



Room to Read®

World Change Starts with Educated Children.®

**REPORT: “BONNIE’S BIG IDEA”
NOVEMBER 2011**

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Project title: To support the Reading Room, Local Language Publishing, and Girls’ Education programs in India. Additionally, to provide support for implementing India’s Literacy Instruction pilot.

Grant purpose: To support India’s Literacy Instruction pilot, establish 42 libraries, publish 3 local language children’s book titles, and support girls’ education in India in 2011.

Enclosures: Appendix I: Geographic Need for Programming
Appendix II: Summary of titles funded by “Bonnie’s Big Idea”
Appendix III: Story from the Field
Appendix IV: Photos of libraries funded by “Bonnie’s Big Idea”
Appendix V: Photos of our Girls’ Education participants
Appendix VI: Photos of the Literacy Instruction pilot

Executive Summary

Room to Read is proud to partner with “Bonnie’s Big Idea” to support our Reading Room, Local Language Publishing, and Girls’ Education programs in India, as well as to support our country-wide Literacy Instruction pilot. Providing much needed resources to underserved communities, this partnership will enhance educational opportunities for children living across a number of states in India. By establishing 42 libraries, publishing 3 local language children’s book titles, and supporting our Literacy Instruction pilot and Girls’ Education program, this grant has had a significant impact on thousands of young students in primary and secondary school. This report details our progress in meeting the terms of our 2011 grant, including an overview of your funded projects.

Update on Room to Read India

During the reporting period, our India team continued to support the growth of our existing programs by welcoming an additional 800 girls to our Girls’ Education program, establishing 850 new libraries, and publishing 21 new local language children’s book titles. In addition, our India team participated in a Room to Read study entitled, *Young Women’s Success in Tertiary Education*. As a result of the Clinton Global Initiative’s Girls’ Secondary Education Subgroup, Room to Read, the Academy for Educational Development, and Amenons Nos Filles a l’Ecole partnered with the MasterCard Foundation to lead a study on girls’ success in tertiary education. The study took place in Cambodia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, India, and Mauritania, and the purpose was to investigate the success factors that enable a girl from a rural or economically disadvantaged background to make the transition to tertiary education. As a result of this study, Room to Read expects to create short information guides for secondary school girls, their families, governments, and donors about the opportunities and challenges associated with college and university scholarships. We additionally expect to use information gleaned from this study to inform and strengthen our Girls’ Education program, which is specifically aimed at promoting girls’ long-term educational success. This report is currently available at the following URL: <http://www.roomtoread.org/document.doc?id=508>.

Room to Read India is currently in the process of implementing our 2010 - 2014 strategic plan, a plan which includes the design and implementation of Literacy Instruction pilots in the countries where we work. These pilots complement and build upon our existing work of establishing libraries and publishing local language children’s materials in order to create literate environments. Together, these programs help to ensure that children have the skills and resources they need to become independent readers. In India, Room to Read’s Literacy Instruction pilot began in July of 2008 and is currently in its fourth year of implementation. In 2011, the pilot has served 13,503 students (7,562 boys and 5,942 girls) in Grade 1 and Grade 2 and 310 teachers across 310 schools in Rajasthan and Uttarakhand.

Update on the Reading Room Program in India

In 2011, Room to Read India is in the process of establishing 850 new libraries across Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, and Uttarakhand. In addition, our India team is working to enable the long-term sustainability of our 2009 and 2010 libraries by providing books and other educational resources, conducting monitoring visits to identify operational strengths and weaknesses, and holding library management trainings for teachers, librarians, and school administrators.

As a major goal of our Reading Room program is to increase the participation of state governments in planning and implementing our programs, our India team has signed formal Memorandums of Understanding with all state governments, which lay out their distinct roles and responsibilities for implementing the Reading Room (library) program in their communities. The state governments currently support this program by ensuring that each school with a

Room to Read library hosts a daily classroom period for students to take full advantage of library resources. In addition, state governments provide stationary and children's magazines to the libraries and ensure that there is at least one teacher-librarian to manage daily use. Lastly, state governments are responsible for coordinating library management trainings and monitoring progress made at each project site in order to report back to block and district officials at monthly government meetings.

Update on Libraries Funded by “Bonnie’s Big Idea”

At the beginning of each calendar year, our India team creates a country-wide implementation calendar to help our field staff ensure that each new library is established on-time. With this in mind, all 42 libraries funded by “Bonnie’s Big Idea” are at the same stage of establishment.¹ The following paragraphs describe the locations of these 42 projects as well as outlining the progress that our teams have made throughout the reporting period in establishing these projects.

The library projects funded by “Bonnie’s Big Idea” are located in the following regions: Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, and Uttarakhand. As these locations represent a wide range of populations and cultures, Appendix I provides detailed information on the educational need present in each area.

Implementation Activities

In order to establish these projects, our India team conducted a comprehensive needs assessment, which helped us to investigate each region’s need for our support, as well as the schools’ capacity to ensure the long-term sustainability of the projects and community involvement. After completing this process and selecting project sites, our team began to work with local residents, parents, and government officials to garner public support for each new library project. In order to encourage local involvement, our India team used what we call a Challenge Grant model to establish each library. This grant requires each community to pledge its support by providing in-kind donations (e.g. labor, space) and/or financial contributions, which not only provides local residents with an opportunity to get involved in the project, but also helps the communities feel pride and ownership of the library’s success. For the 42 libraries funded by “Bonnie’s Big Idea” local communities provided the following supports to assist in the establishment process:

- Physical space to house each library
- Electricity
- Water
- Stationary supplies
- A point teacher to manage the day-to-day usage of the libraries

These contributions helped to build local interest in each project and demonstrated a long-term commitment to supporting the new libraries.

