouraging them to get involved and support the learning of girls at home, a minimum of one SMS was sent out. These messages contained essential information on the COVID-19 situation, tips on a healthy home learning environment, and on coping with stress, along with information against child marriage and gender-based violence.



Like many children in rural Nepal, Sapana faced a daily struggle to receive an education. Today she is a nurse helping to save lives in her community during the pandemic. "My parents insisted that I leave my job as a nurse because they were afraid of the pandemic. After a long discussion with them I was able to finally calm them down. I love my work, and this is why I studied so hard: so that I can be of help to others."

– Sapana, Girls' Education Program Alumina

[Watch the video here.](#)

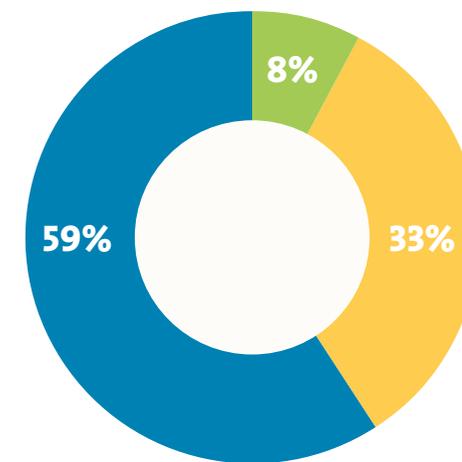


"It could be monotonous studying from home without my friends around but, thanks to the radio program, I am able to learn in an enjoyable manner. I like listening to life skills-related dramas, and I've recently learnt a lot about anger management and leadership skills."

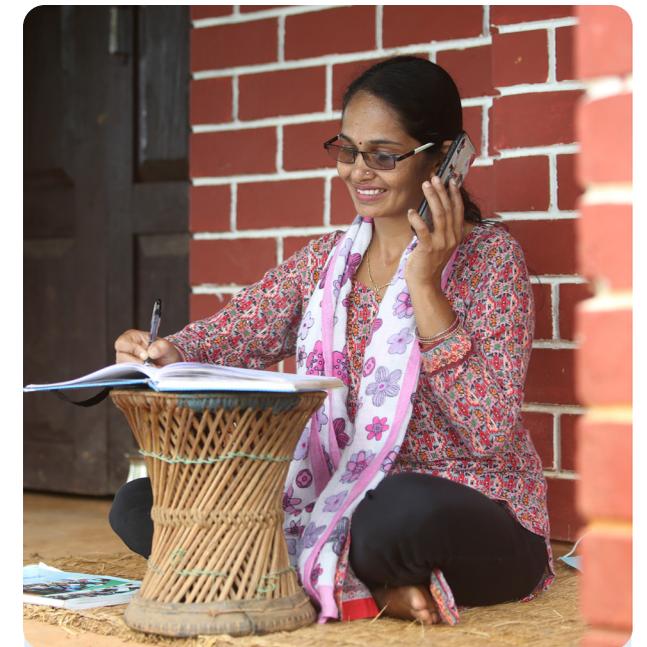
- Pramila, Girls' Education Program

6.2 KEY FINDINGS

Participants enrolled in the Girls' Education Program receive remote mentoring from social mobilizers who help them deal with the difficulties arising during the COVID-19 pandemic. The local mentors assist in addressing everyday issues by providing them a safe space to share these problems and provide consultation to make informed decisions. Out of 353 girls surveyed, 92% stated that the remote mentoring was able to solve their problem.



■ Unsolved
 ■ Completely Solved
 ■ Partially Solved



Susma, Girls' Education Program's Social Mobilizer conducting an individual mentoring session from home.

CALENDAR OF THE YEAR 2020

FEBRUARY



Writers' Workshop

A professional development workshop was organized for 20 authors and illustrators on the art and science of creating quality children's books. From these partnerships, a diverse range of storybooks were designed to engage early readers and instill the habit of reading in children.

AUGUST



Best Reader in Nepal

Sugisma Kadel, one of the students benefiting from Room to Read's Literacy Program was awarded the title of "Best Reader in Nepal 2021" by the Ministry of Education, Science, and Information Technology on the 16th Library Day. Sugisma was awarded for her reading skills, such as individual reading and reading aloud.

