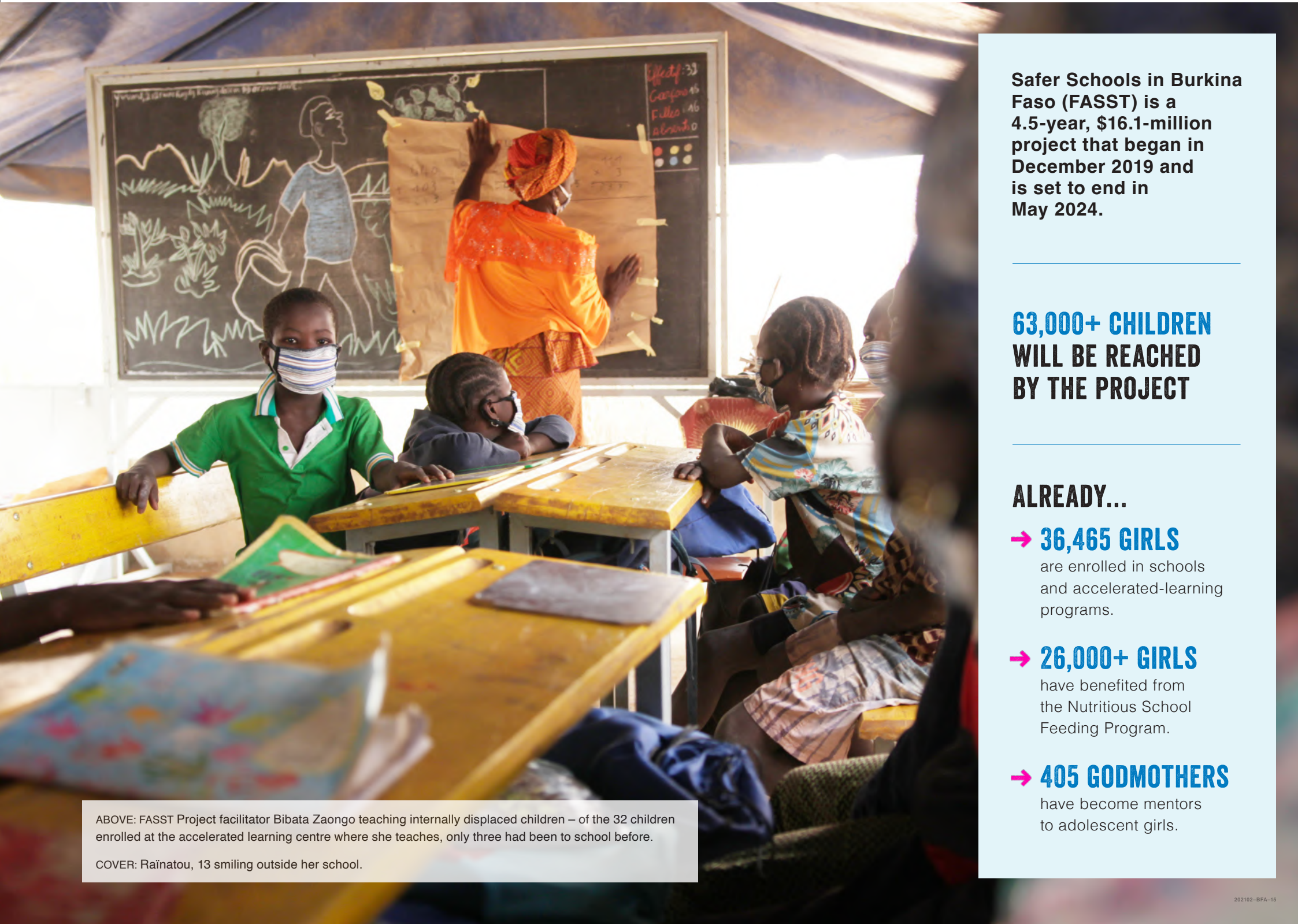




STORIES OF CHANGE
Year 2 Impact Report
Fall 2022



SAFER **SCHOOLS** IN BURKINA FASO



ABOVE: FASST Project facilitator Bibata Zaongo teaching internally displaced children – of the 32 children enrolled at the accelerated learning centre where she teaches, only three had been to school before.

