



2024 ANNUAL REPORT



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At PoP, we build more than schools—we build hope. With classrooms, bathrooms, and handwashing stations, we create the safe, supportive spaces every child deserves to learn and dream.

Here's what you've made possible in 2024.

A LETTER FROM OUR CEO



To our PoP Family,

Thank you for being here and for being a part of the Pencils of Promise journey. With your support, we've been able to deliver quality education to the children who need it most year after year.

2024 was a year of continued growth and transformation for our team and the communities we partner with. Together, we built nine new schools and served over 125,000 students - all in just one year.

While the team and I are thrilled at each new school built and student supported, what continues to stand out to me the most is simple: what we do works. Our longitudinal study in Ghana showed that reading fluency for students increased from 9% to 69% over the course of four years, while control schools went from 6% to 47% in the same time period. This means that when a student is enrolled in a PoP school, we can guarantee that their learning outcomes will increase. That is something that we can all be very, very proud of.

Embarking on 2025, I am ecstatic to be back with the PoP team in a day-to-day capacity, working to improve our programs, expand our reach and work toward a world where every child has access to quality education.

Thank you for being with us on this journey and staying committed to the vision of a better world through education. I hope you enjoy reflecting on the past year as much as I did.

With gratitude,

Leslie Engle
CEO, Pencils of Promise



(L to R) PoP's Chief Strategy and Growth Officer Tom Casazzone, PoP's CEO Leslie Engle, PoP Global Ambassador Aqua and PoP's Director of Development Carly Mortensen.

PROGRAMS IMPACT TO-DATE



TEACHER SUPPORT

We stand behind the belief that students will perform better if classrooms are led by enthusiastic, inspired and well-trained teachers. To ensure students are receiving a high-quality education, we provide public primary school teachers with training and innovative resources, enhancing the delivery of national curriculum and empowering them to lead dynamic and effective lessons.

Total Schools Benefited by Teacher Support

📍 GHANA

763

📍 GUATEMALA

200

📍 LAOS

426

Total Students Benefited by Teacher Support

📍 GHANA

175,202

📍 GUATEMALA

32,027

📍 LAOS

16,344

Total Teachers Supported by Teacher Support Programming

📍 GHANA

3,263


📍 GUATEMALA

1,202

📍 LAOS

547

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING (SEL) OUTCOMES

A large orange '80%' is centered within a hand-drawn, textured orange oval.

In a two-year observation study, 80% of teachers participating in PoP's SEL program reported improvements in student confidence, peer collaboration, and regular school attendance. These are key indicators of growth in self-awareness, social awareness, and relationship skills—three of the five core competencies outlined by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL). These skills are foundational for student well-being and long-term academic engagement.

Classrooms implementing Morning Meeting activities experienced a notable increase in student participation: in the 2019–2020 school year, 90% of students were actively engaged in greeting and sharing activities. In contrast, data from the 2018–2019 school year showed that only 74% of students were participating. Morning Meetings provide a daily opportunity to connect, build trust, and create a sense of belonging—helping students and teachers start the day with purpose, and setting the tone for stronger engagement and learning.

A large orange '90%' is centered within a hand-drawn, textured orange oval.

