



Annual Report

2024



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2024 Annual Report

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Students at Yepocapa receive brand-new textbooks from visiting CoEd volunteers, representing supporters like YOU who made the program possible. *Chimaltenango, February 2024.*

2024 was a year that started out like any other.

With schools back to a more-or-less normal timeline after the pandemic, we geared up for a season of visiting schools with our staff and volunteers to celebrate each of our programs' most recent expansions to new schools and students. During the visits, we:

- Inaugurated **2 new textbook schools**, ensuring that **386 new students** can study with these vital learning materials for generations to come.
- Inaugurated **1 new Computer Center**, providing 21st-century technology skills to 420 students every year.
- Celebrated the expansion of the **Spark Reading Program to 25 schools** currently in training, serving 220 teachers and transforming 5,370 students into lifelong readers and learners.
- Welcomed nearly 300 NEW students into the Rise Youth Development Program, for a total of **1,056 Rise scholars** receiving the academic

and social support to persist in school until graduation—along with personal development that empowers them to realize their potential as the next generation of young leaders.

In addition to visiting the schools benefiting from our programs, there was another, very special purpose that our staff were traveling to Guatemala for this year. In the week between the project visits, staff helped host focus groups with 200 Rise students, graduates, youth who left the program, and their families to listen to their successes and challenges in their own words. The focus groups were just one part of a **human-centered design impact study**, conducted in partnership with ADGN Education, the education experts who helped design the MAIA school curriculum. This comprehensive study also included a literature review, a listening tour with other nonprofits working in Guatemala, a comprehensive analysis of program data and methodology, and surveys of students, graduates, and program staff.

Mapping the Educational Landscape

The impact study provided crucial insights into the new educational landscape in the years following the pandemic. We already knew that the lingering economic impact had doubled the number of families in need of scholarships, and that more children than ever were dropping out of school (more than 100,000 in recent years, according to Guatemalan national newspaper *Prensa Libre*). But the impact study gave Rise students, graduates, and dropouts the opportunity to **share what success looks like in their own words**, how Rise helps them achieve it, and what new barriers now stand in their way post-pandemic.

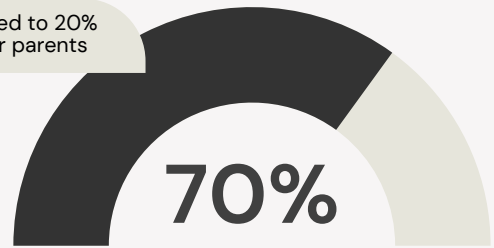
We also gained a wealth of data on what Rise has achieved so far. These results often echoed or reinforced the statistics gained from our last survey of Rise graduates, conducted about 10 years ago—when the sample size was much smaller. It's reassuring to see that **even as the program has grown, these strong results**



CoEd staff including Executive Director **Joe Berninger** and Guatemala Country Director **Joanne Wessels** join **Rob Jentsch** of ADGN Education to conduct focus groups with over 200 Rise students and families.

have persisted. Students shared with us many inspiring aspirations for their futures—from helping clean up trash, to caring for animals, to bringing medical care to their local communities.

compared to 20%
of their parents



70%
of Rise scholars graduate from
high school



**After graduating, 9 in 10 (88%) are either
working or studying at a higher level.**

One third finance the education of younger siblings.

Despite the program's impressive results achieved to date, we also heard firsthand that students are facing increased challenges in overcoming barriers to staying in school and in securing professional jobs after graduation. The study identified a few main ways that we can deepen the Rise Program's impact to ensure that it is truly helping students break the cycle of poverty:

- **Increase direct payments** to Rise students by 50% to keep more kids in school and empower families.
- Equip Rise students with **high-quality technology skills** to prepare them for jobs.
- Prepare kids to enter the job market through a new **Career Connections Unit**.
- Expand **pathways to quality secondary and higher education** through a boarding school and university residence for young women.

Identifying Three Pathways out of Poverty

All of the learnings from the impact study helped to shape our new **2025–2030 Strategic Plan**, completed in January 2025 to guide the coming years of our work. (We will also check in on the plan annually to assess progress and incorporate key learnings.) You can read the full strategic plan at coeduc.org/strategic-plan/en or by clicking below.

