Girls’ Education Program
November 2010

The goal of Room to Read’s Girls’ Education program is for girls to complete secondary school and have the skills necessary to negotiate key life decisions. Specifically, the program seeks to achieve the following outcomes:

- Increase years of schooling for girls
- Increase girls’ self-awareness, decision-making and problem-solving skills
- Increase the girl-friendliness of school environments
- Increase family, peer, and community awareness and support of girls’ education
- Increase collaboration with government to support policies and programs to promote girls’ education

Room to Read is adopting a worldwide approach to the Girls’ Education program in which all girls in selected schools will be identified as primary program beneficiaries and eligible for at least some level of program support. This enhanced approach expands on the girl-based approach that Room to Read has implemented in many countries over the last decade. In the girl-based approach, individual girls are selected for program participation—in some cases a relatively small number of girls per school—and receive a combination of material and academic support as well as life skills education. In contrast, under the new approach, all girls in the selected school will be offered life skills education and have access to a trusted female mentor; at the same time, it will still be a subset of girls in those schools who will be targeted for material and academic support based on their needs. The overall program includes nine activity sets: 1) life skills education; 2) mentoring; 3) academic support; 4) material support; gender-responsive teaching; 6) school infrastructure to create friendly environments; 7) stakeholder engagement; 8) partnership with governments and other NGOs; and 9) research, assessment, monitoring and evaluation.

Including all girls in a school in program activities will not only improve opportunities for many more girls to complete secondary school but will also have profound effects on views about girls’ education at the school and community levels. The approach makes it more likely to increase the participation of school teachers and administrators, community members, local government officials and participants’ family members and peers in Room to Read activities. Engaging a wider range of stakeholders in school and community level girls’ education activities can then increase the girl-friendliness of the school environment and within the community. This contributes to a “multiplier effect” of positive outcomes for program participants and future generations of girls in the target areas. The enhanced approach also supports a more efficient use of resources since there are economies of scale created when there is programming for larger numbers of girls supported at one location. And among girls themselves, the enhanced program approach will create opportunities for more inclusive mutual support among girls as all will be participants rather than a specific group singled out for support from Room to Read.

Room to Read’s approach to targeting and section for the Girls’ Education program is to work in areas that demonstrate economic need and verifiable gender inequality in education. The needs and inequality, though, should not be so great that Room to Read would have a limited chance of transforming community values about the importance of secondary education for girls even with girls’ education programming and material support. In keeping with this view, the Girls’ Education program will target schools in communities that have need but also minimum required conditions for program success. This includes a basic level of local support and functionality in a school and community. Some of the criteria used for targeting and selection will be consistently used worldwide (e.g., gender disparities in enrollment, inequalities in completion, or inequalities in academic achievement), while Country teams may develop others based on their local contexts (e.g., inequitable class practices, violence, or trafficking).

In the coming years, Room to Read will target lower secondary schools to address widespread dropout between primary and secondary school and develop the enhanced program approach and activities in a consistent environment. As scholars transition into upper secondary school, girls who continue to have economic or academic needs will receive more targeted individual support.
## Program Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>2009 (Q4)</th>
<th>2010 (planned)</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>234</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambodia</td>
<td>1,622</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1,622</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>2,081</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>2,781</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laos</td>
<td>821</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>1,071</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>1,570</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>1,670</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>1,194</td>
<td>350*</td>
<td>1,544</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>1,003</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>1,153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zambia</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>8,725</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,550</strong></td>
<td><strong>10,275</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Enhanced GEP Approach

Current Approach: Selected girls in a school

Way Forward:
- All girls in a school in a disadvantaged community that has verifiable gender inequality

Rationale:
- Increased impact (qualitative & quantitative)
- Increased efficiencies
- Increased sustainability
- Increased inclusivity / decreased exclusivity
Updated Program Model

- Community engagement
- Parent engagement
- Teacher professional development
- Infrastructure as needed

Life skills education
Mentoring

Financial support
Academic support

Families, schools and communities
Cohorts of Girls

World Change Starts with Educated Children®