

# TEACH TO REACH



**GENEVA CHALLENGE 2022**

# TABLE OF CONTENTS



Meet Our Team	Page 03
Abstract	Page 04
Introduction	Page 06
Background	Page 07
Case Study: Vietnam	Page 11
Other Institutions	Page 14
Program Design	Page 19
Implementation	Page 21
Funding	Page 31
Sustainability	Page 32
Conclusion	Page 33
References	Page 34

# Meet Our Team



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# Abstract

Teach to Reach is an educational program created by graduate students at the University of California, San Diego. The mission of the program is to sustainably increase teacher quantity and quality in impoverished rural communities through the utilization of transnational advocacy networks. The program trains current and prospective teachers in poverty-reduction and cognitive development educational techniques for primary school students.

This program was created in response to a series of reports by the United Nations, the World Bank, IMF, and The Center for Global Development which outline the need to increase both access and quality of teachers in low and middle-income countries as a means to combat systemic education poverty. Our program improves both teacher quantity and quality by providing holistic training from certified volunteer teachers and financial incentives to help primary school teachers to excel and therefore raise the instructional level for at-risk and economically disadvantaged students.

As this report will outline, the program has a variety of funding sources available to get the program off the ground. In its beginning stages, the program will need to raise funds to provide housing and accommodations for international volunteers and to award stipends and accommodations for the prospective host teachers. However, the idea is that the host teachers, per their participation, will remain a part of the program to fill the shoes of the international volunteers that facilitate the teacher training. The aim is to create a bottom-up sustainable system where prospective teachers are trained by teachers from their country in the long-term. Placing emphasis on the teachers of the host country itself decreases the reliance on international volunteers and increases the capacity of the local host teachers to share their knowledge with their fellow compatriots.

In this proposal, we will present our program along with an overview of the current literature, the existing institutions in education for poverty alleviation, and a case study of Vietnam to demonstrate the challenges and opportunities in this policy

area. The goal of this proposal is to demonstrate why there is a need for augmenting teacher quality and quantity in primary school education. We also aim to articulate how our program mitigates the challenges presented by the current situation and the low efficacy of the existing systems that seek to solve education poverty.



**Teach to Reach**

# Introduction

Education poverty is one of the most significant hurdles for developing and developed nations to combat as they seek to remedy poverty within their borders. Getting more kids into school, keeping them there, and providing quality education are some of the most fundamental challenges when considering global poverty alleviation policy. Many academics, non-profits, and government workers agree that education is a direct and sustainable route for lifting people and families out of poverty. However, delivering educational opportunities to impoverished populations has been a historically complicated solution in its implementation. This is because families often face difficult economic tradeoffs in the short run that disincentivize sending their kids to school. Worsening this issue, governments often underfund education, which increases the actual costs of attending (i.e., school fees), creating an even more significant barrier for poor prospective students and their families. Additionally, simply sending one's kids to school does not ensure that individuals will reap educational benefits; students must receive a proper education to increase their chances of exiting a poverty cycle.

Quality education helps because it allows students to gain necessary skills that eventually help them become economically self-sufficient, decreasing the need for government aid and support. While there are many other forms of poverty alleviation, increasing access and quality of education are two of the most promising and studied policy efforts that have been proven to work. As a means to bolster efforts in this policy area, this report will focus on the current challenges in education poverty and provide a policy recommendation that seeks to remediate some of the historical shortcomings of traditional education policy.

# Background

To preface our report, it is vital to understand the current situation regarding education poverty. According to UNESCO, as of 2018, 258 million children are not receiving schooling.<sup>1</sup> To make matters worse, UNESCO's estimates do not account for the 168 million children affected by school closures<sup>2</sup> and the 7 million children that were expected to drop out in response to economic hardship due to the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>3</sup> That makes a total estimated value of children out of school increase to a whopping 433 million children.

Most education poverty occurs in the developing world.<sup>4</sup> The main argument often made as to why education poverty is more prevalent in the developing world is that governments lack the funding to build schools, pay teachers, and provide supplies and meals to the students. Due to a lack of funding, schools often charge entrance fees, ultimately disincentivizing families from sending their children to school. However, for the sake of accuracy, it should be noted that in middle-high income nations, while there is more access to free education, there is a significant dichotomy and disparity between the quality of free and paid education. For this report, we will focus more on education in low and middle-income countries due to the increased prevalence of education poverty in these nations. Still, we believe that almost all countries face similar challenges within their borders.

After a literature review, it's clear that there are two areas of interest when constructing policy solutions: access and quality. This grouping is not necessarily mutually exclusive but can be thought of as two distinct metrics to define the problem and to zero in on solutions. One common misconception is

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<sup>1</sup> UNESCO, "Learning Poverty" (Unknown: UNESCO, 2022)

<sup>2</sup> UNICEF, "COVID-19: Schools for more than 168 million children globally have been completely closed for almost a full year, says UNICEF" (Unknown: UN General Assembly, 2021)

<sup>3</sup> João Pedro Azevedo et al., "Simulating the Potential Impacts of COVID-19 School Closures on School and Learning Outcomes" (Unknown: World Bank, 2022)

<sup>4</sup> Arye L. Hillman and Eva Jenkner, "Educating Children in Poor Countries" (Unknown: International Monetary Fund, 2004)

that money solves these problems. However, in a recent report by the World Bank, researchers identified that “public spending does not correlate strongly with learning...improvements in learning are unlikely when additional resources are allocated like past funding.”<sup>5</sup> This means that while there is a continued need to increase funding for education, the traditional spending methods have not resulted in considerable improvements. Furthermore, the report outlines how government spending has not increased significantly for all income ranges and how the recent pandemic has cut education spending. With all of this in mind, it’s essential to construct policy solutions that deter from the traditional methods utilized by governments and existing institutions.

In response to the World Bank’s report, many education-oriented think-tanks have offered recommendations to metamorphosize spending areas into more effective and sustainable regimes. These recommendations include school lunch programs, waiving fees, and increased public-private partnerships. Almost all of these recommendations seek to mitigate the access barrier by reducing costs for the students and their families. Our team agrees that these policies are necessary for combating education poverty on a global scale. However, we believe quality education, the other side of the equation, is not being met by current policy analysts.