[Read More.](#)

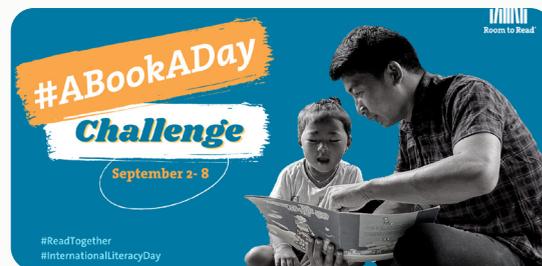
JULY



Integrated Curriculum Workshop in Nuwakot and Syangja

A five-day teacher training workshop was held in Nuwakot, Tanahun, Palpa, Syangja and Salyan to assist the government implement the integrated curriculum system. In partnership with the local government, over 300 teachers were introduced to the new curriculum and teaching guidelines provided by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST).

SEPTEMBER



International Literacy Day

A literacy campaign, #ReadTogether, was launched with the aim to encourage parents and elders to read together with their children at home. The idea was introduced in communities across seven districts in Nepal where families pledge reading time for children at home.

OCTOBER



International Girl Child Day

To amplify the need of girls' education, a "Girls' Education Matters" campaign was organized for three consecutive weeks. Adolescent girls from Nuwakot, Banke, Bardiya and Tanahun expressed, through various artistic forms, their right to education and the need for gender equality.

DECEMBER



Marking 20 Years of Room to Read

Room to Read (RtR) celebrates our 20th anniversary from our establishment in Bahundanda village of Lamjung District to reaching 20 million children worldwide. Room to Read, together with the Social Welfare Council (SWC), Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST), Center for Education and Human Resource Development (CEHRD), Curriculum Development Center (CDC), and partner NGOs, commemorated the day through a virtual medium, by expressing our hopes and plans for quality education in Nepal. (From left to right): (Founders) John Wood, Erin Ganju and Dinesh Shrestha also spoke about the RtR's history and future plans.

DECEMBER



Children's Storybook Panel Discussion

In partnership with the Nepalese Society of Children's Literature (NESCHIL) a panel discussion was held on the importance of storybooks for the overall development of children. It provided a platform for policymakers and experts to share the children's literature scene in Nepal and work together to strengthen the literature environment.

DECEMBER



Virtual Slam Poetry

In collaboration with poets and artists from Word Warriors, a series of slam poetry was produced on #GirlsEducationMatters addressing the stigma and challenges threatening girls' right to education. The poems were shared with families and communities in Room to Read's program districts to emphasize the importance of girls' education.