Strategic Plan



As we deepen collaborations between our four program teams in Guatemala, we're beginning to think of our work in terms of how all of our current and future programs and initiatives combine to empower students to walk **three main pathways out of poverty**. We can also think of these as three key competencies that students need to achieve, in order to break the cycle of poverty.

1 Reading

Literacy skills lay an essential foundation for all later learning. Once students learn to read, they can read to learn—opening up a whole new world of critical thinking skills and a lifelong love of learning. Our **Spark Reading Program** provides reading materials and comprehensive training to primary-school teachers over a two-year period, ensuring that children build crucial literacy skills at the earliest levels. At the middle-school level, our **Textbook Program** delivers textbooks in four subjects, using a revolving fund to ensure that schools have these resources for generations. The program also provides in-depth teacher training on using the books effectively—engaging students in the learning process and building critical thinking skills. In the coming years, we will deepen collaboration between these two programs. Staff share learnings and best practices and support each other during busy training seasons.

Three Pathways Out of Poverty



2 Technology

Technology skills are essential for students in Guatemala to further their education or find higher-paying jobs, outside of the declining agricultural sector. Our **Technology Program** (formerly known as the Computer Centers Program) provides middle and high-school youth with badly-needed digital literacy training that prepares them with these crucial skills. The program's new name reflects the need to expand the excellent curriculum and resources developed by our technology team—such as the Moodle platform developed in response to the pandemic—to benefit even more students beyond the 12,400 directly studying at CoEd Computer Centers. The program will also continue to set up Computer Centers in rural middle schools, using a sustainability model to ensure that schools have these resources for generations to come. Teachers receive about 80 hours of training in their first year and 40 hours of continuing education each year.



Students at Jalapa will be able to gain valuable technology skills for generations to come thanks to their new CoEd Computer Center.



Rise students take the lead on service projects in their community. *Sacatepéquez, May 2024*

3 Graduation (with Life Skills)

USAID reports that Guatemalan youth must complete at least 12 years of education to break the cycle of poverty. In middle and high school, our **Rise Youth Development Program** identifies students on the verge of dropping out and provides an academic scholarship to cover financial costs. Rise also provides comprehensive, holistic support services and youth development that enable students to graduate with the skills to become the next generation of young leaders. More than 70% of Rise students are female—a focus population that has great potential for social change, yet faces patriarchal expectations and discrimination in their journey. Thanks to partnership with the Sisters of the Precious Blood, we have the opportunity to assume and expand operations of a boarding school and a university residence that will provide more direct pathways to quality secondary and higher education for a subset of girls in Rise.



Spark students explore their brand-new reading materials provided through the program.

Getting the Map into the Right Hands

Empowered with the results of our impact study, we are embarking on a journey to **share these learnings with others working in the education space in Guatemala**. We hosted three sessions in the fall of 2024 for over two dozen guests from foundations and other nonprofits to share our findings and discuss how we can collaborate for maximum impact. We also frequently meet with these groups through the El Directorio network in Guatemala, our partnerships with Rotary clubs leading similar projects around the world, and by serving as founding members of Voices for Education. This network advocates for equitable public education in Guatemala's Highlands and collaborates with Guatemala's Ministry of Education to promote open dialogue and evidence-based insights that can drive similar change throughout all of Guatemala.

Our **Spark Reading Program team also continues to lead the charge** to share best practices with the Ministry. Spark's new GANA guides for teachers (Guia de Aprendizaje en el Nivel Adecuado) align strongly with the nationally-adopted Teaching at the Right Level methodology, and Guatemala's Ministry of Education is looking

