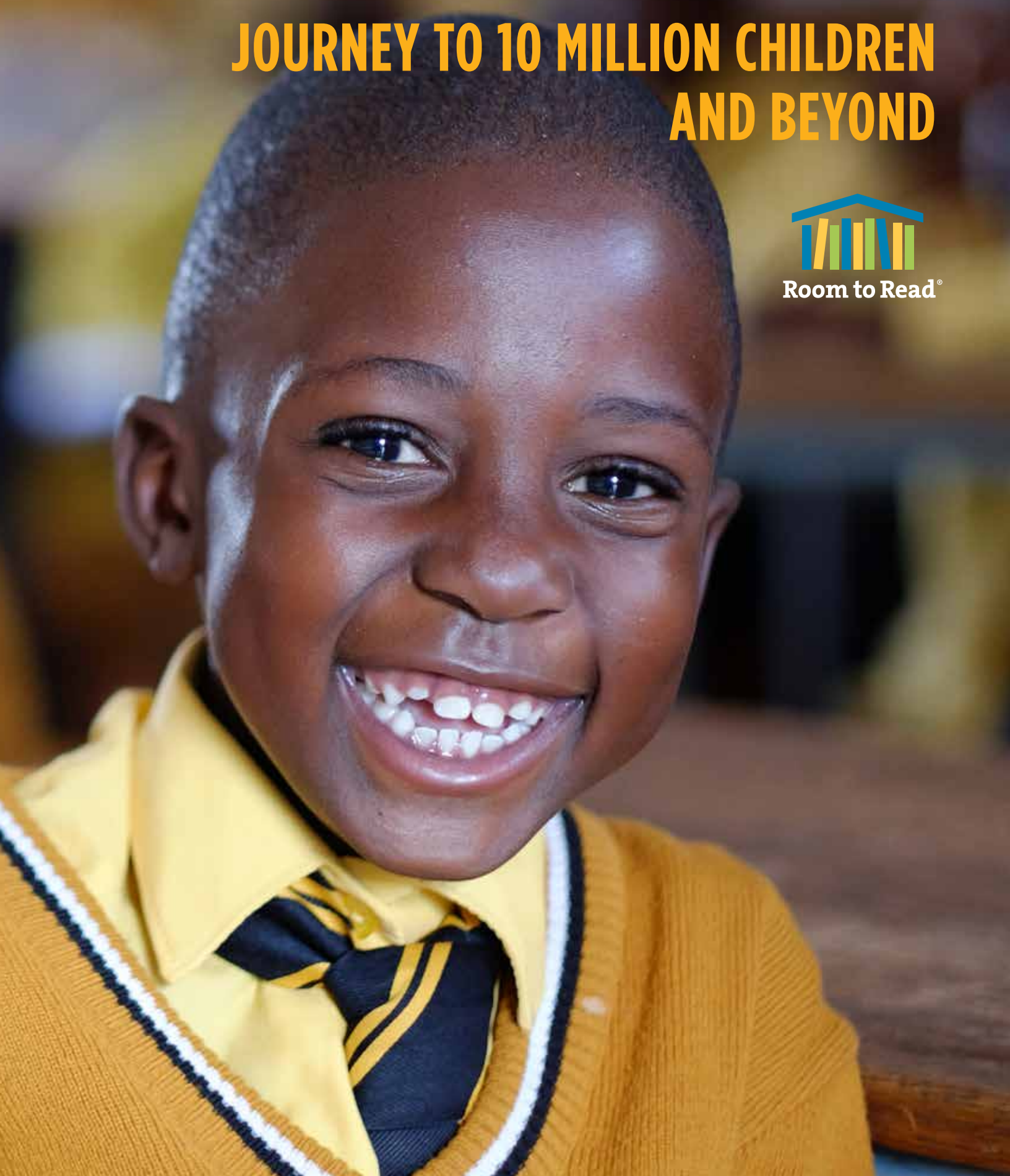


Room to Read **Annual Report 2015**

JOURNEY TO 10 MILLION CHILDREN AND BEYOND



Room to Read®





Dear Friends,

Last year, a student from Room to Read's Girls' Education Program in Cambodia said confidently to our leadership team that, to her, "education was like oxygen." My work with Room to Read

has proven just how true that statement is — how when you nourish and encourage children's desires to learn, they are less passive and instead actively seek brighter futures. Quality education is fundamental to how children determine their paths ahead, but unfortunately, far too many students around the world are denied even a basic education. This crucial need for quality education launched Room to Read on our journey toward world change 16 years ago, and the ongoing need is what keeps us working tirelessly to bring Literacy and Girls' Education Programs to thousands of communities each year.

We have now supported more than 10 million children to pursue their dreams through education. That's 10 million individual lives changed — happy, joyful readers exploring the world of books, and self-assured, courageous girls knocking down doors and breaking through glass ceilings. Look beyond these 10 million children and you'll find further ripple effects of our work. You'll find improvements in wider education systems, like in Vietnam, where we have trained teachers beyond the Room to Read network on how to effectively mentor girls in secondary school. Or in Nepal, where our literacy materials are being used as the basis for the country's new Grade 1 and 2 literacy curriculum. You'll also find an upswing of community support for children's education, as parents witness their children forging new paths and reaching new heights.

While we are proud of everything we've accomplished to date, we are striving for so much more. There are still 250 million young children — 40 percent of the primary-school-age population globally — who cannot read or write. To expand our capacity and reach these children more rapidly, we are investing in technology systems that significantly improve our operational efficiency, and we are diversifying our revenue streams to ensure the scale and longevity of our work. We are also creating standardized program modules, drawn from the learnings of our teams around the world, so our field staff can deliver programs effectively and cost-efficiently. We have launched a new technical assistance arm, Room to Read Accelerator, to leverage these modules and support partners to adapt our programs for the underserved populations that we have yet to reach (see more about Accelerator on page 25).

As we continue on our journey beyond 10 million children and set our sights on new achievements, you have my promise that we will work hard every day to scale our impact in the best manner we can. Education is an essential need — just like oxygen. So we are committed to reaching at least five million additional children by 2020 directly through our programs while also training others to reach more. Together, we are driving closer to a world in which all children have the educational opportunities they need to thrive.

Room to Read has been able to set and exceed ambitious goals due to the generosity and partnership of our supporters around the world. For that, I will be forever grateful. I am humbled by the passion and dedication that you bring to our cause. I sincerely thank you for your transformative investments in changing the world through education.

Warmly,

Erin Ganju

Co-Founder and CEO

Room to Read seeks to transform the lives of millions of children in developing countries by focusing on literacy and gender equality in education. Working in collaboration with local communities, partner organizations and governments, we develop literacy skills and a habit of reading among primary school children, and support girls to complete secondary school with the relevant life skills to succeed in school and beyond.



Dear Friends,

I joined Room to Read’s board in 2008 because I had the opportunity and obligation to help children who did not have the same chances to succeed that I was fortunate to have been given. My

parents instilled in me a love of learning, and I benefited from the teachers and educational institutions that helped me further my knowledge and make informed life choices. Now, as a parent of four children, three of them girls, I also know I cannot take for granted that young girls will have a fair shot at their chosen futures. I believe that all children, both girls and boys, deserve the same chances at success that I had, the same opportunities to invest in themselves and the world around them.

While I was initially drawn to Room to Read’s commitment to global education, my respect for the organization has greatly deepened over the last eight years. I have been enriched through learning about our programs and our passionate people — the staff, volunteers, supporters and partners who form our worldwide network. I am proud of the tremendous impact we’ve had — the 10 million children we’ve reached — and I am now honored to take on a new leadership role as Board Chair for this world-changing team.

During my chairmanship, we are focused on reaching an average of one million additional children every year. This type of growth ensures that governments take notice and recognize that high-quality programs can be delivered cost-effectively and at scale. In order to meet our goals, we need to aggressively take on the next set of challenges to further hone our core business operations and continue to maximize efficiency and effectiveness. We need to seek new, transformational opportunities that will allow us to rapidly grow our impact and meet the world’s immense educational need. I’m excited to build on the strategic direction we have adopted and propel us toward eradicating illiteracy in our lifetime!

Having built my career seeking the best investment opportunities, I am convinced that educating children is the single most promising investment we can make in the world’s future. This conclusion was never more obvious to me than during my recent trip to experience Room to Read’s work in Cambodia. All of the children I met could demonstrate the impact of the quality education they were receiving. Whether they were reading to learn about the world around them or articulating their life plans, all were clearly deserving of our support.