COVER: Raïnatou, 13 smiling outside her school.

Safer Schools in Burkina Faso (FASST) is a 4.5-year, \$16.1-million project that began in December 2019 and is set to end in May 2024.

63,000+ CHILDREN
WILL BE REACHED
BY THE PROJECT

ALREADY...

- **36,465 GIRLS**
are enrolled in schools and accelerated-learning programs.
- **26,000+ GIRLS**
have benefited from the Nutritious School Feeding Program.
- **405 GODMOTHERS**
have become mentors to adolescent girls.

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Plan International is promoting the importance of education throughout Burkina Faso via community volunteers, like Nadinga, who go door-to-door raising awareness among local parents.



Safety First

Returning to a safe, inclusive classroom.

FOR CHILDREN WHO HAVE BEEN FORCED TO LEAVE SCHOOL because of conflict, displacement and poverty, rejoining the classroom is only the first chapter in their new learning journey.

The trauma – both physical and emotional – these children may have experienced affects their ability to learn long after their return to the classroom.

That's why the Safer Schools in Burkina Faso project (FASST) prioritizes safe, inclusive learning spaces that are accessible and accommodating.

Returning to a safe classroom made Latifa feel supported when she came back to school after an attack on her family's farm. The project is benefiting teachers as well as students, and Lompo – the principal of a public primary school in the Est region of Burkina Faso – feels confident that his students are learning in a safe environment.

These opportunities for students in Burkina Faso **would not be possible without your generosity.**

THE SAFER SCHOOLS IN BURKINA FASO PROJECT WILL:

- 1 Improve safety protocols in schools and learning centres
- 2 Establish accelerated-learning centres and remedial courses to help children catch up
- 3 Promote girls' right to education in order to rally support within communities
- 4 Build and refurbish school facilities so they are accessible and inclusive

The Scene



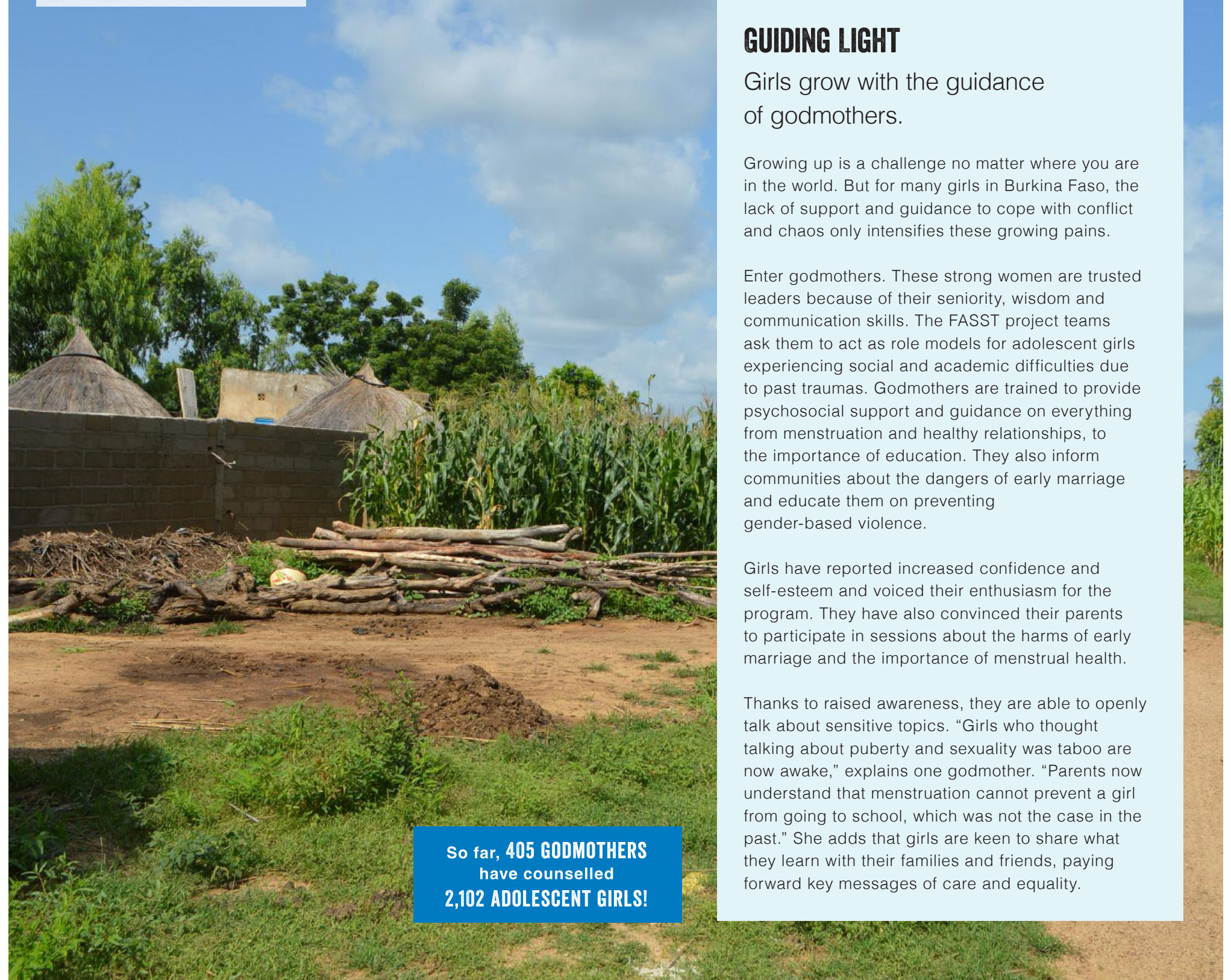
THE NAME “BURKINA FASO” SIGNIFIES THE COMING TOGETHER OF THE COUNTRY’S TRIBES: Burkina comes from the Mossi language and Faso from Diouala. People in Burkina Faso are known as “Burkinabe” – the ‘be’ is from the Foulfulde language. Elaborate mud architecture, hypnotic ceremonial dances and jagged prehistoric peaks are just a few of Burkina Faso’s wonders. But earlier this year, the country fell under military rule following years of escalating conflict and turmoil.