While funding is a significant issue for governments to overcome, the costs for increasing human capital through the quality of education are relatively low as the metrics for successful increases in educational levels are not unattainable. Some current and past policies look to provide education from preschool to high school; we believe that policies should aim to increase the quality of education of children under the age of 10. This is to create significant gains in education levels and to increase the chances of breaking poverty cycles; students merely need to reach a proficient reading level by age 10. This means that the focus should be on early childhood learning, and instruction should be focused primarily on reading and basic literacy skills. According to the World Bank, 53% of children in low and middle income countries cannot read a simple text by the end of primary school; this number jumps to around 80% in low-income countries.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, for children growing up in poverty, being able to read by 10 years old decreases the dropout rate from 23% to 4%.<sup>7</sup> Focusing on basic literacy skills will keep children in school for longer and provide them with the most basic skills

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<sup>5</sup> World Bank, “Education Finance Watch 2021” (Unknown: World Bank, 2021)

<sup>6</sup> World Bank, “Learning Poverty” (Unknown: Oxford University Press, 2022)

<sup>7</sup> The Campaign for Grade Level Reading, “Third Grade Reading Success Matters” (Unknown: The Patterson Foundation, 2022)



necessary to flee poverty. Interestingly, if all students from low-income countries learned basic reading skills, a projected 171 million could escape from extreme poverty.<sup>8</sup>

The question then becomes: how can we increase the quality of education? The simple answer is that we need more teachers, and we need to train those teachers better. For starters, UNESCO projects that the world will need 69 million more teachers by 2030.<sup>9</sup> If we want to make ground on education poverty, we need to meet that number and train practicing teachers to increase their capacity to teach impoverished children. According to Shoshana Steinberg and Michal Krumer-Nevo, two well respected academics and social psychologists, we need to train teachers to equip them with poverty awareness skills.<sup>10</sup> In addition to teaching poverty education skills, teachers in the developing world lack the training and support to provide an adequate education. According to a study of 6 sub-Saharan African nations, the World Bank found that “84 percent of grade 4 teachers have not reached the minimum level of mastery of the curriculum they teach.” and “less than 1 in 10 teachers exhibit good teaching practices, such as regularly checking for student’s understanding and providing feedback.”<sup>11</sup> The problem, however, is not the teachers themselves but “the result of system-level policies that do not appropriately recruit, prepare, support, manage, and motivate teachers.”<sup>12</sup> So, the challenge is to increase poverty-directed education tactics and find a way to incentivize teachers to teach more effectively.

What is more convoluted than training teachers is getting those teachers to areas where they are needed most. Roughly two out of three people experiencing extreme poverty live in a rural area.<sup>13</sup> . Furthermore, due to the pandemic, rural children are experiencing an education emergency; with budget cuts for education funding and school closures, around 10 million students are being forced out of school forever. <sup>14</sup> There is a massive gap in the quality of educators in rural vs. urban areas. For example, in a study from China, researchers found that the gap between rural and urban students of the same age was the equivalent of

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<sup>8</sup> Olivia Giovetti, “Six Benefits of Literacy in the Fight Against Poverty” (Unknown: Concern Worldwide, 2020)

<sup>9</sup> United Nations News, “Nearly 69 million new teachers needed to achieve global education goals, UNESCO reports” (Unknown: the Department of Global Commissions, 2016)

<sup>10</sup> Shoshana Steinberg and Michal Krumer-Nevo, “Poverty-aware teacher education” (Unknown: European Journal of Teacher Education, 2020)

<sup>11</sup> World Bank, “Teachers” (Unknown: Oxford University Press, 2022)

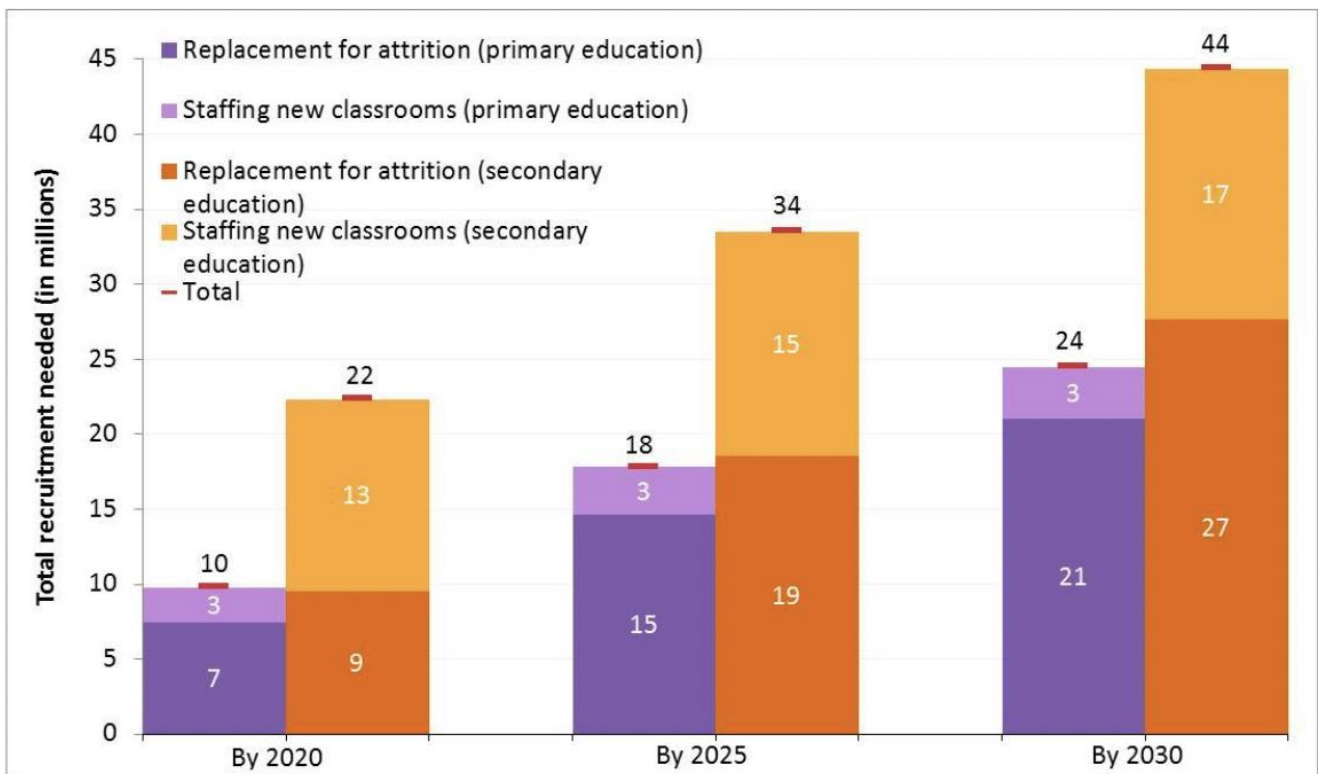
<sup>12</sup> World Bank, “Teachers”

