



# 2022 ANNUAL REPORT



11 Years in  
Bangladesh

## 11 YEARS OF THE BANGLADESH GEP

11 years is a near lifetime for many of the young girls in the GEP, but for Speak Up the years seem to have flown by. Starting with 21 girls in the GEP in January 2012, we have steadily grown to serve more than 2,000 girls and their families in 36 slums and villages and counting. In this year's report we will highlight not only our work in 2022 but also chart our progress over time. Thanks for making this possible!

### OUR FINANCES

In 11 years we have grown from a few hundred dollars a month to sponsor 21 girls to having nearly 1,000 girls sponsored monthly. In 2022 we continued to solidify our financial base with more than 750 donors contributing. For the first time in many years our finances did not increase from the year before, but we still raised over \$670,000. Nearly 700 donors give monthly, a strong foundation for our future growth. We maintained our Reserve Fund at \$50,000 and aim to increase it to \$75,000 in 2023. Our expenses to start the year outstrip our monthly donations, so these funds will be used in early 2023 to pay for one-time expenses beyond the regular monthly budget, enabling us to smooth out our giving over the year and never run a deficit.

### OUR STAFF

We continued to solidify our Bangladesh GEP staff team, again giving all staff positions small raises with another 5% pay raise across the board starting in January 2022. We now have 35 full time staff and 75 part-time teachers, all of whom are Bangladeshi nationals, evenly split between men and women. A highlight is that we now have 4 full-time staff who are former GEP students, and 33 part-time teachers or interns are also former GEP students, giving many young women extra income and job experience. Our only US-based staff, Dave Palmer, continued in his fourth year as our Development Director, giving us a person entirely dedicated to raising funds and donor relations and greatly increasing our ability to secure grants. Our 7-person US Board of Directors continues to meet bi-annually to provide oversight, and all Board members are among our 25 largest donors. Our Founder Troy Anderson continues to serve as our International Director and lives in Bangladesh to oversee our Girls Education Program there.



### OUR SYSTEMS

We now have Learning Centers in all 36 slums and villages, giving girls in each location a safe place to study, meet with tutors, and attend various training and inspirational meetings.

Our two full-time Advocacy Team members coordinate with police, village leaders, and government authorities across the region to stop child marriages and intervene into various cases of abuse and exploitation.

Our GEP now has two offices, 8 motorcycles, two dorms housing 155 girls, 23 interns, and hundreds of girls on our Waiting List. We hold monthly Parents Meetings in all 36 locations, bi-monthly training meetings for 200 girls, and scores of training meetings on various topics.

# 2022 INCOME

Thanks to a large number of faithful donors, our income has steadily increased almost every year since 2013.