After the Challenge Grants were fulfilled, our India team began delivering books and furniture to each of the 42 projects. Throughout the reporting period, these libraries received 19,698 books, averaging 500 books per project. Comprising a combination of local language and English titles, each book was selected in accordance with Room to Read’s book leveling classification strategy. Book leveling is the process of matching titles to the reading abilities and interests of students using the libraries. This classification strategy enables children with differing reading levels to choose books that are at their comfort level. It also fosters children’s independent use of the library by enabling children to easily self-select books when they may be using the library unaided by a teacher. As Room to Read will continue to provide support to

¹ As Room to Read has just started working in Maharashtra in January 2011, these projects are on a slightly different calendar in order to account for time needed to launch the Reading Room program in this region. These libraries will open in December 2011.

these libraries through 2013, our India team will continue to deliver books to each project at different phases over the next three years.

Supplementing book deliveries, our team outfitted each library with key furniture, including book shelves, chairs, desks, tables, and floor mats. These deliveries ensure that schools have the supplies they need to organize each library and to host library activities in a well-resourced classroom. For projects in Maharashtra, our India team will deliver library books and furniture in December of 2011. This delay in delivery is due to the fact that our India team only began working in this region in January 2011, creating a necessary period of field training for both our new field staff and government partners. With this in mind, libraries established in Maharashtra are following a slightly different implementation calendar and will be established in December 2011 rather than August 2011. We look forward to providing you with updates on the Maharashtra projects in our next report.

Our India team worked throughout the reporting period to expand our relationship with the government by identifying local and national government partners to support the initial stages of library establishment and program implementation. In collaboration with these partners, our team hosted a series of library management trainings, which were attended by 663 teachers, librarians, and school administrators working to support the projects funded by “Bonnie’s Big Idea.” The topics covered during these trainings included the following:

- Introduction to Room to Read and the Reading Room program
- The proper use of library materials and resources
- Introduction to partner NGOs and ways in which they can offer assistance and support
- The role of teachers in managing the library
- Best practices from other libraries across the country
- Room to Read’s book leveling strategy²
- The formation of Children’s Management Committees³

These trainings will continue throughout 2013 and provide various opportunities for school staff to sharpen their skills and develop strategies for engaging students and the broader school community.

Lastly, the libraries funded by “Bonnie’s Big Idea” were monitored throughout the reporting period to ensure that each project was functioning properly and to provide technical support when needed. Our India team visited each library twice per month, during which time our India team was able to:

- Monitor each library’s process implementation and operations
- Observe students utilizing library resources and interacting with library staff
- Assess each school’s progress towards creating a Children’s Management Committee
- Observe the level of teacher engagement
- Monitor the quality and frequency of library activities
- Assess the quality of library record-keeping and the display of resources

Through these monitoring visits our India team provided on-site coaching and addressed any issues or concerns that arose during the year. Continuing throughout Room to Read’s three-year commitment, these visits will enable teachers and librarians to gain the skills needed to manage their projects once Room to Read’s support has come to an end.

Update on the Literacy Instruction Pilot

² Book leveling is the system of classifying books to best match students’ age, ability, and grade level.

³ Children’s Management Committees are groups of students who help with library check out, book organization, and assist librarians in managing the library’s daily operations.

In India, Room to Read's Literacy Instruction pilot began in July of 2008 and is currently in its fourth year of implementation. In 2011, the pilot is serving 13,503 students (7,562 boys and 5,942 girls) in Grade 1 and Grade 2 and 310 teachers across 310 schools in Rajasthan and Uttarakhand. The pilot is implemented in Hindi, the national language of instruction in these states.

While Room to Read's literacy instruction model has not changed its intended outcomes over the past three years of implementation, the model itself has changed in a few significant ways. For example, in the first year of implementation, teachers and literacy facilitators requested that Room to Read provide more structure to the program, such as additional activities and materials to be used in the classroom. In year two and three, after revising the instructional design to integrate additional lesson plans and reading resources, teachers provided further feedback that the new design provided too many classroom activities and resource materials and that there was not enough instructional time available to complete the lessons. As a result, teachers were overwhelmed and felt they could not meet the objectives of the program.

This year, Room to Read has simplified the pilot with feedback from teachers and information gathered during classroom observations. The new strategies and revised instructional approach were trialed before finalization, and we are happy to report that the new model reflects the appropriate amount of direction and detail for teachers, while still allowing for teacher-adaptation in terms of pace and selected activities of the program.

In summary, the improvements made to the pilot for year four are stated below:

- Increased focus on decoding with detailed activities for teachers and an emphasis on the use of multiple instructional strategies (e.g. big books, shared reading, silent reading, oral work, pre-writing and writing activities, etc.).
- Teacher activities for both textbooks and storybooks, and structured oral work (focus on specific activities to target listening comprehension, phonological awareness, etc.).
- Increased use of storybooks (as opposed to informational texts or the textbooks), both for reading instruction and practice.
- Addition of workbooks for all stages of reading and writing instruction (including the very beginning of pre-writing such as drawing).
- Formal vocabulary instruction.
- Time and activities for revision and remediation (as opposed to new material in each lesson).
- Teacher-implemented classroom assessments to provide teachers with feedback on student learning (not a part of the initial model) that mirrors competencies of the curriculum and program (an improvement for year 4).
- Alignment with not just the outcomes of the state curriculum, but also the textbook content and decoding sequence by state (important for teacher-buy in and government support).

As we look ahead to the upcoming year, our India team will continue to strengthen the pilot in a number of ways. The following are the three major areas that our India team will work on in the coming year: 1) improved student tracking by ensuring that schools are utilizing the data to make immediate improvements in the classroom; 2) improved relationships with government officials by conducting state-level workshops on literacy instruction and by hosting quarterly meetings to share progress made; and 3) improved onsite support by providing literacy facilitators with monitoring tools that can be used to assess progress made on our core objectives.