<sup>13</sup> Homi Kharas et al., “To Move the Needle on Extreme Poverty, Focus on Rural Areas” (Unknown: Ingram Academic Services, 2020)

<sup>14</sup> Senthil Nathan, “Rural Children Across Developing World Facing Education Emergency” (Jakarta: PT Bina Media Tenggara, 2020)

one less year of schooling for those learning in rural areas.<sup>15</sup> In turn, there is a huge need to increase the number of teachers in rural schools and the quality of their instruction. We need to think of innovative ways to train teachers from rural areas and incentivize teachers from urban and suburban areas to bring their skills to their respective countryside.

In this proposal, our team has developed a program to help expand the quality of education in rural areas of low and middle-income countries by utilizing transnational advocacy networks to increase the number of teachers and the quality of their instruction.



(Figure 1: Global Numbers of Teachers Needed to Achieve Universal Primary and Secondary Education by Five-Year Intervals: 2020, 2025, 2030)  
 Source: United Nations News, 2016)

<sup>15</sup> Nicola Bianchi, "There's an Education Gap Between Rural and Urban Communities. Can Technology Bridge It?" (Unknown: Kellogg, 2021)



## **Case Study: Vietnam**

Before proceeding to the implementation of our proposal, we will observe Vietnam's successful efforts in increasing its educational quality. Vietnam's education strategy will demonstrate that the quality of education can be improved with relative success via means such as transnational organizations. It will also show how our proposed policy builds off it and further enhances the alleviation of education poverty.



# Case Study: Vietnam

Over the last few decades, Vietnam has made great strides to grow its economy through various reforms. One of the country's main strategies for 2011-2020 has been the modernization of its education system, which is seen as lagging compared to its fellow Southeast Asian counterparts. Among Vietnam's bold education reforms is the establishment of new accreditation and quality assurance mechanisms and a framework for national qualifications. Notably, this includes the goal of improving teacher quality through professionalization.<sup>16</sup> The new teaching standards revolve around teachers' content knowledge, skills, and value of their native culture.

Until recently, Vietnam's education system has been relatively closed. Therefore, Vietnam has sought solutions outside its borders in creating these new reforms to alleviate its education poverty. As a result, one of the country's main strategies is internationalizing its education system, namely through transnational cooperation for both teachers' and students' benefit. The government currently engages in initiatives for developing teaching methods in high-performing countries such as Singapore and South Korea.<sup>17</sup> Furthermore, partner countries such as Germany, Japan, and even the United States have established foreign-owned universities through Fulbright University Vietnam, set forth by Harvard University.<sup>18</sup>

Through Vietnam's strategies in combating educational poverty by international and transnational means, the country eventually scored a remarkable 17th out of 65 countries in its first participation in the OECD's PISA study in 2012.<sup>19</sup> The study itself assesses students' ability in their reading, mathematics, and science skills. Vietnam's placement has academically put it ahead of the United States, France, and Australia. The country's successful educational reform has now been

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<sup>16</sup> Stefan Trines, "Education in Vietnam" (Vietnam: World Education Services, 2017)

<sup>17</sup> Asia Society, "Education in Vietnam" (Vietnam: Asia Society, 2022)

<sup>18</sup> Stefan Trines, "Education in Vietnam"

<sup>19</sup> Ly T. Pham, "What PISA 2012 can Contribute to Vietnamese Education Reform?" (Vietnam: Lypham, 2017)

contended by some to serve as a new model for other countries facing educational poverty issues.

However, even with Vietnam's success in its education, the country's education poverty has not been fully addressed, nor has the issue been genuinely alleviated. Firstly, out-of-school children and the PISA study are heavily involved. Approximately 37% of Vietnamese children are unenrolled in school, meaning the scoring of the PISA assessment was likely vastly inflated by the underrepresentation of children from lower-income and disadvantaged areas.<sup>20</sup> The challenge of reaching children in more rural areas and giving them quality education remains considerable, along with sending students abroad for their education as a main solution to improving the country's education quality.<sup>21</sup> Instead, one can argue that such a quantity of students taking this path may demonstrate a lack of educational quality at home. While sending students abroad is enriching and beneficial for their education, it does not solve the country's educational poverty, nor does it fully account for students that cannot fund themselves for this path of education in the long term.

Rather than continuing to send students abroad for their education as other middle and low-income countries have done for their primary solution, our implementation strays away from this concept while still maintaining a transnational cooperative. Our policy proposal focuses on placing a solid teaching presence in the home country. The target audience of the teachers is the broader student population, especially those in rural areas that are more likely to have lower access and quality of education.

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<sup>20</sup> Asia Society, "Education in Vietnam"

<sup>21</sup> Stefan Trines, "Education in Vietnam"

# Other Institutions

## ✦ Peace Corps

The Peace Corps has had over 240,000 volunteers since it was established in 1961 in over 142 countries and divides its volunteer force into seven fields: response, environment, community economic development, agriculture, youth in development, health, and education.<sup>22</sup> Education is the biggest sector, making up 42% of the company's workforce in 2019.<sup>23</sup> Education being the largest area in need only proves that there is a lack of educators worldwide.

### ✦ *Educational Volunteers*

Educational volunteers are split into three different categories. They can either provide training and support to teachers, co-teach, or directly instruct students. Volunteers are generally tasked with teaching or enhancing local students in their English conversational skills. They also develop teaching material and resources with their locally assigned school.<sup>24</sup> Outside of the classroom, Peace Corps educators are tasked with working in after-school programs and club activities.

If the Peace Corps volunteers are training primary or secondary school teachers, they are assigned to teach at multiple schools in participatory methodologies. Participatory methodology refers to how a teacher can teach one-on-one along with classroom management.<sup>25</sup> It also educates teachers on how to teach students with special needs. Volunteers also instruct local teachers on English language conversation and competency. Volunteers are not restricted to only teaching English; they can also teach science, math, health, and even courses on the environment.