2013: \$191,000

2014: \$223,000

2015: \$230,000

2016: \$382,000

2017: \$422,000

2018: \$425,000

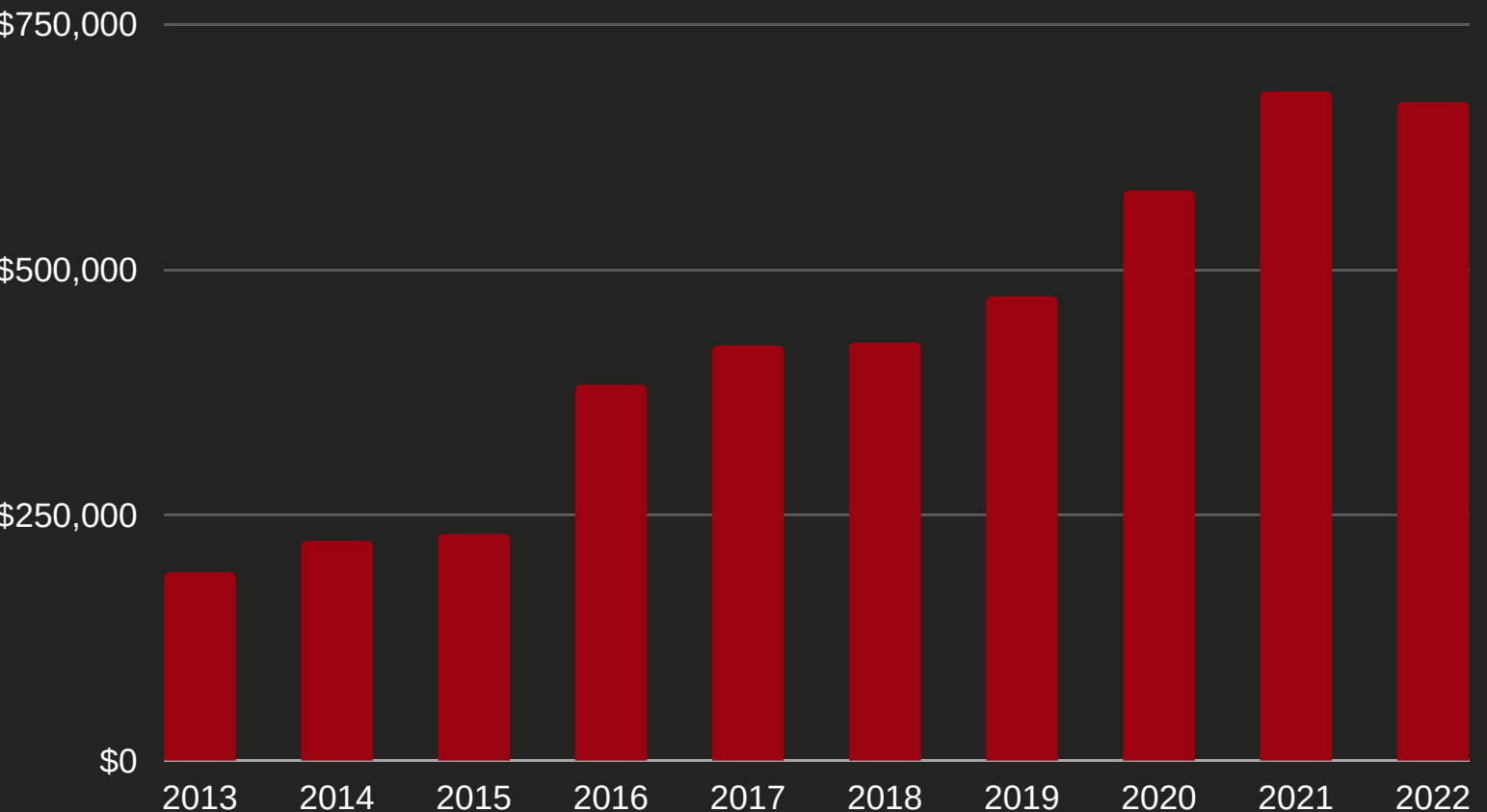
2019: \$472,000

2020: \$580,000

2021: \$681,000

2022: \$670,000

We aim to raise over \$800,000 in 2023, helping us to expand to add another 100 girls to the GEP in mid-year 2023 and another 200 6th graders in January 2024, Our expenses continue to rise as we anticipate having nearly 300 young women receiving monthly stipends for higher education by the end of 2023, so these funds are already designated for those expense accounts. Thanks for investing in our work over the long haul to help us steadily grow over the past 10 years.



# FROM 21 TO 1547 GIRLS

We have steadily increased the number of girls on our official GEP roster each year.

