

# Celebrating our Playmakers



2023

# Mnolo Village Playground

Mkalama District, Singida, Tanzania.



## Letter from Jon and Genevieve

Dear Esteemed Donors and Playmakers,

As we reflect on the past year, I am filled with a deep sense of gratitude and warmth for the incredible efforts and support you have bestowed upon Play360. Your commitment to our mission has been nothing short of inspiring, and I wanted to take a moment to express my sincere appreciation.

To our Donors:

Your generosity has been the cornerstone of Play360's achievements. Your contributions have not only funded the construction of educational playgrounds but have also provided the vital resources necessary for our sustained growth. Your belief in the power of play and education to transform lives is heartening, and we are truly thankful for your steadfast support.

To our dedicated Playmakers:

Your hard work and passion for sparking innovation in teaching and learning have been the heartbeat of Play360. The collaborative spirit you bring to our community, along with your unwavering commitment to supporting one another, has created a vibrant and impactful network. Your dedication to positive change in the lives of children is a beacon of light, and it is a privilege to work alongside such a remarkable group.

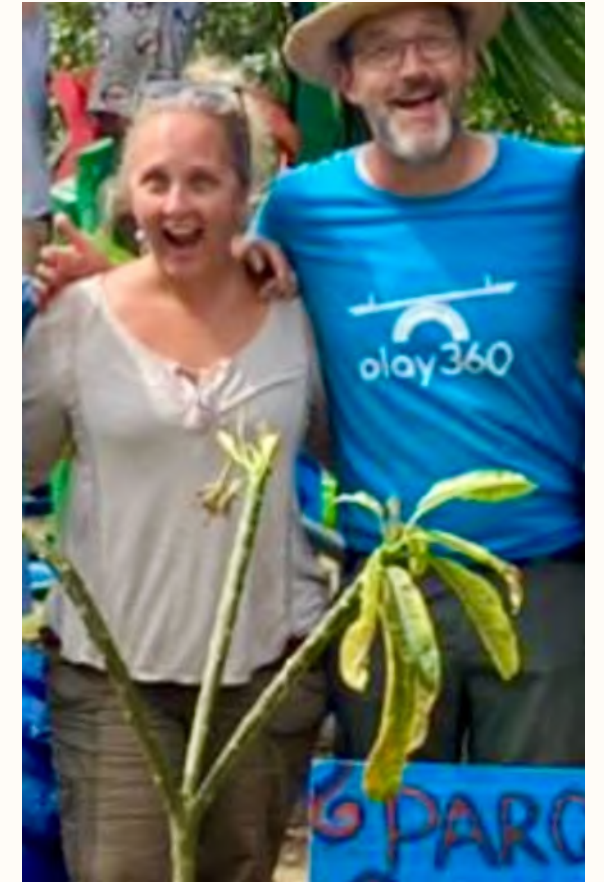
Together, we have achieved significant milestones in 2023. Each of you has played a pivotal role in our shared success. The positive influence of your endeavors resonates far and wide, touching the lives of those we aim to serve.

As we look to the future, let us carry forward this momentum with the same warmth and determination. The challenges ahead may be considerable, but with your continued support, I am confident that Play360 will continue to make a meaningful and lasting impact.

With heartfelt gratitude,

Jon Racek

Founder, Play360





Letter from the Managing Director  
It is with tremendous awe and gratitude that I share the impact of the work of play360 in 2023.

It used to be that we would build a handful of playgrounds a year. Our hope and our model was that the process of introducing a group to a playground build would inspire them to build their own in their community and sometimes this happened. Although it filled us with joy to share the work in person, it wasn't cost effective or impact efficient. In 2021 we introduced the online play360 Playmaker course allowing playmakers from around the world to learn about the importance of play and education and the basics of community organization and playground building. In 2022 we continued to refine and test this model, eventually introducing a cohort based model in order to encourage collective momentum. In 2023, this momentum was realized beyond our wildest expectations with the construction of 49 playgrounds in 9 countries around the world!!

The most exciting outcome is that all of this was possible without traveling, allowing us to redirect our funding directly into the communities and able hands of the playmakers themselves. This approach requires several elements, the most important of which is the relationship of trust that we build with our playmakers throughout the course. It isn't always easy to meet virtually, especially due to time zone differences and connectivity challenges in rural communities, but even if it takes a few tries, we make a point to know our playmakers as individuals and for them to know us. The mutual foundation of trust is the defining difference in the acceleration of the impact of our work and we are very proud.

It has been a tremendous opportunity to continue to contribute to Play360 as managing director in 2023. I am absolutely sure that Play360 is on a brilliant trajectory to inspire hundreds of new playmakers to support and transform education in the developing world!

In play,

Nicole Swedlow

"Every child deserves  
a safe place to play"

- UNICEF



Meet the team

# Play360 Leadership and Administration



Virginia Hidalgo

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Kim Heseltine

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# Board of Directors



Jon Racek



Cate Racek



Charles Reafsynder



Fred Perry



Genevieve Pritchard

# Advisory Committee



Esther Mark



Anuya Trivedi



Huong



Purnur Llolova



Stacey Williams

"I love what Play360 has become. It started as an organization that helped people build simple playgrounds. In 10 years, it has become an organization that trains local community leaders to create change in their community through educational community built playspaces. I wonder what it will look like in another 10 years?"