Update on the Girls' Education Program

Our Girls' Education program in India works to provide young women with the opportunities needed to succeed both in the classroom and outside of it. This year, 3,000 young women in

India are gaining access to material and non-material supports,⁴ including 800 new girl participants who joined the program this year. Operating in five of the eight regions where Room to Read has a presence (Delhi, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, Madhya Pradesh, and Andhra Pradesh), our India team is working to foster an environment that is both supportive and affirming of young women in their efforts to complete secondary school. The section below provides an overview of the activities that have taken place throughout the reporting period to support the girls supported by “Bonnie’s Big Idea.”

During the reporting period, girl participants in our program received a number of supports, including school supplies (e.g. school uniforms, shoes, socks, textbooks, notebooks, stationary, and backpacks) and school fees. In addition, participants received a number of trainings and other support services, including life skills training and learning camps. Some of these activities are described below:

- **Life Skills Trainings:** Customized workshops were held on topics that supported girls’ attainment of core life skills, including financial literacy, entrepreneurship, leadership, negotiation and problem solving, building positive relationships with peers, and gender and sexuality.
- **Development Camps:** Girls were engaged in various arts and crafts activities (e.g. pottery), life skills sessions (e.g. teamwork and breaking stereotypes), cultural performances (e.g. dancing, singing, and dramatizations), and adventure sports (e.g. wall climbing and river crossing).
- **Exposure Visits:** Visits to places outside of girls’ communities were conducted, including visits to the National Museum of Science in Delhi, Bhopal (the capital city of Madhya Pradesh), the Nanda Devi Glaciers in Uttarakhand, and International Cricket Council events to interact with the India and England players as well as with BBC TV and radio commentary crews.
- **Medical Exams:** Check-ups were provided to girls who were in need of medical screenings. In the case of Andhra Pradesh, some girls tested positive for tuberculosis. Currently, NGO partners are working with our country office staff to identify resources and medical treatment for these girls at the local level.
- **Academic Support:** Tutoring sessions were regularly provided to girls who were in need of extra subject-based support, especially in English, science, and math. In addition, practice tests were provided to girls who were in need of support to prepare for end-of-year exams.
- **Monitoring and evaluation:** With support from a Room to Read fellow, our India team participated in a study to assess the experiences of girls who have completed secondary school and are transitioning to their next phase of life. The study helped our team gather important information on the challenges that girls encounter in achieving their immediate post-secondary goals, as well as the resources they have leveraged to overcome challenges and achieve their goals. Room to Read India intends to use information gathered from this study to inform life skills training in the future and help girls develop career and higher education plans.
- **Quarterly Newsletter:** The 14th issue of the girls’ education newsletter was given to all girls in the India program. As in the past, the newsletter provided them with information on a range of topics, including content written by their peers about experiences as participants in the Girls’ Education program. In Andhra Pradesh, the newsletter was additionally provided to girls in Telugu, since this is one of the primary languages spoken by girls who participate in our Girls’ Education program in that state.

In addition to the supports provided to the girls, a host of meetings and events were held for NGO partners, government partners, and parents. The purpose of these meetings was to engage and educate the broader community on the importance of gender equality in education. The highlights and details associated with these activities are outlined below.

⁴ Material supports include books, school uniforms, and school tuition while non-material supports include mentoring and life skills training.

- Workshops continued to be held for parents on engaging their children in discussions around higher education and topics their daughters learned during life skills training, especially topics related to the Entrepreneurial Skills Package.⁵
- Home visits were made by Social Mobilizers to discuss more child-specific topics with parents, such as girls' performance in school and school attendance.
- A presentation was conducted for members of the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyaan (SSA) of Chhattisgarh, a state where the Girls' Education program will be implemented during the 2011/2012 school year. The presentation provided an opportunity for government officials to openly discuss their interest and perspective on co-investing in the program. The result of the presentation was a signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Room to Read and the State Government of Chhattisgarh to jointly implement the program in select schools.
- Building off of the team's success in working with the State Government of Chhattisgarh, our India team additionally held government meetings and presentations for state governments in Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, Madhya Pradesh, and Andhra Pradesh. The team has since signed our first Girls' Education MoU with the State Government of Andhra Pradesh and looks forward to doing the same with the remaining states.
- A Girls' Education program workshop was held in Delhi for program staff from all countries of operation. The workshop provided our teams with an opportunity to share best practices across countries, discuss potential solutions to cross-national challenges, and share key resources (e.g. life skills education manuals, Entrepreneurial Skills Package materials).
- State-level meetings were held for NGO partners to review financial and accounting management systems, programmatic strategy, and solutions for addressing programmatic challenges (e.g. identifying resources in the community to help girls who have tested positive for tuberculosis).
- A special task force made-up of program staff was created to address the following key topics: partnership management, stakeholder management, mentoring, academic support, and material support. The task force is charged with collecting and documenting information that will help the global Girls' Education program identify common best practices; determine standard guidelines for each of the content areas (e.g. life skills training, monitoring and evaluation); and devise global indicators that can be used across countries to measure the impact of our success.

As we continue to provide the abovementioned supports throughout the remaining months of 2011, we look forward to updating you on our progress in future reports.

Update on the Local Language Program in India

Our Local Language Publishing program is designed to increase primary school students' access to quality texts published in the local language. The program also aims to increase the capacity of writers and illustrators to create titles that are appropriate and engaging for young audiences.

As we work to strengthen students' literacy skills and promote the usage of books across our libraries, our Local Language Publishing program is critical to ensuring that children and teachers who utilize our libraries have access to a wide-variety of reading materials. As a result, our team produces variants of books that encourage student-teacher engagement through classroom activities (e.g. larger flipbooks, curriculum-linked fact books and minority language books). By creating subject-based books that are linked to the school curriculum, our team is able to generate interest on the part of the teacher to use these resources in his/her classroom and to build students' vocabulary in science, math, and other subjects. This year, our India team is developing 21 new titles, a collection of books which will incorporate folktales, historical

⁵ With support from the Goldman Sachs Foundation, our India team has developed an Entrepreneurial Skills Package, which is being provided to a subset of 9th-12th grade girls in our Girls' Education Program and focuses on career exposure and role-modeling, marketplace exposure and basic financial literacy. We are working to determine which elements of the Entrepreneurial Skills Package will become a standard part of our life-skills component for this grade range.

fiction, and poetry to highlight subject-based material that can be used to compliment classroom lessons.