2012: 21

2013: 151

2014: 350

2015: 575

2016: 900

2017: 1259

2018: 1278

2019: 1298

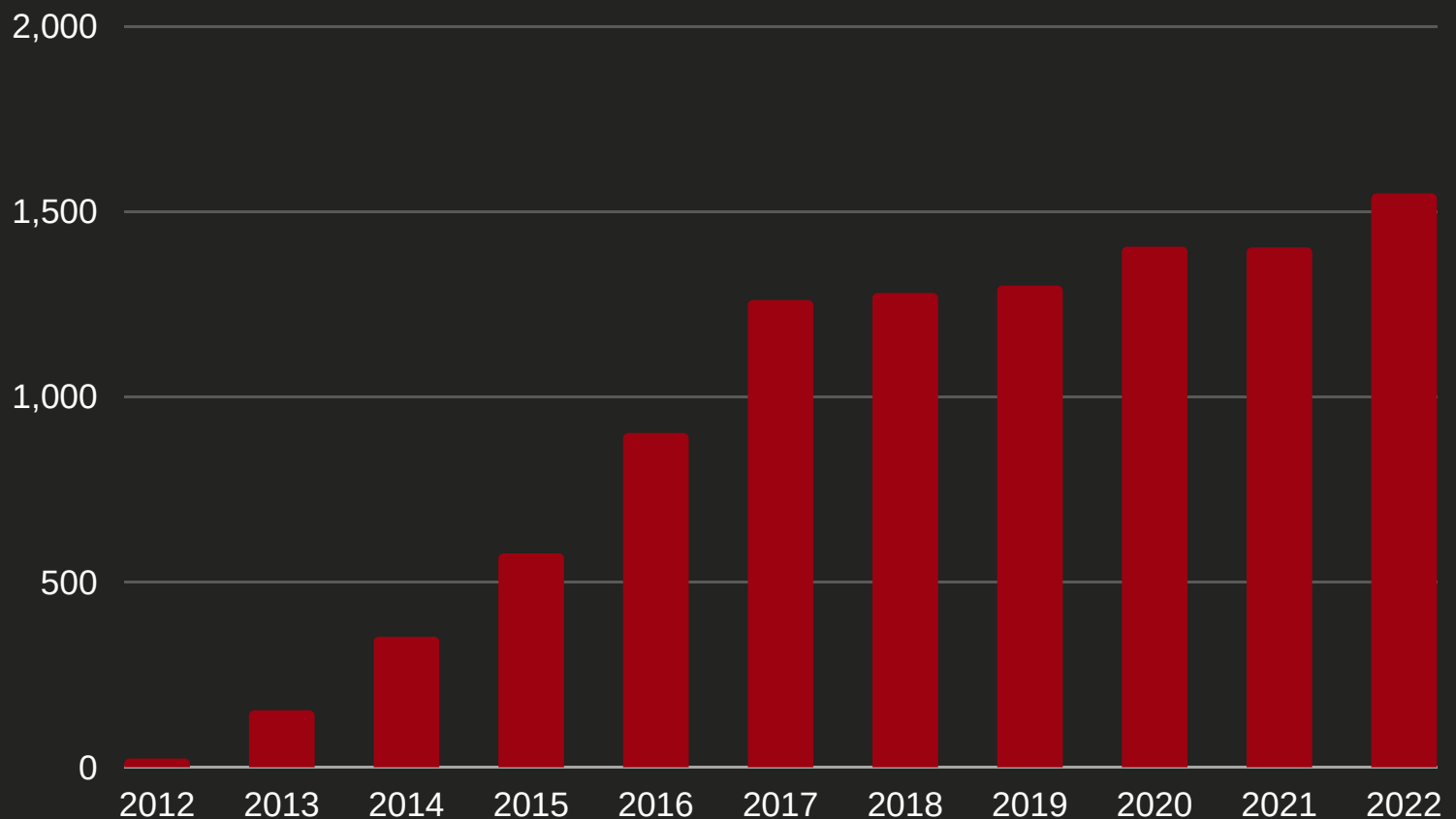
2020: 1403

2021: 1401

2022: 1547

2023: 1605 to start the year

These numbers don't include several hundred girls on our Friends List, girls who attend our tutoring sessions and hope to officially join the roster as soon as we have the funding to give them full benefits. With more than 400 on our Waiting List to start 2023, there are actually more than 2,000 girls receiving help from the GEP.



## 2012: THE GEP BEGINS

In the fall of 2011, Speak Up started meeting potential partners in the Khulna Division of western Bangladesh, hoping to find a group to collaborate with to empower and educate girls in poverty who were at risk of exploitation. We had no idea at that time how big the GEP might become, nor what it really could look like. But after visiting many slums and brothel areas and villages, we decided to partner with a local organization to begin a pilot project in 2012 to empower girls.

**In December 2011 we met with 20 girls from three villages**, along with their parents, attending an information session. All signed up for our GEP Pilot Program, under which we committed to at least a first year of providing them with all that they needed to stay in school, including books and school supplies, uniforms, and daily tutors. These first girls were later joined by a 21st young woman in a 4th village, giving us a small but dedicated group. At that point most of the girls were from very poor Hindu areas, almost all descendants of the Hindu untouchable caste. Though the caste system and any discrimination based on it is illegal in Bangladesh, the reality for many of the poorest Hindu families is that a commonly identifiable last name "Das" marks them as poor and unwanted in the eyes of many, leading to continued discrimination against what is often called the Dalit community. **We focused on the Hindu Dalit community when the GEP officially started in January 2012.**

As the first year continued and progressed well, we realized that tens of thousands of girls in the Khulna area alone could benefit from the GEP. So we began to get monthly sponsors for each of the 21 GEP girls, knowing that a solid financial foundation for the first batch would enable us to expand and add more girls in 2013. Though we dreamed of this happening, little did we know at the time that in 11 years we would grow from 21 to more than 1,600 girls in the GEP, with hundreds more on the Waiting List. And importantly, that three of the first 21 GEP girls would in 2021, after 9 years in the GEP, finish their higher education and join the GEP staff team.



## 2013: 154 GIRLS

In January 2013, **154 girls from 5th grade through 12th grade** attended our monthly large GEP meeting, the first time we had ever had so many girls in the GEP. This meeting was a watershed moment for our GEP staff, as we looked at each other realizing that this could really work, that thousands of girls in our area were hungry for what the GEP was providing, and that if we could raise enough money we could build something huge one day. Little did we know what would come one day.

**We built our first Learning Centers in several villages**, small school rooms that gave girls in each village a safe place to study and receive after school tutoring. Because most mothers are uneducated and unable to help much with their daughters' homework, we use the Learning Centers in each village to provide tutoring for 3 hours a day 5 days a week for every girl in the GEP. Over time this changed to be for girls in 4th through 8th grade, while girls in 9th grade and above would receive a monthly stipend to go to an outside tutor who could provide higher level instruction on specialized subjects. But girls of all ages continue to use the Learning Centers weekly for training sessions, Health Seminars, game days, and picnics. From simple beginnings, the Learning Centers have become a kind of clubhouse for the girls activities for the entire village, an important place of laughter and learning and belonging.

## 2014: A NEW DORM

In 2014 **we opened up our first GEP Dormitory in Khulna City**, a building we still use now in 2023. Located in a safe area of the city, our Dormitory originally housed 15 girls, our GEP offices, and a family overseeing the dorm. With the future in mind, we began equipping the dorm with beds and facilities for up to 80 girls, knowing that one day many more would come to the city for high school and college. What started as a small dorm has grown to house 172 girls in two buildings.

**We also greatly expanded the GEP from 151 to 350 girls**, and expanded our work to 12 different villages.



## 2015: 575 GIRLS

By 2015 the GEP was really beginning to pick up steam, and **we increased the official roster to 575 girls in 16 villages**. By now we had girls from 5th grade through College in the GEP, many more living in the dormitory and a growing staff team managing a complex schedule of daily tutoring, large training meetings, and interventions to stop child marriages. This is the year that the GEP really began to feel like a significant player in the area, as we built relationships with many government officials and other NGOs and firmly established the GEP.