Jon Racek,  
play360 Founder



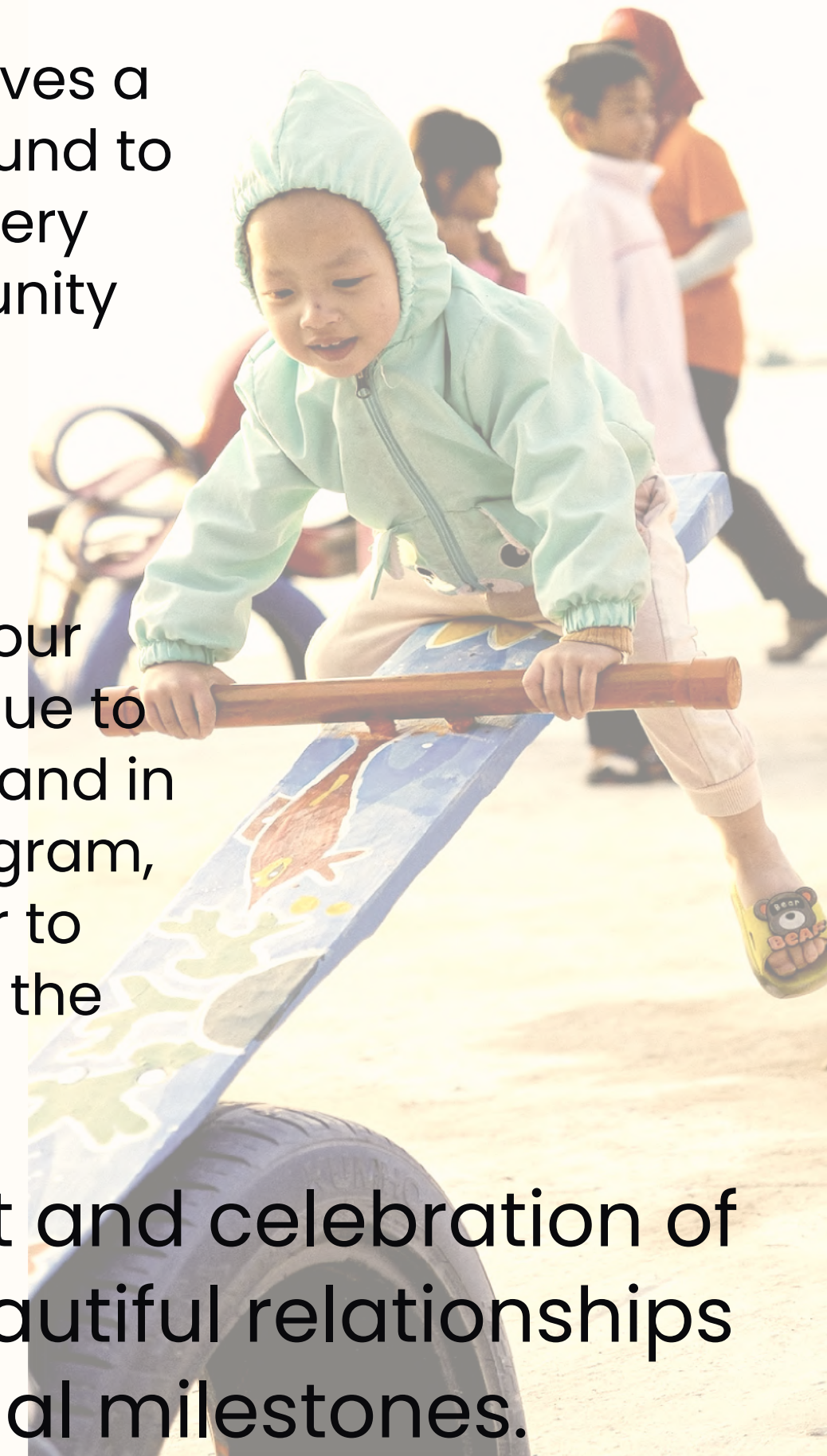


## About play360

Play360 was founded by Jon Racek who believed that every child deserves a safe place to play. He used his design skills and his education background to support children and playgrounds in Thailand and then realized that every educator, every child and every family with big dreams for their community deserves this work.

Since those early days, Play360 has worked directly with empowered stakeholders to build community-supported projects that fit the local resources and needs identified together. As the pandemic arrived and our lives evolved we began to reimagine how the organization could continue to contribute. In 2021 we dedicated our efforts to developing a new vision and in 2022 we launched the Playmaker Course, an online cohort learning program, with virtual in person support and mentorships. 2023 has been the year to watch this dream evolve and flourish in the form of playmakers around the world completing the playmaker course and then stepping into their communities to build playgrounds.

This is an annual report and celebration of so many moments, beautiful relationships and organizational milestones.



# The playmaker course



## PlayMaker's Playbook, Part 1

This course will provide everything you need to know to imagine, design and coordinate your new playground or community project.

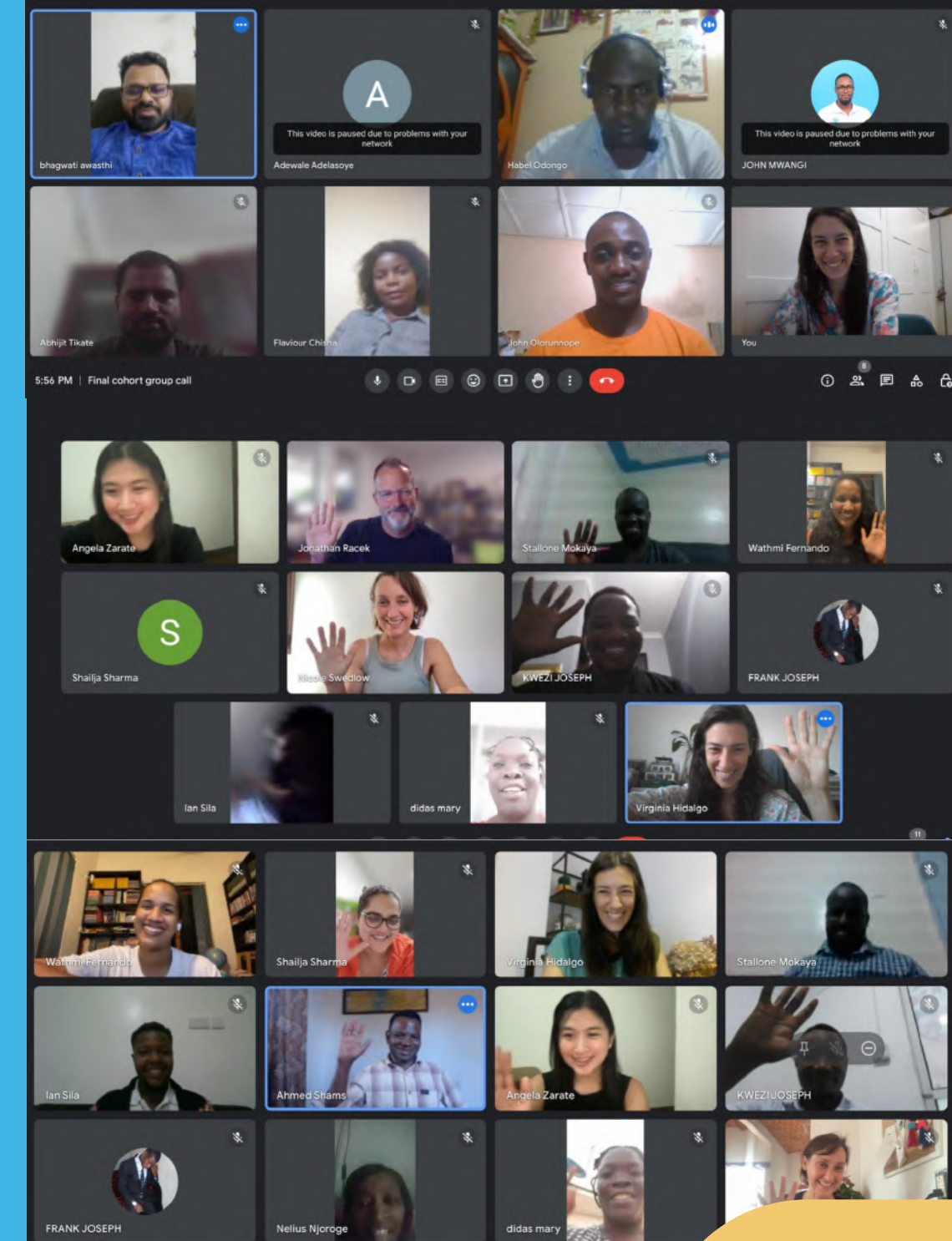
[Begin Here](#)



## Playmaker's Playbook, Part 2

This course will provide everything you with more information to help you imagine, design and coordinate your new playground or community project.

[Begin Here](#)



# 2023

## playmaker course stats

*"The Play360 course has given me a new drive to give back to the community in ways I never knew I would."*

-Ian Mutuku

# 38

### ENROLLED

THIS REFLECTS THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO WERE ENROLLED IN THE COURSE AND STARTED MODULE 1. IN COHORT 3 WE ENROLLED STUDENTS WHO NEVER STARTED THE COURSE AND THIS PROMPTED A CHANGE TO REQUIRE PERSONAL INTERVIEWS BEFORE ENROLLMENT IS OFFERED.

# 15

### COMPLETED

THIS REFLECTS STUDENTS THAT HAVE COMPLETED 100% OF THE PROCESS WITHIN THE 2023 YEAR, BUT SINCE COHORT 5 JUST ENDED, THIS NUMBER WILL INCREASE INTO 2024.

