



the *India* Chapter

Room to Read India's Quarterly Newsletter | July - September 2025




From the Leadership

Dear Readers,

It is my privilege to bring to you the third edition of the India Chapter quarterly newsletter. While we strive to create a world free of illiteracy and gender inequality, our staff ensures that we uphold our values of Collaboration, Action, Respect, Education and Scale. This commitment to our positive culture has again earned us a **Great Place To Work® certification – our 14th recognition in 11 years!**

Driven by commitment, the past quarter for us has once again brought many a positive development. our leadership role in the *India Coalition for Education for Gender Equality* isn't just advocacy – It's about embedding dignity and equality into the national fabric. Globally, we showcased our expertise at the **UKFIET 2025**, and locally, our Literacy Program in Jodhpur, Rajasthan, delivered *a monumental 4X gain in Oral Reading Fluency*.

In this edition, you'll also read about our inspiring collective efforts to **expand Life Skills Education to boys** under our Gender Equality Portfolio. Additionally, there are updates on the exceptional work done in Children's Literature across India, including the **National Summit: My Book, My Story**. 

As we celebrated our global 25th Anniversary and honored our incredible people, we celebrated the heart of Room to Read: a culture built on firm belief in the right of every child to read and learn. We thank our employees, partners and donors for making this influence possible. With this momentum, we carry forward our shared goal: to change the world, one child, one book, one classroom at a time.

We hope this newsletter keeps you informed and inspired by the progress we're making together. Thank you, as always, for being a vital part of our journey.

Happy reading!



Nimrat Singh

Director - People Operations
Room to Read India



Spotlight

The India Coalition for Gender-Equal Education

With the belief that children recognize their sense of self-worth through dignified and gender-equal learning, Room to Read India is playing a lead role in the *Gender Transformative Education (GTE) Collaborative – India Coalition for Education for Gender Equality*. This powerful initiative, steered by Breakthrough India and the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI), is working to shape the national vision and advancement around gender transformative education.



This quarter, a major highlight was the Coalition's Launch Event on August 5, 2025. We co-hosted a key panel on *Embedding Gender Equality through Government Systems and Partnerships*, bringing together diverse voices from officials, civil society organizations and young adolescents. Further solidifying our influence, our *Country Director*, Poornima Garg, contributed expert insights to a forthcoming national study on the State of Education for Gender Equality in India.

This collaborative is a collective movement with the vision of developed India with an equal, enabling and inclusive environment in and through education.

My Book, My Story: Celebrating Children's Literature



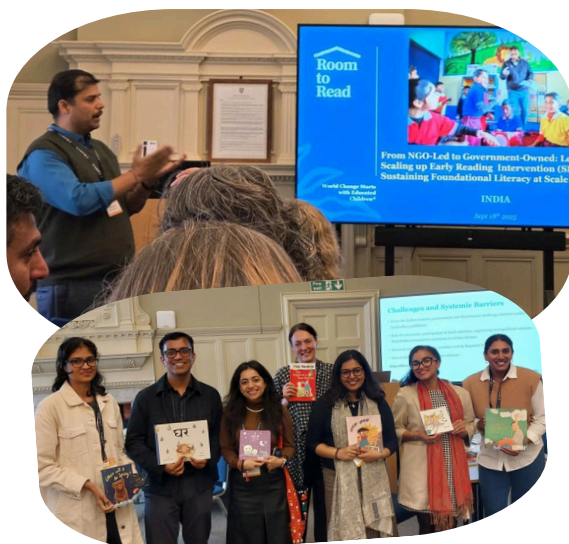
Glimpses from the Event

On September 15, 2025, we hosted a national event in New Delhi to culminate our seventh edition of the Reading Campaign and third edition of the Room to Read Children's Literature Awards.

Inaugurated by our Country Director, Poornima Garg; we had the opportunity to host our CEO, Dr. Geetha Murali, our Board Members Mr. Anshu Prakash and Mr. Gaurav Dalmia and the privilege of hearing the Keynote Address by an award-winning author Paro Anand and Special Address on evolving landscape in Marathi literature by Harshal Korhale at the event.

The event also brought together authors, educators and policymakers exploring **how dignity, diversity and emotional well-being can be nurtured through children's books**. Recognizing young creators in Hindi and Marathi languages through the Children's Literature Awards 2025 felicitation ceremony and witnessing a live theatre performance were the key highlights from the event. **Read more.**

Room to Read India at UKFIET 2025!