Titles Funded by “Bonnie’s Big Idea”

In 2011, “Bonnie’s Big Idea” funded three local language titles in India. Targeted towards primary school readers, these titles provide young students with engaging materials to help them enhance their interest and ability to read. The following descriptions provide an overview of these three titles with a more detailed summary offered in Appendix II:

- Anjan: Anjan, is a storybook created for 3rd grade students. A story of courage and acceptance, Anjan tells the true story of Anjan Nandi, one of India’s star cricket players. Both deaf and mute, Anjan was placed into a mainstream classroom as a young boy and faced teasing and bullying throughout his first years of school. Eventually, Anjan learned to use sign language to communicate with his teachers and classmates, allowing his peers to see his true personality and intellect for the first time. Growing up to be a national hero, this story is meant to inspire its readers to practice acceptance and to be kind to all people regardless of their abilities. Positioning these lessons in a way that is both engaging and relevant to a young child, Anjan highlights the ability of the Local Language Publishing program to bring key life lessons to young readers in a way that speaks to their interests, reading levels, and experiences.
- Hide and Seek: Hide and Seek, or Luka Chhipi in Hindi, tells the story of a young butterfly and bee who decide to play hide and seek in a lush garden. Exploring the flowers and trees around them, the two friends play well until the evening where they get the opportunity to explore nature after the sun goes down. Teaching students about the power of friendship and the beauty of nature, this title is centered on the game of hide-and-seek, an activity that many of our young readers can easily relate to and understand.
- The Mouse Forgets His Clever Ploy: The Mouse Forgets His Clever Ploy or Chuhae Ji Bhulae Chaturai in Hindi, is a Big Book⁶ targeted towards young readers. In this story, a young cat discovers a bowl of rich, creamy milk and instantly devours its contents. Sleepy from his overindulgence, the cat immediately falls asleep with milk still dripping from his whiskers. Observing the sleeping animal and smelling the rich milk on the floor, a young mouse decides to test his luck and drink straight from the cat’s whiskers. Providing students with lessons on adventure, curiosity, and bravery, the story ends well for the young mouse and his courage is rewarded with a delicious treat. Using bright images and two animals that students are familiar with, the story allows its readers to connect with the content and imagery on a variety of levels.

Our India team is currently in the process of finalizing the illustration and design for these three titles and the completed works will be sent to the printer in December 2011. Set to print 25,500 copies of the three titles (8,500 of each individual work), our India team will be distributing copies to all Room to Read libraries established in 2010 and 2011. Additional distributions of Anjan, Hide and Seek, and The Mouse Forgets His Clever Ploy will take place throughout 2012 and will include recipients such as government schools and NGO partners. By maintaining a diverse distribution plan our India team is able to increase both the range and scope of the title’s impact, and expose a wide range of students to quality books created with their skill sets and interests in mind.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Since 2008, Room to Read has collected a set of cross-nationally consistent indicators for each of its programs. These global indicators are designed to inform broad organizational activities related to program inputs, outputs, and outcomes. The table below provides an overview of the Global Indicator (GI) results of our India-based programs in 2009 and 2010 across our

⁶ BIG BOOK

countries of operation. This data provides important information about large-scale trends and Room to Read's programmatic successes.

Reading Room Program

No.	Global Indicator	2009 GI	2010 GI
1	Number of libraries in three year period of active support	2,315	2,615
2	Number of local language and/or English books provided	911,779	1,398,843
3	Number of books checked out by library users	3,819,830	7,150,619
4	Percentage of libraries where school personnel are trained by Room to Read	92%	98%
5	Average number of hours per week each student/class can access the library	2.3	1.2
6	Percentage of libraries with book classification systems in place	96%	95%
7	Percentage of libraries that have functional check-out systems	95%	96%

Local Language Publishing Program

No.	Global Indicator	2009 GI	2010 GI
1	Number of Room to Read titles published	18	18
2	Number of Room to Read books distributed to Room to Read libraries	74,142	66,842
3	Number of Room to Read books donated to other organizations	481	6,257
4	Number of local authors and illustrators hired to create books	34	34
5	Number of local authors and illustrators who received training ⁷	21	25
6	Number of workshops held for authors and illustrators to improve their skills	2	2

Girls' Education Program

No.	Global Indicator	2009 GI	2010 GI
1	Number of girls who are supported by our program	2,184	2,882
2	Percentage of scholars who have dropped out of the program	2.5%	3.7%
3	Percentage of scholars who advanced to the next grade	90%	94%
4	Percentage of scholars who transitioned from primary school to secondary school	93%	93%
5	Number of scholars who received academic support	1,569	2,003
6	Number of scholars who participated in life skills activities	1,096	1,645

Challenges

Throughout the reporting period our India team faced a number of challenges when implementing the Reading Room, Local Language Publishing, and Girls' Education programs. The following paragraphs describe these challenges and outline the ways in which our India team has worked to overcome and mitigate these obstacles for the future:

- *Girls' Education* – In Uttarakhand, our team faces the challenge of traveling across very hilly terrain to provide services to girls that are located across a number of geographically distant villages.⁸ As a result, it has become very difficult for Social Mobilizers to travel to sites on a regular basis to implement a life skills training. Looking ahead, to mitigate this challenge, members of our state team will conduct intensive (two to three days long) life skills trainings to cover the life skills content. In the past, life skills trainings have taken place more frequently and over a period of one day.
- *Libraries* – Room to Read works within countries that contain hundreds, and sometimes

⁷ In 2008 and 2009, this calculation double-counted authors and illustrators who attended more than one workshop; in 2010, this calculation includes only unique workshop participants.