LITERACY OUTCOMES

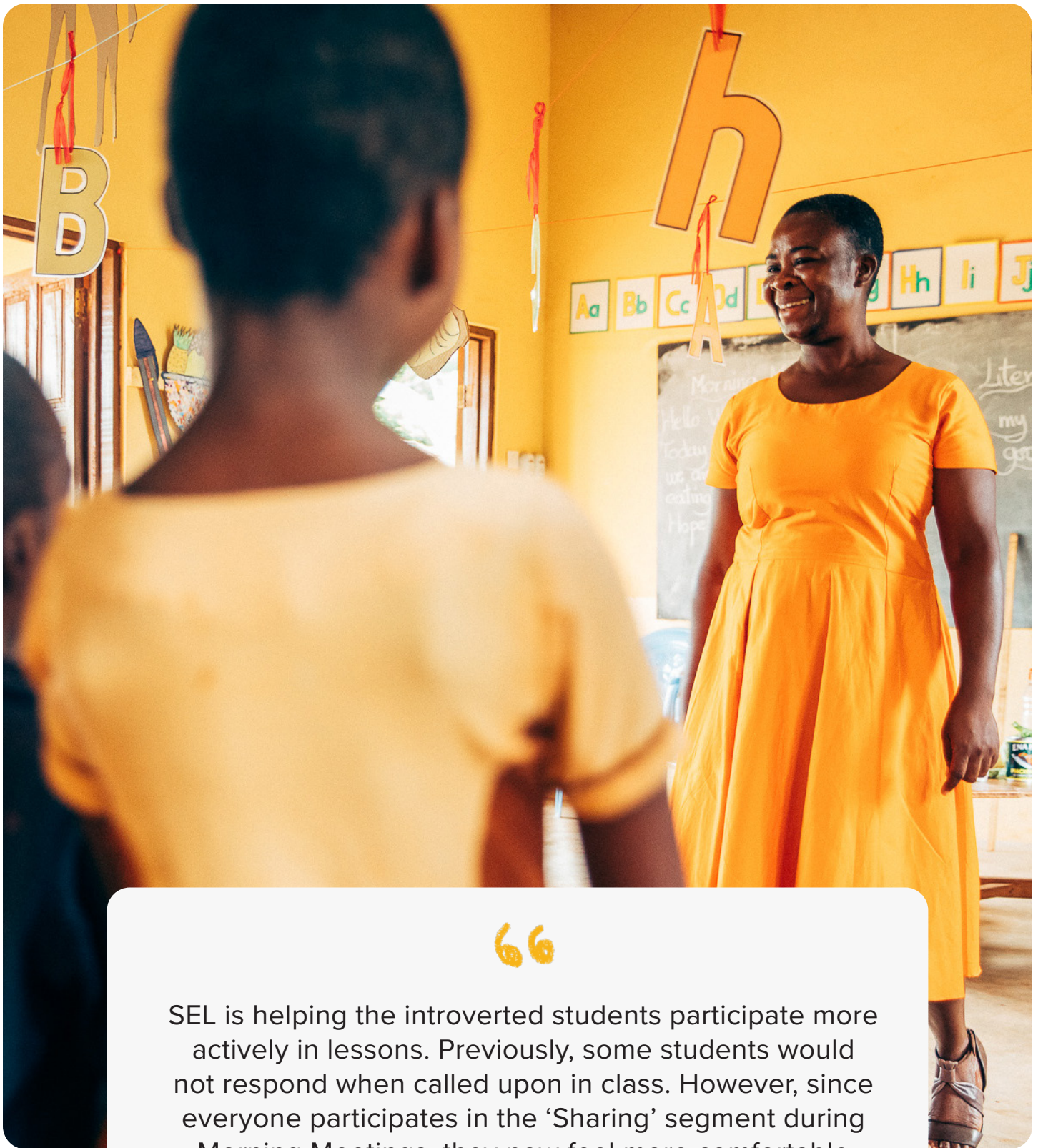
A large orange '9' is followed by a hand-drawn orange arrow pointing to a large orange '69%'. The '69%' is underlined with a hand-drawn orange line.

For Upper Primary students in Ghana, PoP students showed fluency gains from 9% in 2018 to 69% in 2022, while control schools improved from 6% (2018) to 47% (2022). These results position PoP students far ahead of Ghana's 2025 national SDG benchmark goal of 52% proficiency at the end of primary school, demonstrating the long-term value of sustained literacy programming. (EGRA, 2018-2022).

Reading comprehension outcomes were equally compelling.

In Lower Primary, PoP students improved from 0% to 45% between 2018 and 2022, compared to 0% to 29% in control schools. In Upper Primary, PoP students rose from 4% to 74%, while their peers in control schools increased from 3% to 59%. According to UNESCO, comprehension is a core element of SDG Target 4.1, and these outcomes suggest that PoP's model is enabling students to far exceed national targets for minimum reading proficiency. (EGRA, 2018-2022).

A large orange '4' is followed by a hand-drawn orange arrow pointing to a large orange '74%'. The '74%' is underlined with a hand-drawn orange line.



66

SEL is helping the introverted students participate more actively in lessons. Previously, some students would not respond when called upon in class. However, since everyone participates in the ‘Sharing’ segment during Morning Meetings, they now feel more comfortable speaking in class. It is also helping students improve their speaking and reading fluency.

— Teacher in Ghana

WATER, SANITATION & HYGIENE

Through our WASH (Water, Sanitation & Hygiene) program, we provide children with access to clean water, private bathrooms and good hygiene practices to foster their growth and development. We believe providing safe, clean infrastructure, coupled with knowledge about hygiene behavior is essential for keeping kids healthy, happy and in school. Our WASH program is straightforward: Provide the infrastructure, distribute materials and educate students and communities on healthy behaviors.