We had a significant influence at the recent UKFIET Conference in Oxford, UK, sharing key insights into educational equity and foundational literacy.

Our *Program Operations Director* **Rishi Rajvanshi** shared powerful lessons on sustaining foundational literacy at scale, tracing the successful transition of Project SERI to a scaled-up government-owned model.

State Manager **Pushplata Rawat** presented findings from a joint Gender Landscape study in Uttarakhand, making a strong case for mainstreaming gender perspectives from the foundational years.

Additionally, *National Program Coordinator for QRM*, **Deepali Agarwal** led a vital workshop on Curating Inclusive Libraries, encouraging reflection on gaps and opportunities in children's book curation.

Program Snapshots

Building Creativity: *Learning Through Play* Workshop

We recently hosted an inspiring *Learning Through Play* workshop led by Victoria Yim from the LEGO Foundation. The one-day session showcased how learning can be joyful, imaginative and engaging. Bringing together educators and students, it explored creative ways to transform classrooms into inclusive and collaborative spaces that nurture curiosity and creativity. [Read more.](#)



Bringing Life Skills Education to Boys

For over two decades, we focused on delivering vital Life Skills Education to adolescent girls. This year marks a major expansion as we begin including boys through three innovative Test Programs: *LifeSkills for Equality Project*, *Financial Literacy Initiative for Adolescents* and *Climate Justice Leadership Program*.



Room to Read's first Life Skills session with Boys in India.

These programs equip educators with high-quality curriculum content and facilitation guidance. This past quarter, we built strong momentum through government-led content-vetting workshops and regular implementation across classrooms in multiple states. This comprehensive approach, supported by community involvement, is building strong networks for adolescents' holistic development.

#IndiaGetsReading 7.0: My Book, My Story

The seventh edition of the campaign, themed **My Book, My Story**, powerfully connected with diverse audiences. For children, it created a space to express their thoughts freely; for caregivers, teachers, officials, and partners, it was a collective call to amplify every child's voice and promote inclusive learning. Anchored in the belief that every child deserves to read with dignity, the campaign featured vibrant activities such as Mobile Library Vans, Pledge Reading Time, and the Read-a-thon — a nationwide celebration that as per early estimates engaged over 39 lakh participants*.



Learn more about the campaign here:
[**India Gets Reading 7.0 : My Book My Story**](#)

*Final verification in process

Let's Learn

Discover the life-changing power of books through inspiring stories

Finding My Voice

#WatchNow: Meet Ravi, a Grade 4 student from Maharashtra, whose world changed when he discovered the joy of reading. Through stories, he found the words to share his thoughts, make new friends and grow confident. Books became his bridge to connection, belonging and self-expression.



From Books to Brilliance

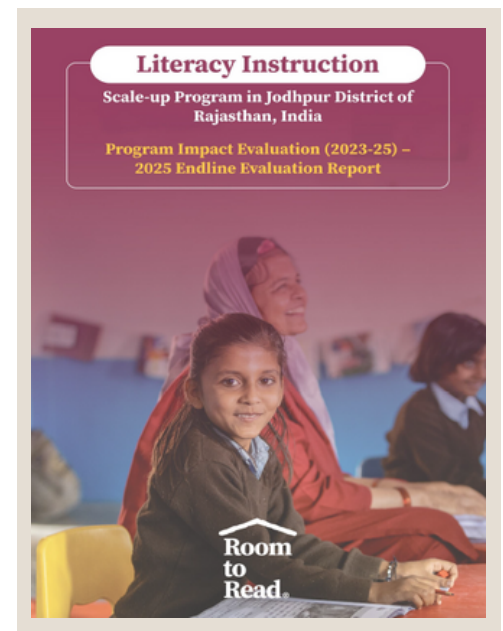
#WatchNow: Meet Vaishnavi, a Grade 4 student in Madhya Pradesh, whose world was quietly transformed by reading. Books became a vibrant bridge, fostering a love for learning that empowered her to chase new goals. This is a story of how small changes in a child's environment can lead to achieving bigger dreams.



Footprints from Rajasthan

Our three-year (2022-25) Literacy Instruction Scale-up Program in Jodhpur, Rajasthan, has derived major success in over 2,600 schools. Evaluation shows program students achieved four times the gain in Oral Reading Fluency (ORF) compared to peers from comparison schools, increasing by an impressive 24.5 correct words per minute.