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<sup>22</sup> Peace Corps, "Fast Facts" (Unknown: Marian Haley Beil, 2022)

<sup>23</sup> Peace Corps, "Fast Facts"

<sup>24</sup> Peace Corps, "Education" (Unknown: Marian Haley Beil, 2022)

<sup>25</sup> Peace Corps, "The Participatory Analysis For Community Action (PACA) Field Guide For Volunteers" (Unknown: Marian Haley Beil, 2018)

The Peace Corps attracts many self-motivated individuals with a desire and ability to volunteer. Educational volunteers are even further enticed by the benefits provided. These benefits include training, travel costs, a stipend, medical coverage, student loan forgiveness in some cases, and a stipend to help transition back to civilian life in the states.<sup>26</sup>

## ◆ Teachers Without Borders

Teachers Without Borders (TWB) was founded in the year 2000 by Dr. Fred Mednick.<sup>27</sup> It is an international organization focusing on a “bottom-up” development strategy. The purpose of this organization is to connect established teachers to an online community of teachers worldwide.<sup>28</sup> This gives them access to a variety of resources that they can apply locally. Educators can find resources based on a theme, including education in emergencies, peace education, educating girls, and human rights and inclusion. TWB states that they rarely send teachers to foreign locations and volunteers are expected to work digitally through creating content, courses, article submissions, or proposing their own projects.<sup>29</sup> Undergraduate and graduate students can apply for internships centered around TWB themes. Graduate students can apply for fellowships in research related to education and development.



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<sup>26</sup> Peace Corps, “Education”

<sup>27</sup> Teachers Without Borders, “Our Team” (Unknown: Teachers Without Borders, 2022)

<sup>28</sup> Michelle Renée Genua, “How Teachers Without Borders Combats Global Poverty” (Canada: Clint Borgen, 2021)

<sup>29</sup> Teachers Without Borders, “Action Paths” (Unknown: Teachers Without Borders, 2022)

## Overview

There are various institutions that do similar work already in place, including the two we just reviewed: Peace Corps and Teachers Without Borders. Advocates of these institutions will argue that education is provided to low-income countries through their educational programs. While this is true in some cases, we want to highlight where our program outshines others. To understand why other programs fall short, we will discuss the organizational structure and who makes up the volunteer force.

## How are these programs funded?

It is important to mention how these programs are funded to contrast the funding strategy in our proposal.

The Peace Corps is a US federal agency, meaning that it receives funding from the US Congress. This funding is known as a budgetary resource and in the fiscal year 2021, the Peace Corps received about 520 million in budgetary resources.<sup>30</sup> According to the Brookings Institute, in the year 2017 the Peace Corps spent approximately \$56,500 per volunteer, making it one of the priciest overseas civilian programs.<sup>31</sup>

In contrast, Teachers Without Borders used to operate as a non-profit organization which legally meant that they were a 501c.<sup>32</sup> This implies that they used to run solely on donations. But, as of 2013, they are no longer a non-profit organization. They now rely solely on volunteer work and do not keep a payroll or accept donations.<sup>33</sup> It is remarkable how TWB is such a recognized name in educational poverty, yet no one is paid for their work. This issue demonstrates that there are people who truly care about educational poverty and there is no doubt that teachers would willingly sign up for our proposed program.

## Qualifications

The Peace Corps does have minimum requirements for volunteers to serve. But, it is a competitive process in that volunteers must have at least a bachelor's degree or five years of relevant work experience.<sup>34</sup> Ultimately, volunteers are selected

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<sup>30</sup> USA Spending, "Peace Corps" (Unknown: USA Spending, 2021)

<sup>31</sup> Thomas M. Hill, "The Peace Corps: A Lot of Bucks for Very Little Bang?" (Unknown: Ingram Academic Services)

<sup>32</sup> Teachers Without Borders, "Disclosures" (Unknown: Teachers Without Borders, 2022)

<sup>33</sup> Teachers Without Borders, "Disclosures"

<sup>34</sup> Peace Corps, "Do I Need a College Degree to Serve in the Peace Corps?" (Unknown: Marian Haley Beil, 2020)



based on the preferences of the host government. If the host government requires highly specialized or technical skills, then the Peace Corps placement officer will seek out these applicants.

The Peace Corps attracts many recent undergraduate students, and although they have completed their education, it does not mean that they are suited to teach in a foreign country. Even if the volunteer graduated from a top university with an background in education, it would be difficult for the student to have a tremendous impact on the native teachers at such a young age. Even then, this represents only a modicum of volunteers when you consider all the different sectors a volunteer can choose from and the educational background they completed during their undergraduate degree.

The timeline of volunteering is also not beneficial to the local community, even though two years of volunteering may seem like a substantial amount of time. Still, one should consider culture shock, developing relationships, learning from one's mistakes, and other factors that eat up a volunteer's first months. When the volunteer has a well-established relationship with the local educators, it is time for the volunteer to head back home, only to be replaced by a novice volunteer who would have to develop their relationships from the beginning. Then, the cycle continues.

In short, the Peace Corps is not designed to specialize in training teachers or with a long-term goal in mind. It is an organization with a diverse set of objectives, which is great because it addresses many different sectors. Still, we feel that to escape educational poverty through quality education, a more specialized and sustainable program like Teach to Reach is the answer.

## Soft Power

One of the biggest criticisms of the Peace Corps is that it has been used as an instrument of soft power by the U.S. government. It is built right into their mission statement, which reads, “promote a better understanding of Americans on the part of the people served.” and “To help promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans.”<sup>35</sup> This is mentioned not to discredit any of the valuable work the Peace Corps has done; it simply does not target educational poverty as reflected explicitly in its mission statement. According to Stephen

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<sup>35</sup> Peace Corps, "About" (Unknown: Marian Haley Beil, 2020)

Macharia Magu, author of *Soft Power Strategies in US Foreign Policy*, the Peace Corps was founded as a foreign policy strategy to rival the Soviet Union's global influence.<sup>36</sup>

After reading Magu's work, one can then make the argument that the primary purpose of the Peace Corps is not to educate teachers worldwide. Resources will be dependent on the current US government administration and global attitudes towards the country. U.S. foreign policy will precede any educational objectives the Peace Corps may have, which means that funding could be stagnant or could be allocated to other governmental agencies.

Therefore, a program focused solely on education and funded by an international organization would create the most benefit in alleviating educational poverty.

