



**Thank you for investing in Room to Read in 2018 and for your investment in the children, communities and families that we serve around the world.**

Thanks to your support, this past year was record-setting for us as we embarked on numerous initiatives designed to integrate our life-changing educational models with government schools, and in doing so, achieve unprecedented scale.

With your help, we have now reached more than 16.6 million children across 16 countries with our programs. Your belief in the power of education to change lives has helped us to bring our game-changing literacy and girls' education interventions to children in more than 30,000 communities. These students now have access to a new world of opportunities, and we cannot thank you enough for helping them receive the education they need and deserve.

While these numbers are incredible, what we are most proud of is the story behind the numbers and the systemic change that we are affecting through many of the projects highlighted in this report. Over the past 18 years we have generated unequivocal proof that our programs improve children's literacy and girls' life outcomes. We are now paving the path for governments to adopt, integrate and institutionalize our interventions to benefit children across entire communities and countries.

We hope you enjoy reading about the accomplishments that you helped us to achieve in 2018, and we look forward to another exciting year as we work with you to reach more children in 2019!

## LITERACY RESULTS

### CHILDREN BENEFITED

NEW IN 2018	CUMULATIVE THROUGH 2018
2.1M*	14.3M*

### COMMUNITIES BENEFITED

NEW IN 2018	CUMULATIVE THROUGH 2018
4,200*	34K*

### BOOKS PUBLISHED

NEW IN 2018	CUMULATIVE THROUGH 2018
280	1,750

### TEACHERS TRAINED

2018
13,500*

## GIRLS' EDUCATION RESULTS

### GIRLS BENEFITED

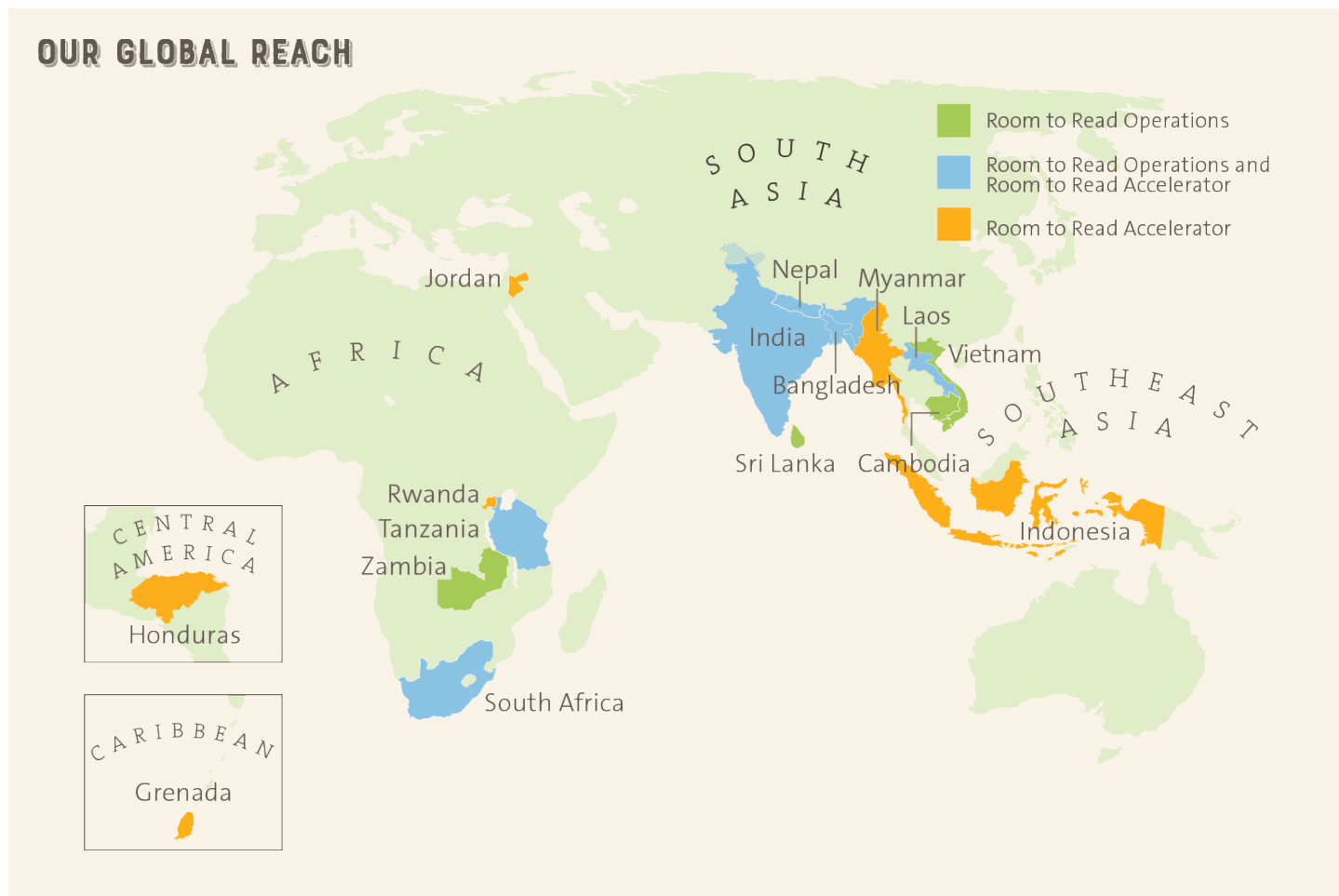
TOTAL IN 2018	CUMULATIVE THROUGH 2018
70K*	95K*