I am so very grateful to help lead such an energized, passionate network, and I thank you for all that you have done to get us this far. I also know we have a lot of work left to do, so I hope you will continue to join me on our ambitious journey to educate the world’s children.

Scott Kapnick
Board Chair

TABLE OF CONTENTS

REACHING 10 MILLION	3	GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT	27
Literacy Program	5	ORGANIZATIONAL FUNDERS	29
Girls’ Education Program	7	FINANCIALS	31
Earthquake Recovery Efforts in Nepal	9	BOARDS & STAFF	33
BEYOND 10 MILLION	11		
Building Lifelong Readers, at Scale	13		
Empowering Generations of Girls	19		
Beyond Direct Implementation:	25		
Room to Read Accelerator			

REACHING 10 MILLION



Last year marked a significant milestone for Room to Read: we reached our 10 millionth child through our Literacy and Girls' Education Programs — five years ahead of our goal! When it comes to a child's education, every year counts, and we work diligently to bring students across Asia and Africa transformational educational opportunities as rapidly as we can. By partnering with local communities, vigorously monitoring and evaluating our impact, and seeking ongoing program improvements, we strive to ensure that the students we reach are learning and thriving.





LITERACY PROGRAM



Literacy is foundational for a child's education and participation in a global society. By addressing gaps in local literacy curricula and educational resources, our Literacy Program supports students to become independent readers who enjoy reading regularly — setting the stage for future educational success.

LITERACY PROGRAM RESULTS

CHILDREN BENEFITED



885K

New in 2015

10.7M

Cumulative

PROGRAM SCHOOLS



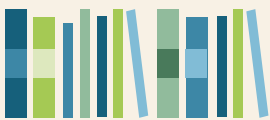
1,127

New in 2015

18,699

Cumulative

BOOKS PUBLISHED



137

New in 2015

1,295

Cumulative

BOOKS DELIVERED

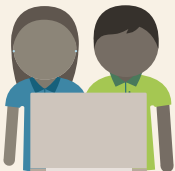


2.5M

New in 2015

18M

Cumulative



8,962

TEACHERS AND LIBRARIANS
TRAINED IN 2015



2,313

AVG. # OF BOOKS CHECKED
OUT PER SCHOOL IN 2015

OUR IMPACT ON STUDENTS' READING SKILLS

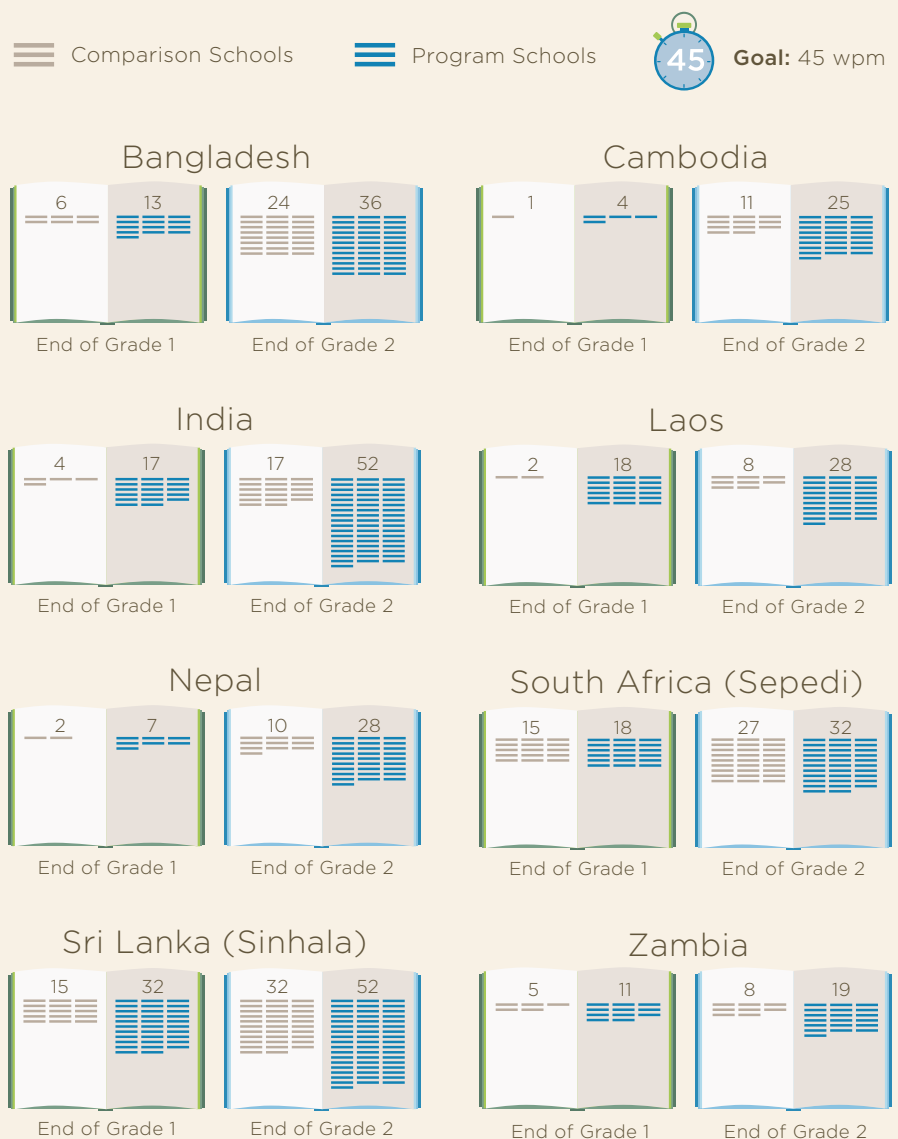
To track our impact on children's literacy, we conduct reading skills assessments that measure the reading fluency of students in our program. In 2015, this included an evaluation in Sri Lanka, where we introduced the second year of our new Sinhala-language Literacy Program. We evaluated students' reading skills at the end of the school year and found that children in our program could read 51 words per minute — 20 words more than students in similar

non-program schools. Over the course of our two-year literacy intervention, the reading-comprehension gains of children in our program were also 1.4 times greater than those made by students in comparison schools. These results indicate that our Literacy Program is having a large, positive impact on reading skills, and they validate our approach to providing reading materials and comprehensive professional development for teachers on literacy instruction.

Average Words Read per Minute by Students

We have tested more than 20,000 children as part of our reading skills evaluations. Across diverse contexts, these evaluations demonstrate that children in our Literacy Program schools read more fluently than children in nearby comparison schools.

These successes are remarkable when compared with similarly focused education interventions around the world. In a recent review of 75 evaluations of teacher-training programs in low-income countries, only two interventions were found to produce a moderate or large effect of the kind seen in nearly all Room to Read evaluations. Our results therefore demonstrate that overall our program is making an impact in challenging environments where success has often been elusive.



GIRLS' EDUCATION PROGRAM



The greatest gender inequalities in education tend to occur during secondary school. This is why our Girls' Education Program supports girls throughout their secondary education to ensure that they graduate with the necessary skills to make informed, independent decisions about how to lead their lives.

GIRLS' EDUCATION PROGRAM RESULTS

PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS



29,834

2015

38,750

Cumulative

85%

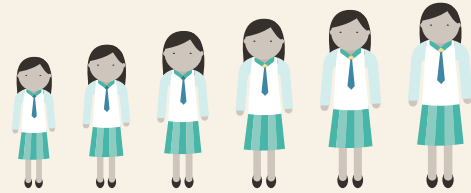
OF PARTICIPANTS ATTENDED LIFE SKILLS TRAINING IN 2015



*Does not include data from Grade 12 and 13 students in Sri Lanka, which is pending due to the timing of the school year.

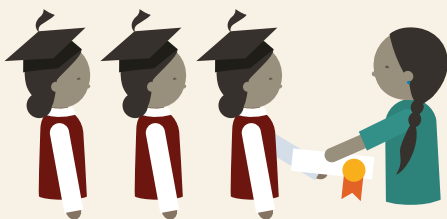
95%

OF PARTICIPANTS WHO REMAINED IN SCHOOL IN 2015 ADVANCED TO THE NEXT GRADE



*Does not include data from Grade 12 and 13 students in Sri Lanka, which is pending due to the timing of the school year.