**We also more intentionally began working in poor Muslim areas in 2015** in our efforts to eventually balance the GEP enrollment between Hindu and Muslim girls. By 2022 our GEP roster was almost 50% Muslim, with our staff team also reflecting the religious diversity of the region. We continue to focus on the difficult task of keeping girls from very conservative Muslim families in school through college, and we are thrilled that in 2022 two Muslim graduates of our GEP joined our full-time staff team.

## 2016: COLLEGE GRADS

In 2016 **we had our first young women graduate from college**, two young women who had joined the GEP to start college in 2012. Most girls join the GEP in 5th or 6th grade, but early on we began supporting some young women who were ready to finish high school in hopes that they would be role models for the hundreds of younger girls in the GEP.

When girls join the GEP, we promise them that if they finish the 12th grade and get admitted to a college, nursing school, or other higher education, we will give them a monthly stipend for up to four years to fund their higher education. **To start 2023 we now have 235 young women in college or nursing school**, and a great wave is building of nearly a thousand more girls to follow. These are all girls from villages and families where previously no women even finished high school.



# 2017: MOMENTUM

In 2017 our GEP continued to gain momentum and size, and **we increased to 1259 girls and young women on the official roster and expanding to 26 villages.** Over the first 5 years of the GEP we had seen great hunger for an education, with girls from far away villages showing up to our meetings asking us to expand to their areas. While our finances limited how big we could get so quickly, we began doing all that we could to help any girl who was in need.

We began a **huge expansion of academic support:** spending tens of thousands of dollars each year on textbooks, finished building Learning Centers in all 26 villages, and started providing better school supplies and larger stipends for all the girls in the GEP.

After nearly 6 years with our first local NGO partner we **began partnering with another local NGO in mid-2017** to help us implement our projects.

# 2018: LOTS OF NURSES

While the GEP continued to grow in 2018, the most dramatic change in our College GEP was **a great number of nurses who began to enroll in local nursing schools through our support.** Starting with the first 6 in 2016, most of whom became our first nursing graduates in 2019, we began 2023 with more than 40 young women in nursing schools both in Khulna and around Bangladesh. As of January 2023 we have helped 21 young women graduate from nursing school, and in mid-2023 they will be joined by at least 25 more new nursing students. We anticipate that one day our GEP in the 36 villages and slums where we currently work will be producing 35-40 new nurses every year, a massive change for the prospects of young women in the area and exactly what Bangladesh needs: educated young women with a heart to serve their community and country.

**We also began operating the beginnings of our second dorm,** as our original 2014 dorm was now at full capacity with 82 beds filled. By 2023 we have fully filled a second dorm building housed with 90 College and Nursing students.





# 2019: 30 VILLAGES

In 2019, **our GEP expanded to a total of 30 villages across the region**, giving nearly 1300 girls a chance to get a full education. We were stopping scores of child marriages, and could sense by now that entire families and villages were committed to stopping child marriage in their area. It became less of a fight to convince parents to keep their daughters in school, even though we continued to oppose child marriages when we came across them.

**45 young women passed their HSC exams**, after which they can go on to college or nursing school. These 12th graders all come from villages where virtually no women previously finished high-school. **Our newly-formed Advocacy Team intervened to stop at least 35 child marriages** and ran training and awareness seminars for many police and government agencies. **We ran 11 monthly Parents Meetings in each of 30 villages**, meaning that 330 times our GEP team gathered entire villages together to discuss girls education and help parents stay on track with empowering their daughters. **And we also ran 32 large GEP training meetings**, where girls from all 30 villages come together for a day of training and inspiration. Finally, **our 55 part-time tutors** ran tutoring sessions in our 30 Learning Centers 5 days a week for 48 weeks of the year, providing countless hours of academic support to more than **1800 girls** who visited our Learning Centers in 2019.

# 2020: BIGGER VISION

By 2020, besides responding heavily to the financial and food needs of families ravaged by Covid, we began experimenting with many new ideas. **We started our GEP football (soccer) program**, allowing hundreds of girls a chance for recreation and fitness. And **we added a new village to the GEP**, the 31st, by essentially splitting one large area into two as so many girls in Shovna and Kultula villages were joyfully overwhelming one Learning Center with more than 100 girls. This entire area started in the GEP years ago by a handful of bold girls coming to nearby Khornia village and gracefully demanding that we expand to Shovna, which we enthusiastically did.



GIRLS EDUCATION  
PROGRAM

Future  
Doctors

year

# 2021: SHEDELLCTP

In 2021 we developed our list of 10 development goals for each girl in the GEP.

Try to remember this acronym:

## 10 Development Goals SHEDELLCTP

Every young woman in the GEP will....

জিইপি'র প্রতিটি যুবতী নারী হবে ....