### SECONDARY SCHOOL GRADUATES

NEW IN 2018	CUMULATIVE THROUGH 2018
1,300*	6,200*

## SCALING OUR REACH

In 2018, your investment helped us to engage government, nonprofit and private-sector partners to scale our reach and support an increasing number of children in low-income communities. Below are examples of some of these incredible partnerships and the impact you helped us achieve.



### Bangladesh: Promoting Literacy in Cox's Bazar

We launched an exciting new project in the Cox's Bazar district of Bangladesh in 2018, which is a region where more than 900,000 Rohingya refugees (half of whom are under the age of 18) are currently displaced. Through the project, we are working with UNICEF to support partners in Bangladesh's education sector on a "Learning Competency Framework and Approach" by helping to assess students' literacy in English and Myanmar. We are also developing teaching and learning materials to use in the more than 300 learning centers located in the district's refugee camps. More than 140,000 children and 2,200 teachers will benefit from this work.

## **Honduras: Strengthening the Children's Publishing Industry**

We launched a technical assistance project in Honduras — our first Central American country — in 2018 to build the capacity of authors, illustrators, publishers and the government to create high-quality children's books. The three-year project is funded by USAID and supports the sustainability of the country's children's publishing industry through the establishment of a National Book Committee and a series of workshops on best practices in children's book creation.

## **India: Advancing Girls' Education at Scale**

In 2018, we launched a three-year project in partnership with the IKEA Foundation to empower adolescent girls at scale across the Indian states of Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan. The project will empower more than 68,000 11 to 13-year-old girls through a life-skills based intervention. The goal of the intervention is to improve girls' learning and life outcomes, allowing them to progress through secondary school with the ability to think critically and rely on themselves to meet day-to-day challenges. This large-scale project is based on a scaffolded approach that will ultimately enable the state governments to replicate and expand the intervention to reach all adolescent girls in each state.



## **GIRLS' EDUCATION RESULTS HIGHLIGHT: ALUMNAE TRACER STUDY**

**Our recent "Alumnae Tracer Study" in India confirmed that our Girls' Education Program has had an important and lasting effect on young women who completed our program in Delhi and Uttarakhand between 2010–2014. Specific findings from the study include:**

### **ALUMNAE HAVE DELAYED MARRIAGE**

Most young women interviewed, who were between the ages of 21 and 25, have delayed marriage.

### **ALUMNAE HAVE PURSUED TERTIARY EDUCATION AT A HIGH RATE**

Many of the program alumnae have pursued higher education after graduating from secondary school.

### **ALUMNAE ARE PURSUING CAREERS**

Thirty-eight percent of the alumnae pursued full-time work — often in private organizations or businesses — immediately after completing grade 12. Almost all who worked also pursued higher education degrees at some point, either while working or after making a transition from work.

### **ALUMNAE HAVE HEALTHY APPROACHES TO THEIR GOALS, THEIR FUTURES AND THEIR RELATIONSHIPS**

Life skills that young women learned and used in the Girls' Education Program have supported their decision-making and problem-solving in the pursuit of their future goals. The program has also shown impact on changing young women's ways of thinking about themselves, their goals, futures and relationships.