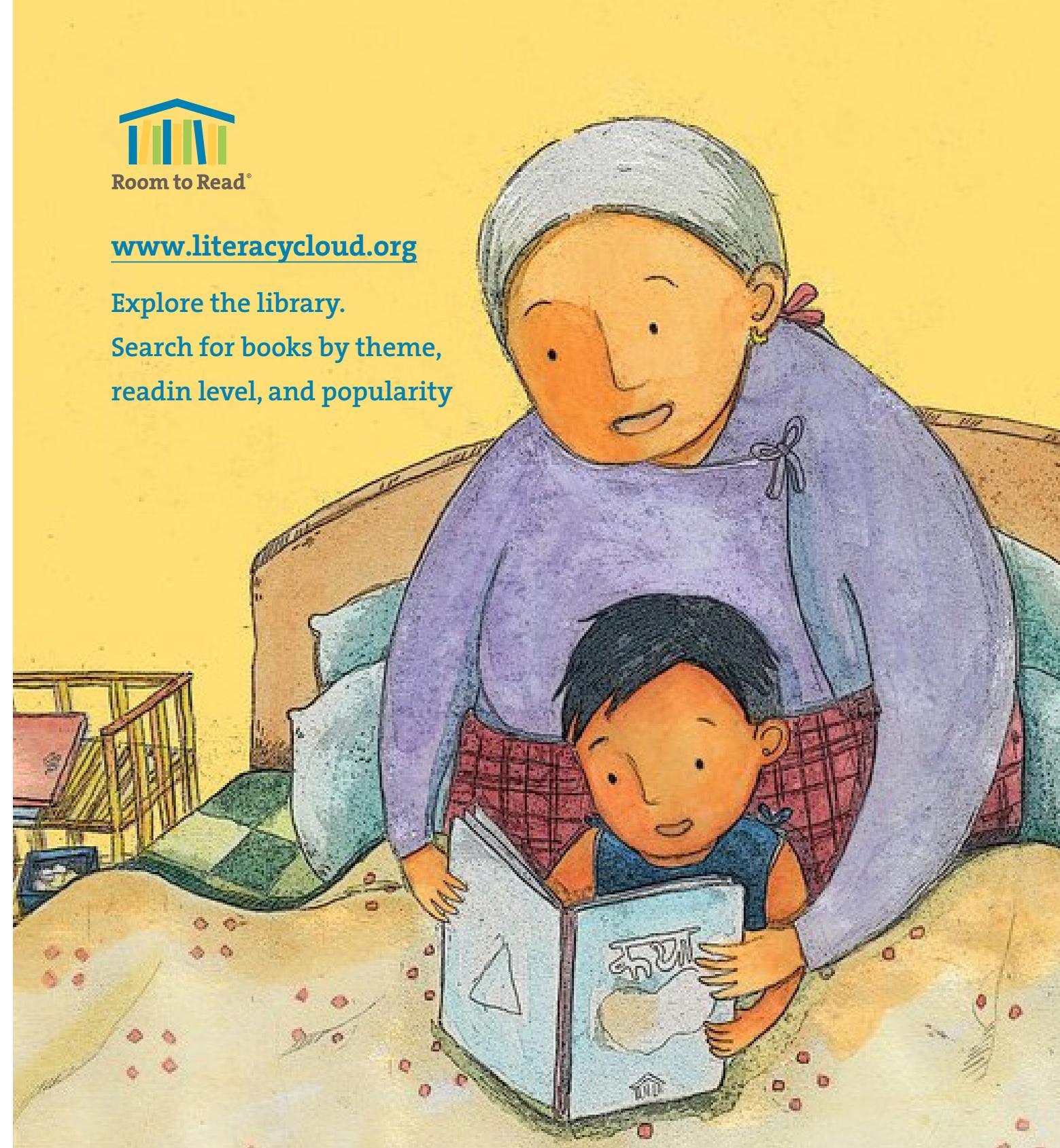
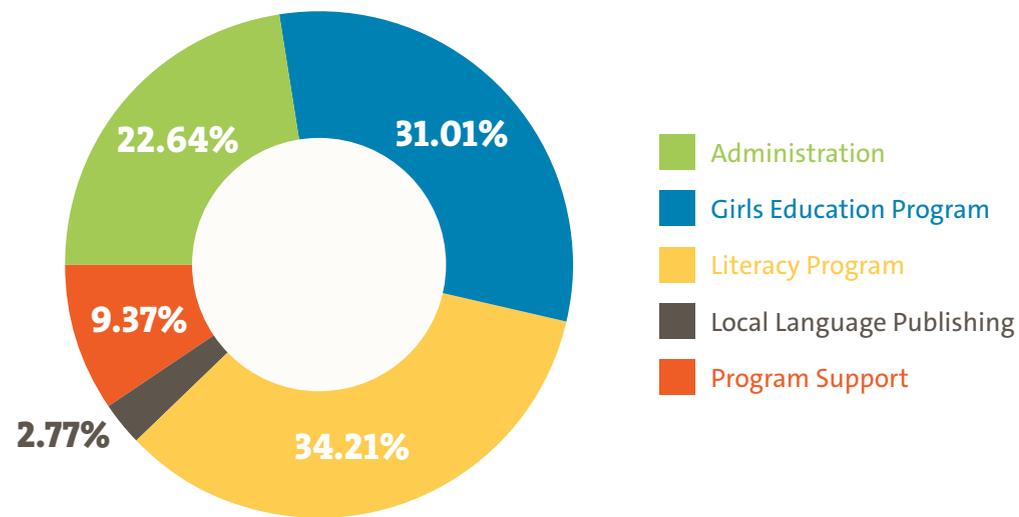
FINANCIALS

We care about transparency.

Room to Read is known to be one of the most effective and fiscally responsible organizations in global education. Our commitment is to full transparency, combined with consistent monitoring of our impact, to achieving measurable results. For the children we serve, our program is changing their lives so they can reshape their own future, and that of their communities and nations.

DEPARTMENT	EXPENSES IN NPR	% OF TOTAL EXPENSES
Girls' Education Program	63,071,540	31.01%
Literacy Program	69,589,173	34.21%
Local Language Publishing	5,639,475	2.77%
Program Support	19,064,381	9.37%
Administration	46,054,467	22.64%
Total	203,419,036	100%

Expenses in NPR.



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