**S - Safety. Understand safety in relationships and other areas.**

এস - নিরাপত্তা। নিরাপত্তা সম্পর্ক এবং অন্যান্য ক্ষেত্রে বুঝতে পারা।

**H - Healthy. Have a healthy life: diet, exercise, physical health.**

এইচ - স্বাস্থ্যকর। সুস্থ জীবনযাপন করা (খাদ্য, ব্যায়াম, সামগ্রিকভাবে শারীরিক স্বাস্থ্যবান।)

**E - Experience. Have job experience, with interview skills.**

ই-অভিজ্ঞতা। (ইন্টারভিউ এবং নেতৃত্বের দক্ষতাসহ কাজের অভিজ্ঞতা।)

**D - Driving. Know how to safely ride a bicycle and a motorcycle.**

ডি - পরিচালনা। (নিরাপদে সাইকেল এবং মোটরসাইকেল চালনা করা।)

**E - English. Have basic proficiency in English.**

ই- ইংরেজি। (তার ভবিষ্যতের ক্ষমতায়নের জন্য ইংরেজিতে প্রাথমিক দক্ষতা থাকবে।)

**L - Law. Understand the law about the rights of women and girls.**

এল - আইন। (নারী ও মেয়েদের অধিকার সংক্রান্ত আইন বুঝতে পারবে।)

**L - Leadership. Be a confident leader, with public speaking skills.**

এল - নেতৃত্ব। (জনসাধারণের কথা বলার দক্ষতাসহ একজন আত্মবিশ্বাসী নেতা হওয়া।)

**C - Computers. Have basic computer proficiency for a good job.**

সি - কম্পিউটার। (ভাল চাকরি পেতে প্রাথমিক ভাবে কম্পিউটারে দক্ষ হবে।)

**T - Taka. Able to earn, save, and budget money.**

টি - টাকা। (অর্থ উপার্জন, সঞ্চয় এবং বাজেট করার ক্ষেত্রে অভিজ্ঞ হওয়া।)

**P - Public Service. Live a life that serves and empowers others.**

পি - জনসেবা। (এমন জীবন যাপন করা যা অন্যদের সেবা এবং ক্ষমতায়ন করবে।)

## গার্লস্ ইমপাওয়ারমেন্ট প্রোগ্রাম (জিইপি)

সোনাডাঙ্গা আবাসিক এলাকা (২য় ফেজ), রোড নং-৩, হাউজ নং-৩৮৩, সোনাডাঙ্গা, খুলনা।

# 2022: 11 YEARS OF THE GEP

After 11 years of the GEP, we have a lot to be thankful for, and 2022 was another year of steady growth. We are grateful to all of our supporters who helped make the following possible over 2022:

**We now have 235 young women receiving stipends to attend a higher education.** This is a massive change for their slums and villages.

**We have begun work in slums in Khulna city,** giving nearly 200 girls academic support and giving 20 College GEP students some extra income as part-time teachers. Besides those 20 teachers, we also have hired **17 GEP interns for 2023,** giving those young women both work experience and income. And **we have hired 4 GEP graduates as full-time GEP staff,** a number certain to grow in 2023 and beyond as we commit to hiring the brightest of our graduates to carry on the work.

We started 2023 with **1605 girls and young women on the GEP roster in a total of 36 slums and villages.**

**We now refer to the GEP interchangeably as the Girls Education Program or the Girls Empowerment Program,** a change you might see if you look closely at some of our banners and PR materials.

And we now have **beds for 172 girls and young women in our two GEP dorms in Khulna city,** spaces that are almost always at near full capacity as there is a great hunger for a safe place to get an education. Our 82-bed high school dorm is full of girls escaping the pressures of child marriage or other serious problems at home, while our 90 beds for older girls are full of young women in nursing school, college, or other higher education.

Numbers don't tell the whole story, but they do capture one simple truth: there is great need in Bangladesh to stop child marriage and give girls a chance to thrive in school, and there is a great hunger among girls in slums and villages to reach their dreams. If you met any girl in the GEP, you would certainly be impressed by her graciousness, her tenacity to stay in school, and her vision to build something brighter for her future.



# CORE VALUES

Each month, more than 1500 girls in our Girls Education Program in Bangladesh, and hundreds more on our Waiting List, receive school supplies, including notebooks which prominently display our GEP Core Values. The girls are regularly drilled on the purposes and values of the GEP, helping them to remember the traits that will serve them well as they break the cycle of female poverty and build joyful, thriving futures.

