

# Our Work in Nepal

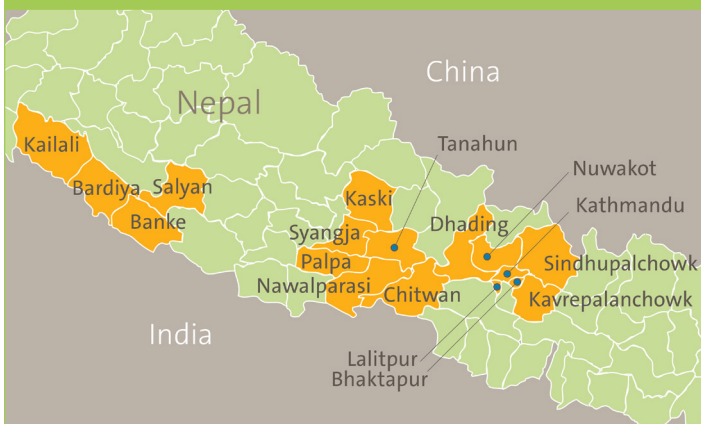


In Nepal, books are unaffordable for most families who live on less than

**\$2** a day.



## Our Presence in Nepal



## Country Information

Population	28 million
Land area	147,000 km <sup>2</sup>
Languages of instruction	Nepali & English
Launch of operations	1998
Room to Read offices	Kathmandu, Butwal, Pokhara & Gulariya

## Country Overview

Nepal is a small, landlocked country known for having many of the highest mountains in the world. The country faces many challenges due to recent political instability, natural disasters, the remote nature of many of its populated areas, and widespread poverty.

The very mountains that give Nepal its grandeur make building sustainable infrastructure a slow and arduous process. Most of the country's population lives in rural areas, including the rocky plains and valleys that sit in the shadows of the towering Himalayas and the remote southern flatlands of the Tarai. As a result of the challenging terrain, these areas often lack phones, roads, clean water, and schools.

Nepal's economy is almost completely dependent on agrarian sustenance farming and tourism. Although people from around the world come to visit the country's majestic mountains, tourism has slowed in the last 15 years due to political unrest. This has had a significant impact on the country's economy. Today, nearly half of all Nepalese people live in poverty on less than \$2 a day.



## History and Results

Nepal was our very first country of operation starting in 1998, when Room to Read Founder, John Wood, delivered his first books to a school high in the Himalayas. The organization was then known as Books for Nepal. Although our name has changed and we have grown immensely, we continue to see much success and innovation in our programs in Nepal today.

Today, both our holistic Literacy Program and our Girls' Education Program are thriving throughout the Himalayan region and the Tarai flatlands. We continue to be a catalyst for change in the educational landscape in Nepal by transforming the lives of children across the country.

Room to Read Nepal collaborates both with the Government of Nepal and the local communities within which we work. We also work closely with the Department of Education and local district education offices, engaging in discussions around education strategy at multiple levels of government.

Immediately after the 2015 earthquakes, we joined forces with the Government of Nepal to lead recovery efforts around education. We are investing \$5,000,000 to execute reconstruction efforts in 700 classrooms across 62 schools, restore damaged libraries, and implement our Girls' Education and Literacy Programs. Through this effort we hope to get the students of Nepal back in school and provide them with earthquake-safe buildings and exceptional learning materials that will last for years.

## Educational Landscape

Nepal's education system has seen great improvements in the past few decades, but there is still much more work to be done. Almost half of the country's adults are illiterate and 39.6 percent of students drop out before graduating from primary school.

Although the government provides free primary education, many schools continue to be underfunded, overcrowded, and in poor condition—especially in rural areas. The government funding covers teachers' salaries, but village families are expected to bear all other costs. Given the immense poverty within the country, this means that most schools lack libraries, books, and other learning materials.

In addition to these deterrents, many students face other obstacles to education at home. Roughly a third of the population ages 5 to 14 are engaged in child labor, keeping them out of the school system altogether. Girls are at a much higher risk of dropping out due to cultural bias, a lack of educational opportunities and resources, and pressures to marry early. Roughly 4 in 10 girls are married before they turn 18. Overall, girls are 22 percent less likely to be literate than their male counterparts. Enrollment rates for girls have been on the rise in recent years and great progress has been made towards gender equality in education.

The devastating earthquakes that hit Nepal in 2015 wreaked havoc on the country's fragile infrastructure and had a major impact on the education system. These events affected 52 percent of Nepal's districts, damaging or destroying 47 thousand classrooms and leaving over one million students without a place to learn.

### 2018 Nepal Targets

<b>Literacy Program</b>	
Schools supported	368
Projected children benefited	90,540
New local language titles	10
Reprinted local language titles	10
<b>Girls' Education Program</b>	
Projected new participants	580
Projected total participants	4,460



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