# 14

### CONSTRUCTED

STUDENTS WHO TOOK THE PLAYMAKER COURSE IN ANY OF THE PREVIOUS COHORTS BUT CONSTRUCTED IN 2023. THIS REFLECTS PLAYMAKERS CONSTRUCTING (NOT PLAYGROUNDS CONSTRUCTED)

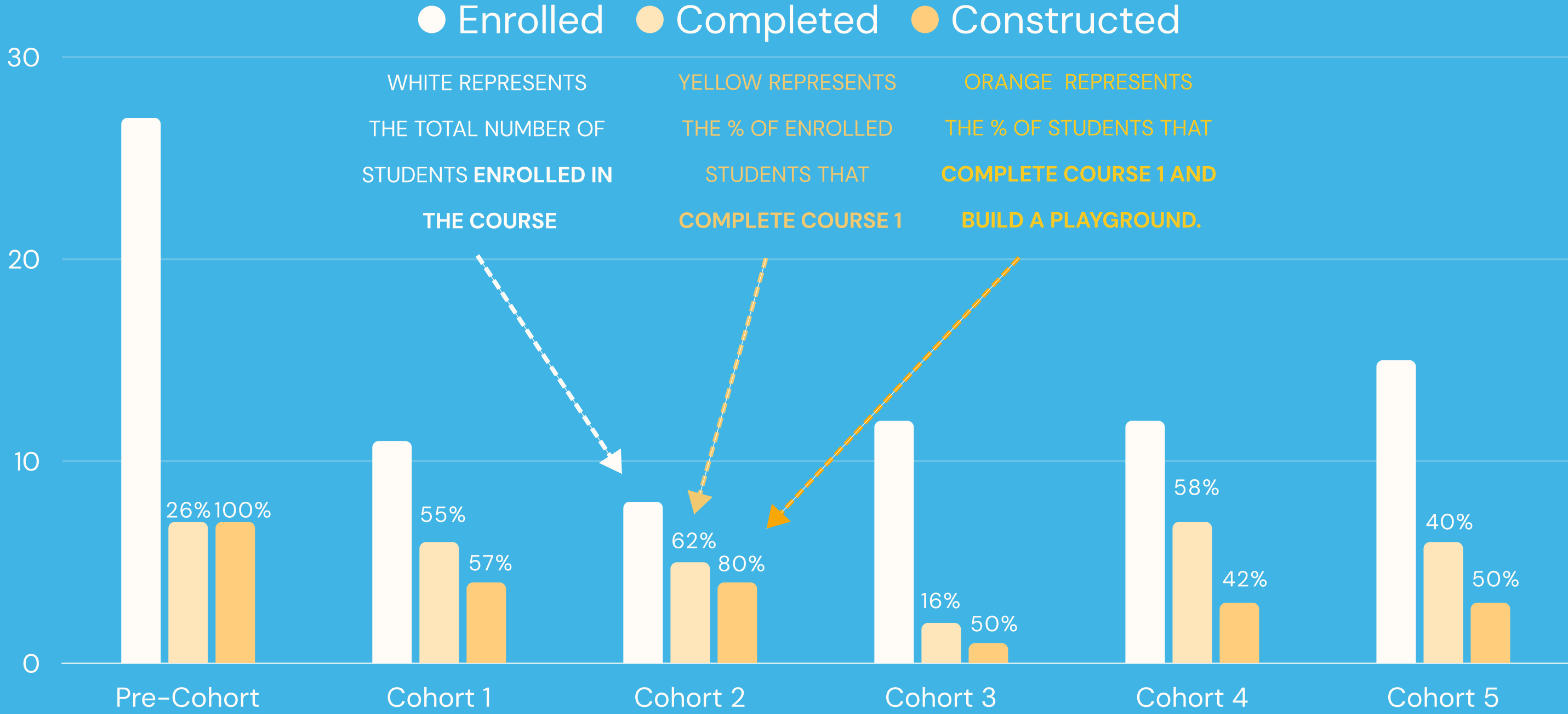
# 12

### COUNTRIES

KENIA, ZAMBIA, MALAWI, NIGERIA, PAKISTAN, TANZANIA, AUSTRALIA, FILIPINAS, SRI LANKA, BOTSWANA, MEXICO Y MYANMAR.

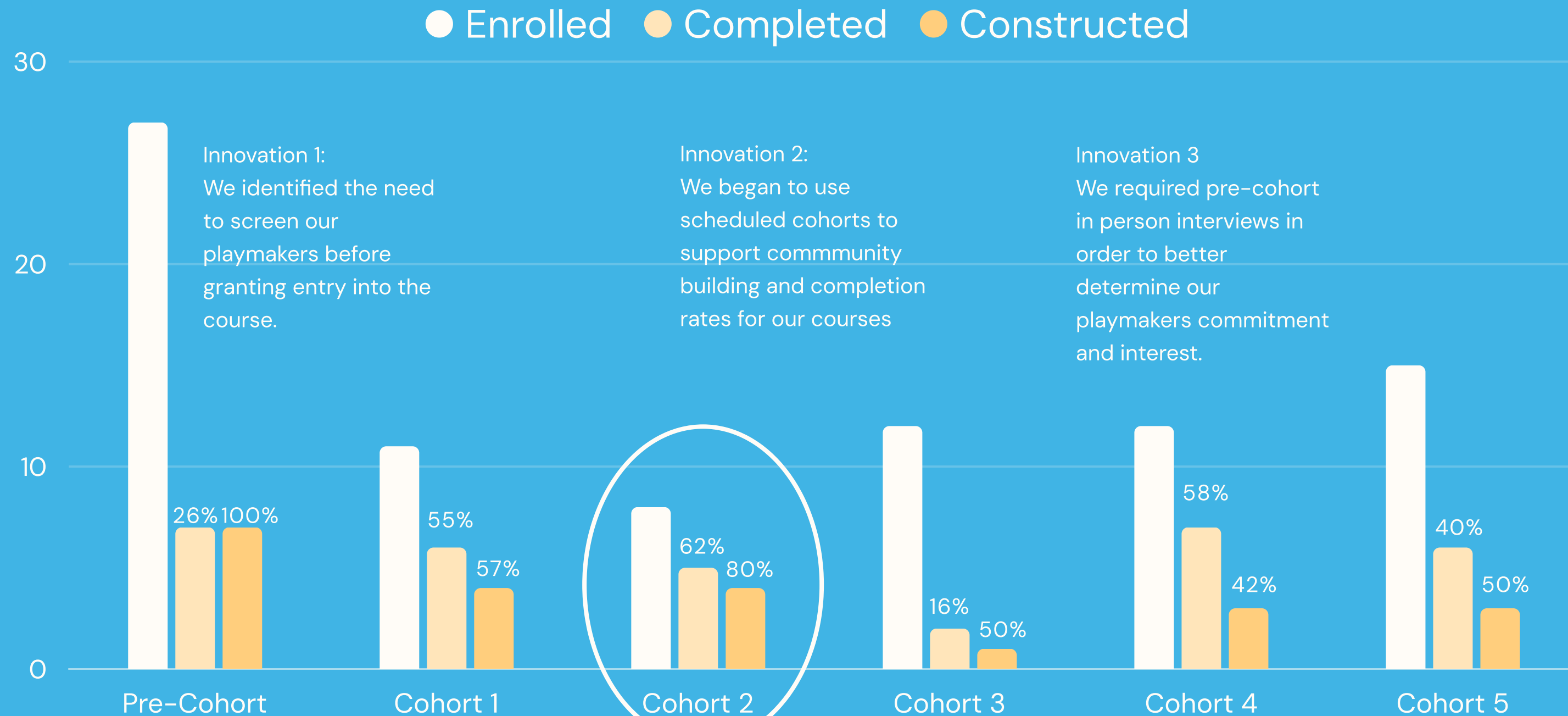
# Cohort Statistics 2021 - 2023

THE ANNUAL STATISTICS ARE CONSTANTLY UPDATED AND EVOLVING. STUDENTS MIGHT COMPLETE A PLAYGROUND IN ONE YEAR AND BUILD IN ANOTHER. WE ARE REPRESENTING COHORT STATISTICS IN THESE CHARTS.