## HARD WORK

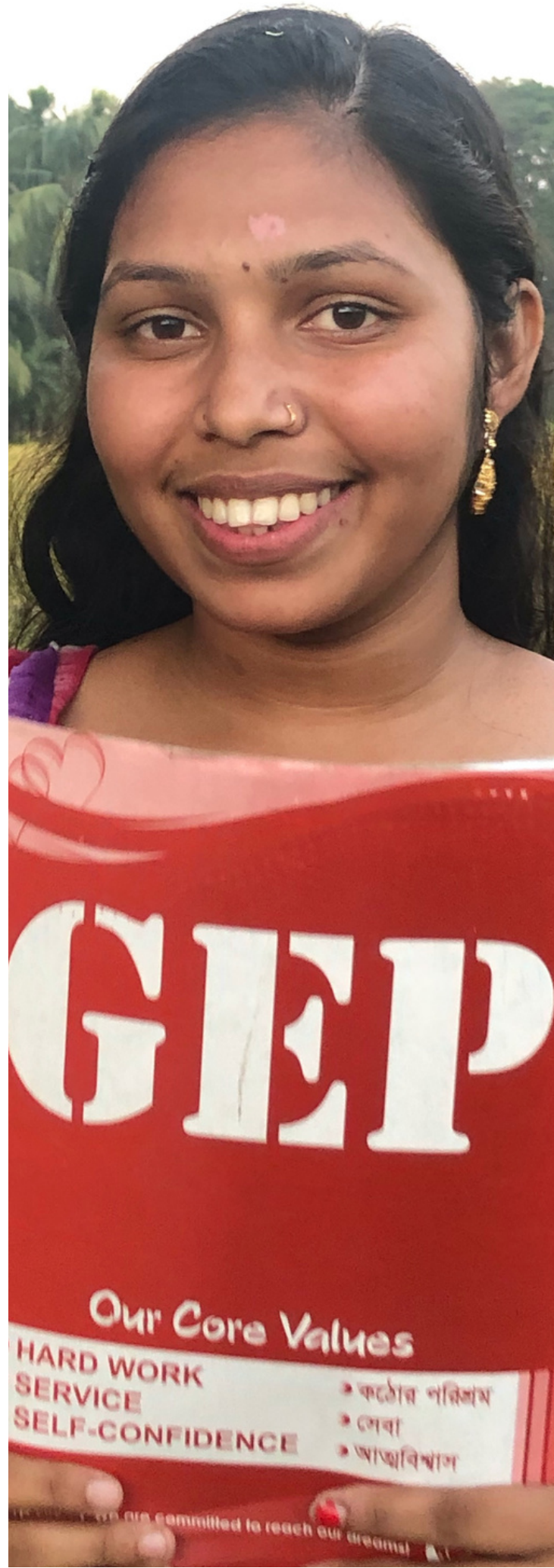
GEP girls know that they will receive all the support they need to stay in school, but that their success ultimately depends on their commitment to work hard in school. While they are normal young women with their ups and downs, our girls are amazing in school. You've likely never seen a more motivated, hard-working group of students. Focused, disciplined, and able to endure endless distractions, our girls are the embodiment of grit and hard work in the midst of very difficult circumstances.

## SERVICE

The GEP is designed not only to help girls thrive, but to equip them to become servant-hearted leaders in their community and country one day. They know that the GEP is not just for them, but that they are being given the most beautiful burden: to serve the poor, to shape the world, to become leaders who will change everything. We are not just creating educated girls; we aim to build compassionate, talented leaders.

## SELF-CONFIDENCE

With an entire team behind them, our girls know that they can achieve whatever they dream. Girls in poverty receive a lot of negative messages about their worth and place in society, so we combat this with self-confidence training. Young women from terribly difficult backgrounds, whose own families often consider them burdens to be married off, are growing in confidence as their vision for the future grows. Watch out for a humble yet confident army of girls coming soon!



# 2022 EXPENSES

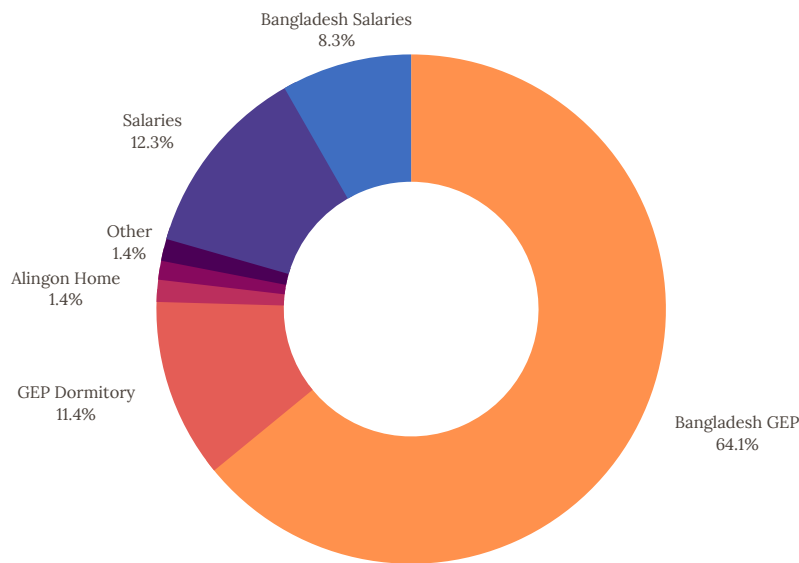
Here is how we spent funds in 2022:

## EXPENSES BY CATEGORY

Our overall expenses in 2022 broke down as follows:

Bangladesh GEP:	\$	470,330
GEP Dormitory:	\$	83,206
Alingon Home:	\$	9,984
Cambodia Project:	\$	6,000
Lebanon Project:	\$	2,500
Other Expenses:	\$	10,002
Salaries:	\$	90,000
Bangladesh Salaries:	\$	61,102

**TOTAL: \$ 733,124**



## ALINGON HOME SUPPORT

For the 12th and final year in 2022, we supported the Alingon Home for girls removed from brothels in Bangladesh. Since 2011 we have given over \$267,000 for the operation of Alingon.

