

IMPACT NETWORK



2021 ANNUAL REPORT

Resilience in the Age of the Pandemic

2021 marked the second year of the pandemic and Impact Network continued to persevere in the face of obstacles. This year showed that Impact Network could **recover from the pandemic, audaciously try new things, and continue our mission** to provide every child with a quality education. As we look back on our work over the last year we are grateful for the support of our partners, community members, and supporters to ensure our success.

The school year kicked off with a comprehensive teacher training before the school year started in February. While we did experience some closures and delays due to COVID-19, we are so proud that we were able to reconfigure our curriculum so that students did not lose teaching time. We were also able to pilot some of the most innovative and impactful programs in our decade-long history. Our Read Smart visual phonics pilot had incredible results and was scaled up to 8 schools in 2022. In 2021, we also expanded our Early Childhood Education program to 16 classes across 8 schools. We now serve over 400 students in a play-based program steeped in exploration and creativity.

While the core of our work is Impact Education, we continue to test innovative ways to improve the lives of our students and families. During school closures in June and July, we piloted a phone call outreach program to reach families and students who were most vulnerable. We grew our Child Protection programs as a response to our internal survey data. And we launched Impact Earth to respond to the growing climate change crisis and to impart the importance of protecting our world to our students.

2021 was the year we persevered and thrived. We are filled with gratitude to each of you who supported us on the journey.



Reshma Patel
Executive Director

MISSION & VISION



We believe every child deserves access to a quality education

Impact Network transforms lives in rural Zambian communities through education and innovation — at a fraction of the cost of other alternatives.

Our key program, the eSchool 360, is a holistic education model centered on empowering teachers with tablets, activity-based lessons, support and weekly coaching. This model is currently running in 40+ schools and impacting over 5,300 students. We also design and implement a variety of projects that improve the overall lives of our students, including early childhood education, financial literacy, child protection, girls and women empowerment, environmental sustainability, and life skills and sexuality.

Currently, we are part of a large-scale randomized controlled trial evaluation conducted by American Institutes for Research. At the end of grade 1, their research finds that our students were 12 months ahead on numeracy and 22 months ahead on literacy.



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EDUCATION



The Problem: Despite decades of peace and stability, the Zambian educational system is providing neither the access to nor the quality of education that its citizens demand. While primary school enrollment is high, education quality is low, and literacy rates among young adults fall under regional averages.

Our Solution: We envision a world where all students are given the tools they need to reach their full potential. Impact Network developed the eSchool 360 to address the widespread inequality in global education, which disproportionately affects children in rural Africa.

What Happened in 2021: We continued to improve our eSchool 360 model and adapt to an ever-changing landscape due to the ongoing pandemic. This year we continued to provide support, training, and resources for our teachers. Additionally, we prioritized programs for our students that provided wrap-around services. Each of these programs was purposefully designed to impact one of the three key areas – education access, education quality, and student wellbeing. Some highlights from the year are:

- An expansion of our play-based early childhood education program, covering over 400 little learners aged 3 to 6.
- Phone calls to families during COVID-19 closures, prioritizing vulnerable at-risk students to ensure their academic progress and wellbeing in their home.
- An incredible early literacy program called *Read Smart*, with high-impact, externally validated results.

2021 RESULTS



We continued to collect and analyze internal data on enrollment, attendance, literacy & numeracy performance, and retention. Our framework also helps us track patterns across communities and schools over time to ensure that our interventions have meaningful impact.