⁸ Many girls in the regions where we work in Uttarakhand walk between two and three hours to reach school.

thousands of languages. Oftentimes, there is an inconsistency between the language of instruction at schools and the language spoken at home. As a result, teachers frequently do not speak the range of languages spoken by their students and therefore, are not always able to fully take advantage of the local language resources produced by Room to Read's Local Language Publishing program. While this is a challenge that is outside the scope of our program, our teams mitigate this issue by selecting schools and communities in which the language of instruction is generally the same as the language spoken in the home. For children whose families have migrated from other communities, the problem of language still remains, and it is a challenge that our country teams continue to address and work around. For example, Room to Read has expanded the range of languages that our titles are published in, adding multiple minority languages in India last year and looking to potentially increase the number of languages supported in the future.

- Local Language Publishing – One of the most significant challenges faced by the Local Language Publishing program is the acquisition of local talent to create new works. Due to the vast size and separation of India's urban areas, recruitment often proves difficult as some regions lack access to the popular media outlets traditionally used to advertise workshops and other events. In order to mitigate this challenge, our India team has been working with local news outlets to figure out the best methods of advertisement (newspaper, radio, etc.) and is targeting their efforts towards regions that have a vibrant art and education environment.

Best Practices

Below are best practices that our India team continued to utilize in 2011 to further our work.

- Girls' Education – While the importance of life skills acquisition and its link to girls' development is widely acknowledged, Room to Read has found that few organizations focus on how the attainment of life skills support girls' completion of secondary school and future success. Furthermore, few organizations have created an assessment framework to evaluate the competency-level achieved by participants receiving life skills training. Through our new strategic plan and associated program implementation, we are addressing this gap in girls' education by creating a global framework that country teams can use to track girls' progress toward the attainment of life skills. This framework, entitled the Life Skills Competency Framework, was created by Room to Read with input from our Advisory Board and country staff. This year, our country teams utilized the framework to map out their existing life skills trainings and identify gaps in areas that Room to Read has identified as a core competency (please see Appendix II for a copy of Room to Read's Life Skills Competency Framework).
- Libraries – In most states, the practice of establishing home libraries during the summer break has become a planned activity carried out by the local school communities. As briefly mentioned above, during the vacation period, a set of books are kept at the home of a local teacher or student. The locations of these home libraries are then shared with children before the vacation begins, so they can easily access these resources throughout the summer. To support this effort, Field Coordinators have dedicated time to conducting educational activities with children during the summer months and promoting the use of library resources and book checkout. Witnessing the success of this activity, local government officials in Madhya Pradesh are promoting the use of summer libraries in their local communities and are encouraging district officials to establish summer libraries in school communities where Room to Read does not currently provide direct support.
- Local Language Publishing – Our India team is in the process of developing an official policy for the reprinting of previously published local language titles. In order to ensure that only the most impactful and beneficial titles are reprinted, our team is working with librarians, teachers, government officials, and students to gain feedback on which books spoke best to them and which titles they feel would be most beneficial to reproduce. Our India team

expects to have a draft of this policy by the end of 2011 and plans to implement the guidelines in early 2012.

Financials

India Literacy Instruction Pilot
Primary Reading Enhancement Program in India - Room to Read
Financial Report for the Period January 1, 2011 - June 30, 2011
(in USD)

	<i>Budget</i>		<i>Actual Spent</i>		<i>Variance</i>
	<i>Jan 1, 11 - June 30, 11</i>		<i>Jan 1, 11 - June 30, 11</i>		
Project Staff					
Senior Project Staff Salary	\$	14,418	\$	12,273	\$ (2,145)
Senior Reading Room Program Officer		4,842		3,489	(1,353)
PREP Program Officers		11,408		17,385	5,977
Reading Cell		5,167		3,937	(1,229)
Quality Managers		23,333		30,684	7,350
Subtotal Project Staff	\$	59,168	\$	67,768	\$ 8,600
Advisor & Consultants					
Advisor	\$	-	\$	-	-
Consultant(s) - Assessment and Diagnostic Tools		6,071		-	(6,071)
Consultant(s) - Reading Instruction		3,334		2,810	(524)
Consultant - Process Documentation		-		-	-
Subtotal Advisor & Consultants	\$	9,404	\$	2,810	\$ (6,594)
Travel					
Quality Manager Travel	\$	8,000	\$	5,783	\$ (2,217)
Reading Cell Travel		333		323	(10)
Reading Room Program Officer Travel		300		-	(300)
Senior Reading Room Program Officer travel		600		163	(437)
Global Program Officer Travel		1,500		-	(1,500)
Advisor travel		-		-	-
Process documentation consultant travel		-		-	-
Advisory Board Travel		-		-	-
Advisory Board Member, non-Delhi-based		1,027		-	(1,027)
Advisory Board Member, Delhi-based		111		-	(111)
Subtotal Project Staff Travel	\$	11,871	\$	6,269	\$ (5,602)
Trainings & Assessments					
Quality Manager training	\$	8,534	\$	2,268	\$ (6,266)
Facilitator trainings		-		-	-
Teacher trainings		15,640		6,268	(9,371)
Teacher training to implement mid-test		9,706		1,893	(7,812)
Post-test (end of Year 2 student assessment)		11,552		25,230	13,679
Dissemination Activities		8,633		874	(7,759)
Assessment Tool Printing		-		-	-
Subtotal Trainings	\$	54,064	\$	36,535	\$ (17,529)
Equipment & Supplies					
Computers & Software	\$	-	\$	-	-
Printer		-		-	-
Digital Cameras		-		-	-
Furniture		-		-	-
Stationery		167		-	(167)
Material development and printing (including transportation)		32,240		3,581	(28,659)
Stationery for schools		200		-	(200)
Lobbying expenses		-		-	-
Subtotal Equipment & Supplies	\$	32,607	\$	3,581	\$ (29,026)
Other Operating Costs - Funded by Goldman Sachs Foundation Grant					
TOTAL SPEND-OUT OF THE PRIMARY READING ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM	\$	167,114	\$	116,963	\$ (50,151)
BREAKDOWN FOR SPENDOUT OF PROGRAM SPENDING					
Hewlett Foundation			\$	83,333	
Goldman Sachs Foundation				12,783	
Harold and Mary Frances Hill				50,000	
Room to Read				30,371	
Total Spendout of Foundation Funding			\$	176,488	