PARTICIPANTS WHO GRADUATED SECONDARY SCHOOL



726

2015

2,362

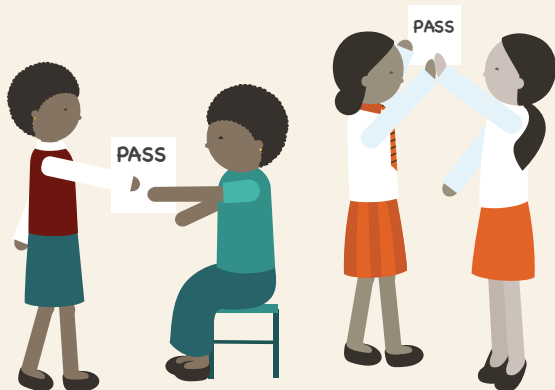
Cumulative

GETTING TO GRADUATION: FOCUS ON NATIONAL EXAMS

In order to graduate from secondary school, girls in many of our program countries need to pass challenging national exams. Completing these tests represents a huge achievement in the communities where we work, as girls in our program are often the first in their families to take the exams.

Our staff are dedicated to preparing girls for these gatekeeping exams as they open the door to new possibilities, including pursuing a university education. Throughout our program, girls are encouraged to engage in their studies, and some participants receive individualized support if their grades or attendance begin to drop. In 2015, this work paid off as hundreds of girls celebrated passing their exams!

- In Bangladesh, 94 percent of girls in our program passed their final school exams — surpassing the national pass rate of 87 percent.
- In Sri Lanka, 74 percent of girls in our program passed the highly competitive advanced level exam that qualifies them for application to universities — far exceeding the national pass rate of 61 percent.
- In Vietnam, 94 percent of girls in our program passed the national exam. More than half of those girls went on to pursue a tertiary education.



WHERE ARE OUR GRADUATES NOW?

In 2015, we surveyed recent graduates to see what they are doing post-graduation. Whether it be tertiary education, a career or deciding to start a family, we are thrilled to see our alumnae following paths of their own choosing.



NEITHER: 10%
*Reflects data from 90% of 2014 program graduates.

STRENGTHENING OUR PROGRAM: RISK ASSESSMENT PILOT

Each girl in our program has a unique journey and set of educational challenges. To identify the girls most at risk of dropping out of school and to provide them with extra support, we developed an early warning system, which we piloted in Tanzania in 2015. Through the pilot, our staff tracked a set of four risk factors among our program participants: missing school, failing an exam, missing life skills sessions and parents missing family meetings.

The results were striking: Girls who showed one or more of these risk factors were more than four times as likely to drop out of school as those who showed none. Parent meeting attendance and school attendance were especially predictive of a girl's dropout risk.

Being able to predict which girls are most likely to drop out raises our ability to intervene earlier with targeted support. Findings from the pilot in Tanzania are now informing the development of a global risk-tracking system, which we will roll out worldwide in 2016.

EARTHQUAKE RECOVERY EFFORTS IN NEPAL



Since 2000, we've built or repaired more than 1,100 school buildings and established 3,800 libraries in Nepal, benefiting nearly 2.7 million children. After the 2015 earthquakes, we moved quickly to partner with the Nepal government and lead recovery efforts for the decimated education sector.



SPECIAL MESSAGE

from John Wood



Nepal is the country of Room to Read's birth, and the Nepalese people have been close to my heart for the past 16 years.

Like so many of our supporters, I was saddened beyond description at the devastation of the earthquakes and immediately wondered what I could do to help. As usual, our team was one step ahead of me. Within 24 hours we had launched the Nepal Education Fund and begun outreach efforts to ensure that the country's students would be able to return to school safely.

Our global team moved rapidly on two parallel tracks. In Nepal, we hired professional psychologists to train our staff in psychosocial support techniques so we could better serve teachers and children who were emotionally affected by the event. In the months after the earthquake, we also distributed nearly 500,000 Room to Read-published books to temporary learning centers throughout Nepal so children could continue practicing their reading skills. Simultaneously, our worldwide development teams, volunteers, boards and chapters leapt into action to raise funds for rebuilding and repairing classrooms and libraries.

In July 2015, I had the honor of visiting the affected communities and rallying support to meet their needs. While witnessing the damage firsthand was heartbreaking, my interactions with our students, staff and partners reminded me of the resilience of the Nepalese people and their unwavering belief in the power of education to move the nation forward.

One particular memory that stuck with me was my visit with a group of students from our Girls' Education Program in Sankhu, a district in the distant outskirts of Kathmandu Valley. Although the girls had lost their homes, they eagerly showed up for school every day. As each girl told me her story, there was little focus on the recent destruction. They instead talked about their dreams: to attend university, to study abroad, to be a nurse. The girls awed me with their ability to look past the challenges presented by the recent natural disaster — along with the normal challenges of adolescence — and focus on moving toward a brighter future.

I repeatedly encountered this sense of optimism throughout my trip. Amid the tragedy, there was hope and passionate dedication to rebuilding the country as well. Inspired by this, I left Nepal energized and more committed than ever to doing what Room to Read does best: getting children the quality education they deserve.

Thankfully, our global network came together and raised significant support for Nepal. As a result, we will be reconstructing more than 700 classrooms in 62 earthquake-damaged schools in the heavily impacted districts of Nuwakot and Dhading. Our teams have completed all preconstruction activities for this work — including hiring project engineers, determining construction plans and costs, and requesting government approval for school designs — and construction has already begun at some of the schools. We also held community orientation meetings to ensure that communities are informed and engaged from the very beginning of the construction process.

We are grateful that our global network continues to stand in solidarity with Nepal. As we have since day one of Room to Read's existence, we are committed to helping the nation's children to embrace a better future through the lifelong gift of education and literacy.

With warmest regards,

John Wood
Founder, Room to Read

BEYOND 10 MILLION



Since our founding in 2000, Room to Read has developed effective, research-based and globally adaptable approaches to improving early grade literacy learning and gender equality in education. We are extremely proud of the significant impact our Literacy and Girls' Education Programs have had during this time, but we know there are millions more children who need our help. To reach these children with quality programs as quickly as possible, we work with communities, partner organizations and governments to share our learnings and exponentially scale our impact, far beyond our program schools.