# Cohort **Innovations** 2021 - 2023

PLAY360 IS COMMITTED TO CONSTANT REVIEW AND IMPROVEMENT OF OUR PROCESS. WE HAVE MADE SEVERAL ADAPTIONS IN THE PAST 2 YEARS OF LEARNING HOW TO BEST ENGAGE WITH OUR STUDENTS. OUR FOCUS IS THAT EVERY PLAYMAKER FEELS LIKE THEY HAVE A RELATIONSHIP WITH US AND OUR PLAYMAKER COMMUNITY.



MOST REPRESENTATIVE OF  
WHERE WE SEE OUR BASELINE

"Play is the royal road to  
childhood happiness and  
adult brilliance."

- Joseph Pearce



# playgrounds for every child



## Kosovo

Obiliq, Kosovo, Dr. Ibrahim Rugova  
Primary School

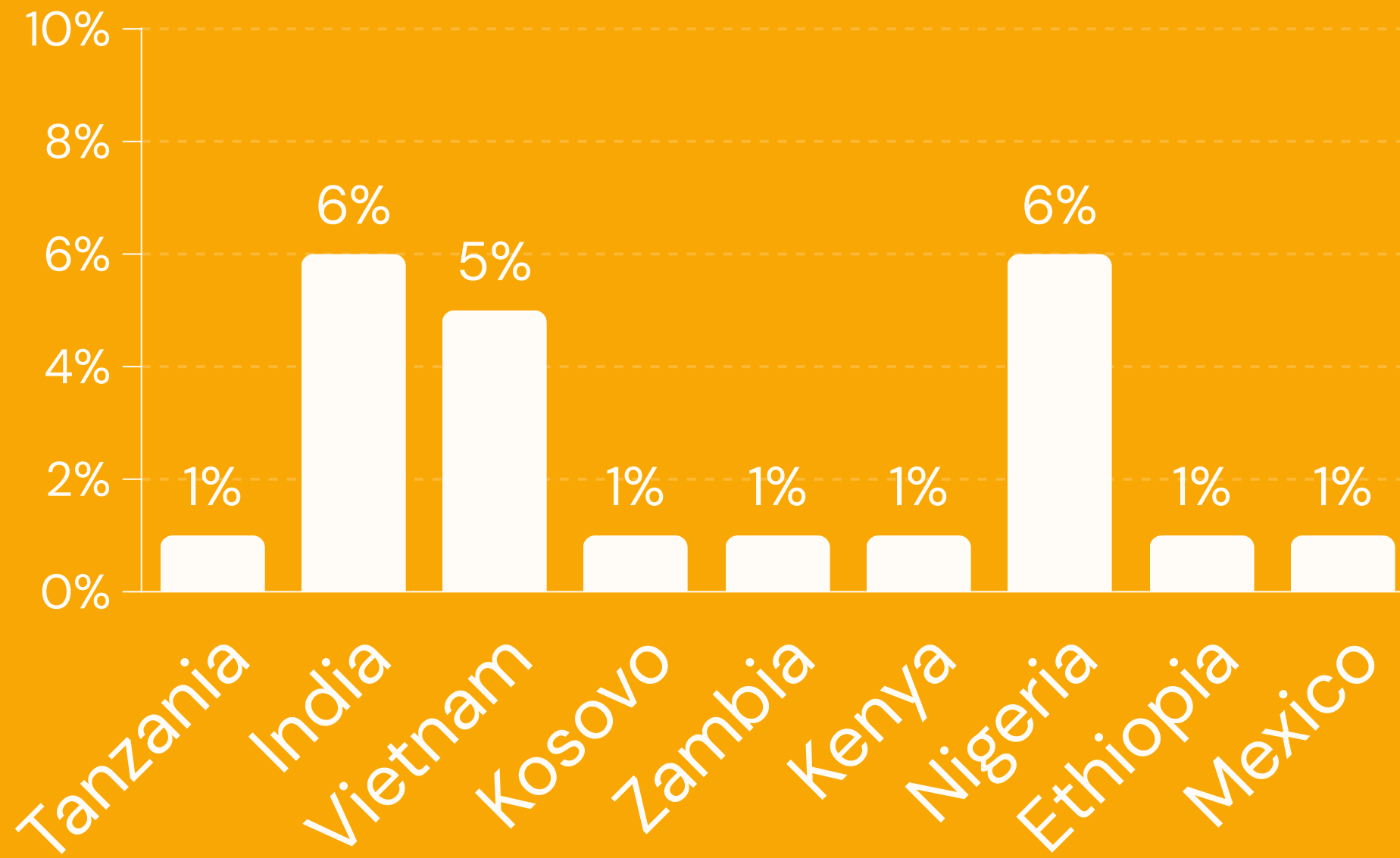


## Vietnam



## India

# Countries with Playgrounds in 2023





An elderly man with a joyful expression is sitting on a wooden beam he is painting. He is wearing a grey pinstriped blazer over a pink shirt and a yellow and blue patterned cap. He holds a paintbrush in his right hand and a can of 'Coral' brand paint in his left. The background shows a light pink wall and several colorful wooden beams leaning against it. The ground is dirt with some dry leaves.

"We don't stop playing  
when we grow old.  
We grow old when we stop  
playing."

• George Bernard Shaw



# VIETNAM



# NIGERIA



playmaker highlight

# Ahmed Shams

Age: 40

Profession: Electrical Engineer

Country: Tanzania

# Playgrounds Constructed: 2+



Ahmed demonstrated exceptional motivation for the course from the outset, consistently staying ahead, actively participating in all calls, and emerging as the first in his cohort to complete the entire process. Noteworthy is his effective communication, maintaining regular contact throughout the process. He has already created two playgrounds and is motivated to build more.

## Playmaker Highlight

# Janeth

Country: Tanzania

# Playgrounds Constructed: 3+

Janeth is a playmaker with a strong sense of community. She has already built three playgrounds, and what stands out the most is her encouragement of team members and community members to become playmakers themselves. Several individuals, inspired by her, have already embraced this role and constructed their own playgrounds. Additionally, in January 2024, she is set to conduct her first teacher training, showcasing her commitment to fostering growth within the community.







**Anuya Trivedi**

Ahmedabad, Gujarat, India



## Fellows Highlight

# Anuya Trivedi

In the lively heart of Ahmedabad, Anuya Trivedi Bhargava, the creative mind behind Green Buddies Foundation, is crafting a vision that fills childhood with joy, purpose, and simplicity. Beyond winning awards like the Creative Innovator Award (2023) and the Global Recycling Heroes Award (2020), Anuya is on a mission to weave dreams for children using the magic of play.

Anuya's passion is to create play spaces where the laughter of children becomes the sweet sound of happiness. She uses discarded tires and collected materials to design "Recycled Play Stations" that are not only great for durable play, but good for the environment too!

Anuya is not just having an impact in Ahmedabad, but also within the global community of play360. Anuya is a contributor to the play360 governance and decision making process as a member of the Advisory Committee. Anuya's enthusiasm for her work and her dedication to children having access to playgrounds guarantees that together we can move towards a world where every child, no matter where they live, gets the chance to have fun and learn through play. Play360 is honored to be able to support Anuya on her spectacular trajectory as a visionary leader of play education.





