

The logo for Room to Read, featuring a blue outline of a house above the text "Room to Read" in a bold, black, sans-serif font.

Room
to
Read



GIRLS'
EDUCATION PROGRAM
(GEP)

www.roomtoreadindia.org

INEQUITY AND INEQUALITY: A GENDERED CRISIS



According to UNESCO reports, 4.2 million adolescent girls were out of school before the COVID-19 pandemic further shook India's secondary education scenario. With the growing challenges, adolescent girls from historically low-income communities face a bigger threat than ever. Poverty is one facet of the issues giving rise to inequities and inequalities for adolescent girls. Several other factors contribute to the pressing need for girls' education and gender equality.

9 out of 10 girls ever enrolled in school do not complete schooling

1 out of every 100 girls enrolled in early grades reaches secondary education

An estimated 10 million girls are at risk of dropping out of school post-pandemic

1 out of every 10 female workers in India are between 15-19 years of age

An estimated 13 million girls will fall into the trap of child marriage

Some of the gender-specific challenges adolescent girls face in completing secondary education and developing life skills to make informed choices about their lives include:

Lack of voice and agency

Lack of positive role models

Lack of resources

Lack of family and community support

GIRLS' EDUCATION PROGRAM: A SOLUTION

Room to Read India's Girls' Education Program (GEP) ensures that adolescent girls develop the skills needed to succeed in school and make key life decisions. Room to Read India works with adolescent girls, their families, schools and local communities to understand gender-specific challenges and devise relevant solutions. The GEP focuses on enabling adolescent girls empower themselves through:



Our program goes further by supporting young people of all genders to build knowledge and skills with which they can create a gender-equal world and tackle some of the world's most pressing challenges, from climate change to poverty.

3,79,719

Girls Supported

3,955

GEP graduated Scholars

94%

Girls attending life skills training

97%

Advancement rate among girls who stayed in GEP

83%

Scholars passed Gatekeeping exams

(January 1 2022 to December 31, 2022)



SYSTEM INTEGRATION EFFORTS



We support schools, communities, and governments to observe, collaborate, and deliver GEP through their education systems, processes, and structures.

I DO

WE DO

YOU DO

Demonstrate the comprehensive model in selected government schools

Collaboration with the government to scale up the life skills component

Preparing the road ahead in areas of content, human resource and systems related to life skills

Continuation of the ongoing program



Scaling Up Life Skills in Residential Schools

I DO

WE DO

LIFE CHANGING LIFE SKILLS

Room to Read India believes that with the right life skills, girls can more effectively negotiate life decisions, including the decision to stay in school and break the stereotypes that affect their lives. These skills equip them to take charge, effectively respond to life situations, and identify the best solutions and implementation practices.

Gender Transformative Life Skills Curriculum

SELF-AWARENESS

(I am Valuable)

1. Self-confidence
2. Expressing & managing emotions
3. Empathy

SELF-EFFICACY

(I am empowered)

1. Self-control
2. Critical thinking
3. Decision-making
4. Perseverance

SOCIAL AWARENESS

(We Can Do It)

1. Communication
2. Creative problem-solving
3. Relationship-building

System Engagement and Strengthening

Group and Individual Mentorship of Girls

I am resilient and can overcome challenges!



I have goals and can make independent, informed choices!



I have voice and deserve to be heard!



I am healthy and have control over my body!



Peer solidarity groups

Enhanced Knowledge

Right attitude

Practice enabled skilling

Agents of change for self & others

Facilitating Space for Inter-Generational Dialoguing

Engagement with family, caregivers & community

Girls as leaders in community campaigns

Engaging Boys through Life Skills Club

Field based learning: Exposure Visit to Banks/ Financial Institutions, Universities, colleges, women-focused organizations, vocational schools, etc.

Community Projects-service & Learning and Interaction with Community Resource Speakers and going in the public spaces as leaders

LIFE SKILLS WORK!

The BIG Evaluation

Two year randomized control trial on how life skills impact girls' lives.

Independent researchers from JPAL, the University of Illinois Chicago, American University and Dartmouth College together led a study in Rajasthan, India to understand how life skills program implemented by Room to Read India influences girls' lives.



Baseline survey was conducted with 2,399 girls



50% of the girls were in the Room to Read India's Program and rest 50% were selected separately



Study spanned across 119 schools and 2 years



Endline survey was conducted with 2,387 girls

THE STUDY'S FINDINGS

The evaluation revealed that with the support of a mentor and life skills curriculum, girls can stay in school longer and cultivate leadership and life skills in just two years.

Creative Problem Solving



Relationship Building



Decision Making



Expressing Agency Over One's Life



6%

From January 1 2022, to December 31 2022, Room to Read's Girls' Education Program dropout rate reduced to only 6%



PROJECT VIJAYI



With support from IKEA Foundation, Room to Read India implemented an innovative program to empower approximately 70,000 girls through a life-skills-based intervention. This 3+ year intervention is unique, as it covers both – the direct implementation of GEP by Room to Read India in selected government schools and also the scale-up model, which extends elements of Room to Read India's GEP across all (360+) residential institutions of Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh.

EMPOWERING GIRLS TO LEAD SUCCESSFUL LIVES! IKEA PROJECT STUDY

Three years end-of-the-project study to record the effect of life skills on empowering girls

As part of the grant agreement with the IKEA Foundation, Room to Read India planned to conduct an evaluation to quantitatively measure changes in life skills and employment aspirations among girls benefitting from the intervention. However, due to school closure during COVID-19, Room to Read India shifted its research strategy and instead conducted an end-of-project review that used predominantly qualitative interviews to (A) understand how students and educators experienced the life skills intervention and (B) identify ways in which Room to Read India's implementation approach to life skills education – particularly in response to challenges presented by COVID-19 – could be improved.

180 girls, 19 teachers,
and 38 wardens
surveyed

Study spanned across
30 residential schools
(18 from Chhattisgarh
and 12 from Rajasthan)

Incorporated
qualitative &
quantitative mixed
modality approach

THE STUDY'S FINDINGS

Students, teachers, and wardens believed the program had positively contributed to girls' lives. Overall, 98 percent of students reported that the program helped them in their daily lives, and 95 percent said it helped prepare them for the future. 87 percent reported that the program had helped or supported them during COVID-19.

Teachers and wardens believed that the program had positively influenced their lives. Implementation of the program during COVID-19 related school closures was challenging due to technology access.

Students, teachers, and wardens had strong positive impressions of the program's materials. Teachers and wardens had favorable impressions of the support they received from Room to Read India.

THE STUDY'S RECOMMENDATIONS

Explore best practices
in delivering programs
remotely to students

Revisit and refine the
approach to virtual
training of teachers

Revisit and refine
the guided material
support, including the
student handbook

Provide more
audio-visual content




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