Total Schools Benefited by WASH Programming

📍 GHANA

570

📍 GUATEMALA

349

📍 LAOS

358

Total Students Benefited by WASH

📍 GHANA

130,806

📍 GUATEMALA

62,268

📍 LAOS

40,673

Total WASH Infrastructure Built

📍 GHANA

141

📍 GUATEMALA

185

📍 LAOS

117

IMPROVED ACCESS TO SAFE DRINKING WATER



96%

In 2024, 96% of students in PoP WASH schools reported drinking from PoP-provided water filters, ensuring daily access to safe water at school. These results stand in stark contrast to global trends—according to UNICEF (2022), 546 million children worldwide attend schools that lack basic drinking water services.

STRENGTHENED HYGIENE PRACTICES

In Laos, 83% of students reported washing their hands after using the washroom. This behavior change matters because 42% of schools globally lack basic hygiene services, affecting 802 million children (UNICEF, 2022). Without these practices in place, students face an increased risk of illness and school absenteeism.



83%

REDUCING STIGMA & EXPANDING AWARENESS FOR MENSTRUAL HEALTH

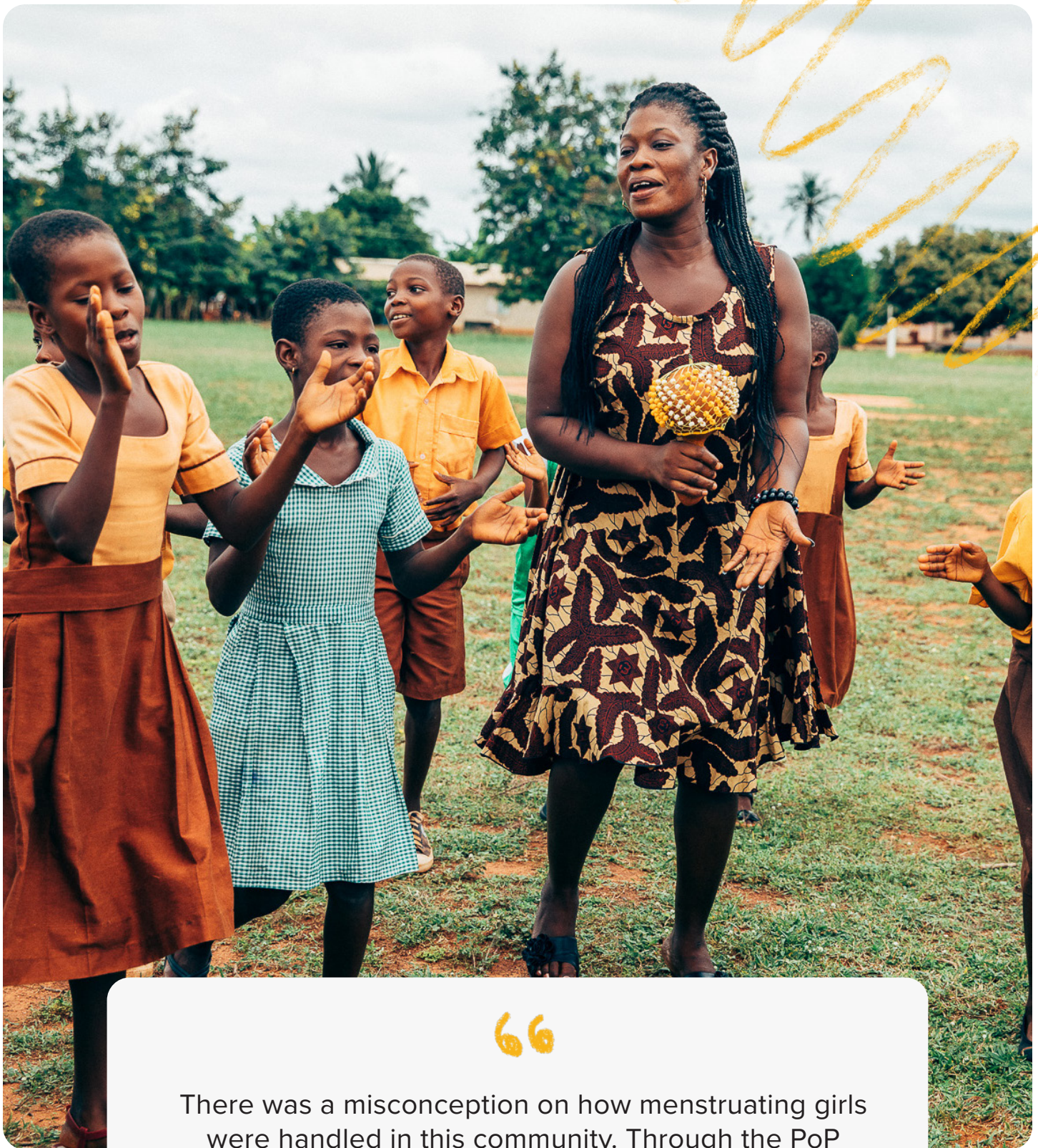
Menstrual health remains one of the most neglected components of school-based health interventions. Globally, over 500 million girls and women lack access to menstrual hygiene products and safe facilities (World Bank). Without intervention, stigma and misinformation lead to absenteeism and educational inequality.