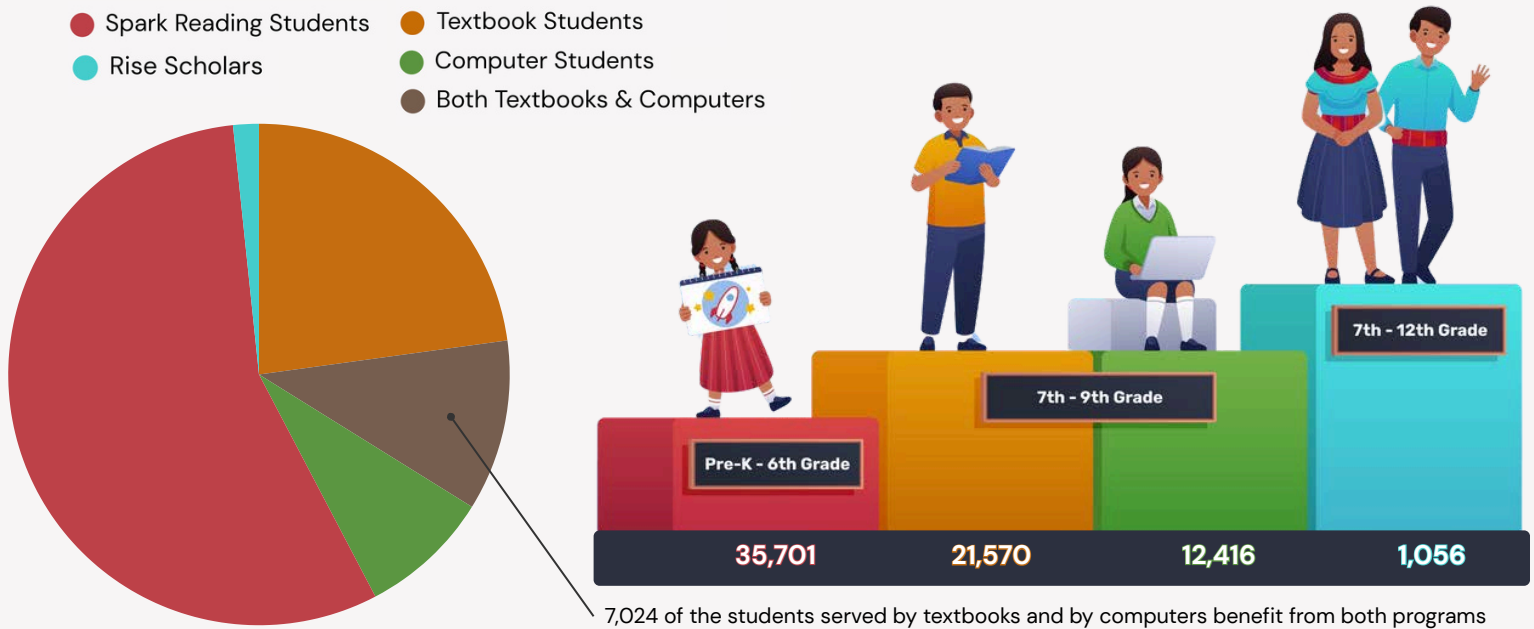
to us for guidance. In March 2024, we invited 28 Ministry of Education officials from Sacatepéquez, Chimaltenango, and Quetzaltenango to get a seven-hour crash course in the Spark methodology. This will help them support the teachers at schools in their regions for the long term (which our 2023 studies proved to be an effective method of maximizing the program's impact), as well as consider using Spark methods on a broader scale throughout their assigned regions! Ministry officials now sign off on the diplomas that teachers earn through Spark, further increasing their authenticity.

The Spark team also developed a series of nine classroom flipcharts (rotafolios)—packed with 30 stories each—to complement the GANA guide. **These new resources meet students where they are**, instead of teaching to an expected grade level and leaving students further and further behind. As students struggle to catch up on learning lost, an adaptive methodology based on frequent student evaluations is more important than ever before.



Ministry of Education officials get a crash course in best practices and insights from CoEd's Spark Reading Program. *Quetzaltenango, March 2024*

Current Reach of CoEd's Programs



Navigating the Future Together

We'd like to take this opportunity to recognize the groups making all of this possible. Our goal has always been to work **cooperatively** with children and youth, parents, teachers, administrators, educational authorities, and community leaders to **create holistic strategies for educational development**. The students, families, and communities that we serve are full and equal partners in the outcomes we envision—a Guatemala transformed through education, where every student learns to read, gains technology skills, and graduates with the skills they need to thrive.

In addition, our **48 staff members in Guatemala are experts in their fields**, continually networking and staying up-to-date on the latest best practices for education. (For example, our team of seven Spark trainers completed an International Diploma in Neurocognition and Literacy Processes in 2024!) Then, our talented staff revise curriculum materials and put these learnings into

practice, thanks to their knowledge of the Guatemalan context, familiarity with Guatemala's national curriculum, and their many years of experience working with rural schools, teachers, and students every day.

Finally, **we couldn't do this work without YOU**—the individuals, corporations, foundations, and Rotarians who give so generously of your time, talent, and treasure to ensure that students in Guatemala are empowered to reach their full potential. THANK YOU for believing in the power of this work, and most of all, for believing that a child with the right map out of poverty can lead their entire country to a brighter future.

