Dear STS Supporters:

STS began with a vision that if children in developing countries receive the support they need in the early years in education, health, and engagement of their communities, they could thrive in primary school and beyond. To test this idea, STS began working in Guinea, West Africa. As of 2017, we have supported a total of 40 schools in Guinea where teachers now use hands-on, active teaching methods, schools are equipped with clean water and latrines, and parents and communities are more actively engaged in supporting their children’s education. In this annual report, we reflect on our activities for 2017 and look back on those first 15 years and the valuable lessons we’ve learned.

First, we’ve learned that one good thing leads to another. We knew children needed support in education, health, and engagement – what we call the Whole Child Model – but learned that support in one area can have benefits in others. Providing wells at schools not only improved the school community’s health status, but also enabled students to stay at school longer. Providing sacks of rice to at-risk girls not only helped these girls and their families eat better, but helped these girls learn reading and math better; their performance exceeded that of their peers.

Second, we’ve learned that it’s only worthwhile if it’s sustainable. To sustain our work in Guinea, STS began the process of helping our local office become autonomous and file for local registration. In this new phase, “STS-Guinea” will continue carrying out activities related to the Whole Child Model and education more broadly as funding and opportunities become available.

Finally, we’ve learned that in order to grow, you need to move. Fresh from our experience in Guinea, we began in 2017 to engage with education officials and local communities and NGOs in northern Tanzania, where we will begin operations in 2018-2019. And there is the story of our trajectory – from zero employees in 2002 to 45 people supporting our work across 25 countries in 2017. In all this, we continue to provide services in evaluation, curriculum development, and training, and our clients increasingly rely on us as “thought partners,” helping them develop their next project design, program strategy, or solution to a seemingly intractable problem.

We are excited to continue this journey with you, and I am personally grateful that you – our partners, donors, colleagues, and friends – continue to help us build opportunities for children to learn better so they can thrive in this world. I thank you for your support.

Dr. Mark Lynd
Co-Founder and President
Celebrating 15 Years

What do children need to learn? That question has guided STS since our founding in 2002, and it has remained our focus as the scope of our work has expanded in research and evaluation, curriculum and training, and policy and planning. That question is the essence of our mission—improving the lives and learning of girls and boys worldwide through thoughtful research, practice, and partnership.

To get the organization off the ground in Guinea, cofounders Mark Lynd and Jeff Davis contributed their own money; now, 45 people work for STS supporting our work in 23 countries in 2017.

The World Bank and Aide et Action were among STS’s first partners in Guinea; now, STS partners with USAID, Chemonics International, World Vision, Education Development Center, and many others on over 22 projects.

After starting in Guinea, STS branched out to Uganda in 2007; since then, STS has worked in 37 additional countries.

STS first intervened in 8 schools in Guinea; since then, STS has not only worked with general populations, but children with disabilities, girls, and students in conflict zones.

Whatever our work, we embody our enduring values and the lessons we have learned from developing the Whole Child Model.
Investing in an Integrated Approach

Our Whole Child Model focuses on three areas of need — education, health, and engagement.

An observation inspired the creation of our Whole Child Model: Students cannot succeed with standalone solutions such as textbooks or teacher training. Rather, a combination of education, health, and engagement is needed if children are to thrive during their early school years. Since our founding, we have implemented and honed activities that form these three pillars of our integrated approach with the aim of not just improving students’ learning, but their lives.

### A LOOK BACK

During the 2016-2017 school year in Guinea, we:

- supported 6 schools
- trained 32 educators, 17 students, and 14 community members on girls’ education and gender equity
- awarded 30 scholarships to girls
- began construction on a 4-classroom school and completed 2 community wells
- reached 4,396 students

### The Whole Child Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EDUCATION</th>
<th>HEALTH</th>
<th>ENGAGEMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quality learning and teaching begins in early childhood, energizes classrooms, and empowers girls.</td>
<td>Water at school (wells)</td>
<td>Children learn best when they are healthy. A healthy learning environment can help.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Quality health and wellness education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sanitation at school (latrines)</td>
<td>Children learn best in well-organized schools supported by the community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nutrition instruction at school and support at home</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Health Activities
- Water at school (wells)
- Quality health and wellness education
- Sanitation at school (latrines)
- Nutrition instruction at school and support at home

### Engagement Activities
- Parental and community involvement
- School management
- Linkages with other schools

### Education Activities
- Activity-based teaching and learning
- Girls’ scholarship program
- After-school program
- Early childhood education

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**GUINEA**
In 2012, we administered our first Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) in Guinea. Since then, we have evaluated students’ fundamental reading skills in 18 additional countries. Our research has ranged from comprehensive EGRAs with thousands of students—including the first national EGRAs in Pakistan and in Afghanistan—and innovative work developing the first adaptation of an EGRA in Moroccan Sign Language for students who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Research and Evaluation
As part of our work in 2017, we assessed the numeracy skills of students participating in a math pilot in Ghana; conducted quarterly assessments of students’ reading skills in the DRC; adapted and piloted a new EGRA in the Kyrgyz Republic; administered formative assessments of student learning in Pakistan; and supported grantees in eight countries monitor their low-cost, technology-based solutions and programs to improve literacy.