# 83.9%

% of our expenses that went to support our GEP projects in Bangladesh.

# 13.6%

% of our expenses were for fundraising US salaries, and other expenses

# 2.5%

% of our income that went to support projects in Lebanon, Cambodia, Alingon, and in the USA.



# 2012-22 EXPENSES

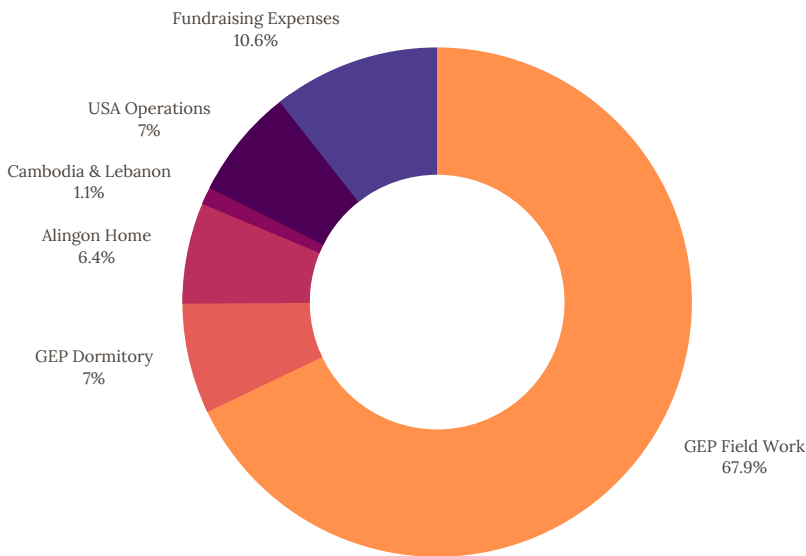
We are committed to rigorous financial oversight so that every dollar is used to empower girls in poverty. Here is how we spent funds from 2012 to 2022:

## EXPENSES BY CATEGORY

Our overall expenses from 2012-22 are as follows:

GEP Field Work:	\$	2,849,642
GEP Dormitory:	\$	291,808
Alingon Home:	\$	267,420
Cambodia-Lebanon:	\$	45,866
Fundraising Expenses:	\$	446,794
USA Operations:	\$	292,769

**TOTAL: \$ 4,194,299**



# 81.3 %

% of our expenses that went to support our projects in Bangladesh.

# 10.6 %

% of our expenses that went to fundraising expenses.

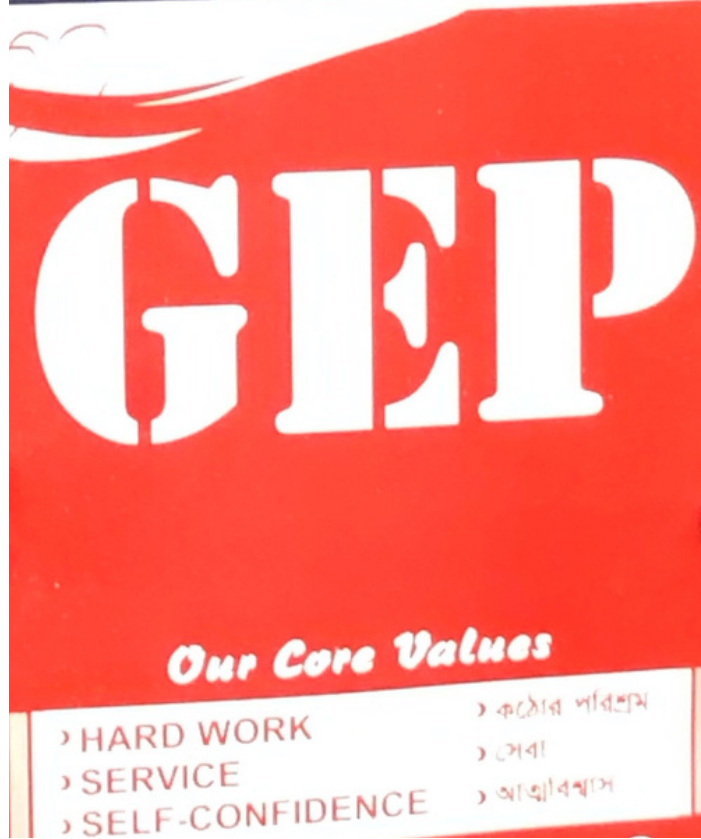
# 8.1 %

% of our expenses that went to support projects in Lebanon, Cambodia and the USA.