2X

In Guatemala, the percentage of students in PoP's WASH program who believed girls can attend school while on their period doubled from 40% to 82%. These shifts are critical, not only for keeping girls in school but for enabling them to thrive with confidence and dignity.





“

There was a misconception on how menstruating girls were handled in this community. Through the PoP WASH program, these misconceptions have been cleared. Today, menstruating girls can cook, fetch water, and socialize.

— Teacher in Ghana

MORE IMPACT

E-Readers in Use

As of 2024

📍 GHANA

10,137

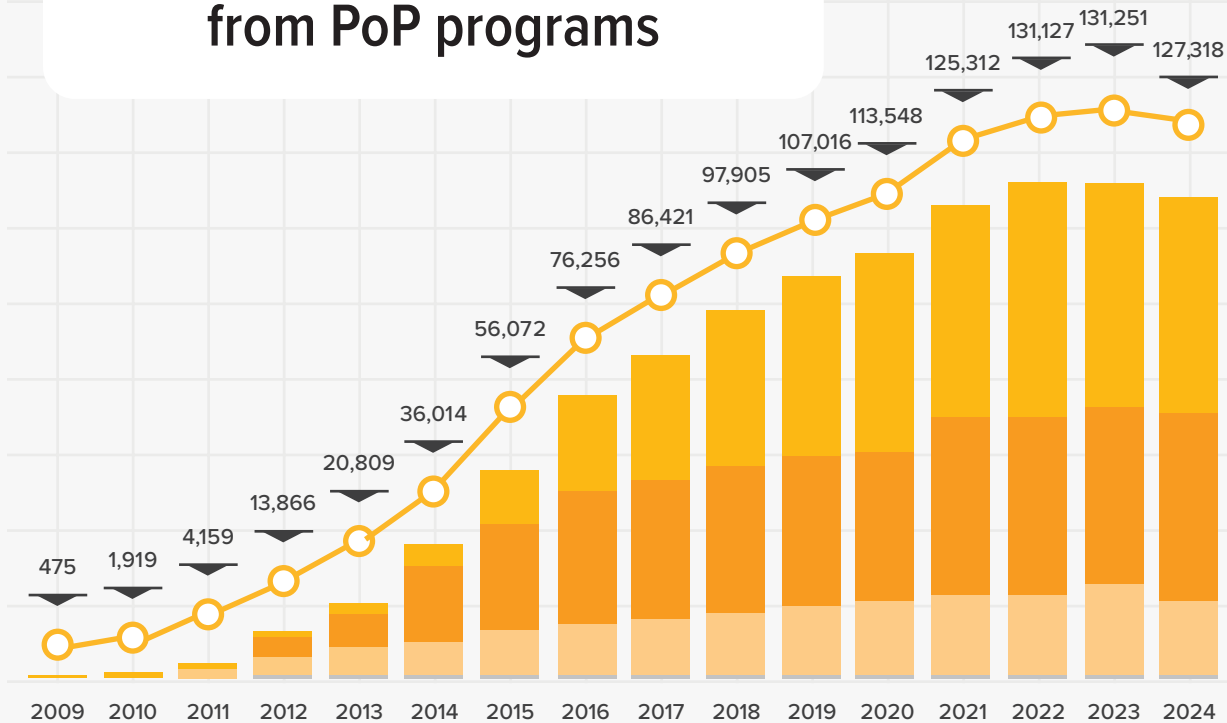
📍 GUATEMALA

1,349

TOTAL

11,486

Students currently benefiting from PoP programs



Note: Laos saw a decline in students impacted in 2024 while we worked to refine our agreement with the Ministry of Education for 2025.

2024 BUILDS



SCHOOL BUILDS

According to the latest data from the WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme (2022):

29%

of schools lack basic drinking water services, affecting 546 million students.

28%

lack basic sanitation services, impacting 539 million students.

42%

do not have basic hygiene services, affecting 802 million students.

This highlights the urgent need for improved school infrastructure worldwide.