A F R I C A

Zambia



Tanzania



South Africa



India



Nepal



Laos



Vietnam



Cambodia



Sri Lanka



Bangladesh



Grenada

Room to Read Accelerator

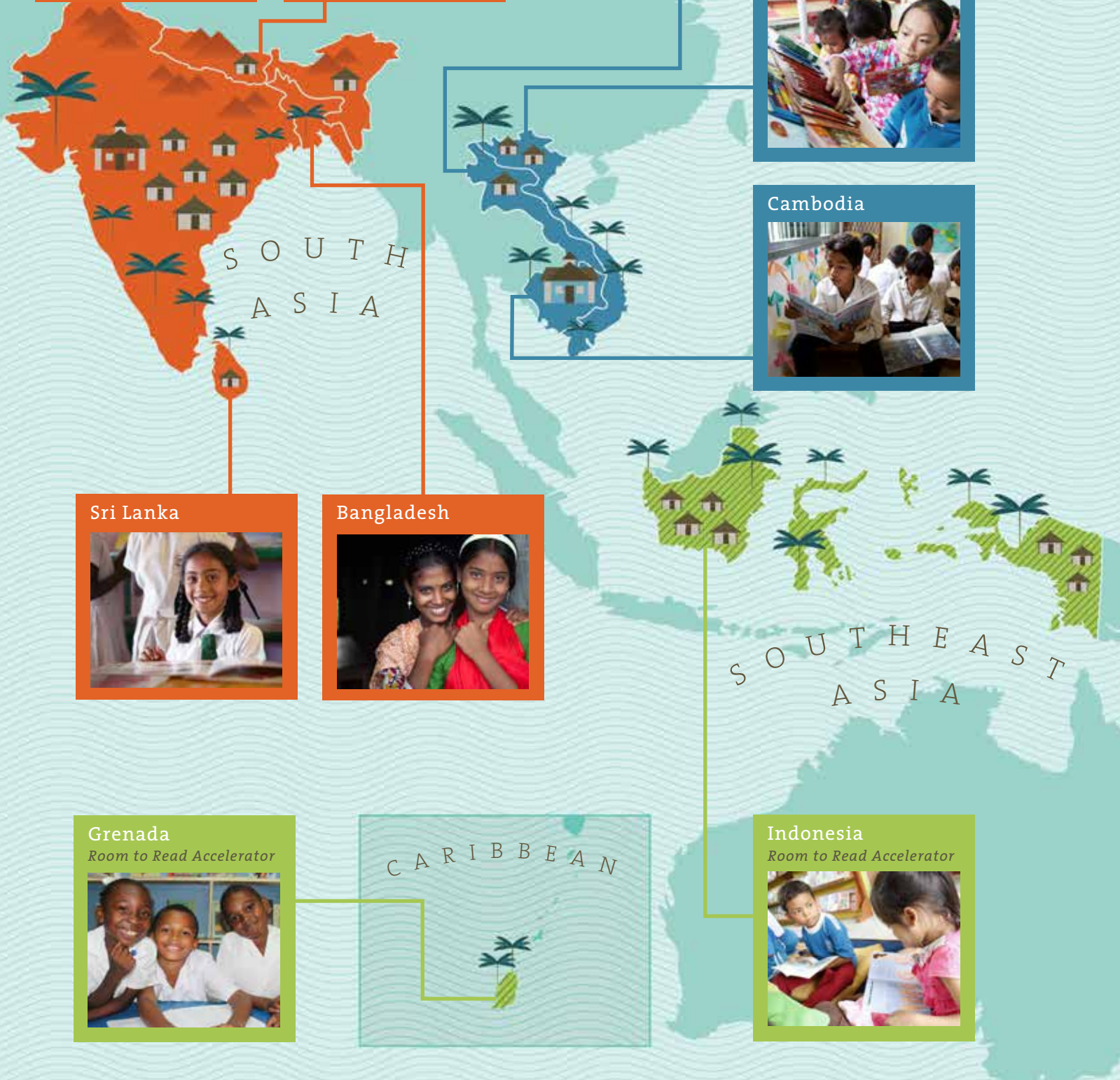


C A R I B B E A N



Indonesia

Room to Read Accelerator



BUILDING LIFELONG READERS, AT SCALE



250 MILLION CHILDREN ARE NOT LEARNING THE BASICS.

A FOUNDATION IN LITERACY CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

171 MILLION

PEOPLE COULD BE LIFTED OUT OF POVERTY IF ALL STUDENTS IN LOW-INCOME COUNTRIES LEFT SCHOOL WITH BASIC READING SKILLS

COUNTRIES THAT HAVE RAISED LITERACY RATES BY

20-30%

HAVE SEEN SIMULTANEOUS GDP INCREASES OF

8-16%

A CHILD BORN TO A MOTHER WHO CAN READ IS

50%

MORE LIKELY TO SURVIVE PAST AGE FIVE

Early readers need effective teachers and access to quality reading materials to develop literacy skills and a lifelong habit and love of reading. Our Literacy Program ensures that primary school students have the instruction, resources and learning spaces they need in order to build a strong foundation in literacy.

Through years of research, evaluation and refinement, we have built proven, data-driven literacy interventions that can be contextualized and replicated around the world. To build on this success, we seek opportunities to share our learnings and impact educational policies and initiatives. Our long-term goal is to help governments adopt educational solutions that will eradicate illiteracy from their countries.

JOURNEY TO LIFELONG LITERACY

Our Top 10 Learnings

1. Children read faster and with greater comprehension with systematic phonics-based reading instruction.

EXAMPLE: In India, students in our program read an average of 35 more words per minute than students in comparison schools by the end of Grade 2.



2. Children are more likely to read when their teachers know how to conduct reading activities, such as reading aloud or shared reading.

EXAMPLE: In South Africa, students in our program were reading independently in over 60% of library periods, and over 65% reported reading most of the books available in their library.





3. Children prefer illustrated fiction books, such as folklore and fantasy.

EXAMPLE: We analyzed library book checkout in three of our countries, and the majority of top books were fiction. Children reported liking fiction books because of the stories and characters.



4. Children learn best in classrooms that are bright, well-lit and properly ventilated.

EXAMPLE: We developed a checklist that ensures our school construction projects are safe and conducive to learning. In an analysis of our buildings constructed since 2011, fewer than 1% showed signs of major structural damage, which we have since repaired.



DEVELOPING FOUNDATIONAL LITERACY SKILLS



Replacing Early Grade Textbooks

LAOS

During our 11 years of work in Laos, we have had great success improving primary school students' literacy skills. Students in our Laos Literacy Program can read three and a half times as many words per minute as their peers in non-program schools. Impressed by this impact, the national Laotian government invited us to use our Grade 1 and 2 literacy textbooks in place of the standard government textbooks in 46 schools in Savannakhet. The results of this pilot are being closely monitored, and may be used to inform the development of new national textbooks in the future.

Influencing National Curriculum and Policy

NEPAL

Nepal became our first country of operation in 2000 with a simple delivery of books for a school library. Since then, we have built a holistic Literacy Program and strong ties with the Nepalese government. In 2015, we collaborated with Nepal's Department of Education to review and identify gaps in the country's national literacy education policies. As a result of this process, our literacy instruction materials will serve as the basis for the country's new National Early Grade Reading Program curriculum for Grade 1 and 2 students — benefiting millions of children across the country.



5. Consistent monitoring and evaluation ensures libraries are well run and effective.

EXAMPLE: Approximately 30% more of our libraries were able to maintain quality after we introduced three years of support and training.



6. Access to libraries makes students want to read more at school and at home.

EXAMPLE: 44% of students in schools with our libraries reported reading for enjoyment at school compared to 33% of students in comparison schools.





Scaling Instructional Interventions at Government Schools

INDIA

Room to Read began piloting literacy instruction activities in India in 2008. These activities are now a core component of our Literacy Program, and Grade 2 students in our India program can read three times as many words per minute as their peers in non-program schools. Recognizing this achievement, the state governments of Uttarakhand and Chhattisgarh invited us to implement our early grade literacy instruction work at scale for five academic years. In 2015, we began a pilot project in 360 primary schools across the two states, and are working to build the states' systemic capabilities so they can implement effective literacy interventions independently in the future.

7. Transparency leads to greater community involvement and participation.

EXAMPLE: In Sri Lanka, publicly tracking community-raised funds led to reaching goals more quickly, broader participation and greater accountability among those involved.



SPREADING A HABIT OF READING



Promoting a Teacher's Role in Building Reading Habits

BANGLADESH

We launched our work in Bangladesh in 2008. To share our learnings from the past eight years and build support for our programs, we regularly seek opportunities to meet with key influencers in the country's education sector. In 2015, this included presenting at the Bangladesh Literacy Association's 4th National Conference of Teachers. The two-day event, held in Dhaka, was attended by top education officials, including Bangladesh's education minister. Through our presentation, we promoted the role teachers play in developing literacy skills and a habit of reading, as well as the fundamental role literacy plays throughout a child's education.

8. Ongoing learning and innovation drive increased impact.

EXAMPLE: Our literacy instruction activities began as a pilot in India. These activities are now a core component of our global program, and have dramatically increased our impact on students' reading skills.



9. Collaboration provides opportunities for scale.



Campaign to Expand School Libraries Nationally

SOUTH AFRICA

Room to Read has worked to improve literacy learning in South Africa since 2006. During this time, we have built strong ties with the South African government, and in 2015 we were invited to participate in a forum hosted by South Africa's Department of Basic Education. The goal of the forum was to plan for a new campaign that will promote reading and the expansion of library information services throughout the country, including establishing or refurbishing 1,000 school libraries annually.



Improving Libraries and Library Activities Countrywide

VIETNAM

Vietnam became our second country of operation in 2001. We have worked to improve the country's school libraries since then, and in 2015 we succeeded in influencing Vietnam's national education policy. In December, we signed an agreement with Vietnam's Ministry of Education that launched a new "Friendly Primary School Library Program" in government primary schools nationwide. The program will use our librarian training model, establishment practices and library period curriculum to help students across the country build a habit of reading.

EXAMPLE: In Tanzania, we are collaborating with the national government, USAID and RTI International to develop new Swahili-language education materials for Grades 1–4.



10. Advocacy and partnerships with local governments are key to broader systemic change.

EXAMPLE: In Cambodia, after the government saw our results, we partnered to rewrite their Grade 1 textbook and advocated successfully for higher salaries for school librarians.