Since 2016, armed extremist groups have been increasing their attacks on government buildings, schools and public spaces. In 2021, the humanitarian situation worsened as the number of killings and atrocities committed by Islamist groups, state security forces and pro-government security forces surged. **The attacks brought the total number of internally displaced people to 1.8 million, an estimated 61% of whom are children.** Displacement not only exposes children to violence and uproots them from all they know, but also reduces their chances of being able to go to school and have a promising future.

- In 2020, more than 857,000 children were out of school.
- The secondary school enrolment rate is only 29%.
- The literacy rate for young adults aged 15–24 is 58%.

Your support is helping to address the dire need for education for children who have experienced conflict, trauma and displacement.

Landscape of Kourittenga, Burkina Faso.



**So far, 405 GODMOTHERS
have counselled
2,102 ADOLESCENT GIRLS!**

GUIDING LIGHT

Girls grow with the guidance of godmothers.

Growing up is a challenge no matter where you are in the world. But for many girls in Burkina Faso, the lack of support and guidance to cope with conflict and chaos only intensifies these growing pains.

Enter godmothers. These strong women are trusted leaders because of their seniority, wisdom and communication skills. The FASST project teams ask them to act as role models for adolescent girls experiencing social and academic difficulties due to past traumas. Godmothers are trained to provide psychosocial support and guidance on everything from menstruation and healthy relationships, to the importance of education. They also inform communities about the dangers of early marriage and educate them on preventing gender-based violence.

Girls have reported increased confidence and self-esteem and voiced their enthusiasm for the program. They have also convinced their parents to participate in sessions about the harms of early marriage and the importance of menstrual health.

Thanks to raised awareness, they are able to openly talk about sensitive topics. “Girls who thought talking about puberty and sexuality was taboo are now awake,” explains one godmother. “Parents now understand that menstruation cannot prevent a girl from going to school, which was not the case in the past.” She adds that girls are keen to share what they learn with their families and friends, paying forward key messages of care and equality.

THE RUNDOWN

Thanks to your generosity, children in Burkina Faso are getting a chance to pursue their education – and their dreams.

Here are some highlights and achievements you've made possible:

36,465 GIRLS

are enrolled in schools and accelerated-learning programs.