## Why these programs fall short

There is no doubt that organizations such as the Peace Corps and Teachers Without Borders, among others, are alleviating educational poverty and have had a meaningful impact. Although these organizations have good intentions, they only address educational poverty temporarily and inefficiently. We believe these organizations fail because most volunteers are not qualified enough, they are short-term fixes, and because of the program's soft power intentions.

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<sup>36</sup> Stephen Macharia Magu, "Soft Power Strategies in US Foreign Policy: Assessing the Impact of Citizen Diplomacy on Foreign States' Behavior" (Unknown: Lewis Warrington Webb, 2013)

# Program Design

## Overview

Our solution involves increasing the number of teachers to improve the quality and accessibility of education. But, in order to increase quantity, we need to incentivize teachers to continue their work in the education sector. Reed and Busby discuss the problems with starting a career in education: low salaries, poor conditions, and little room to move up the ladder.<sup>37</sup> Additionally, education budgets are being slashed worldwide, particularly in low-income countries. The World Bank explains that two-thirds of poorer countries have cut down their budgets in this sector, which has only been exacerbated since the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>38</sup> Even before the pandemic, the gap in education funds between high- and low-income countries was significant and has only gotten worse.

## Proposal

Teach to Reach addresses fixes the issues outlined above. We have created a program that organizes and disperses teachers globally to train others in the education sector. This program involves volunteers from all over the world traveling to new places to train educators. They will use their knowledge to show novice and unskilled teachers how to be better in their classrooms. This program will be split into three sections: pre-field, field work, and post-field. The pre-field segment will get volunteers prepared for their time in the program. The fieldwork segment will include the time spent in their country. Lastly, the post-field feature will cover the steps taken after the volunteer finishes their time in the program. Our program will pay for transportation, housing, and food accommodations while volunteers are in their assigned countries.

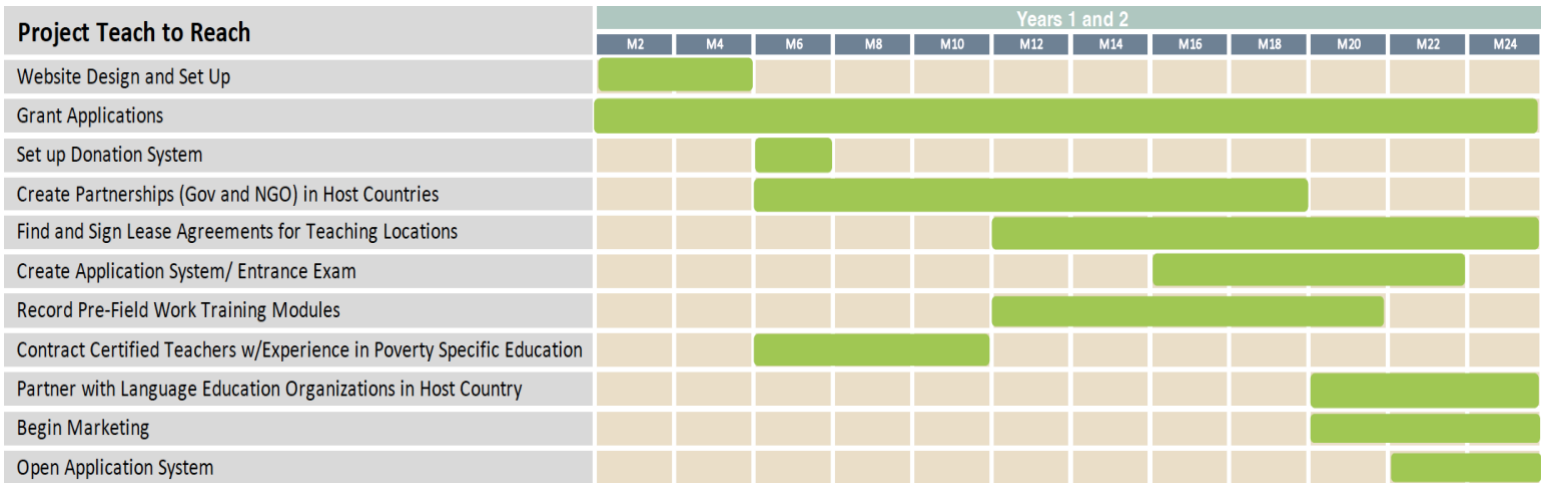
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<sup>37</sup> Daisy F. Reed and Doris W. Busby, "Teacher Incentives in Rural Schools" (Unknown: Research in Rural Education, 1985)

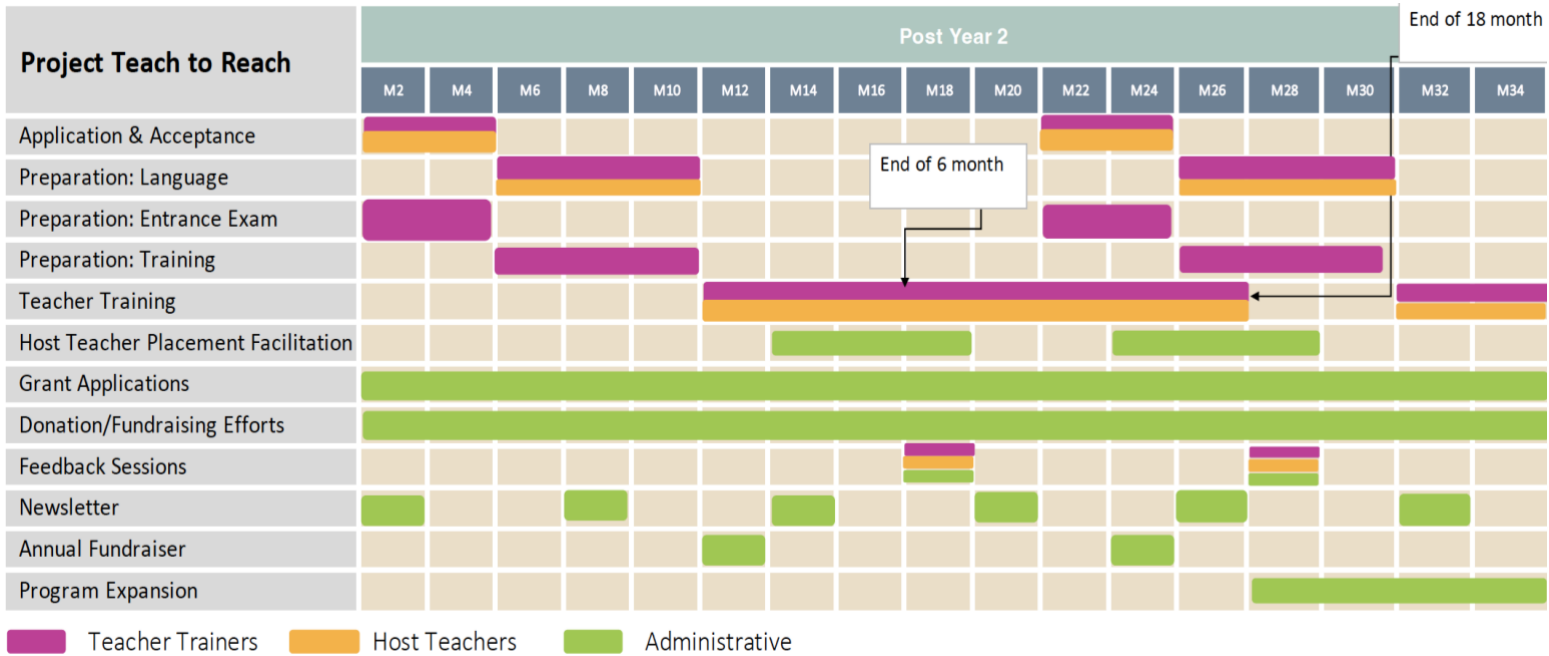
<sup>38</sup> World Bank, "Two-Thirds of Poorer Countries are Cutting Education Budgets Due to COVID-19" (Unknown: Oxford University Press, 2021)