Esther Mark  
2023/2024 Fellow  
Advisory Committee  
Council President

"Play is the primary way  
that children were  
designed to learn"

-Kathy Hersh-Pasek

# 2023 IMPACT

# 49

**Playgrounds  
Built**

# 9,800

**Children  
Playing**

# 4,410

**Community  
Members**





# Finance and Administration

2023

Playmakers In Action

- Playmaker Cohorts
- Playmaker Construction
- IKONA Playmaker Con...**
- Teacher Training Progr...
- Playmakers Dashboard
- Construction Steps
- Course 2 process
- Impact Measurement
- Duplicate of Impact Mea...
- Impact Widgets Informat...

Grants Management

- IKONA Test Maintena...
- Fundraising Meeting Min...
- Fundraising Dashboard
- Grant Management

# IKONA Playmaker Con... Main Table | 2022 | +

Invite / 11

New Item Search Person Filter Sort Hide

Item	Short N...	Ph...	Drive	Course 2 Status	Steps to constru...	Teacher ...
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## Active Construction

Item	Short N...	Ph...	Drive	Course 2 Status	Steps to constru...	Teacher ...
> Esther Mark...				Certified	COMPLETE	Esther
> Anuya				Certified	COMPLETE	Anuya
> Huong				Certified	COMPLETE	Huong
> Chase				Enrolled	Stuck	-
> Xhem				Certified	COMPLETE	-
> Flavio				Certified	COMPLETE	-
> Tula R				Certified	COMPLETE	Tula
> Ahme				Certified	COMPLETE	-
> Abhiji				Certified	COMPLETE	-
> Varun				Certified	Stuck	-
> FRAN				Certified	COMPLETE	-
> Kwezi Joseph	Joseph				COMPLETE	-
Maryabella Didas	Maryabella			Certified	Stuck	
> Joseph Melale	Joseph			Certified	COMPLETE	Joseph

**Team Celebration!**  
 In 2023 we took huge strides to automate all of our internal administration.



A huge THANK YOU to the team at IKONA for your generous contribution of consulting support!

Help

"It is highly satisfactory to work towards making the world better by promoting simple yet fundamental practices like play.

Consider it not as a reward for well-behaved children but as a basic need and a right for all children to grow up healthy, happy, and with good opportunities for their future."



**Luz Herrera**

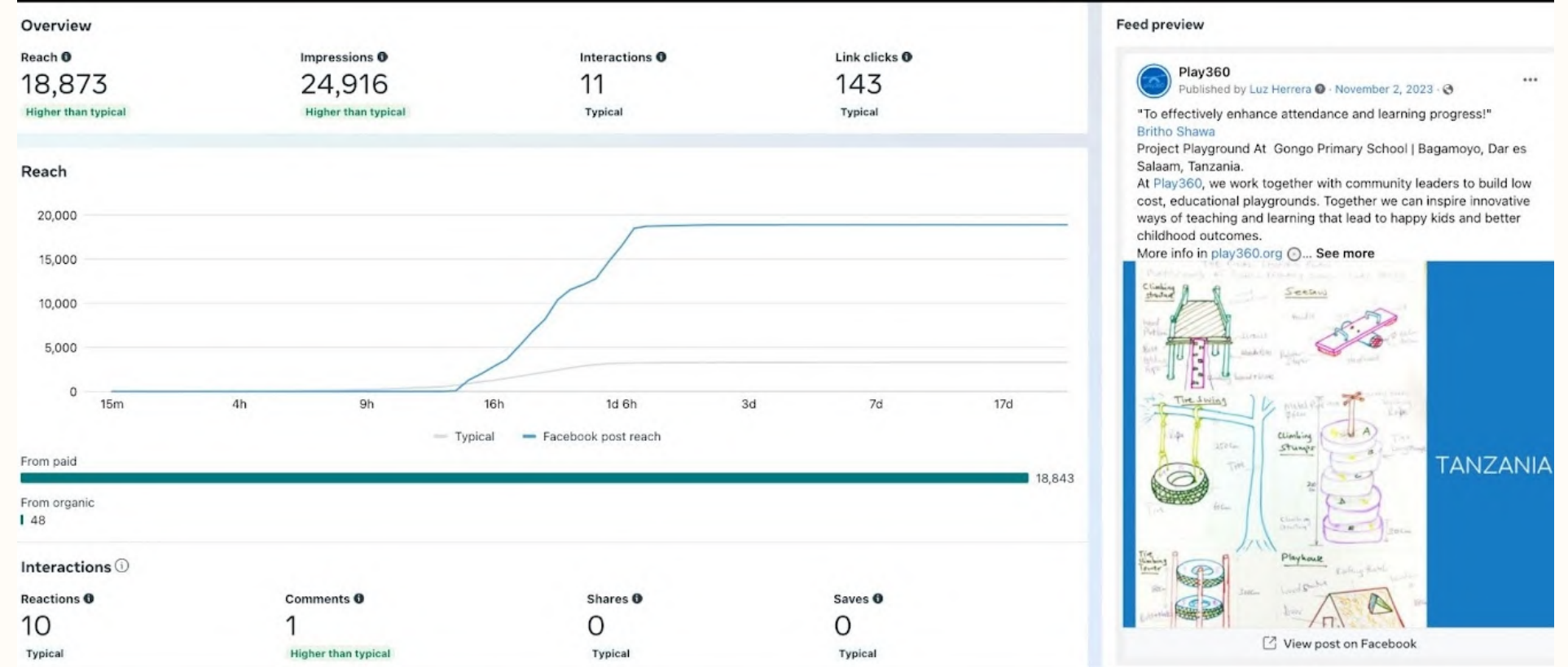
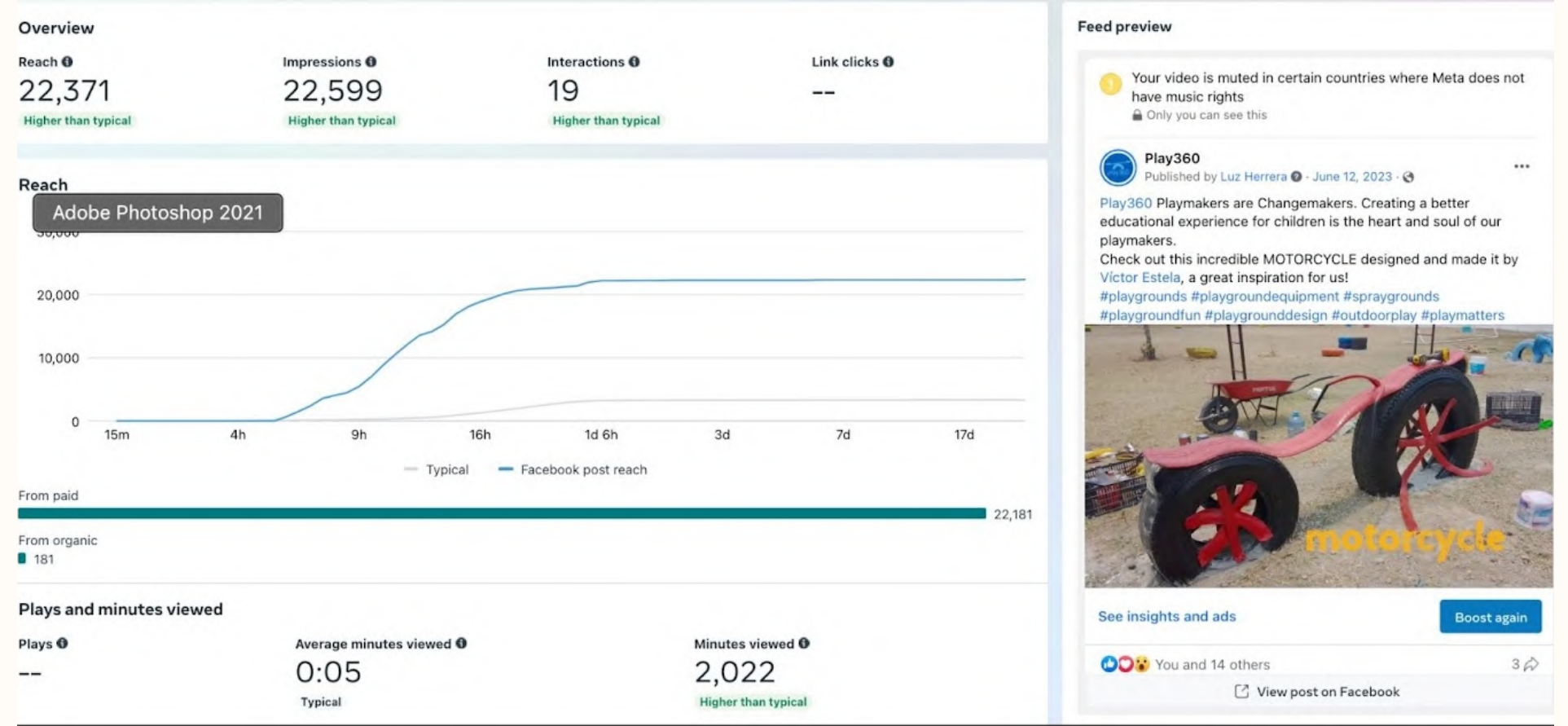
MEDIA AND COMMUNICATIONS