**ROOM TO READ
GIRLS' EDUCATION PROGRAM
2011 Financial Spending Report**

	INDIA			
	YTD Through 3Q11		4Q11	FY 2011 Budget
	Budget	Actual		
DIRECT PROGRAM EXPENSE				
Pure Direct Expenses				
School Fees	\$ 9,986	\$ 11,656	\$ 4,931	\$ 14,917
Material Inputs	40,247	39,854	4,453	44,699
Transportation	7,851	7,784	67	7,917
Medical Care	9,310	11,348	5,279	14,589
Residential / Boarding Costs	4,448	4,676	1,544	5,992
Academic Support	67,975	77,325	30,133	98,108
Life Skills trainings for girls	83,410	101,339	63,016	146,427
Other activities and workshops for girls	22,147	26,594	24,430	46,578
Activities and workshops at the School level	9,050	11,762	5,359	14,409
Activities and workshops with Parents and Communities	8,349	9,183	7,776	16,125
Other Pure Direct Exp	-	90	-	-
Total Pure Direct Expenses	262,773	301,612	146,988	409,762
Other Direct Expenses				
Monitoring: Field Support & Admin Costs	168,248	161,059	73,607	241,855
General Expenses	100,633	40,582	36,921	137,554
Personnel Expenses	100,124	100,258	59,031	159,155
Travel Expenses	28,471	23,477	9,533	38,004
Total Other Direct Expenses	\$ 397,476	\$ 325,377	\$ 179,091	\$ 576,568
Total Girls' Education Program Expenses	\$ 660,250	\$ 626,988	\$ 326,079	\$ 986,329
INDIRECT EXPENSE ALLOCATION				
Country Office Expenses	124,142	97,254	61,310	185,453
Regional Office Expenses	46,491	43,370	22,961	69,452
Total Girls' Education Program Indirect Expense Allocation	\$ 170,634	\$ 140,624	\$ 84,271	\$ 254,905
TOTAL GIRLS' EDUCATION PROGRAM EXPENSES	\$ 830,883	\$ 767,612	\$ 410,351	\$ 1,241,234

**ROOM TO READ
READING ROOM PROGRAM
2011 Financial Spending Report for 2011 Reading Rooms**

	INDIA			
	YTD Through 3Q11		4Q11	FY 2011 Budget
	Budget	Actual		
DIRECT PROGRAM EXPENSE				
Pure Direct Expenses				
Pre-establishment and Meetings	\$ 6,845	\$ 7,062	\$ -	\$ 6,845
Books	314,055	268,746	6,311	320,366
Educational Materials & Supplies	60,408	72,323	4,957	65,364
Library Activities	17,533	12,476	12,000	29,533
Furniture/Display	519,627	411,816	-	519,627
Educator Professional Development	18,211	12,223	11,745	29,956
Renovations	52,036	9,078	42,083	94,118
Other Pure Direct Exp	1,065	1,600	50	1,114
Total Pure Direct Expenses	989,780	795,324	77,145	1,066,925
Other Direct Expenses				
Monitoring: Field Support & Admin Costs	366,812	396,600	28,590	395,401
General Expenses	46,987	9,939	3,662	50,650
Personnel Expenses	174,159	147,662	13,574	187,733
Travel Expenses	34,386	43,591	2,680	37,066
Total Other Direct Expenses	\$ 622,344	\$ 597,792	\$ 48,506	\$ 670,850
Total Reading Room Program Direct Program Expenses	\$ 1,612,124	\$ 1,393,116	\$ 125,651	\$ 1,737,775
INDIRECT EXPENSE ALLOCATION				
Country Office Expenses	303,117	230,761	23,625	326,742
Regional Office Expenses	113,517	116,467	8,848	122,365
Total Reading Room Program Indirect Expense Allocation	\$ 416,634	\$ 347,228	\$ 32,473	\$ 449,107
TOTAL READING ROOM PROGRAM EXPENSES¹	\$ 2,028,758	\$ 1,740,344	\$ 158,124	\$ 2,186,882

**ROOM TO READ
LOCAL LANGUAGE PUBLISHING PROGRAM
2011 Financial Spending Report**

	INDIA			
	YTD Through 3Q11		4Q11	FY 2011 Budget
	Budget	Actual		
DIRECT PROGRAM EXPENSE				
Pure Direct Expenses				
Manuscript Preparation	\$ 15,558	\$ 8,376	\$ 3,970	\$ 19,528
Printing Costs	54,918	3,014	51,358	106,276
Field Testing	-	-	-	-
Other Pure Direct Expenses	-	-	-	-
Total Pure Direct Expenses	70,476	11,391	55,328	125,804
Other Direct Expenses				
Monitoring: Field Support & Admin Costs	-	-	-	-
General Expenses	36,381	48,149	11,200	36,381
Personnel Expenses	14,730	24,122	13,213	14,730
Travel Expenses	1,240	2,084	620	1,240
Total Other Direct Expenses	\$ 52,351	\$ 74,356	\$ 25,032	\$ 52,351
Total Local Language Publishing Direct Program Expenses	\$ 122,827	\$ 85,746	\$ 80,360	\$ 178,155
INDIRECT EXPENSE ALLOCATION				
Country Office Expenses	24,661	19,158	15,110	39,771
Regional Office Expenses	9,236	8,868	5,659	14,894
Total Local Language Publishing Indirect Expense Allocation	\$ 33,897	\$ 28,026	\$ 20,768	\$ 54,665
TOTAL LOCAL LANGUAGE PUBLISHING EXPENSES¹	\$ 156,724	\$ 113,773	\$ 101,128	\$ 232,820

Conclusion

Room to Read is honored to partner with “Bonnie’s Big Idea” to support our Reading Room, Local Language Publishing, and Girls’ Education programs, as well as our Literacy Instruction pilots in India. Through this partnership, over 4,000 students and 130 teachers have gained access to quality books and engaging reading environments, 3 local language titles were published, over 650 schools were able to provide their students with literacy programs that will help them improve their reading skills and increase their comprehension and engagement in reading, and over 3,000 girls have received support in completing their secondary education and finding personal achievement and success. As our teams prepare to continue improving and implementing programming, we look forward to being able to share our progress and impact in our next report and thank you again for your continued partnership and support.