## 2022 SUPPORTERS - THANKS!

Abrahamy, Aaron  
Abselet, Kayvan  
Ackerman, Alex  
Adamec, Justene  
Aggarwal, Puneet  
Aitken, Reed  
Albert, Dorothy  
Alexander, Denelle  
Allen, Kevin & Sara  
Allen, Scott & Claire  
Aloy, Jennifer  
Ambo, Steven  
Ambrose, Allison  
And, Amirra  
Anderson, Adam & Jaci  
Anderson, JF  
Anderson, Sean & Christy  
Anderson, Troy  
Anderson, Valyn & Jean  
Andreason, Jeffrey & Carrie  
Angulo, Rose  
Anwander, Helen  
Apling, Bradley  
Arffa, Hannah  
Arnold-McEwan, Erika  
Aspling, Dave & Carol  
Avella, Becky  
Axume, Sisilia  
Azarian, Christina  
Babel, Gail  
Badeen, Jonathan  
Bagwell, Megan  
Bajaj, Anita  
Bajaj, Nitin & Meghan Brombach  
Baker, Joan  
Bakker, Laryn  
Ballard, HobbyAnn  
Barclay, Margaret  
Barikdar, Milton  
Baroi, Clara "Ranu"  
Barringer, John  
Bartz, Jennie  
Basiago, Jonathan  
Basiago, Julie  
Bassett, Brice  
Battaglia, Giulia  
Bayles, Don & Joyce  
Beaghan, Emily  
Beck, Kaitlyn  
Beck, Randy  
Becker, Mary  
Beckstrom, Cherie  
Bednash, TJ  
Behrens, Victoria  
Bemis, Brynn  
Bengston, Eric  
Benter, Allison  
Berry, Heather  
Beumer, Shayna  
Bevins, Elizabeth  
Bezos, Mark  
Bezos-Poore, Christina & Steve  
Bindal Family  
Bishop, Berry & Will  
Bjorklund, Andrew  
Black, Michele  
Blue, David  
Blythe, Jocelyn  
Bockstruck, Justin  
Bockstruck, Scott & Zenita  
Bolton, Natalie  
Boone, Sarah  
Bourbeau, Ashley  
Bowdoin, Jon & Kathie  
Bowe, Elle  
Bowers, Jay & Karen  
Bowman, Odelle  
Boyce, Christian  
Boyle, Brian  
Boyle, Joe  
Brabbee, Andrew  
Brabbee, Minette  
Braganza, Raji & Leela  
Brauner, Kelly Jacquet  
Breitner, Michael  
Brenhaug, Brian & Michelle  
Brewster, Elizabeth  
Brewton, Amoreena  
Bridge, Kim  
Bringard, Christopher  
Brinker, Keith  
Bristow, Kyoko  
Brombach, Beth  
Brombach, Meghan  
Brower, Stacey  
Brown, Adam & Shawna  
Brown, Leland  
Brown, Matthew  
Brown, Timothy  
Buckley, Maureen  
Bui, Jasper & Donna  
Burch, Jessica  
Burch, Victoria & Bob  
Burger, Patrick & Amy  
Burr, William  
Burrell, Talene  
Bursch, Alan  
Bursch, Amy Phillips  
Bursch, Brad & Allison  
Busboom, Jan & Janice  
Byers, Stephen  
Byrne, Mary Lou  
Cabanaw, Jasmine  
Cady, Curtis & Barbara  
Cady, Pamela  
Calabro, Paul & Constance  
Calderon, Natalie  
Calleros, Sandra Lee



## 2022 SUPPORTERS - THANKS!

Canty, Jack Danger  
Carless, Andrea  
Carlsen, Amy  
Carlson, Barbara  
Carpenter, Lisa & Alex  
Carper, Ross  
Carrothers, Tracy McNeme  
Caskey, Christina & Robert  
Catania, Kati  
Cavanaugh, Karen  
Cegelis Sum, Geneva  
Chamberlain, Eli  
Chang, Steven & Stephanie  
Charity, Garrett  
Chelian, Michael & Jay  
Chen, Chih Ping  
Chen, Mark  
Cheng, Joe & Amy  
Chessum, Todd & Shawna  
Chesters, Brian  
Cheung, Kevin  
Cheung, Phillip  
Chi, Young Mi  
Chian, David  
Chin, Christian  
Cho, Albert  
Chodos, Michele Swift  
Choi, Sandra  
Chowdhury, Shanjana  
Chrisman, Tabitha  
Christerson, Brad & Carin  
Christie, Kathryn  
Chung, Hanna  
Clark, Austin  
Clements, Nicole  
Coates, Barbara  
Coats, David  
Coats, Steve & Georgia  
Coats, Zoe  
Conkle, Lindsey  
Conley, Bill  
Connolly, Carlyn  
Connolly, Lynn  
Conrad, Daniel  
Corona, Rhea  
Courtney, Laurie  
Crawford, Adam  
Crawford, Deborah & Jeff  
Crawford, Jessica & Brad  
Cripps, Dani  
Critchlow, Saralyn  
Crosbie, Carisa  
Culcleasure, John  
Currier, Kelsi  
Curry, Christopher & Parichat  
Cutno, Angel Chung  
Daly, Pamela  
Damrow, Christine  
Das, John  
Davis, Candace  
Davis, Holly  
DeGarmo, Dawn & Michael  
de Wet, Richard  
DeBerte, Anna  
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