EMPOWERING GENERATIONS OF GIRLS



Girls in low-income countries face significant challenges along their educational journeys. Our Girls' Education Program ensures that girls complete secondary school with the skills to negotiate key life decisions.

Our program reinforces girls' commitment to their own education, and increases support for them among their parents, teachers and communities. We also develop girls' essential life skills such as self-confidence, decision-making and relationship building. By putting data at the heart of our programming, we ensure that our program is efficient with high impact. In order for girls everywhere to have the support they need to graduate, we advocate for social and educational change at the local and national levels. We also collaborate with governments and organizations to demonstrate what works in girls' education.

62 MILLION GIRLS GLOBALLY ARE DENIED AN EDUCATION.

WITH AN EDUCATION, CHANGE CAN HAPPEN.

IF 10% MORE

GIRLS ATTEND SCHOOL, A COUNTRY'S GDP COULD INCREASE BY AN AVERAGE OF **3%**

AN EXTRA YEAR OF SECONDARY SCHOOL FOR A GIRL CAN INCREASE HER FUTURE EARNINGS BY **10-20%**

IF ALL WOMEN HAD A SECONDARY EDUCATION, EARLY BIRTHS COULD FALL BY **59%**

GIRLS WITH SECONDARY SCHOOLING ARE UP TO **SIX TIMES** LESS LIKELY TO MARRY AS CHILDREN THAN THOSE WITH LITTLE OR NO EDUCATION

JOURNEY TO A BRIGHTER FUTURE

10 Steps to Educating Girls

1. Enrolling in secondary school.

WE HAVE SUPPORTED THE EDUCATION OF MORE THAN **38,000** GIRLS ACROSS ASIA AND AFRICA.

IN 2015, **93%** OF GIRLS IN OUR PROGRAM REMAINED IN SCHOOL OR GRADUATED.

2. Introducing the mentor.

We hire local women as mentors to encourage the girls. These women act as role models, track each girl's progress, and provide extra support to those most at risk.

IN 2015, WE EMPLOYED AND TRAINED OVER **500** MENTORS.





3. Strengthening parental support. We work to increase family, school and community engagement in girls' education.

GIRLS WHOSE PARENTS ATTENDED MEETINGS WERE
20% LESS LIKELY TO DROP OUT OF SCHOOL THAN
GIRLS WHOSE PARENTS DID NOT ATTEND.

IN 2015, **82%** OF GIRLS' PARENTS OR GUARDIANS
ATTENDED PARENT MEETINGS.



ADVOCATING FOR GIRLS' RIGHTS



Summit to End Child Marriage

ZAMBIA

More than 700 million women alive today were married by the age of 18. The majority of child marriages occur in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, where they pose severe challenges to girls' continuing education. In addition to working directly with girls and families to prevent early marriages, we also work to change social norms more broadly around girls' education and marriage. Last year, we participated in the first African Union summit on ending child marriage. The summit, which was held in Zambia, was attended by members of national ministries and thought leaders working to advance girls' rights across the continent. During the event, our team members shared our experiences and best practices from our Girls' Education Program and helped draft a strategic plan for ending child marriage in Zambia.

4. Promoting critical life skills. We provide life skills education for girls.

GIRLS WHO PARTICIPATED IN OUR LIFE SKILLS ACTIVITIES HAD
14% LOWER DROPOUT RATES AND **16%** HIGHER ADVANCEMENT RATES THAN GIRLS WHO DID NOT ATTEND.
 IN 2015, **85%** OF GIRLS PARTICIPATED IN LIFE SKILLS ACTIVITIES.

5. Covering educational expenses, when needed.

We provide targeted material support to cover school-related costs, such as uniforms and school fees.

OVER THE YEARS, GIRLS WHO RECEIVED THIS SUPPORT WERE
14% LESS LIKELY TO DROP OUT AND **12%** MORE LIKELY TO ADVANCE TO THE NEXT GRADE.

IN 2015, **45%** OF GIRLS RECEIVED NEEDS-BASED MATERIAL SUPPORT.



Community Advocacy through Acting

BANGLADESH

Bangladesh has one of the highest early marriage rates in the world. About 66% of girls marry by the age of 18, and over one-third of girls are married by the age of 15. This illegal but common practice often leads to girls dropping out of school. To combat this trend, students from our program in Bangladesh organized a series of performances to advocate for prioritizing girls' education over early marriage. Girls from six schools across Rajshahi performed a drama called *Ichchha*, which means wish or desire, for their peers, families, community members and government officials to build support for keeping girls in school and delaying marriage until adulthood.



Collaborating to Advance Gender Equality in Education

INDIA

The challenges facing girls' education in low-income countries are numerous: economic barriers, social customs and pressures, lack of access to quality education and more. To comprehensively address these challenges on a wide scale in India, we organized a one-day consultation called "Adolescent Girls in India: Issues of Gender Equality, Life Skills and School." The event, which was held in New Delhi, brought together leading national and international nonprofits working in India to share best practices in supporting and advocating for adolescent girls' rights, particularly in relation to education. The consultation also focused on how to scale effective interventions across the country and maximize our collective impact.

6. Preparing for exams. Passing national gatekeeper exams is required for advancement to the next level of schooling.

A QUALITATIVE EVALUATION FOUND THAT OUR EXAM PREPARATION ACTIVITIES IN INDIA, NEPAL AND ZAMBIA HELPED GIRLS TO PASS THEIR EXAMS.

IN 2015, **95%** OF GIRLS WHO REMAINED IN THE PROGRAM ADVANCED TO THE NEXT GRADE.



7. Overcoming risk. Risk of dropout increases as girls grow older. Risks include joining the workforce, child marriage, academic failure and pregnancy.

MENTORS APPLY OUR RISK AND RESPONSE SYSTEM TO IDENTIFY GIRLS AT HIGH RISK AND INTERVENE.

A QUALITATIVE EVALUATION FOUND MENTORING HAS BEEN AN EFFECTIVE MEANS OF PREVENTING GIRLS FROM DROPPING OUT.



SHARING OUR LEARNINGS



Integrating Life Skills into Standard School Curriculum

CAMBODIA

One of the key components of our Girls' Education Program is our life skills curriculum. In Cambodia, we currently provide life skills education outside of the normal school day, but we are working to integrate our lessons into standard school curriculum. In pursuit of this goal, we partnered with secondary schools in Prey Veng and Kampong Cham last year to train teachers on our life skills education. Provincial and district officials in Kampong Cham then gave those teachers permission to conduct life skills sessions for girls during the school day with minimal support from our staff. We are now using this success to advocate for additional integration of life skills education into the national secondary school curriculum.

8. Creating change. Girls are confident in applying what they have learned in life skills sessions.

A QUALITATIVE EVALUATION FOUND THAT GIRLS USE THEIR NEWLY FORMED LEADERSHIP SKILLS OUTSIDE OF THE SESSIONS. GIRLS BECOME THEIR OWN "AGENTS OF CHANGE," AND MANY COMMUNICATE WHAT THEY HAVE LEARNED WITH THEIR PARENTS, SIBLINGS OR OTHER CHILDREN IN THEIR COMMUNITIES.



9. Graduating!

A TOTAL OF **2,362** PARTICIPANTS HAVE GRADUATED FROM SECONDARY SCHOOL THROUGH OUR PROGRAM.