# Timelines

Below are the timelines for Teach to Reach segmented into 2 month blocks. Figure 2 displays the layout of Year 1 and 2 of the program and Figure 3 displays the layout for every year following Year 2.



(Figure 2: Gantt Chart Years 1 and 2)



(Figure 3: Gantt Chart Post Year 2)

## **Implementation: Pre-Field**



Before volunteers are sent out to their assigned countries, they must first complete a series of tasks to prepare themselves for training others.

# Teacher Trainers

## Application

Our application is open to anyone in the world that already has obtained their teaching credentials and has a desire to volunteer to spread their knowledge. In the application, the volunteer will tell us their relevant certifications and where they would like to be placed in the world. We will require a ranked-choice list including their top five countries. We then compile all applications and disperse volunteers based on an equal distribution across countries while trying to accommodate the ranked lists that the volunteers provide. They must upload documentation, including updated vaccinations and their conferred degree. Once their applications are submitted, our team will review the applications. If their credentials match those necessary for the program, we will schedule an interview to get to know the candidates better and have a more in-depth understanding of what their expectations and goals are for the program. Once accepted, they will start their preparation.

## Preparation for the Program

### ◆ *Language*

Teacher Trainers will be required to take a language placement test as a part of their application. All volunteers who don't speak the common tongue of the country they've been assigned and do not pass their placement test will be required to take a language course. This class will be taught virtually through our program and will last six months, up until a week before their start date. However, applicants can choose to take a class outside our program, so long as the institution they attend is accredited and contingent on that they can present a certificate of completion. Furthermore, if applicants already have a basic level of proficiency in the language but did not pass the language placement test in their application, they can choose to retake the test at any point in their language training.

### ◆ *Entrance Exam*

The volunteers will send in proof of their degrees so we can validate their teaching credentials. Then, they will all take an entrance exam in their field of study to confirm their knowledge of the subject. This exam will ensure that they are still qualified to teach, as well as addressing more modern material so that they are up to date. We will prioritize teachers with

experience teaching impoverished students, but this experience is not mandatory to enter our program.

### ◆ *Basic Training Course (Remote)*

All volunteers will take a self-paced course to model the training program that can be accessed remotely before travel and when in the host country. This training program will explain how to approach teachers, talk to students, and give a detailed guide on the day-to-day schedule, including how the training will be paced throughout the year.

### ◆ *Advanced Training Course (On-Site)*

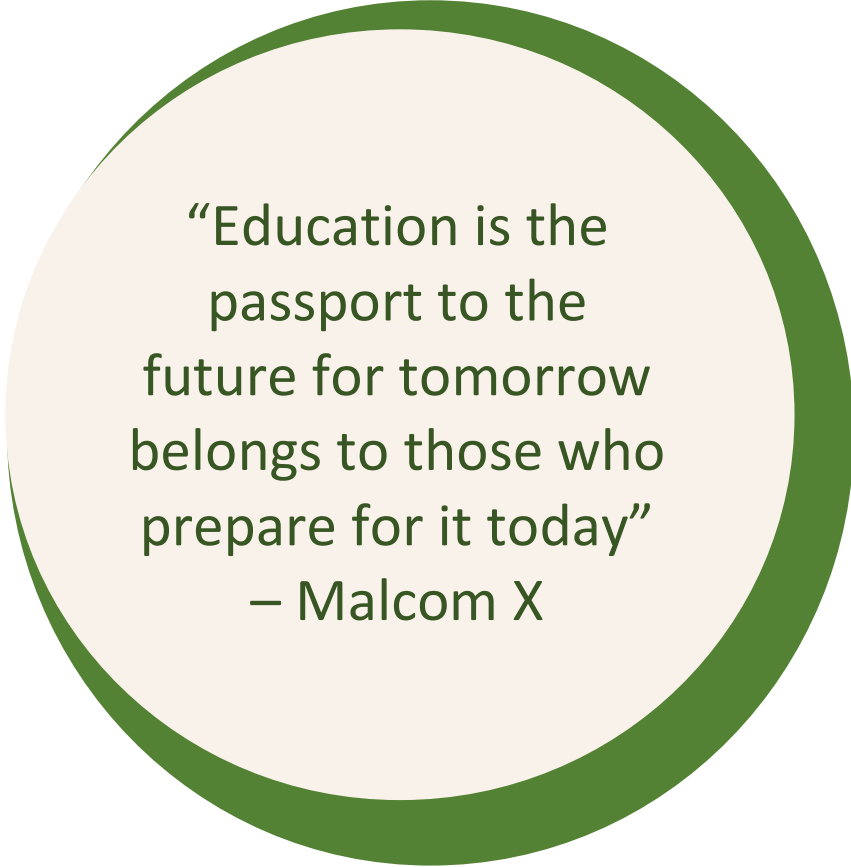
All volunteers will have a specialized course that prepares them for the culture of their new country, their work with impoverished students, and additional necessary skills for early childhood development teaching strategies.