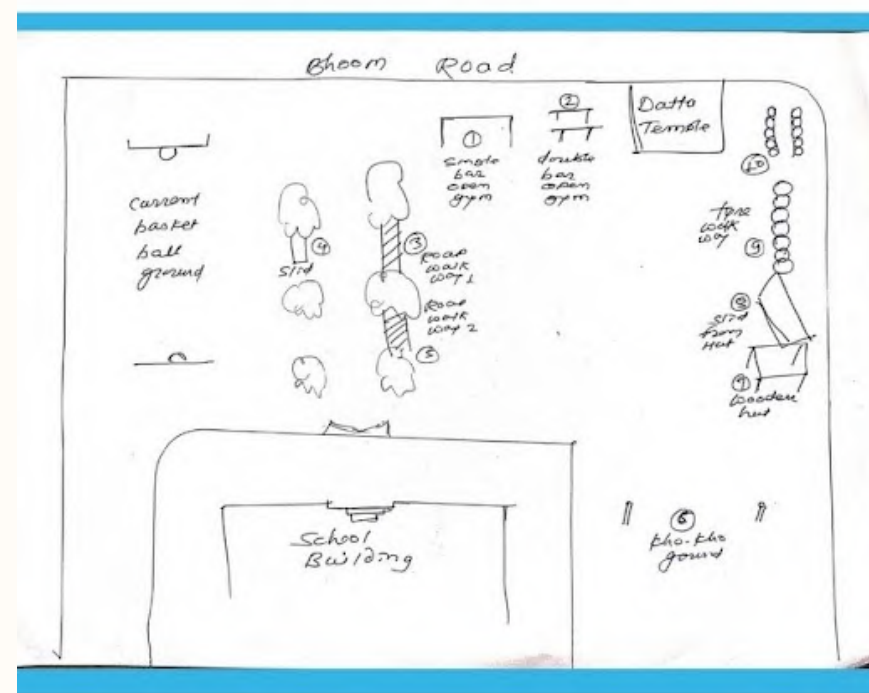
from Luz

# Social Media

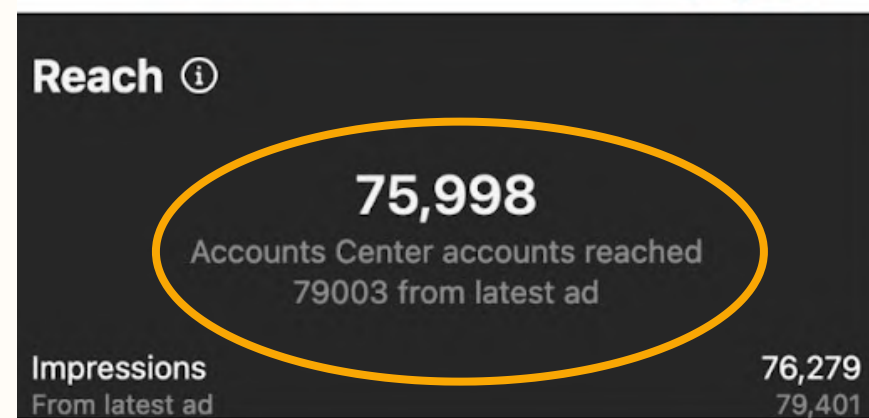
In 2023, we continue our efforts to extensively promote the cohorts, both in inviting individuals to train as playmakers and in showcasing their commitment and significant work in building playgrounds around the world.

This year, with some new design and publishing proposals, our social media approach has diversified while centering around the Play360 initiative. We've engaged with cohort processes, collaborated with organizations and individual initiatives, and shared various perspectives on the crucial role of play in children's development through reflections and research.

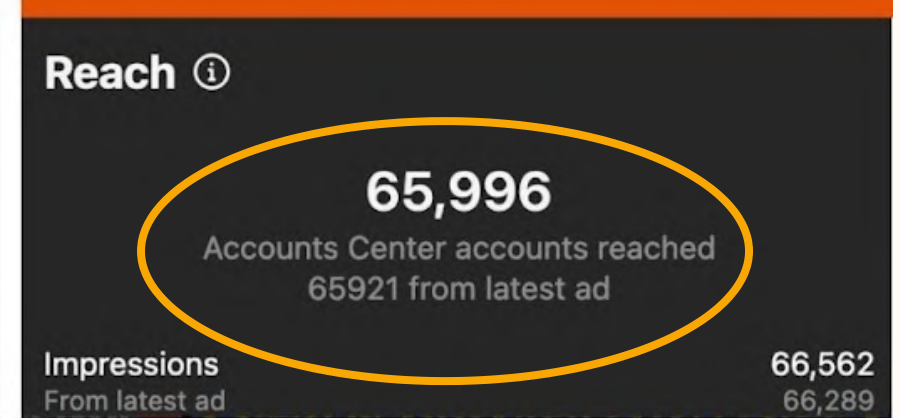
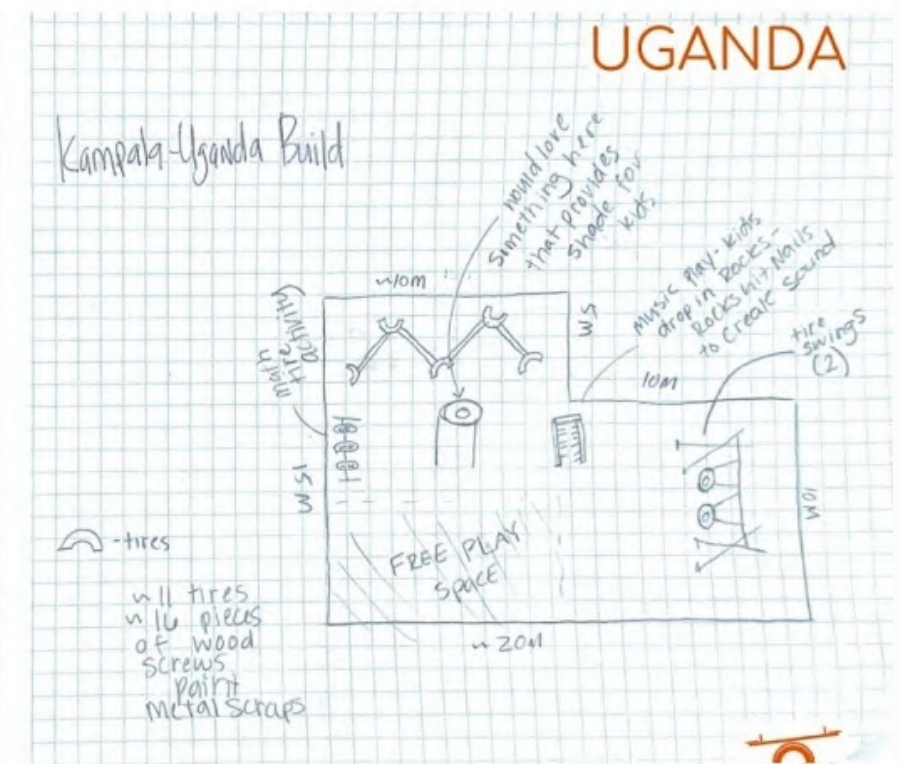
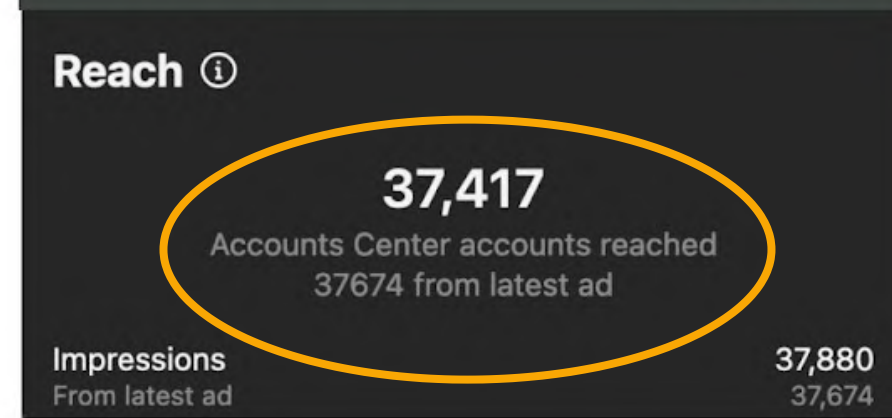