## **Indonesia: Creating a Digital Learning Platform**

Working in partnership with Google.org, we are creating a digital open-source learning platform that combines literacy development tools for educators with original children's book titles developed and published in Bahasa Indonesia. In addition to supporting a culture of reading in the country, the platform will also lay a foundation to grow Room to Read's role in the education technology space so that we can reach more children around the world with life-changing educational resources.



## **Tanzania: Supporting Quality Government Learning Materials**

As part of USAID's *Tusome Pamoja* (Let's Read Together) project, Room to Read partnered with RTI International and the ministries of education in mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar to improve Swahili-language teaching and learning materials. We produced a total of 116 fiction and nonfiction books for students in grades 1–4 and scripted lessons for teachers to use in literacy instruction for all four grades. These materials were shared in local primary schools, benefiting more than 1.4 million children.



## **Vietnam: Expanding our Library Model**

We have a unique opportunity to build libraries at scale, in partnership with the Vietnamese government. This partnership builds on the success of a government "Friendly Primary School Library Program" that used parts of our library model to help students develop a habit of reading. Inspired by the program's results, the government is now interested in scaling our approach further. Launched in 2018, the new three-year project will create hundreds of child-friendly libraries in the communities that need them most and implement an innovative three-tiered approach that will support eventual government ownership of our model.



## OPERATIONAL UPDATES

In January 2018, Dr. Geetha Murali was appointed as our new CEO, having previously worked for the organization for nearly nine years and serving most recently as our Chief of Development and Communications Officer. Below are several additional exciting highlights from the year.



### **New Global Board Chair**

John Ridding, CEO of the Financial Times Group, was named as our new Board Chair in March 2018. Mr. Ridding has served on our Board since 2007 and is also a member of our U.K. regional development board.

### **New India Advisory Board**

In October 2018, we launched a new India Regional Development Board with three founding members: Board Chair Gaurav Dalmia, Chairman of Dalmia Group Holdings; Khozem Merchant, Partner – India Head at Brunswick Group; and Nandini Piramal, Executive Director of Piramal Enterprises Ltd. This is a significant step supporting our growth in India as the board looks to recruit additional members and raise awareness and funds for our work in the country.

### **Record Revenue**

We are excited to share that we achieved our greatest single-year revenue results in Room to Read's history in 2018. This is the second consecutive year in which we have exceeded our revenue goals, thanks to the incredible generosity of our global community. As of January 10, 2019 we have booked revenue of \$52.2 million, which is 6 percent over revenue in 2017. This is against a target of \$51.5 million.





## Room to Read Named a Goalkeeper Accelerator

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation named Room to Read a 2018 Goalkeepers Accelerator. This recognition is in light of our ability to catalyze progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals through our Literacy Program. Credit Suisse, Dubai Cares and Four Acre Trust have partnered with us in this effort to scale our work in India, Vietnam and South Africa, respectively. These commitments of more than \$3.5 million will support our goal of reaching more than 1.1 million additional children in these countries over the next three years.



## Preparing for our Next Strategic Plan

We have begun to identify the priorities and activities for our next strategic plan, which will guide our work from 2020–2024. With our core programmatic expertise solidly in place — delivered through both direct programming and technical assistance — we are now in a position to build a path toward scale and system-level international influence. We will focus on a set of four components, all falling under the theme of removing barriers to scale:

### 1. Increasing program access, integration and influence

Reach a more diverse set of children who have not yet been reached; amplify the impact of educators and other professionals working or training to work in schools (and potentially the impact of families and communities where systems are weak); and ultimately yield better, measurable outcomes.

### 2. Program and people operations

Investments in creating an environment that effectively and efficiently attracts and retains top talent

### 3. Brand building: cementing our role as thought leaders and as a household name

Marketing and communications strategies that transform Room to Read into a recognizable brand globally

### 4. Revenue and financial sustainability

Building the financial sustainability of the organization so that we can ensure strategic investments toward our programs that will be increasingly adopted, integrated, and institutionalized by governments

The new plan will be finalized this summer and released at the end of 2019.



# THANK YOU!

**Our work is only possible because of you. Thank you for partnering with us to change the world through education. We look forward to continuing this journey with you in 2019!**