Curriculum and Training
In Niger, we developed, finalized, and implemented grade 1 and 2 materials according to a systematic approach to reading in collaboration with the Ministry of Education. In Ghana, we developed and evaluated a new approach to teaching mathematics in the early grades, including a standards-based curriculum, tools for measuring conceptual understanding, and a school-based in-service model to support teachers.

Policy and Planning
In Malawi, we supported the government in the implementation of its National Reading Strategy by ensuring the quality of teaching and learning materials and advising on methods for setting reading benchmarks.
A Dedicated Team

Our staff is committed to advancing education on a global scale. United by a passion for excellence, we are a diverse group of individuals with an array of skills and expertise—from psychometricians to finance specialists, literacy experts to program managers.

Executive Leadership
Mark Lynd
President and Co-Founder
Candace Debnam
Executive Director

Senior Management Team
Mo Schroeder-Sanai
Director of Operations
Kristina Solum
Director of Programs
Hetal Thukral
Director of Research
Beth Odenwald
Deputy Director of Programs

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Laura Stahl
Director of Operations, The Project for Education Research that Scales, Stanford University
Dipanjan Chatterjee
Vice President, Forester Research
Kevin McLaughlin
Senior Associate, Democracy & Governance Sector, Tetra Tech ARD
Currently overseas as Chief of Party of the USAID-funded Planning and Local Governance Project (PLGP) in Albania
Alex Pompe
Growth Manager, Premise Data
Katherine Young
Research Analyst, EMC Research

Working with STS is a unique experience for me because, with this team, I feel surrounded not just by professionals, but by truly trustworthy friends. The overall atmosphere of support and care is amazing, and it definitely makes work more pleasant and, as a result, more productive.

Altynai Moldoeva
Assessment Lead, Kyrgyz Republic

STS continues to demonstrate commitment to its mission to provide innovative solutions through genuine local partnerships and research.

Autumn Thomas
Program Coordinator

STS has a unique model for educational development in resource-lean environments. STS leverages its high-quality contract-based work to make long-term commitments to the improvement of education in high-need and often neglected contexts. Using its Whole Child Model, STS has worked in Guinea with local actors to build sustainable capacity to provide technical support to schools and communities.

Helen Boyle
Board Member

The STS team is deeply committed to the communities we serve. It’s a privilege to work with a community of like-minded individuals committed to our holistic approach to research and intervention design.

Candace Debnam
Executive Director

Our staff is committed to advancing education on a global scale. United by a passion for excellence, we are a diverse group of individuals with an array of skills and expertise—from psychometricians to finance specialists, literacy experts to program managers.
## Partners and Donors

### Partners
- Chemonics International, Inc., USAID
- UK Department for International Development
- World Vision
- Australia’s Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
- FHI 360
- EDC
- Alcoa Foundation
- Plan International
- The Turing Foundation
- NORC at the University of Chicago
- Creative Associates International, Inc.
- United States Department of Agriculture
- Project Concern International
- The Education Ministries of Afghanistan, Ghana, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Guinea, Mali, Morocco, Niger, Pakistan, Tajikistan, and Zambia
- Ministry of Education and Science, Kyrgyz Republic
- Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology, Malawi
- Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, Tanzania
- Ministry of Education, Liberia
- Ministry of Education, Ethiopia
- Agora Center, the University of Jyväskylä
- Benetech
- Institute for Disabilities Research and Training
- Kampuchean Action for Primary Education
- Little Thinking Minds
- Oeuvre Malienne d’Aide à l’Enfance du Sahel
- Qué Funciona para el Desarrollo A.C.
- Réseau d’Acteurs pour le Renouveau de l’Education
- Resources for the Blind, Inc.
- Sesame Workshop
- India Trust
- Woman Educational Researchers of Kenya
- Link Community
- Development Ethiopia
- International Institute of Rural Reconstruction, Ethiopia
- Search for Common Ground

### Individual Donors
- Marissa Baratian
- Thomas Bell
- Carolyn Benson
- Helen Boyle
- Alyson Carlyle
- Jeffrey Cresswell
- Mary & Paul De Rosas
- Candace Debnam
- Kate Dickey
- Norma Evans
- Ryan Fallon
- Candice Healy
- Jennifer Herington
- Mark Hoffman
- Dana Jones
- Robin Kirby
- Erin Lane
- Molly Lim
- Teresa Long
- Mark Lynd
- Lauren McAskill
- Matt McDowell
- Karen McLaughlin
- Katherine Merseth
- Christina N’Tchougan-Sonou
- Arlene Odenwald
- Elisabeth Odenwald
- Edkinas Pauza
- Steve Portigal
- Alastair Ridd
- Laura Stahl
- Sylvia Thompson
- Heital Thukral
- Jill Toftoli
- Elizabeth Waller
- Anne Williams
- Matthew York
- Anthony & Katherine Young
- Laura Zasoski

### Statement of Activities

#### Support and Revenue
- Contracts: $4,494,523
- Contributions and Other Income: $140,581
- Total: $4,635,104

#### Expenses
- Program Services: $3,551,913
- General & Administrative: $1,054,354
- Fundraising: $4,793
- Total: $4,611,060

#### Net Assets
- January 2017: $347,180
- December 2017: $371,224