INDIA



KOSOVO



playgrounds  
around  
the world!

From India to Kosovo and Uganda, playground projects spanning nine countries have been shared with thousands of Instagram and Facebook users. These initiatives serve as shining examples, promoting the idea and encouraging people in other places worldwide to join forces in community projects.

# Media Strategy 2023

In our pursuit to extend our reach, we've implemented various campaigns throughout the year. Our focus goes beyond just accumulating followers and likes; we aim to capture and maintain attention, increase page views, and connect with people

This year, our emphasis has shifted towards Instagram, aligning with current social media trends. Our goal is not just growth but meaningful engagement, fostering a community that values and prioritizes play.

## SOCIAL MEDIA RESULTS

2023



+ 2,583,974 impressions

**229 posts & stories**

+ 2,814,212 accounts reached

**118 advertising  
campaigns**

+ 5,933 page views



+ 3,486,919 impressions

**263 posts**

+ 1,576,717 reached people

**148 advertising  
campaigns**

+12,445 page views



The  
**LEGO**  
Foundation



IN MARCH 2023, THE LEGO FOUNDATION INVITED PLAY360  
TO SHOWCASE OUR WORK IN THEIR ANNUAL EVENT #ALLINFORPLAY!

*Congratulations Playmakers!*

*"To me a playground is a little community! A safe place for children to play, grow, imagine and explore with one another and the world around them. I'm grateful to be part of a project that empowers communities in this way."*



Kim Heseltine

ACCOUNTING AND FINANCE

# Financial Overview

## Play360

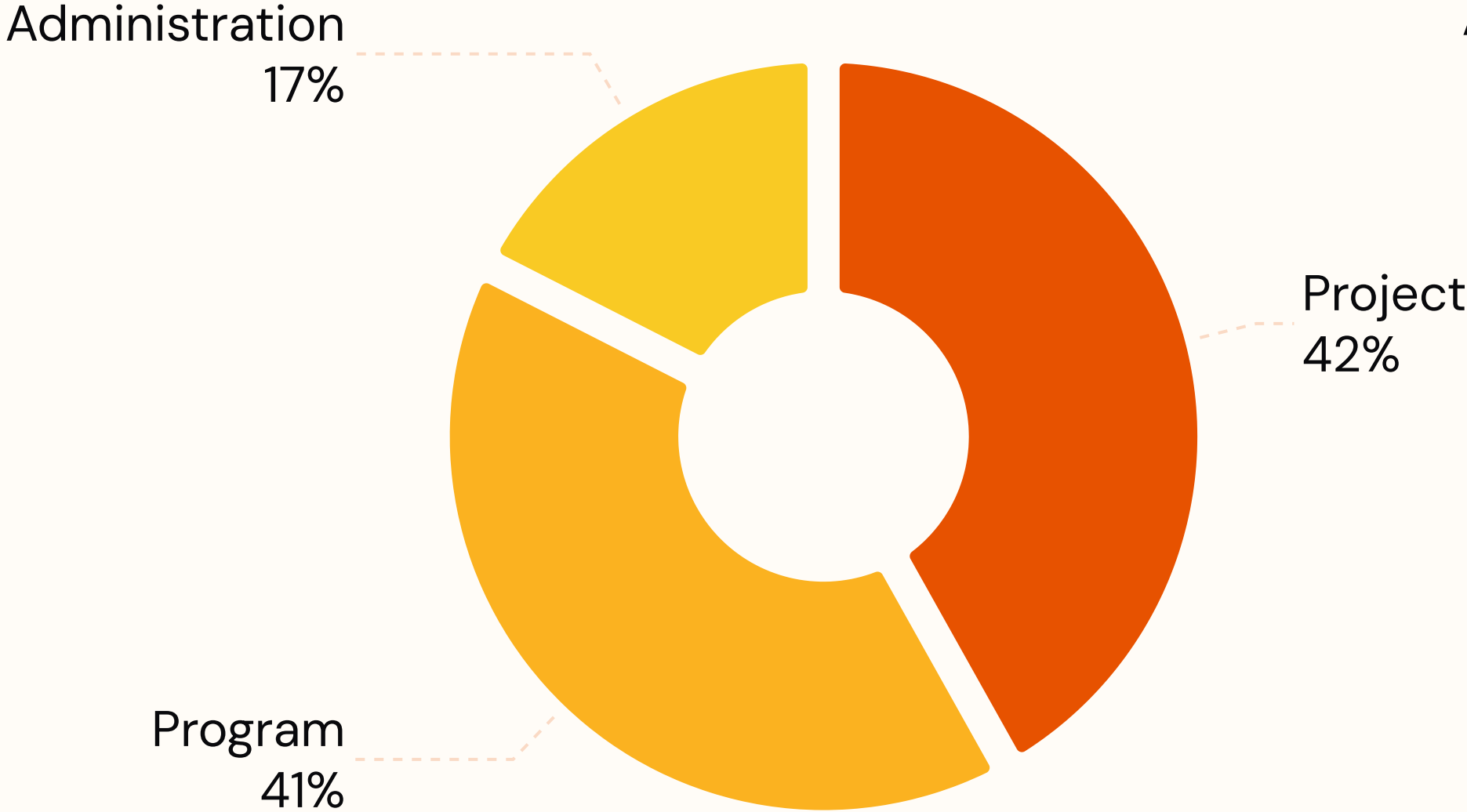
Play360 is a 501(c)3 non profit registered in the United States.

