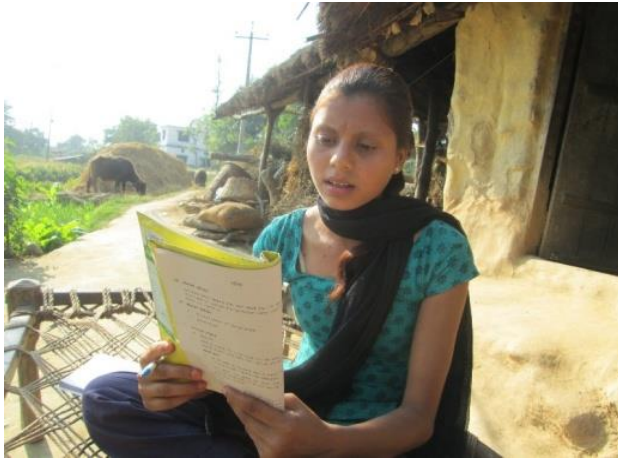


APPENDIX B: STORY FROM THE FIELD

Name: Kabita
Region: Bardiya, Nepal
Age: 16



Kabita lives with her mother and two siblings in a rural region of Nepal's Bardiya district. In order to support the family, Kabita's mother raises buffalo and sells their milk in a local market. Despite working upwards of 16 hours a day, Kabita's mother often makes too little to afford the family's expenses and is forced to have her children go out in search of work. As the oldest girl, many of the family's financial burdens fell on Kabita, and before long the young student's grades and attendance records began to fall dangerously low. As Kabita focused more and more on work and less on her studies, her interest in her classes and investment in her grades began to

decrease.

When Kabita reached Grade 6, her school began to require fees for enrollment – fees that the family could not afford. Kabita says, “After passing grade 5, enrolling in a higher grade was a major constraint due to my family's economic status. Fortunately, in the year 2011, Room to Read's Girls' Education Program was launched in Kisan Secondary School and I was fortunately one of the girls to receive support. Not needing support for my school fees and school materials meant savings for my home and some time for my mother to do house chores.”

Outside of covering school fees, Kabita's Social Mobilizers began to work with the young girl on improving her commitment to her studies and her time management skills around school work and family obligations. Kabita began to see that there were options for her future outside of agriculture and day labor, she began to connect her grades and school performance with opportunities to succeed outside of her village, and to use that success to help her mother and her brother and sister. While on the verge of failing her courses when she joined the program, Kabita now maintains a B average and was one of the highest scorers on her school's latest gatekeeper exam. Now in Grade 11, Kabita is focusing on business management and plans to go into banking after completing University. Kabita has also become an advocate in her community, speaking out about the sexism her mother faced when looking for work and dispelling the myth that high paying agricultural positions should be reserved for men. Kabita has become a source of pride and empowerment within her community, and we look forward to seeing what's next for the young scholar.