The course will include:

1. Specified poverty-focused teaching methods and psychological strategies
2. Cognitive skills content and methods
3. Cultural awareness and integration
4. Tools for basic literacy instruction (can opt-out if they already possess this skill)
5. Supplementary conversational language classes
6. Workshops with local teachers

# Host Trainers

Host teachers will have the opportunity to both apply online or be recommended by partners of our organization. We will work with transnational advocacy networks for organizations that already exist to identify potential volunteers within the host countries. Once these relationships are formed, we will ask them to nominate current teachers and students ending their college or high school education in their communities who would be a good fit for our program. Once they've been nominated or have applied, we will review their documentation and decide if they will be a match for the program. Host teachers should have a basic understanding of internationally spoken languages to understand the training better.



“Education is the  
passport to the  
future for tomorrow  
belongs to those who  
prepare for it today”  
– Malcom X



## **Implementation: Field Work**



Volunteers will start their journey by departing to their newly assigned country. Once their flight arrives, the program will officially begin with the advanced training course, which will run for the first two months of their placement.

# Six Month Program: “Teacher Trainer”

Our six-month program is centered around training teachers that are already experienced in the occupation. This program is shorter since we are not starting from scratch in training, but instead we are introducing new techniques and ideas to the educator. These ideas come partly from skills written by educated teachers, as well as from tried-and-true practices.<sup>40</sup>

The first skill we focus on is professionalism. This includes knowledge of the subject each individual is teaching, clear communication skills, and the ability to foster a good learning environment. Kramer<sup>41</sup> helps us understand professionalism in the education sector with three words: attitude, behavior, and communication. Without these three key factors, teachers have less chance of gaining respect in the classroom and connecting with their students.

The second skill is altering the curriculum. With our team’s help, each course’s curriculum will be examined. The teachers within the school, as well as our volunteers, will reevaluate the lessons being taught. This will eliminate unnecessary and outdated information and will be replaced with more modern lessons. We hope that this reassessment of the curriculum will keep learners more engaged and updated with current events.

The third skill is improving morale. The classroom environment is crucial to the growth of students and teachers alike, which is why we want to establish healthy learning environments.<sup>42</sup> Boosting morale will encompass many factors, including established routines, open inclusion, accessible resources, positive reinforcement, and equal treatment of all students. There are many more principles that teachers can abide by, but we will provide a skeleton outline so teachers can personalize their own structure.

The fourth skill we will focus on is the introduction of modern technology practices. While this will vary from country to country, we want to give a brief overview of the technology available to the teachers. Based on the accessibility

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<sup>40</sup> Husain Jusuf, “Improving Teacher Quality, a Keyword for Improving Education Facing Global Challenges” (Indonesia: The Turkish Online Journal of Educational Technology, 2005)

<sup>41</sup> Pamela A. Kramer, “To Develop a Strong Sense of Professionalism, a Teacher Must Focus on the Critical Elements of Attitude, Behavior, and Communication” (Pennsylvania: Kappa Delta Pi Record, 2003)

<sup>42</sup> Monica Lockridge, “How to Boost Student Morale” (Unknown: Rockin’ Resources, 2022)

of technology, we will make sure to explain how different programs and devices work if the teachers have these options available.

Finally, we will integrate cognitive skills and methods as well as poverty-specific education training to help our teachers develop the skills necessary to instruct vulnerable students and increase their chances of success. This is an essential aspect of the training that the teachers will undergo, because it is geared towards helping the students who need it the most. Often times, these subjects are left out of teaching curriculums, but for our program, they will be the backbone of the pedagogy.

# 18 Month Program: “Host Trainer”

Our 18-month program is meant for people without experience in the education sector. This route trains individuals from the ground up, with a lot more basic training for the first year of the 18 months. Then, we launch into the same schedule as the six month program for the half. This is a more prolonged and intensive program, as we train individuals to be teachers from scratch. The first year is taught in more of a classroom setting, with standard lesson plans usually taught to students in education degree programs.

The subjects for this 18-month program are split up into: group behavior, child and human development, mathematics, language and literacy, educational curriculum creation, and classroom management.<sup>43</sup> These subjects are familiar to students who have obtained teaching credentials or have a degree in education, so volunteers with this background will be chosen to teach the 18-month program. Since we are dealing with volunteers and a free program for residents of the selected country, the subjects will not be as fleshed out as they would be in a college. This part of the program only takes a year so it will be accelerated, meaning it will only cover the basics of each subject. Still, we believe this will be enough to train these learners properly.

Then, each participant will launch into their second year, the same as the six-month program outlined above. We will group both six-month program students and 18-month program students together to save time and energy for the volunteers teaching.

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<sup>43</sup> Paula Nechak, “Bachelor’s Degree in Education” (Unknown: All Education Schools , 2022

