



Project Launch Report

Room to Read® Prepared for: Ute Gebhardt and Ralph Okon

Through our Literacy Program, Room to Read® partners with schools to address gaps across three areas that are critical to literacy learning: teacher training and support, quality reading materials, and child-friendly learning spaces. After assessing a school's unique needs, we provide a tailored intervention to ensure students have the resources and support they need to flourish. Following are details about Bakhaed Complete Primary School, and the targeted activities we have conducted to support the students at this school. Thank you for supporting our program and making these educational transformations possible!

SCHOOL PROFILE

- **Name:** *Bakhaed Complete Primary School*
- **Project ID:** *LA-LP-19-0003*
- **Grades served:** *Preschool – 6*
- **Students:** *310 (157 girls, 153 boys)*
- **Teachers:** *12 (11 female, 1 male)*
- **Country:** *Laos*
- **Region:** *Vientiane Prefecture*
- **City/Village:** *Bakhaed*

LOCATION: VIENTIANE PREFECTURE

Vientiane Prefecture is located in the northwestern part of Laos and is home to Vientiane, the nation's capital and largest city in Laos. The area is situated on the banks of the Mekong River and borders Thailand. It has a tropical climate and experiences severe weather conditions during the rainy season. Due to inadequate drainage and poor access roads, areas around Vientiane often suffer from flash floods each rainy season, which causes extensive property damage in low-lying areas and major difficulties for those commuting to work or school. The capital is the political and economic center of the country and has a number of important industries like government, financial institutions, garment production, food manufacturing and tourism. Vientiane also has the largest proportion of unemployed people in the country, though, and has limited job opportunities, especially for unskilled individuals. Although the capital city has more educational resources than much of the country, the suburban areas outside of the capital have a great need for improvements to school infrastructure, Lao language literacy instruction, and provision of children's books and learning materials. The most common language used in Vientiane is Lao, but the region is also home to many migrants from other provinces and ethnic groups for whom Lao is their second language.



PROJECT DETAILS



LITERACY INSTRUCTION

Teacher Training and Support

Number of Grade 1 classes supported: 2

During the first year of our program, we work with all Grade 1 teachers at a school to improve literacy learning in their classrooms. In Laos, this includes providing multiple days of professional development focused on how to build students' literacy skills in Lao, the country's official language of instruction. The five key topics covered in these trainings are: phonological awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension. Teachers are also provided with learning materials that support the activities learned during their trainings, and our literacy coaches visit classrooms an average of twice per month to ensure teachers master the new instruction techniques.

LITERACY INSTRUCTION TRAININGS CONDUCTED

(Some trainings may appear more than once if they were held for different stakeholders at different times)

Length (Days)

Training Topic

6.0

Other; Phonics; Vocab, Fluency, and Comprehension



LIBRARY

Teacher Training and Support + Quality Reading Materials + Child-Friendly Learning Environment

Library Type: Classroom

Classroom libraries allow children in schools with limited space to benefit from books and other library resources, while also promoting the integration of reading materials in classroom instruction. These libraries are established within a designated portion of a classroom and contain a collection of reading level appropriate books for use by classes during lessons, free time and dedicated library time. These libraries are also provided with other educational materials and storage furniture.

LIBRARY RESOURCES PROVIDED

- 575 local language books published by Room to Read
- 855 non-Room to Read local language books
- Book Display Racks; Monitoring and Support; Posters; Stationery; Transportation of Materials

Library Management Training

Room to Read provides all librarians and teachers involved with our libraries with a minimum of three days of training in the first year of our support, and one to two days of refresher training in both the second and third years. These trainings build on each other and align with the library's stage of development. We also support educators by providing direct coaching and program implementation feedback during regular library monitoring visits. Our team assesses the quality of the library through a rating tool, which evaluates the library across 16 indicators. Room to Read staff use these ratings to determine the frequency and type of support we provide.