Across the globe, millions of children attend schools lacking basic infrastructure—no clean water, proper sanitation, or safe spaces to learn. These conditions hinder learning and limit future opportunities. At PoP, 85% of the school communities PoP visits across the globe lack basic physical infrastructure. We partner with communities to remove these barriers, transforming daily experiences for children and creating ripple effects that uplift generations. Together, with our build partners and supporters, we're not just building schools—we're building a better world.



“

Before, the classrooms were made of bamboo, dirt, and tin sheets; and instead of having lessons, we had to carry sand so it wouldn't turn into a muddy mess. Now, the school is really beautiful—we have classrooms, space to play, and proper restrooms.

— Student in Guatemala

GHANA

Kporkuve



2
classrooms built



994
students impacted*

Nuaso



6
classrooms built



1,339
students impacted*

Dodo Pepesu



2
classrooms built



749
students impacted*

Lente-Yame



2
classrooms built



1,008
students impacted*

GUATEMALA

Sector Canales



3
classrooms built



532
students impacted*

Salinas El Tigre



1
classrooms built



273
students impacted*

LAOS

Houay Loung Theung



2
classrooms built



630
students impacted*

Nam Thoum Neua



3
classrooms built



1,722
students impacted*

Thaly



2
classrooms built



596
students impacted*

*Over the lifetime of the school

WASH Infrastructure

In many of the communities PoP serves, students don't have access to safe, hygienic bathrooms or handwashing stations at school. Without these basic facilities, children often have to leave school during the day just to use the restroom at home—disrupting their learning and sometimes preventing them from returning at all.

That's why PoP builds private, gender-segregated bathrooms, installs handwashing stations, and provides clean water filters at schools. We also deliver essential hygiene education to students. Because we believe that safe, clean infrastructure—and the knowledge to use it—is critical to keeping children healthy, confident, and in class, where they belong.

📍 GHANA

Likpe Mate



6
bathrooms built



770
students impacted*

📍 GUATEMALA

El Rancho Santa María



4
bathrooms built



1,923
students impacted*

*Over the lifetime of the school



“

Thank you to Pencils of Promise for bringing us good health. Now, the children have a place to go to the bathroom, and the classrooms are comfortable for their education.

— Parent in Guatemala

CLASSROOM BUILDS

Every child deserves a safe, welcoming space to learn—and for many students around the world, that begins with a classroom. Occasionally PoP's scouting team will find schools where students are learning in overcrowded or damaged spaces but a full school build isn't necessary or cost effective. That's why PoP partners with these local communities to design and build fully equipped classroom blocks tailored to their needs. These classrooms provide students and teachers with the foundational space to dream big, learn freely, and build a brighter future—one lesson at a time.