101 SCHOOL-MANAGEMENT COMMITTEES

with a total of **862 members** were established in schools to develop safety plans and reporting processes for violations.



MORE THAN 26,000 GIRLS

have benefited from the Nutritious School Feeding Program, and 1,330 girls who are displaced, orphaned or have parents without income are receiving take-home meals.



405 GODMOTHERS

– trusted female community leaders – were trained to mentor girls who are experiencing social and academic difficulties or who are at risk of early marriage. The godmothers counselled **2,102 mentees** with psychosocial support and confidence-building activities.



238 GIRLS' & BOYS' CLUBS

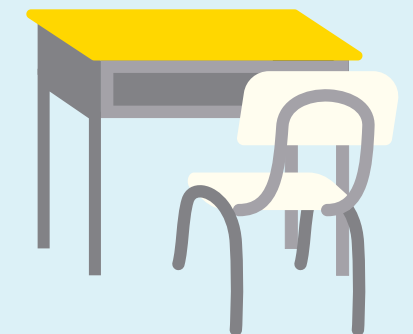
have been established to promote girls' rights and gender equality and help girls manage their periods at school.

Club members also make recommendations for improvements to their schools, such as the provision of sports equipment and sanitary supplies, and the refurbishment of washrooms.

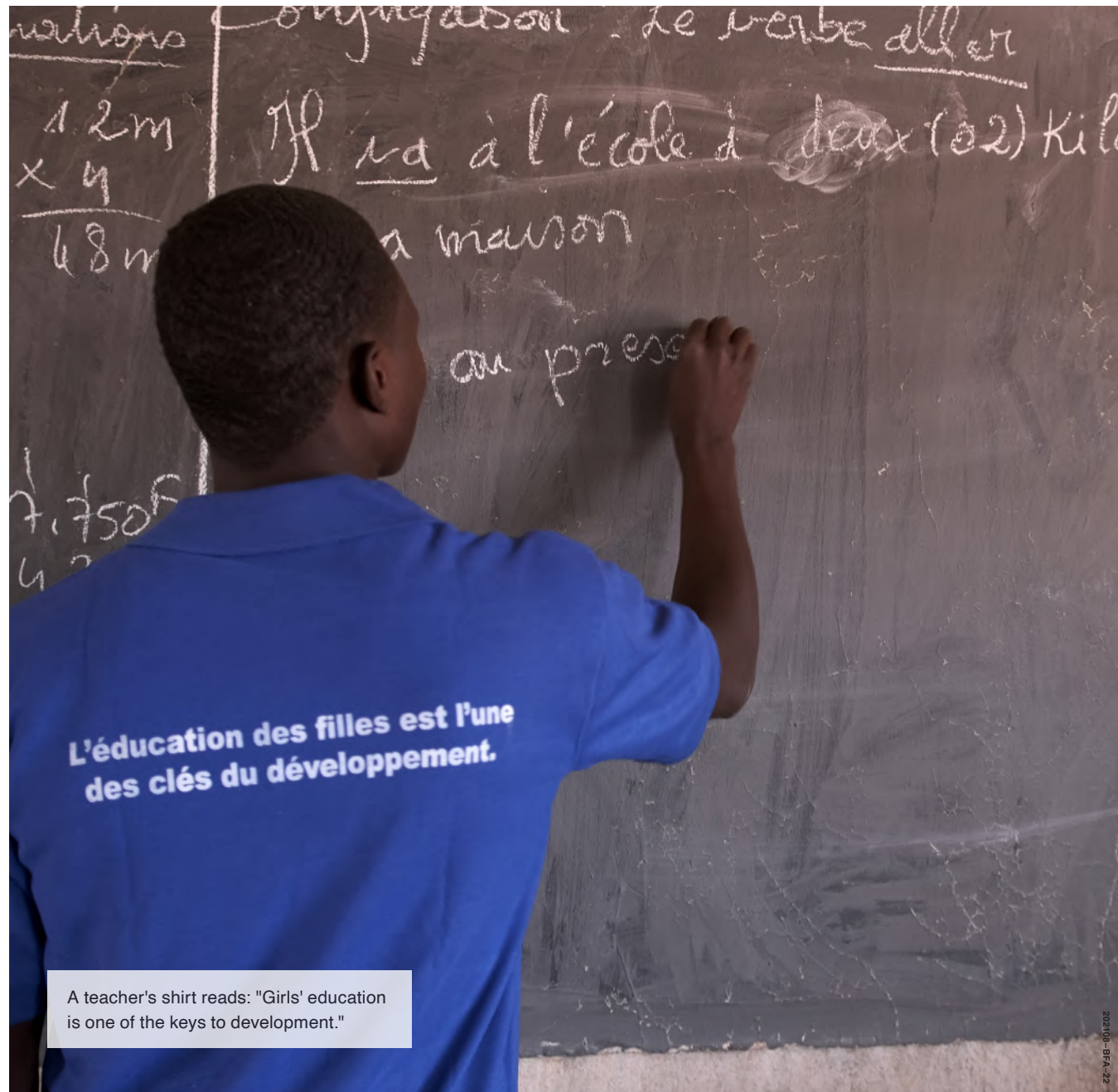
OVER 17,300 STUDENTS

are enrolled in remedial courses across 112 schools.

These courses support children who have missed school or who have learning difficulties.



Spotlight



A teacher's shirt reads: "Girls' education is one of the keys to development."



Latifa is back in school and hopeful for her future.

LEARNING TO LEAD

Latifa is back in class – and she's taking charge.

WHEN ARMED GROUPS ATTACKED LATIFA'S HOME,

she did what any devoted daughter would do: She helped her parents. Her family lost their livestock – which they depended on for income, during the assault. Latifa, who's one of five children, understood the financial stress her parents were experiencing and accepted her father's decision to take her out of school.

Latifa helped her mother take care of the house, but she longed to be back in the classroom. Thankfully, with financial assistance from the FASST project, Latifa is back in school. After a cash transfer paid for school fees and supplies, she is learning and earning good grades.

Her mother is thrilled about her daughter's achievements and supports her decision to return

to school. "Some girls drop out because their parents think a girl's place is to stay at home, learn to clean and get married," reflects Latifa, recognizing that her own parents didn't have much choice, given their financial situation. "I want to encourage parents to allow girls to stay in school and refuse to be married when they are young. I hope that the FASST project will be able to support many young girls."