LIBRARY MANAGEMENT TRAININGS CONDUCTED

(Some trainings may appear more than once if they were held for different stakeholders at different times)

<u>Length (Days)</u>	<u>Training Topic</u>
4.0	Book leveling; Creating a child-friendly environment; Importance of libraries and reading; Library management
3.0	Book leveling; Creating a child-friendly environment; Engaging other teachers; Importance of libraries and reading; Library period and reading activities

COUNTRY & GLOBAL LITERACY PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

SYSTEMIC CHANGE: IMPROVING LITERACY LEARNING BEYOND OUR PROJECT SCHOOLS

Your investment in our programs has allowed Room to Read to demonstrate high quality education initiatives with measurable results. Our ability to execute quality programs at scale has gained the recognition of local and national governments as well as other nonprofits, who want to partner with us to promote widespread educational policy and curriculum changes. The following is a highlight of some of these partnerships, focused on improving literacy learning for children broadly. **We greatly value your investment in our work and make every effort to leverage your support for maximum benefit for the children in the school you supported, and far beyond! With your help and that of partners around the world, we can solve the challenge of illiteracy—in our lifetime.**

SYSTEMIC CHANGE IN LAOS

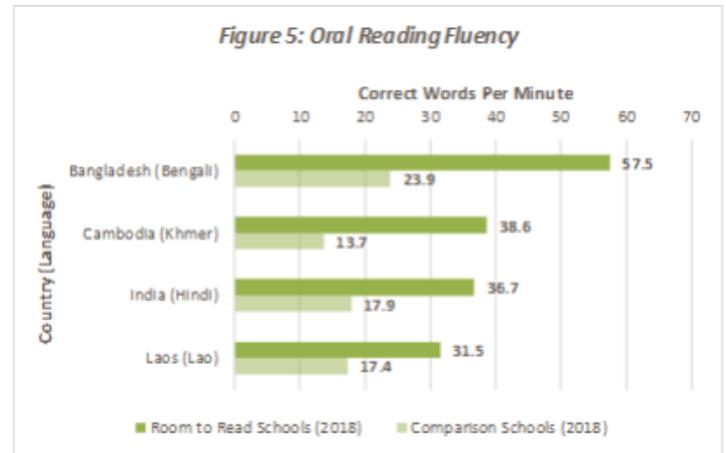
During our 15 years of work in Laos, Room to Read has made great strides in collaborating with the Lao government. Most recently, we partnered with the Ministry of Education and Sports to implement components of our Literacy Program at scale through the Learn to Read project. Through this partnership, we are aiming to improve early grade reading skills for non-Lao speaking students and children with disabilities. Learn to Read marks Room to Read's first cooperative agreement with the government of Laos, and we estimate that we will reach an additional 65,000 children through this project.

GLOBAL RESEARCH, MONITORING & EVALUATION

We conduct ongoing research, monitoring and evaluation to ensure that we are providing communities with the highest quality educational programs. This includes annual data collection on each of our projects, which is then analyzed to measure and improve the impact of our work. Following are some of the highlights from our 2017 program analysis, which is the most recent year that we have completed analyzing.

Improving Reading Skills

We have consistently found that children in classrooms where we support literacy instruction read significantly more fluently than children in nearby comparison schools. In 2018, Room to Read conducted reading skills evaluations of Grade 2 students in four countries (Bangladesh, Cambodia, India and Laos) after they had been in our program for two years. Oral reading fluency is important because research shows that children who read very slowly are not able to retain and comprehend what they are reading –significantly limiting their ability to learn. Results from our evaluations showed that children in Room to Read-supported schools had oral reading fluency rates nearly three times that of children in comparison schools.



Another key metric for the effectiveness of our program is the prevalence of zero scores on reading comprehension tests — i.e. the percentage of children who, by the end of Grade 2, are still unable to read a single word correctly. On average, the prevalence of zero scores for oral reading fluency is more than 50% lower in Room to Read schools than in comparison schools.

4,292

books were checked out on average from our libraries in 2018



Creating a Habit of Reading

We track book checkout in the government schools where Room to Read establishes libraries on a per-child and total basis as an indicator of children’s habit of reading. In 2017, book checkout hit what was at the time an all-time high of 16.6 books per child per year, a more than 40 percent increase from the previous year. In 2018, this upward trajectory continued across our program countries, demonstrating sustained results. Each child on average checked out 16.7 books throughout the year (Figure 1), and each library had an average of 4,292 books checked out (Figure 2). In total, there were 14.8 million books checked out worldwide in 2018. This success is significant because many of our partner schools had no libraries and lacked age-appropriate books prior to Room to Read’s involvement.

PHOTOS



A student practicing new reading skills



A student practicing new reading skills



A teacher conducting a lesson



Students practicing their new reading skills



A student enjoying one of the new books



A student practicing new reading skills



A teacher reading to students



The classroom in which the library was established



Books provided by Room to Read on display in the library



The dedication plaque for the project



The dedication plaque for the project



The dedication plaque for the project