GHANA

Adaklu Seva



3
classrooms built



374
students impacted*

LAOS

Houay Tham I



1
classrooms built



244
students impacted*

GUATEMALA

Tonquín I



1
classrooms built



1,377
students impacted*

El Esfuerzo de los Vicentes



1
classrooms built



568
students impacted*

Nuevo Amanecer

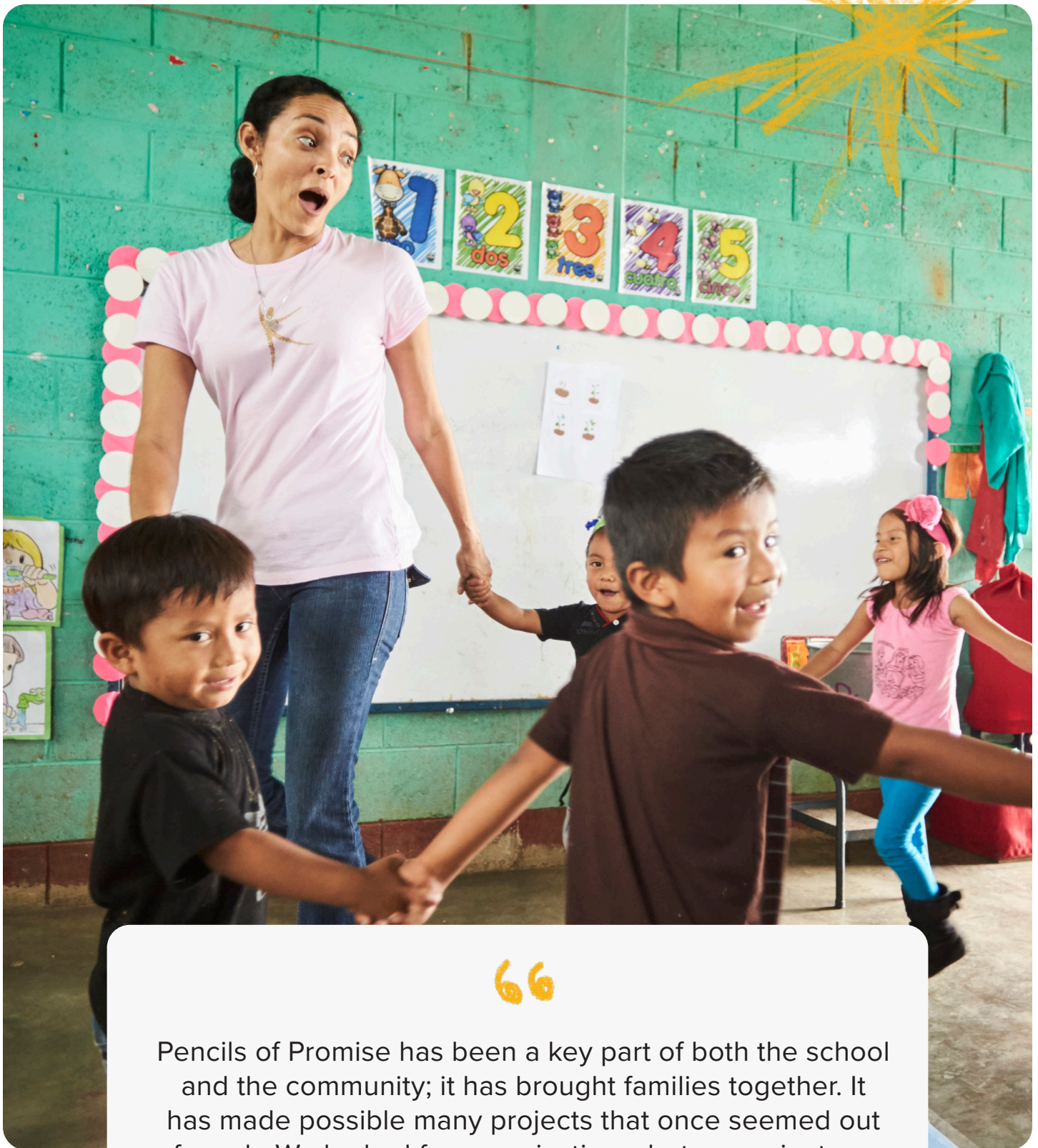


3
classrooms built



1,135
students impacted*

*Over the lifetime of the school



66

Pencils of Promise has been a key part of both the school and the community; it has brought families together. It has made possible many projects that once seemed out of reach. We looked for organizations, but no project ever came through. The school was falling apart and was no longer a safe place for children to be in.

— Teacher in Guatemala

CLASSROOM BLOCK REPAIRS

When a community builds with PoP, they gain a lifelong partner. We routinely visit our school builds to ensure they remain structurally sound and continue to support a safe, inspiring learning environment. Over time, some of our older schools—or those built by others—may need repairs. When that happens, PoP steps in with sustainable, cost-effective solutions to ensure students can keep learning in safe, supportive spaces for years to come.