We receive funding from grants and private donors and use those funds to support playmaker education and the construction of playgrounds.

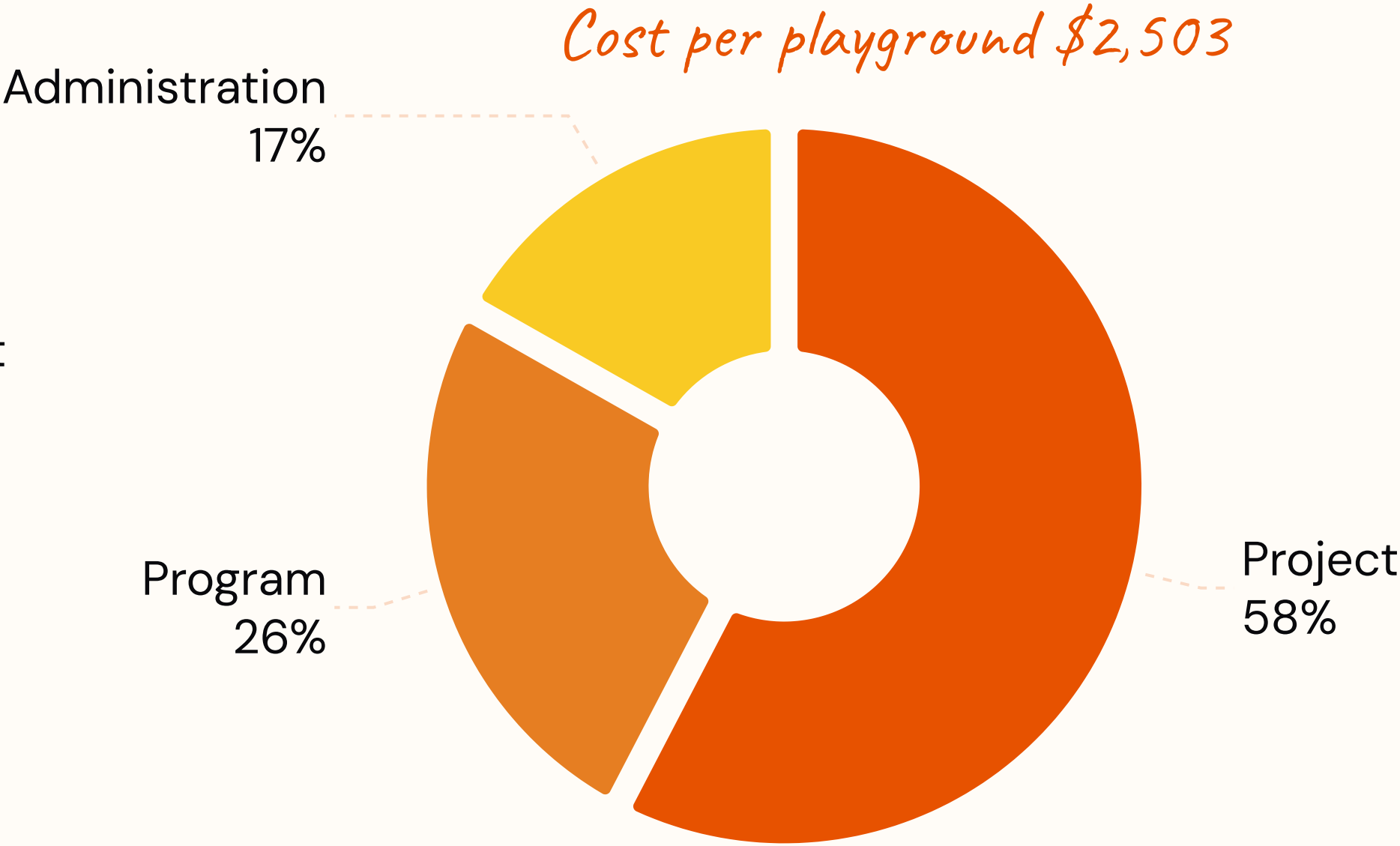
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
<b>INCOME</b>					
Donations	7,995	6,825	55,100	26,260	56,600
Grants	77,750	8,071		49,960	69,850
Other Revenue	8,075	102	10		
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>93,820</b>	<b>14,998</b>	<b>55,110</b>	<b>76,220</b>	<b>126,450</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>					
Program*	2,051	10,732	37,498	39,818	31,371
Project (in-country)**	28,547	13,814	22,967	38,619	70,713
Administration	8,816	4,665	9,055	16,632	20,604
Other	739	220			
<b>TOTAL EXPENSE</b>	<b>40,153</b>	<b>29,431</b>	<b>69,520</b>	<b>95,069</b>	<b>122,688</b>

# financial data

Expenses 2022



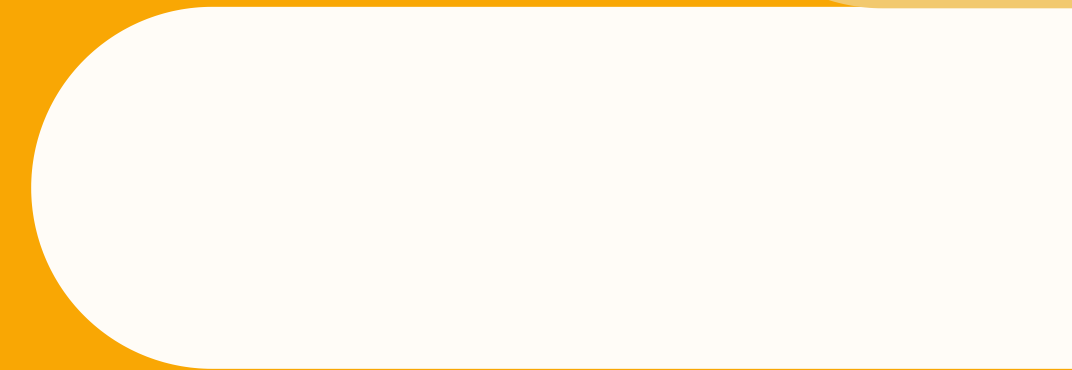
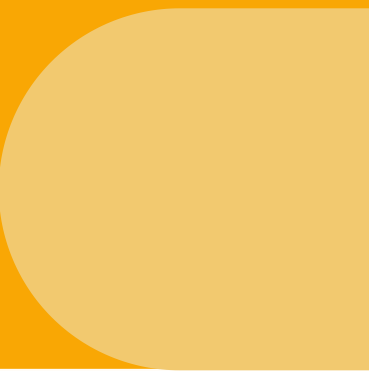
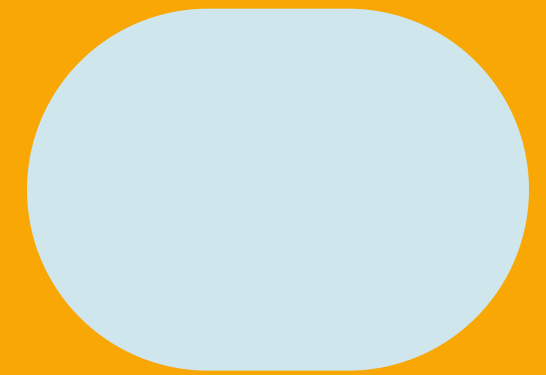
Expenses 2023



**Program:** The funds spent on the educational program, teacher training and playmaker support

**Project:** The funds spent directly on playgrounds and construction

We are immensely grateful  
for the support of all our  
partners and supporters.



# Pitch

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