The program also sharply reduced the number of non-readers by 25 percentage points, making students 3–4 times more likely to hit official fluency benchmarks — a clear demonstration of effective foundational literacy at scale.



Master foundational literacy and gender-transformative life skills at your own pace

#WatchNow: The Swayam series is Room to Read India's self-paced digital learning module, designed to equip educators with expert knowledge in foundational literacy and gender-transformative life skills.

Partner of Choice

Creative Collaboration with BNP Paribas in Mumbai

On July 7, 2025, we hosted 37 volunteers from BNP Paribas India Solutions in Mumbai for a creative session supporting our Girls' Education Program (GEP). The volunteers were engaged in poster-making activity. Focused on vital topics like Cyber Safety, Mental Health and Emotional Awareness, these posters are now displayed in Life Skills Centres to spark conversations and inspire adolescents in grades 6–12.



U.S. Educators Observe Our Library Program in New Delhi

On July 8, 2025, we proudly hosted 19 U.S. educators from the *Fulbright Teachers for Global Classrooms (TGC) Program* at a Delhi school for an immersive look at our Library Program.

The Fulbright scholars toured a library established by Room to Read (2019–2022), learning about the core components that drive our success: age-appropriate storybooks, print-rich child-friendly spaces and sustainability via ongoing teacher training and student-led Library Management Committees. Educators were particularly impressed by the seamless integration of library practices into weekly classroom routines and the use of our digital repository, Literacy Cloud.



Learning from Mission Ankur: Jharkhand Delegation Visits Madhya Pradesh



Room to Read India and JEPC collaborated on a three-day exposure visit to Madhya Pradesh for 14 Key Resource Persons (KRPs) from Jharkhand to observe the successful implementation of the Mission Ankur Project.

The Jharkhand team visited schools to witness effective multi-grade literacy and numeracy classes firsthand.

They gained a practical understanding of early grade reading and the use of multilingual education (MLE) content, including the innovative books developed in Madhya Pradesh. KRPs received a full strategic overview by interacting with state officials, the District Magistrate, supportive supervision staff (CACs/BACs) and DIET faculties. These crucial learnings will now be used by the KRPs back in Jharkhand to address local challenges in multilingual and multigrade classrooms.

Employer of Choice

Celebrating 25 years of Room to Read

As part of our 25 years' celebration, we were privileged to host our co-founder Erin Ganju and CEO Dr. Geetha Murali at the India Country Office, who shared their journeys and inspired one and all. We also held our CARES and Annual Awards event, to recognize and celebrate employees that drive our mission forward. A short glimpse of our journey in India: **Celebrating 25 Years of Room to Read.**



Announcements

Room to Read Children's Literature Awards 2025

The third edition of the awards celebrated the power of children's literature to nurture imagination, expand worlds and give every child the joy of reading. From emerging authors and illustrators to beloved books in Hindi and Marathi chosen by teachers and librarians, these awards honored creativity that inspires children to read, imagine and dream.

Congratulations to all the exceptional awardees of the Children's Literature Awards 2025!

The Room to Read Children's Book Creators' Awards

Young Author

Winner (3-8)

Winner (8-12)

Runner-up (3-8)

Runner-up (8-12)

Young Illustrator

Winner (3-8)

Winner (8-12)

Runner-up (3-8)

Runner-up (8-12)

Children's Book of the Year

Winner (3-8)

Winner (8-12)

Runner-up (3-8)

Runner-up (8-12)

The Room to Read Teacher-Librarian's Choice Awards

Hindi

Winner (3-8)

Winner (8-12)

Runner-up (3-8)

Runner-up (8-12)

Marathi

Winner (3-8)

Winner (8-12)

Runner-up (3-8)

Runner-up (8-12)

Age groups are mentioned in brackets.



Literacy Cloud

Our top four picks for you!



[READ HERE](#)



[READ HERE](#)



[READ HERE](#)



[READ HERE](#)



Room to Read India is a global nonprofit currently operating in 12 states - Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Telangana, Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh.

Through education, Room to Read is transforming the lives of millions of children to create a world free from illiteracy and gender inequality. We are working with the government, local communities and partner organizations to build a world where all children have room to read, learn and grow and can use their skills to accelerate positive change. We support children in communities experiencing deep educational, gender and economic inequities.



www.roomtoreadindia.org