Appendix I: Geographic Need for Programming

Andhra Pradesh (6 projects): Andhra Pradesh is a state located along the southeastern coast of India. As the country's fourth largest state, Andhra Pradesh has a population of 76.21 million, a resident base spread out across vast areas of farmland and agricultural fields. Many Andhra Pradesh inhabitants make their living through farming and/or raising livestock, resulting in a dependence on seasonal employment and day labor. While the state does contain several urban areas, the people of Andhra Pradesh's rural regions suffer due to isolation and widespread poverty, often lacking access to educational and/or social resources and support. Currently, the state's literacy rate is 60%, with women reading at a rate over 24 percentage points lower than that of men. Dedicated to improving this situation, state officials have demonstrated a commitment to establishing educational opportunities for women over the next ten years.

Chhattisgarh (5 projects): Located in central India, Chhattisgarh maintains a population of 20.7 million people. Due to its large number of tribal populations and favorable climate, traditional forms of agriculture and rice production dominate the state's economy. While the state does contain several urban centers, Chhattisgarh is extremely rural and many Chhattisgarh residents experience significant disenfranchisement and isolation. Unable to access the same educational opportunities as their urban neighbors, rural Chhattisgarh residents often forgo their education and focus on child rearing and/or the search for employment. Chhattisgarh's statewide literacy rate is currently below 65%, with women reading and writing at a rate that is 25 percentage points behind their male peers.

Delhi (4 projects): With 22.2 million residents, Delhi is a densely populated city in northern India. While Delhi is an international tourist destination with a vibrant culture and economy, the state is also known for its vast slums and intense poverty. Over 52% of Delhi residents live in slums with no access to fresh water, electricity, sanitation, or basic amenities. While the statewide literacy rate is 81%, in poor areas that rate can plummet to as low as 35%, with women sometimes reading and writing at rates twice as low as men. Without access to structurally sound buildings or stable classrooms, many schools operating in these slums use mobile units with children learning in extremely poor conditions. Working within these areas, Room to Read hopes to improve the region's educational capacity while helping children to gain the skills needed to move past their current living conditions.

Himachal Pradesh (3 projects): Himachal Pradesh is a mountainous state bordering Tibet in northern India. Himachal Pradesh contains many rivers within its borders, contributing to rich hydroelectric power, tourism and agriculture industries. In Himachal Pradesh, 10% of all inhabitants live in urban areas while the additional 90% reside in more isolated rural regions. This disparity creates an imbalance in the distribution of social services and resources that residents experience, with urban areas enjoying more widespread access to support. As one of India's more stable states, Himachal Pradesh maintains a relatively low poverty-rate (only 15% of residents live below the nationally defined poverty-line); however there are significant challenges within the realm of educational quality and opportunity. Despite a state-wide literacy rate of 77%, only 64% of students enroll in secondary school, and less than half continue their education after that point. Girls within the state face additional challenges, comprising only 21% of total school attendees and often forced to withdraw from school to assist with household duties and/or provide childcare to siblings and younger relatives.

Jharkhand (8 projects): Jharkhand is a rural state in eastern India that supports a population of 26.9 million residents. It is one of India's most heavily forested regions, and many residents thus rely on farming and agriculture to support themselves and their families. Over 70% of Jharkhand residents exist solely on income from farming small plots of land that often average less than 1 hectare in size, leading to issues with overuse of land and infertile soil. Due to the region's heavy reliance on seasonal employment, education is often not prioritized within family

settings, resulting in a literacy rate of 54%, of which only 28% are women. Educational reform has proved challenging in the past due to the isolation of many communities within Jharkhand. However, the government remains committed to improving the state's educational capacity and infrastructure.

Maharashtra (3 projects): As one of India's most heavily industrialized regions, Maharashtra contains a unique need for educational programming. Throughout the state, 38% of residents live below the nationally-defined poverty line⁹, residing in crowded slums and remaining unable to access quality educational facilities and resources. Among these communities, many children are pulled from the classroom in order to seek their own employment, forced to forgo their education in order to help support their struggling families. Overstretched and underfunded, state officials have a desire to improve this reality; however, additional support is needed in order to effectively improve the situation.

Rajasthan (11 projects): Rajasthan is India's largest state and is located in the eastern region of the country. While Rajasthan has been focused on growing its industrial capacity over the past five years, the state's primary economies are still rooted in agriculture and rare mineral mining and excavation. With a diverse landscape, one that includes desert, rivers, and farmland, Rajasthan has remained relatively feudal with various populations living off the land and neglecting to take advantage of standardized services such as education and healthcare. In light of this fact, it is not surprising that Rajasthan's literacy rate is slightly below 60%, three-fourths of which are male. Facing severe educational and economic barriers, women often forgo their education to tend to household chores and/or search for employment and help to support their families. With a new commitment to improving the state's educational capacity, the government has expressed excitement in working with Room to Read to achieve statewide literacy and increase access to education for young women and girls.