GUATEMALA

Sector Norte Aldea Ixtacapa



7

classroom repairs



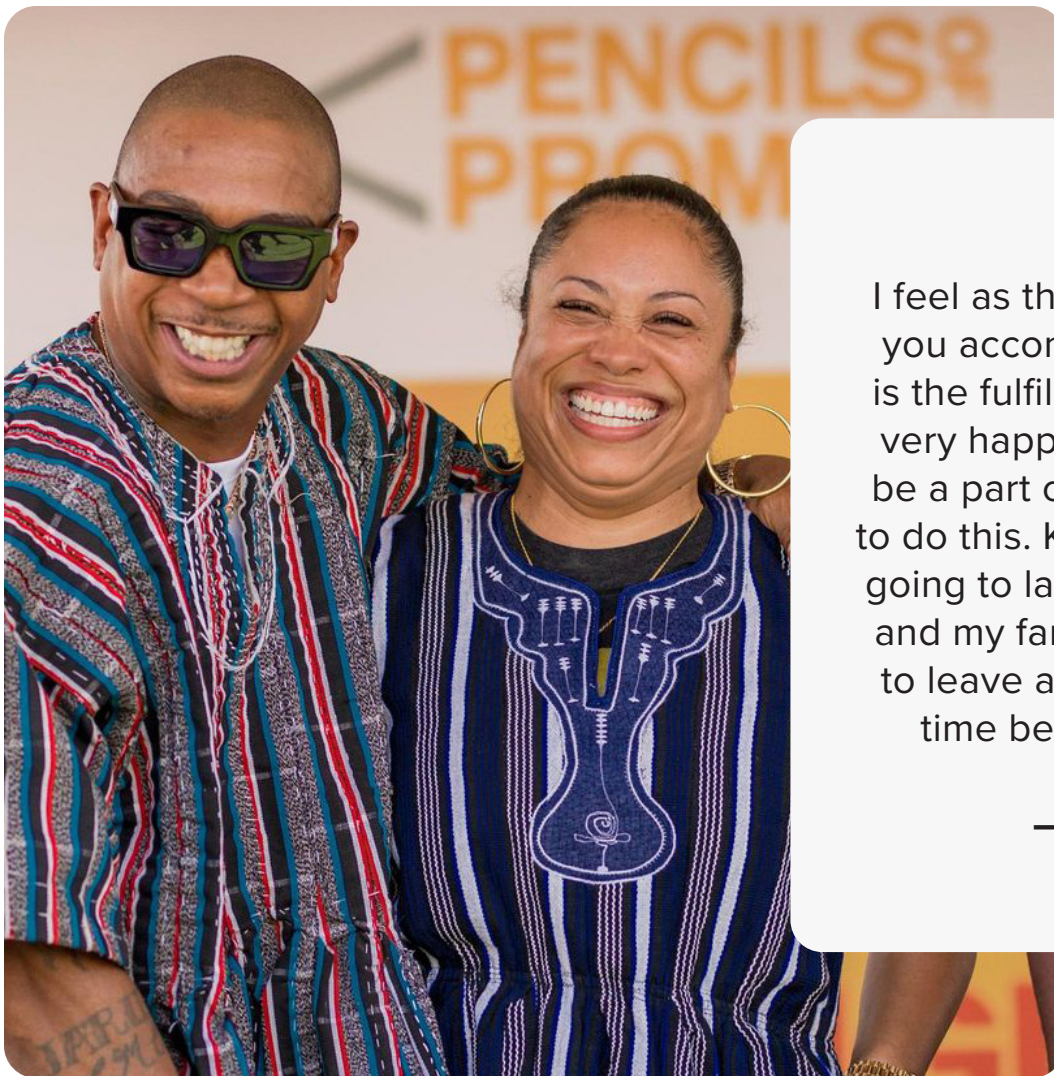
647

students impacted*

*Over the lifetime of the school

DONOR HIGHLIGHTS





“

I feel as though in life, when you accomplish things, this is the fulfillment of that. I am very happy and honored to be a part of this and be able to do this. Knowing that this is going to last way beyond me and my family and it's going to leave a legacy for a long time beyond my years.

— Ja Rule

“

Pencils of Promise stands out to me because it's more than just building classrooms—it's about empowering communities from within. Their locally led teams are deeply connected to the realities on the ground, delivering educational access through a holistic model that addresses not only infrastructure but also the broader challenges students face. By investing in teacher support, WASH programs, and other essential initiatives, PoP sustainably breaks down barriers to learning. This comprehensive, community-centered approach truly sets them apart, and I feel incredibly fortunate to have partnered with Jorge and his dedicated team in Guatemala.

— Alex Sonageri, with Mayan Hope Foundation



The work of Pencils of Promise has inspired me throughout my career. At Atacana, we believe in a growth mindset and in continuous learning to help us grow as an organization. Just as we hold this belief for ourselves, we also believe that children thrive when they have the right classroom and a supportive learning environment.

We hope the Nam Thuam Nuea Village school in Laos—and the work PoP is doing, which extends far beyond the school itself—will teach and empower students to achieve better outcomes in life. This school is dedicated to my late father, who was a professor and deeply loved both children and education. One of the values he instilled in all his children was to strive to do good for others.

Visiting Laos and seeing the school firsthand allowed me to witness the impact Atacana is making through Pencils of Promise—reminding me of the influence we can have as an organization and as individuals. We will continue to support under-resourced communities around the world.

— Salvador Carlucci, CEO Atacana Group



The impact we are having is beyond just building the buildings. Beyond just making it a safe space for them (children). It's actually setting them up for a better life.

— Katia Gutierrez, Internet Marketing Specialist, WebFX



“

As a builder, I’ve always believed in the power of strong foundations. Helping create a school with PoP felt like building something that will truly last.

Education changes everything.

— **Jeremy Morton**

“

Supporting Pencils of Promise has been one of the most meaningful journeys our family has taken. Our trip to Ghana with our daughter Atlas and dear friend Gabe to see our first completed school was unforgettable—it made the impact feel deeply personal and real.