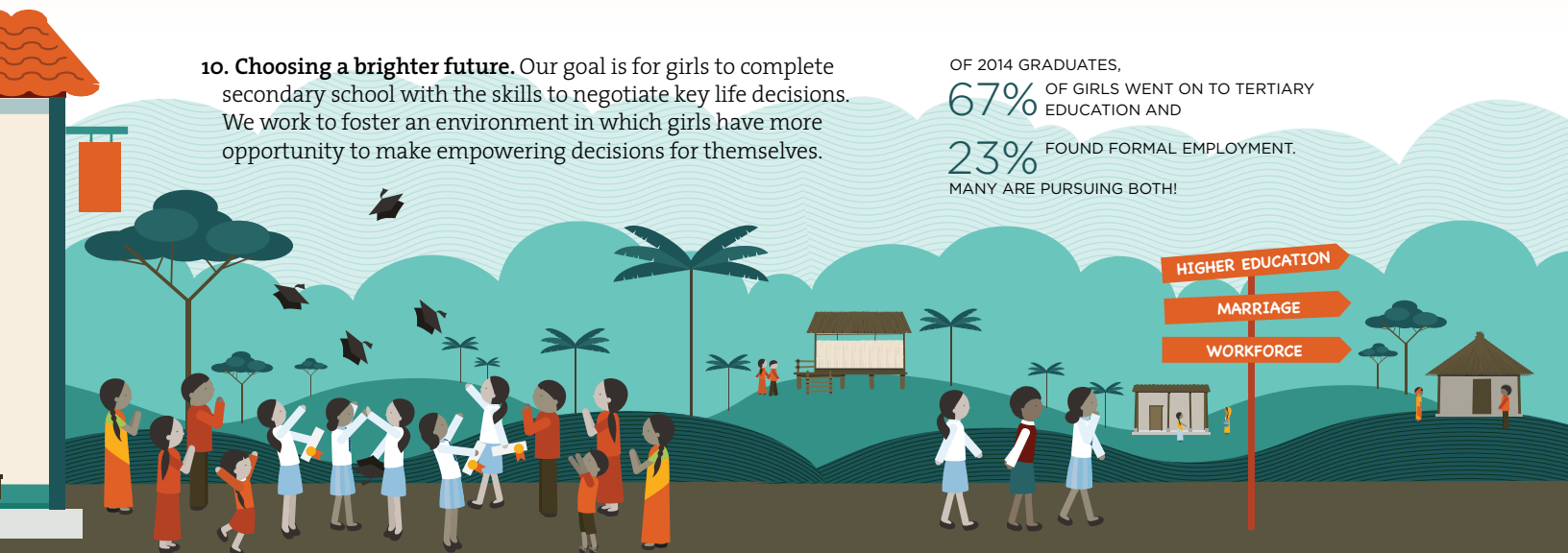
Spreading Best Practices in Mentoring

VIETNAM

Girls in low-income communities often lack positive role models who can help guide and support them in their pursuit of an education. We address this challenge by providing our Girls' Education Program participants with social mobilizers who act as mentors and advocates for the girls. Over the years, we have built strong models for how to effectively provide mentoring support, and last year the Vinh Long Department of Education asked our Vietnam team to organize two workshops to share our learnings in this area. The workshops were attended by 150 teachers who are in charge of student services at 120 secondary schools across Vinh Long. The attendees, who work at non-Room to Read schools, learned about the role mentoring plays in girls' development, as well as various activities for engaging and supporting their students.

10. Choosing a brighter future. Our goal is for girls to complete secondary school with the skills to negotiate key life decisions. We work to foster an environment in which girls have more opportunity to make empowering decisions for themselves.

OF 2014 GRADUATES,
67% OF GIRLS WENT ON TO TERTIARY
 EDUCATION AND
23% FOUND FORMAL EMPLOYMENT.
 MANY ARE PURSUING BOTH!



BEYOND DIRECT IMPLEMENTATION: ROOM TO READ ACCELERATOR



Room to Read currently operates in 10 countries in Asia and Africa. While we are continuing to expand our direct operations in these countries, there are millions more children we want to reach with our programs.

To complement our direct in-country work and rapidly scale our reach around the world, we have launched a technical assistance arm called Room to Read Accelerator. This new unit enables organizations and governments to leverage our proven literacy and girls' education interventions by contextualizing our trainings and content for broader use in many regions — with consideration for local cultures, languages and educational practices.

INDONESIA: 2015 RESULTS

8,300 STUDENTS

BENEFITED IN 2015

25 CHILDREN'S BOOK TITLES

PUBLISHED FOR BEGINNING
READERS IN BAHASA INDONESIA

24 LIBRARIES

ESTABLISHED IN THREE DISTRICTS
ACROSS THE COUNTRY

GRENADA: PARTNERSHIP GOALS

11,000 STUDENTS

BENEFITED BY 2018

DEVELOPMENT OF
**GRADE 1 LITERACY
PROGRAM**

SCHOOL LIBRARIES ESTABLISHED IN

**ALL 57
GOVERNMENT
PRIMARY SCHOOLS**



INDONESIA

We launched our first Accelerator project in Indonesia in 2014. This two-year partnership brought together five nonprofits and two private-sector publishers to establish school libraries and publish children's books in Bahasa Indonesia (the national language). Although Indonesia has a relatively high literacy rate as defined by the United Nations, reading proficiency varies dramatically across the country, particularly in remote regions. There is also a severe shortage of local-language children's books, which prevents children from being able to build a strong habit of reading.

With these issues in mind, we worked with our partner organizations to develop easily replicable solutions that could be spread across the country. Together, we created guidelines for establishing school libraries, teacher training workshops and materials, and a new book-leveling system based on reading skill rather than grade level. Our partners used these resources in 2015 to produce 25 new children's titles and establish 24 libraries in three districts across the country. Forty thousand books were also distributed across these libraries using new "Ideal Book Collection" guidelines.

More than 8,300 children benefited from these activities in 2015, and Indonesia's Ministry of Education is also using the children's books published through the project in a national "15-Minute Reading Campaign" that urges students to spend at least 15 minutes a day reading as a way of promoting reading for fun outside of school. The ministry has been hosting read-aloud activities across the country and is using the new books to engage children during the events.

GRENADA

Grenada, an island country in the Eastern Caribbean, is one of many countries around the world facing challenges in raising child literacy rates. The country has taken steps to make improvements over the past four decades, but education at the primary school level still suffers from inadequate teacher training and a lack of educational materials.

To address these challenges, in 2015 we began a three-year partnership with Grenada's Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development and Grenada Schools Inc., a local nonprofit, to improve early grade literacy. The goal of the project is to design a wide-reaching, cost-effective and sustainable program that builds foundational literacy skills and a habit of reading among primary school students. The project will impact all 57 of Grenada's government primary schools by improving the country's Grade 1 literacy curriculum and establishing a library at each school. The project will also build the capacity of local authors and illustrators to create quality low-cost children's titles in-country and publish six original children's titles.

The partnership will impact an estimated 11,000 students by 2018 and thousands more will benefit in the future as new generations of students enter the school system.

GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT



Tackling illiteracy and gender inequality in education requires the support of a global community. In 2015, we sought to grow our international movement by launching conversations and major media initiatives about the importance of education. These efforts, along with the backing of our extraordinary volunteer chapter network, inspired vital support for our work.

2015 ENGAGEMENT BY THE NUMBERS



1.1 BILLION

PEOPLE EXPOSED TO OUR WORK THROUGH THE PRESS



72,464

FACEBOOK FANS



641,000

FOLLOWERS ON TWITTER



195,060

MINUTES OF OUR VIDEO CONTENT WATCHED BY YOUTUBE FANS



42

STORIES SHARED VIA MEDIUM THAT WERE VIEWED



16,000

REGISTERED GLOBAL VOLUNTEERS WITH MORE THAN

102,056

TIMES

400

LOCAL LEADERS

ROOM TO READ IN THE MEDIA



FIRST LADIES VISIT OUR GIRLS' EDUCATION PROGRAM



As a part of her Let Girls Learn initiative, First Lady of the United States Michelle Obama visited Cambodia in March 2015.

During her trip, she joined First Lady of Cambodia Bun Rany in visiting some of the incredible achievers in our Girls' Education Program. The First Ladies met with a group of girls who were about to graduate from secondary school, a milestone very few people in their village have reached.

The girls shared their stories, and the First Ladies learned more about how community-driven solutions like Room to Read are turning the tide against gender inequality in education. At the end of the visit, Mrs. Obama said to our students, "You all are role models to the world. There are going to be young girls that watch this and they're going to think, I can do the same thing. They're going to say to themselves, 'I have a voice, I have a brain, and I'm going to use it.'"

GIVING THANKS TO EDUCATION

In recognition of reaching our 10 millionth child, we asked our students, teachers, staff and investors from around the world how education has shaped their lives. We collected their personal messages of gratitude as part of our #ThankstoEducation campaign. Here are some of the more than 700 stories we received:



"Thanks to Education, I can stand for what I believe is mine and what I deserve. I am dreaming big to attain the goals of my life."

DAR ES SALAAM, TANZANIA



"Thanks to Education, I can practically do almost anything I want to do — except fly a plane!"

KACHETA, ZAMBIA



"Thanks to Education, my father once crossed the boundary of his remote village. Now I can dream of crossing the boundary of my state and dream my children will cross the boundary of the globe."

DHAKA, BANGLADESH



"Thanks to Education, I am confident enough to take risks because I know even if I fail, my education will always open doors."