Uttarakhand (2 projects): Uttarakhand is a lush state with a population of 8.5 million people. Containing a mixture of plains and forests, Uttarakhand is rich with vegetation and supports strong agricultural and logging industries. Migrant farmers and day laborers comprise the majority of Uttarakhand's resident base, and 40% of the state's populations currently live below the nationally-defined poverty-line. With such a large percentage of the state population lacking access to basic needs such as running water, shelter, and electricity, education has not traditionally been prioritized in many communities. While for many rural communities this reality results in low literacy rates, Uttarakhand's levels are at 70% - below the national average, yet high when compared to other rural areas. With a strong government commitment to improving Uttarakhand's economic standards and performance, Room to Read looks forward to their collaboration and support when implementing its programs and initiatives.

⁹ <http://www.igidr.ac.in/pdf/publication/WP-2006-001.pdf>

Appendix II: Summary of titles funded by “Bonnie’s Big Idea”

Title:	<u>Anjan</u>		
Title in Local Language:	<u>Anjan</u>		
Language:	Hindi		
Theme:	Community, Education, Acceptance	Subject Area:	Acceptance
Grades	3-4	Variant	Storybook
Brief Description:			
<p><u>Anjan</u>, is a storybook created for 3rd grade students. A story of courage and acceptance, <u>Anjan</u> tells the true story of Anjan Nandi, one of India’s star cricket players. Both deaf and mute, Anjan was placed into a mainstream classroom as a young boy and faced teasing and bullying throughout his first years of school. Eventually, Anjan learned to use sign language to communicate with his teachers and classmates, allowing his peers to see his true personality and intellect for the first time. Growing up to be a national hero, this story is meant to inspire its readers to practice acceptance and to be kind to all people regardless of their abilities. Positioning these lessons in a way that is both engaging and relevant to a young child, <u>Anjan</u> highlights the ability of the Local Language Publishing program to bring key lessons to young readers in a way that speaks to their interests, reading levels, and experiences.</p>			

Title:	<u>Hide and Seek</u>		
Title in Local Language:	<u>Luka Chhipi</u>		
Language:	Hindi		
Theme:	Adventure; Environment; Friendship; Love	Subject Area:	Language Arts; Literacy
Grades:	3-5	Variant	Big Book
Brief Description:			
<p><u>Hide and Seek</u>, or Luka Chhipi in Hindi, tells the story of a young butterfly and bee who decide to play hide and seek in a lush garden. Exploring the flowers and trees around them, the two friends play well until the evening where they get the opportunity to explore nature after the sun goes down. Teaching students about the power of friendship and the beauty of nature, this title is centered on the game of hide-and-seek, and activity that many of its young readers can easily relate to and understand.</p>			

Title:	<u>The Mouse Forgets His Clever Ploy</u>		
Title in Local Language:	<u>chuhae Ji Bhulae Chaturai</u>		
Language:	Hindi		
Theme:	Achievement; Adventure; Courage; Risk	Subject Area:	Language Arts; Literacy
Grades:	3-5	Variant	Big Book
Brief Description:			
<p><u>The Mouse Forgets His Clever Ploy</u>, or chuhae Ji Bhulae Chaturai in Hindi, is a Big Book targeted towards young readers. In this story a young cat discovers a bowl of rich, creamy milk and instantly devours its contents. Sleepy from his overindulgence, the cat immediately falls asleep with milk still dripping from his whiskers. Observing the sleeping animal and smelling the rich milk on the floor, a young mouse decides to test his luck and drink straight from the cat’s whiskers. Providing students with lessons on adventure, curiosity, and bravery, the story ends well for the young mouse and his courage is rewarded with a delicious treat. Using bright images and two animals that students are familiar with, the story allows its readers to connect with the content and imagery on a variety of level.</p>			



Appendix III: Anita's Story

Girls' Education Girl Profile – A Room to Read Graduate

Convincing her parents to allow her to continue school was a challenge Anita faced not once, but twice. First was when she was about to enter 9th grade, her parents told her that she had to leave school to prepare for marriage. Luckily, with Room to Read's educational support, she was able to complete 12th grade and she graduated at the top of her class.

When Anita graduated secondary school in 2009, she was determined to continue her studies but her parents again insisted that she focus on marriage. Her mother, in fact, was adamant about it and would hardly take no for an answer. Anita, of course, wasn't surprised by her parents' response so she asked some of her teachers to help her convince her parents. A small contingent of her teachers, together with staff from a local NGO, visited Anita's parents and explained that they should be proud of their daughter who had done so well in school and they should now consider allowing her to study further. Anita's mother, the more vocal of the two parents, still refused to reconsider her decision. Her father, a poor vegetable vendor, concurred with his wife, citing financial problems.

But a few days later, the NGO returned to her home and met just with Anita's father since her mother was out of town. The staff explained that they would take care of Anita's school fees if he would allow Anita to continue her studies. Her father finally relented. The next day, Anita immediately went to the university to enroll in a bachelor's course in education.

Anita is now in her final year at a university in Delhi and in addition to her studies, she works at a stock broker's office to earn extra income. Here, she earns Rs 5000 (just over US\$100) every month, apart from the incentives she gets for enrolling new clients. Anita gets only two Sundays off each month but she is not complaining. "I consider myself lucky to have this job when so many graduates and post graduates are searching for an opportunity."

Anita says, "I am eternally grateful for the support that Room to Read gave me. Apart from the opportunity to study and complete my schooling, the program helped me to overcome my inhibition and become more assertive. I have now realized that keeping quiet or being scared or shy is not the

solution.” She adds, “I am the first person in my family to be educated, and I felt very proud when I was able to read some documents for my father recently and prevent us from being cheated by our neighbors. Perhaps this was the day when my father too realized the value of my education. He told my mother that he was proud of me.”

Ten years from now, Anita hopes that she is married with two children (preferably one boy and one girl) and expects to be working. Anita added that she would ensure that her children would have a better life and more importantly that her daughter would have equal opportunities. She concludes, “Room to Read has helped to change my life beyond my wildest dreams, and I would like to thank them for this opportunity.”

Appendix IV: Photos of libraries funded by “Bonnie’s Big Idea”





Appendix V: Photos of the Girls' Education Program



Appendix VI: Photos of the Literacy Instruction pilot