Yours in service,

Joe Berninger
Executive Director

Joanne Wessels
Guatemala General Director

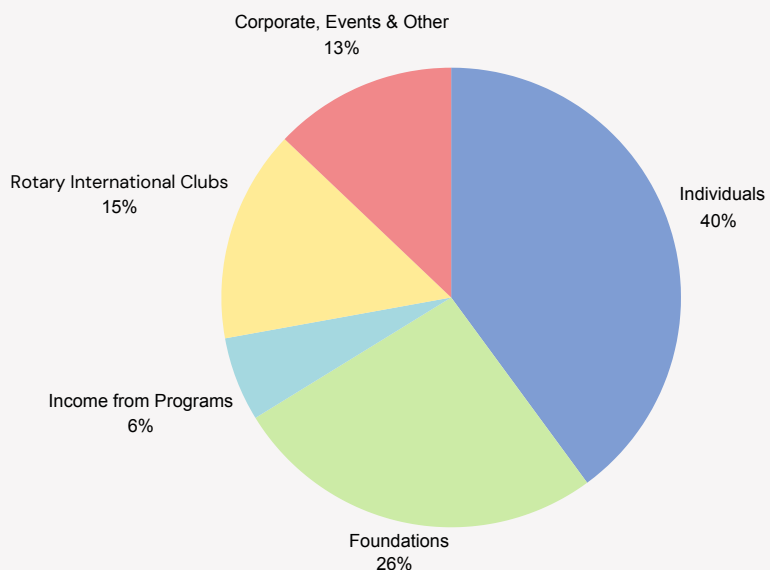
ANNUAL REVENUE 2024	Jan. – Dec. 2024 ¹	Jan. – Dec. 2023
Individuals	\$1,493,402	\$1,528,308
Foundations	\$983,971	\$952,094
Income from Programs	\$221,851	\$302,195
Rotary International Clubs	\$559,240	\$663,172
Corporate, Events & Other ²	\$482,513	\$295,175
TOTAL REVENUE	\$3,740,977	\$3,740,944
ANNUAL EXPENSES 2024	2024	2023
Textbook Cooperatives	\$357,812	\$396,186
Computer Centers	\$323,275	\$393,804
Spark Reading Program	\$499,280	\$591,385
Rise Youth Development Program	\$1,071,972	\$1,005,776
Direct Education (Bridges Program)	\$834,520	\$648,588
Total Program Services	\$3,086,859	\$3,035,739
Mgmt & General	\$333,476	\$255,268
Fundraising	\$396,699	\$390,456
Total Support Services	\$730,175	\$645,724
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$3,817,034	\$3,681,463
Contribution to Net Income ³	(\$76,057)	\$59,481

¹ Numbers for 2023 reflect the final audited numbers; 2024 numbers are still in draft status pending audit.

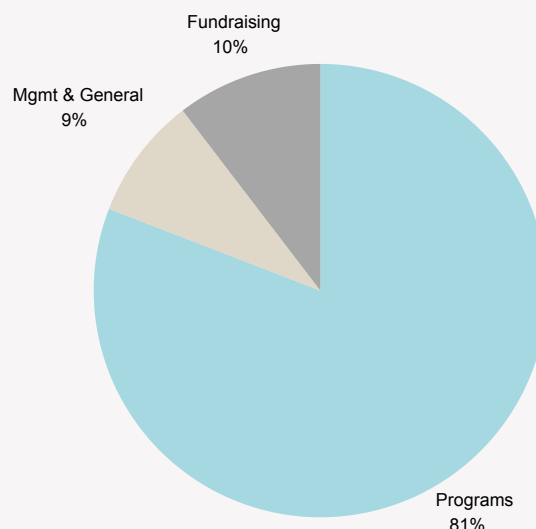
² In 2024, increased investments and better market performance led Other Revenue to be higher than usual.

³ While expenditures were on track with expectations, some of the revenue categories fell behind for the year due mainly to timing differences. However, a favorable Contribution to Net Income in the year prior (and during many of the pandemic years) helps offset this difference.

Annual Revenue



Annual Expenses



Board Service

as of 12/31/2024



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Molly Tyger, Member
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Barb Young, Member



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Recognitions, Partnerships & Collaborations



Thank you
for your support in
breaking the cycle of
poverty in Guatemala
through education.