NEW YORK, USA



"Thanks to Education, I can see my world... and a zillion others."

HONG KONG



"Thanks to Education, I have the opportunity to read instead of grazing buffaloes."

RAJASTHAN, INDIA



"Thanks to Education, I live the life I want."

VANCOUVER, CANADA

ORGANIZATIONAL FUNDERS



Corporate, foundation and government funders play a critical role in scaling our impact on children's literacy and girls' education around the world. In 2015, these partners provided 44 percent of our total support through cash donations and targeted in-kind gifts. They also raised awareness for our mission through their influential networks.



Atlassian has donated more than US\$5

million toward Room to Read's programs in Asia. In 2015, Atlassian was the largest investor in our Girls' Education Program in Cambodia and the largest corporate investor globally. Almost half of Atlassian's staff also supports Room to Read through its \$1/day program.



Through donations from generous BURGER KING®

employees, franchises and restaurant guests in select areas in Europe, Asia and Africa, as well as donations directly from the BURGER KING McLAMORESM Foundation, the BURGER KING® system is supporting more than 69,000 students through Room to Read's Literacy Program in Cambodia, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, South Africa, Tanzania and Zambia.



Founded in 1952, Caterpillar's philanthropic

organization, the Caterpillar Foundation, is focused on making sustainable progress possible around the world by providing support in the areas of environmental sustainability, access to education and basic human needs. The Caterpillar Foundation has provided crucial support for our work since 2009. Through a three-year grant, the foundation has supported our Literacy and Girls' Education Programs in India and South Africa, including the establishment of more than 90 libraries. This grant has benefited more than 25,000 children.



Citi partnered with Room to Read in 2015 through its *e for*

Education initiative, an effort to raise funds for education-related nonprofits around the world. From October to December 2015, Citi donated US\$1 for every US\$1 million of notional volume traded on Citi Velocity, its award-winning institutional foreign exchange trading platform. More than US\$400,000 was raised for Room to Read in 2015, bringing Citi's total support for Room to Read to over US\$1.65 million in the 2013–2015 period.



Credit Suisse is one of Room to

Read's largest corporate funders, supporting both our Literacy and Girls' Education Programs and several key strategic projects, including the development of our 2015–2019 strategic plan and the launch of Room to Read Accelerator. Credit Suisse also donates office space for Room to Read staff in Hong Kong, Sydney and Tokyo, and provides capacity-building to country teams on a broad range of topics through its Global Citizens Program.



Echidna Giving supports Room to Read's programs

in Asia and Africa with an emphasis on our Girls' Education Program. In 2015, Echidna Giving invested in our Literacy and Girls' Education Programs and 2015–2019 strategic plan goals. Echidna Giving is a leading thought partner for Room to Read in innovation, analysis, learning and system change.



The Fossil Foundation, committed to unleashing the potential of underserved young people, supported our Literacy Program in India to ensure children have the instruction and resources they need to become fluent readers. This grant launched our Literacy Program at 310 schools in the states of Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan and Uttarakhand.



Through Goldman Sachs and Goldman Sachs Gives, the company and its senior executives have contributed

more than US\$18 million cumulatively — and over US\$3 million in 2015 — to Room to Read. In 2015, Goldman Sachs supported a wide range of Literacy and Girls' Education Programs for children across Asia and Africa.



The Lee Foundation is Singapore's largest and oldest private

charitable foundation, with a majority of its funding going toward education. With a generous grant of US\$350,000 in 2015, the Lee Foundation became the first family foundation in Singapore to invest significantly in Room to Read's work. This grant provided critical support to our Girls' Education Program across Asia, benefiting 1,350 girls in our program.

TP TOWNSEND PRESS

Townsend Press, an independent publisher of acclaimed educational materials for students in grade school through college, has a dual mission: to create high-quality, reasonably priced electronic and print publications that help students learn the language and reading skills needed for success and to promote reading by publishing a library of compelling US\$2 paperbacks, sponsoring scholarship contests and donating books to schools and community organizations. As a Room to Read partner since 2007, Townsend Press has funded core operating and

program support for local-language book publication, library development and our Girls' Education Program.

UBS Optimus
Foundation



UBS

The UBS
Optimus

Foundation supported Room to Read's post-earthquake recovery efforts in Nepal through a US\$1.1 million grant to rebuild schools in Nuwakot and implement our Literacy and Girls' Education Programs throughout the country. This funding is part of the UBS Optimus Emergency Response funding that includes post-emergency children's education as a crucial intervention.



The U.S. Department of Agriculture, through a McGovern-Dole Food for Education award to Catholic Relief Services, is supporting Room to Read's literacy efforts in Laos through the establishment of 70 libraries, provision of 49,000 books to these libraries and the implementation of literacy instruction activities in 26 schools.

TOP ORGANIZATIONAL FUNDERS (1/1/2015 – 12/31/2015)

\$500,000 and More

Atlassian Foundation
BURGER KING McLAMORESM Foundation
Credit Suisse
Echidna Giving
Goldman Sachs
UBS Optimus Foundation
U.S. Department of Agriculture through an award to Catholic Relief Services

\$250,000 – \$499,999

Butters Foundation
Caerus Foundation, Inc.
Caterpillar Foundation
Citi
Fossil Foundation
Lee Foundation
Townsend Press

\$100,000 – \$249,999

The Brin Wojcicki Foundation
Charities Aid Foundation India
Four Acre Trust
GlobalGiving Foundation
Google
Happy Hearts Fund
Hilton Worldwide
InMaat Foundation
Jersey Overseas Aid Commission

Kendeda Fund
Myriad Asset Management
PepsiCo Foundation
Reliable Source Industrial Company (RSI)
Salesforce.org
Sensato Investors
Tatcha
TripAdvisor Charitable Foundation
The Tudor Foundation, Inc.
United Way Worldwide on behalf of the generosity of Target Foundation

\$50,000 – \$99,999

207, Inc.
Anglo American Chairman's Fund
Asia Alternatives
Bank of America – BA Continuum India Pvt. Ltd.
Better World Books
Biogen International GmbH
Centre for Micro Finance
Dining Concepts
Dodge & Cox
Dow Jones & Company
DT Group of Companies
Eureka Benevolent Foundation
Green Leaves Education Foundation
The Hoglund Foundation
HSBC Bank
Microsoft

Monsanto Fund
Navitas Education Trust
Nuix Pty. Ltd.
Samsung Asia Pte.
Select Equity Group Foundation
The SJS Charitable Trust
T. Rowe Price Foundation
Tokio Marine & Nichido Fire Insurance Co., Ltd.
United States Agency for International Development
USAID India
Wells Fargo
Whitehaven Coal
Z Zurich Foundation

In-Kind Donors

Autodesk
Book Enterprises
Books for Africa
Cisco Systems, Inc.
Credit Suisse
Hardcastle Restaurants Pvt. Ltd. (McDonald's India — West & South)
Hilton Worldwide
Ketchum
Moët Hennessy
Reliance Capital
Scholastic

OUR FINANCIAL FOUNDATION



Room to Read depends on the generosity of global investors to make our life-changing work possible.

We deeply value their partnership and hold ourselves to the utmost levels of fiscal transparency and accountability so they can be sure that their funding is leveraged for maximum impact. This approach, combined with a commitment to consistently measuring and reporting on our results, allows stakeholders to trust that every dollar, pound, rupee and yen is used to provide the greatest benefit for the communities we serve.