So far, 877 GIRLS FROM DISPLACED FAMILIES HAVE RECEIVED CASH TRANSFERS so they can continue their education!

SAFETY SYSTEMS

Suggestion boxes ensure students' voices are heard.

SCHOOLS SHOULD BE SAFE

SPACES – places to learn and grow. Unfortunately, not all teachers understand that. “In the past, it was difficult for me to convince teachers that whipping, insulting and mocking students was not a solution for good learning,” says Lompo, a principal of a public primary school in the Est region of Burkina Faso. In many schools, there was no way for anyone to find out what was happening to students behind closed classroom doors.

After consulting with students, the FASST team set up suggestion boxes in the schools so children could report instances of abuse and

teachers could be held accountable for unacceptable behaviour. Complaints are dealt with based on their urgency. For example, if they are related to violence, they are immediately escalated to a FASST protection advisor and broader feedback is taken to school-management committees.

Lompo is amazed by the improvements he has seen in his students' morale and academic performance since the suggestion boxes were created. “This is the first time that a student can complain about the way they are treated in school,” he explains. “Pupils are increasingly trusting teachers and

actively participating in classes. My colleagues avoid using insults against children, and we have referred children for psychological care.”

So far, **88 suggestion boxes** have been set up across different schools and **2,216 suggestions** have been received.

Lompo is grateful for the opportunity to make his school safe and supportive for students. “I personally thank Plan International and the FASST project for making it possible to correct some shortcomings at the school.”



Lompo, the principal of a public primary school in the Est region of Burkina Faso.

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– Lompo, a principal of a public primary school in the Est region of Burkina Faso



Thank you!

Thank you for your incredible support, which is strengthening the safety of schools and setting students up for success. As children – especially girls – are empowered to overcome obstacles and burdens, their pathways of potential are cleared so they can complete their education.

All of us at Plan International Canada are immensely grateful for your dedication to children's learning, growth and safety.



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