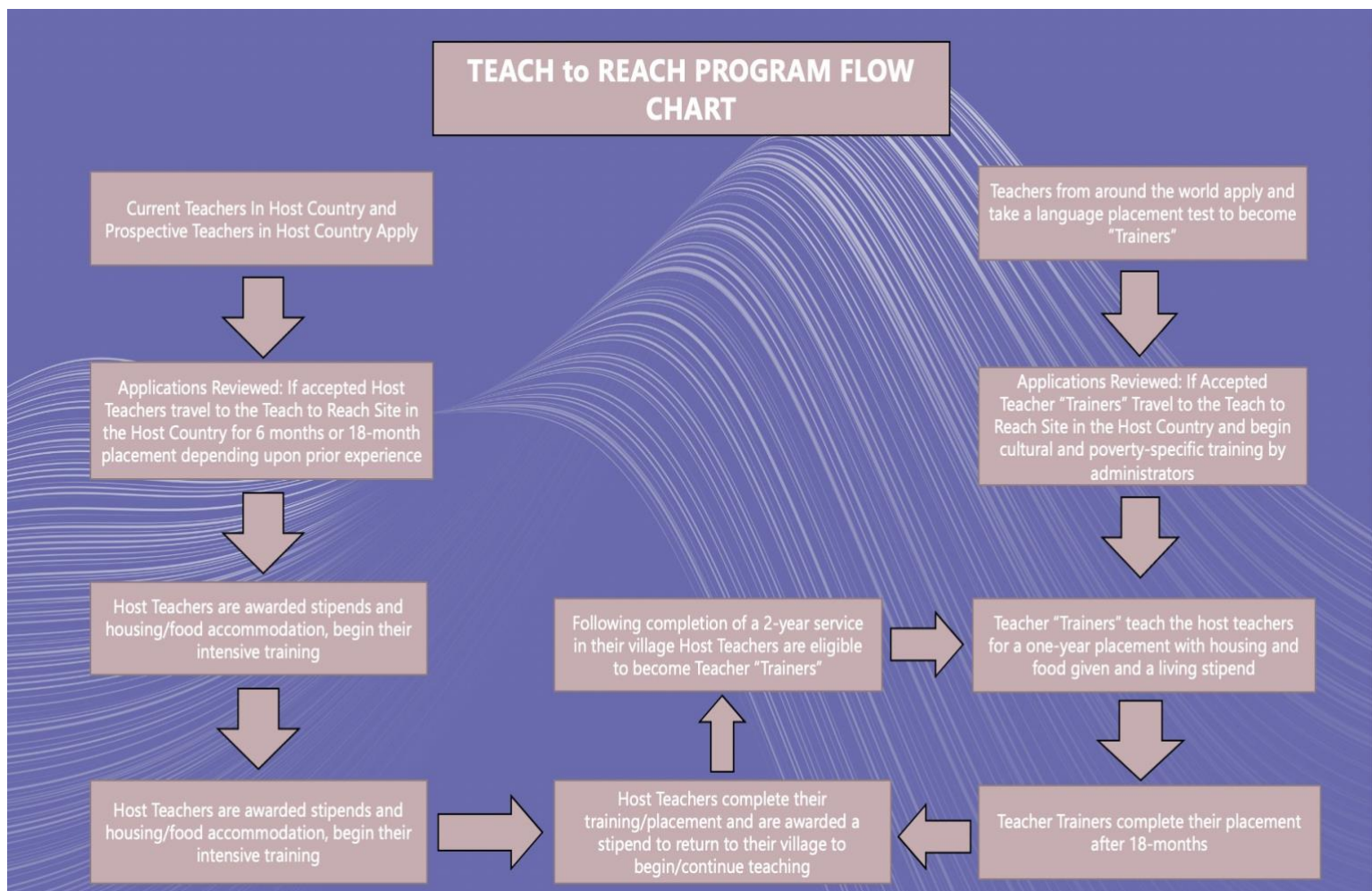
## **Implementation: Post-Field**



After completion of either the six or 18 month program, volunteers and newly trained teachers will have future opportunities to continue on with the program.

# Debrief

Following the completion of the program, newly trained host teachers will have the opportunity to be placed in a vulnerable community that lacks educators. They will be offered a stipend on top of the salary they take in from working in that community. If they don't want to be placed in a community, they can choose to find a school system that best suits their needs. They will not be awarded a stipend but will have the opportunity to remain part of the program as a teacher trainer to instruct the next cycle of host teachers. If they decide to return to become a teacher trainer, they will once again be eligible to receive the living stipend. Either way, they will receive a certificate from the program that demonstrates the skills that they have learned. The overall idea is to build a sustainable system where the need for international volunteers eventually decreases, and host teachers can become teacher trainers.



(Figure 4: Flow Chart)

# Funding

We will be financially supporting our project with two significant sources of income. The first source is UNESCO, which is the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization. UNESCO explains their mission statement on their website: “Reconciliation and development require stronger foundations, deeply rooted in societal interactions, and built upon intellectual and moral solidarity. To better understand and respect each other; to be aware that we all belong to a single human family; to recognize that we share the same planet and pursue common objectives: those are the greatest challenges.”<sup>44</sup> We believe this is the perfect organization to fund our project, as they put a lot of time and effort into projects that contribute to a more peaceful and cooperative planet.

Another avenue in which we will pursue funding is through donations. Much like many other education-based non-profits, our organization will have a strong focus and team dedicated to finding potential donors and getting their support. Donors will receive newsletters, yearly impact reports, and organizational swag and be named as contributors on our organization's website.

We will also be requesting grants to help us push through the beginning stages of our project. Some of the grant organizations we will pursue include (but are not limited to): The Heckscher Foundation, Global Fund For Children, International Paper Foundation, State Street Foundation, Michael & Susan Dell Foundation, Carnegie Corporation of New York, Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. These funds will go towards the volunteers' housing, food, and transportation costs.

Once we are settled into host countries and can demonstrate success, we will also be able to ask local, regional, and national governments to support our program financially. This is a little more convoluted at this time, and it will be essential to build relationships with governments at the onset of the program to initiate partnerships.

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<sup>44</sup> UNESCO, “75 years of History in the Service of Peace” (Unknown: UNESCO, 2022)

# Sustainability

The reason that Teach to Reach is so sustainable is the constant influx of educators that we create. While this may start slowly as we kickstart our program, it will only grow with time. The more years we continue our program, the more teachers will become available in our community. As teachers graduate from their training program, they are incentivized to either work in poverty-stricken communities or give back to the program by becoming teacher trainers or host trainers. This cycle elevates the quality and access of volunteers in the countries we are focusing on, which is the goal of the entire program.



# Conclusion

Project Teach to Reach has the capacity to have a major impact on education sectors around the world. After implementation, we hope to see a growth in the number of accessible teachers as well as the quality of these teachers. With this development, children will be able to gain the necessary skills they need to rise out of impoverished communities. We know that providing opportunities to impoverished communities has never been straightforward and is only worsened by the underfunding of education. Plus, even when governments do fund educational programs, there is data that suggests that public spending does not correlate with learning improvements. Current institutions in the educational sector are not specialized in alleviating educational poverty nor are they qualified enough to make a serious long-lasting impact. As the Vietnam case study indicates, international cooperation is beneficial for both teachers and students in alleviating educational poverty. Although the case study demonstrates that there are benefits in transnational cooperation, it does not consider the sustainable growth strategy that Teach to Reach accounts for.

Teach to Reach will alleviate poverty by introducing qualified teachers to a community in need as well as create a cycle of sustainability where locals can address educational poverty once they are trained. The goal of this project is not for foreign teachers or volunteers to join with a “savior” mentality. We understand that the best teaching will come from someone that is established within that community, but often times, teachers in these communities lack the resources they need to provide students with a quality education. Teach to Reach will strengthen local teachers and as a result will provide local students with a quality education. This access to education will open doors that many of us with a western education take for granted. A quality education can be the difference between a life of poverty or a sustainable one, and we hope that Teach to Reach can provide that opportunity to people around the globe.

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# TEACH TO REACH



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