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS



\$45.3 MILLION
CASH DONATIONS

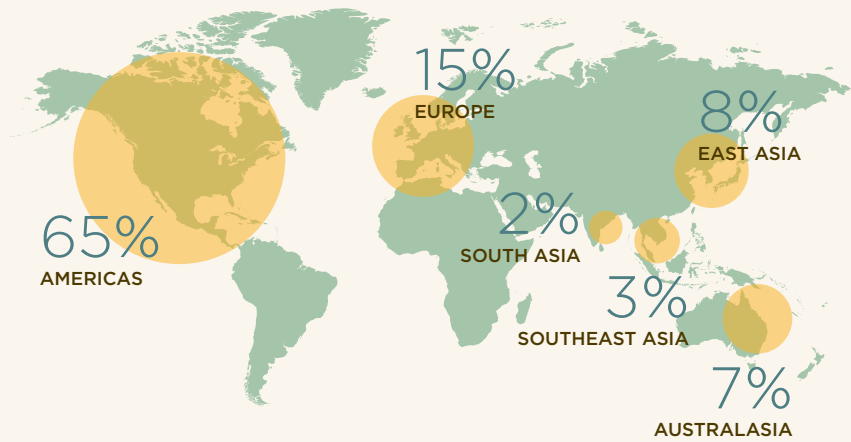


\$4.2 MILLION
IN-KIND DONATIONS

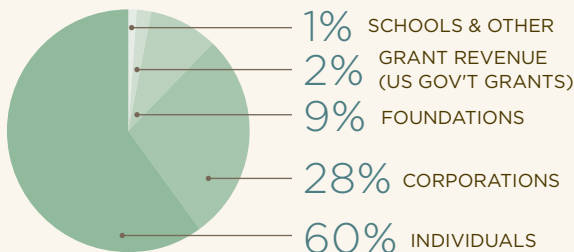


84%
SPENT ON PROGRAMS

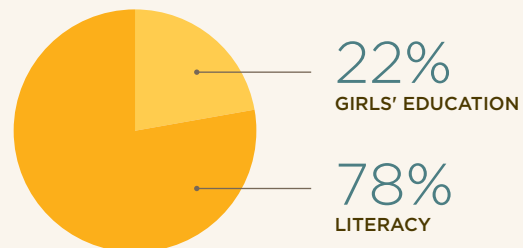
Sources of Revenue by Region



Donations by Type of Investor



Program Functional Expense Breakdown



Statement of Activities

For the years ended December 31, 2015 and 2014 (USD).

SUPPORT AND REVENUE:	2015	2014
Corporations	\$12,536,347	\$11,214,658
Foundations	\$4,172,714	\$2,557,406
Individuals	\$27,360,176	\$27,301,694
Schools and Other	\$490,534	\$1,043,486
Total Donations	\$44,559,771	\$42,117,244
Grant Revenue	\$708,398	\$813,544
Donations In-Kind	\$4,234,999	\$9,922,253
Investment and Other Income (Loss), Special Event Expenses, Fees	\$(609,980)	\$(12,233)
Total Support and Revenue	\$48,893,188	\$52,840,808
OPERATING EXPENSES:	2015	2014
Program Services		
Literacy	\$8,862,628	\$6,273,670
Girls' Education	\$2,581,086	\$2,993,874
School Infrastructure*	N/A	\$3,484,529
Donated Books and Supplies	\$2,671,175	\$8,587,695
Conferences, Travel and Meeting Expenses	\$2,170,957	\$1,852,692
Information Technology Expenses	\$1,177,976	\$891,446
Monitoring & Evaluation	\$94,869	\$322,566
Professional Fees	\$3,024,024	\$1,192,894
Program Operating Expenses	\$2,499,585	\$2,114,252
Program Personnel Expenses	\$17,391,874	\$15,223,265
Total Program Services	\$40,474,174	\$42,936,883
Management and General	\$2,375,379	\$2,703,003
Fundraising	\$5,486,462	\$6,040,120
Total Operating Expenses	\$48,336,015	\$51,680,006
Translation Adjustments	-	\$(33,913)
Change in Unrestricted Net Assets	\$1,561,771	\$3,400,452
Change in Temporarily Restricted Net Assets	\$(1,451,374)	\$(2,273,563)
Unrestricted Net Assets at Beginning of the Year	\$4,088,941	\$688,489
Temporarily Restricted Net Assets at Beginning of the Year	\$16,883,133	\$19,156,696
Net Assets at End of the Year	\$21,082,471	\$20,972,074

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

* School infrastructure services have been aligned to augment Room to Read's Literacy and Girls' Education Programs so that students at our program schools have safe and child-friendly learning environments. As such, infrastructure costs are now incorporated into Literacy or Girls' Education Program planning and are reflected under the associated program, rather than as a standalone service.

BOARDS & STAFF



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Craig Bruya, Former CFO, Microsoft Business Solutions

Mary Byron, Former Partner, Goldman Sachs

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John Ridding

Stuart and Joanna Riley

Randy Work

Leadership Team

MANAGEMENT TEAM

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Lynn Foden, Chief of International Operations

Shari Freedman, Chief Financial Officer

Rebecca Hankin, Vice President of Marketing and Communications

Cory Heyman, Chief Innovation Officer and Executive Director, Room to Read Accelerator

Geetha Murali, Chief Development Officer

Heather Simpson, Chief Program Officer

Pierre Towns, Chief Talent Officer

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Philip Christensen, South Africa Country Director

Shevanthi Jayasuriya, Sri Lanka Country Director

Kall Kann, Cambodia Country Director

Tien Phong Le, Vietnam Country Director

Udaya Manandhar, Nepal Country Director

Russel Mushanga, Zambia Country Director

Peter Mwakabwale, Tanzania Country Director

Geoffrey Odaga, Associate Director, Africa

Rakhi Sarkar, Bangladesh Country Director

Christie Scott, Director, Asia

Dinesh Shrestha, Co-Founder and Director of Field Operations

Norkham Souphanouvong, Laos Country Director

List Current as of 6/30/2016

Technology Advisory Committee

We launched a special advisory committee in 2015 to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our work by developing global information technology strategies and forging key partnerships. In 2015, this committee assisted in planning and deploying several technology solutions, including a new accounting system and customer relationship management database. These new systems have transformed our operations, and we would like to thank the committee for its invaluable guidance on these initiatives.

James Arnett, Partner, Capco

Alex Belous, Education Portfolio Manager,
The Cisco Foundation

Mary Byron, Former Partner, Goldman Sachs

Dustin Frazier, Independent Consultant

Matthew Glotzbach, CEO, Quizlet, Inc.

Andrea Leszek, Vice President of Technology Services,
Salesforce

Ambarish Malpani, Vice President of Engineering, Edmodo

Vibhu Mittal, CEO, Edmodo

Brett Robson, IT Workplace Engineering Manager, Atlassian

Frank van Veenendaal, Former Executive Vice President,
Salesforce

Tim Wood, Senior Program Manager, Bill & Melinda Gates
Foundation

A SPECIAL THANK-YOU

One of Room to Read's greatest strengths is our leadership and the depth of expertise and passion these individuals bring to our mission. We benefit immensely from their wisdom and talent, so we would like to extend our gratitude to three long-term leaders who have fulfilled their commitments on our Board of Directors: Peter Grauer, Tim Koogle and Fernando Reimers. Collectively, they have contributed 17 years of service to our Board and were key in growing Room to Read into the organization we are today. We thank them deeply for their contributions over the years and are honored that they will continue to offer their guidance through our Emeritus Board.

ROOM TO READ'S LEGACY SOCIETY



"As outgoing Board Chair, I am proud to ensure my long-term impact on Room to Read programs through a legacy gift. I hope you will join me in pledging to leave your legacy through Room to Read and make your ongoing commitment toward educating the world's children."

CRAIG BRUYA



The Legacy Society recognizes individuals who have made provisions for Room to Read through their estate plans. As a Legacy Society member, you can share your story and become a role model to others who are thinking about leaving a legacy gift to Room to Read. We are sincerely grateful to those who remember us through a bequest or other type of legacy gift.

For information, please contact legacy@roomtoread.org.





World Change Starts with Educated Children.®

Room to Read Global Office: San Francisco

Delhi • Hong Kong • London • Mumbai • New York • Singapore • Sydney • Tokyo • Zurich

www.roomtoread.org

We would like to thank the following organizations for sharing their office space with Room to Read: Credit Suisse (Hong Kong, Sydney and Tokyo) and Reliance Capital (Mumbai).

Photos: Cover, 3, 11, 18: Willem de Lange; 1, 2, 3, 33: Kimlong Meng; 3, 11, 20: Daniel Hayduk; 3: Santosh Kumar; 4: Peter Stuckings; 3, 17, 22: Saikat Mojumder; 3, 11, 33: Jason Mulikita; 3, 9, 15: Manish Prajapati; 3, 9, 10, 12, 28: Room to Read; 12: Wahid Adnan; 12: Grenada Schools Inc.; 12: Anne Holmes; 12: Giang Pham; 12: Malaka Premasiri; 12, 26: Provisi; 12, 22: Shoot to Help; 12: Keshab Thokar; 14, back cover: Ratana Proeung; 15: Soulisanh Senethavisouk; 16: Deepak Pradhan; 18: Nguyen Minh Duc; 21: Ian Murphy; 23: Nancy Farese; 24: Liz Hale.

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