We believe every child deserves access to safe, quality education, and are committed to helping make that a reality through our partnership with PoP. Raising funds for this cause has been both humbling and inspiring, and we’re honored to play a small part in the life-changing work they do around the world.

— **Brooke Morton**

FINANCIALS





SUPPORT INCOME

Total Support Income in 2024

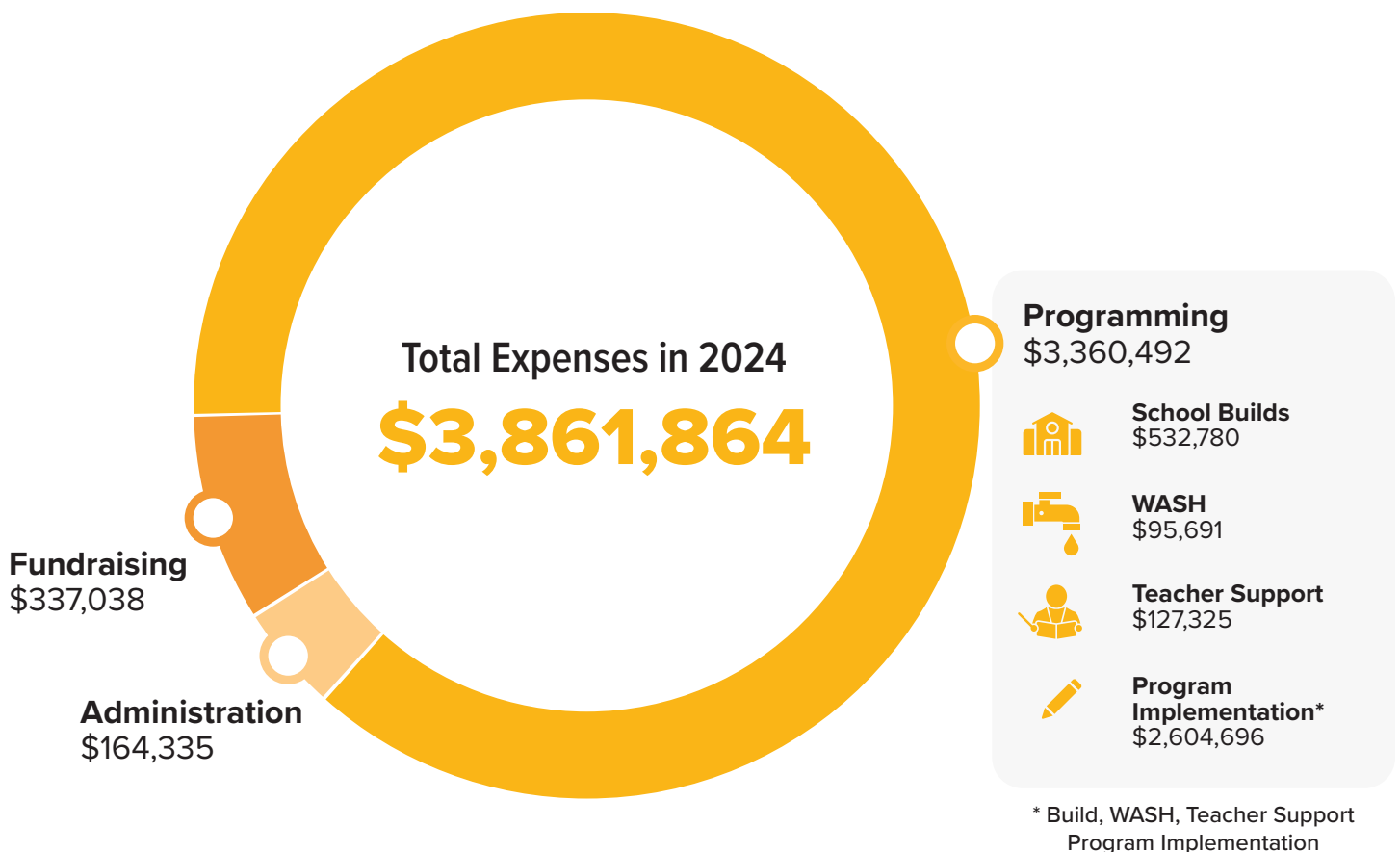
\$3,044,917

2024 End of Year Net Assets

\$647,090



EXPENSES



Note: The financial information presented here is unaudited. Audited financial statements for the fiscal year will be available on our website in Q4 2025.



HELP US BUILD ON THIS MOMENTUM

PoP envisions a future where all children have the learning environment they need to thrive. We won't stop until every student, everywhere, has access to a safe and healthy place to learn.

Will you build with us?



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