90%

Sixth Graders Reading at Highest Level Tested

23%

Growth in Literacy Scores

89%

Student Attendance Rate

60%

Female Enrollment

5,240

Students Enrolled

<2%

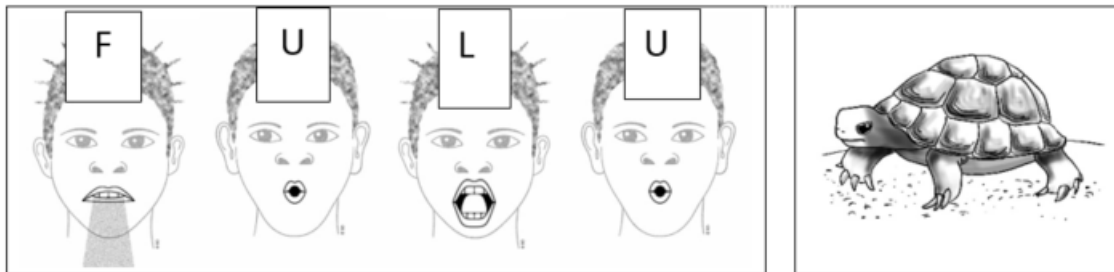
Dropout Rate

Read Smart Pilot

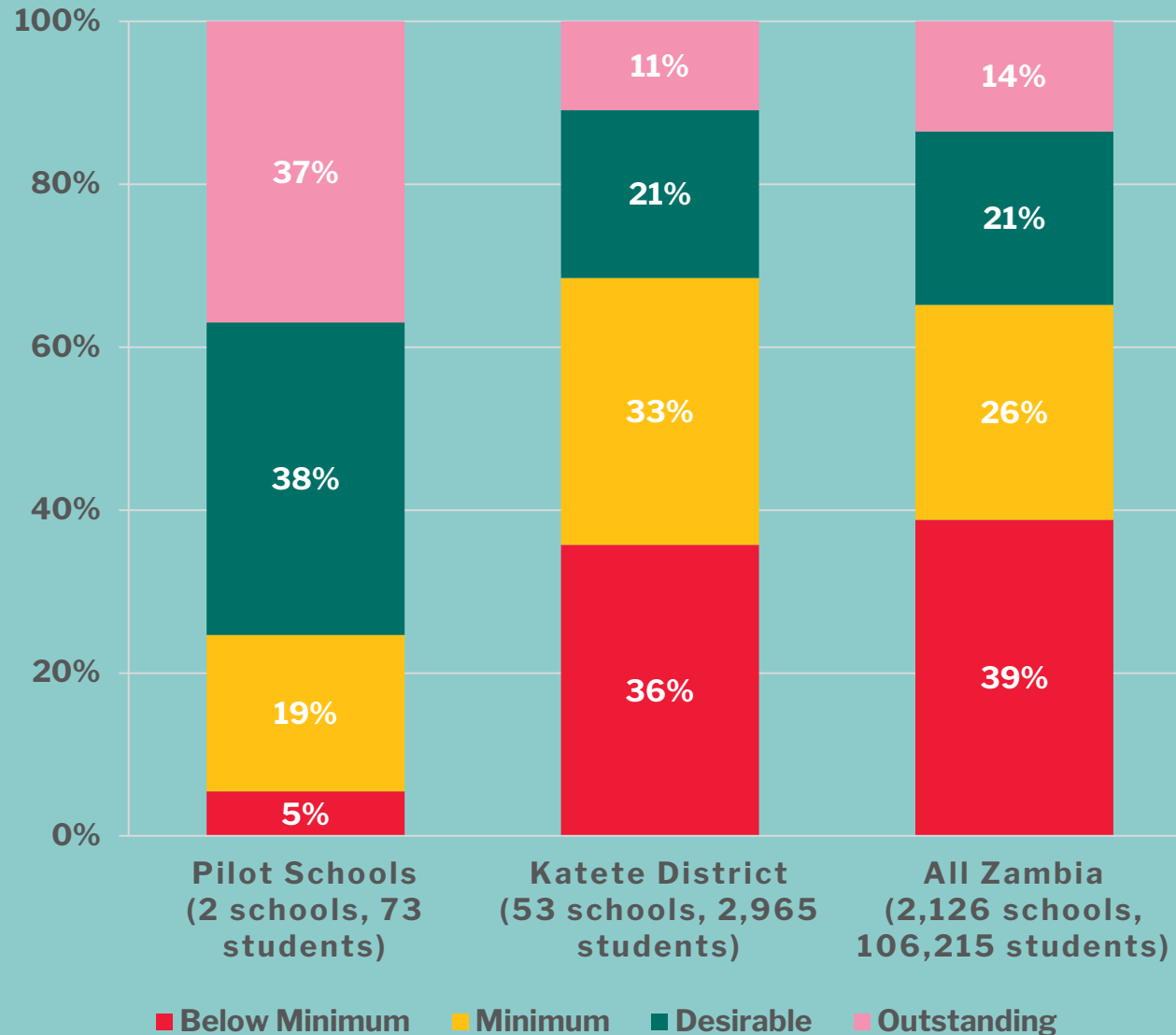
Education quality in rural Zambia has been dismal, especially in regards to literacy. A recent assessment by USAID-funded Let's Read Zambia shows that 70% of Grade 1-3 students performed at minimum or below minimum levels of proficiency in literacy.

In 2021, we piloted an innovative project to combat COVID-19 learning loss and improve early literacy outcomes called "Read Smart". This is a literacy intervention for early grade learning based on the use of phonetic charts, illustrating the mouth positions associated with each sound.

The pilot was conducted in 2021 with students in Grade 1-2 at two schools in Eastern Zambia. In 2022, we are implementing Read Smart across eight schools, reaching over 900 students. External assessment data from the USAID-funded *Let's Read Zambia* project allows us to compare pilot schools with a national dataset. Across Zambia, the proportion of first-grade students at "desirable" or "outstanding" levels was 32-35%, compared to 75% at the pilot schools.



Data From *Let's Read Zambia* -- Term 3, 2021
Literacy Scores for Read Smart Pilot Vs
District/National Level





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GIRLS



The Problem: Many adolescent girls in rural Zambia lack critical menstrual health hygiene materials and knowledge. Additionally, young women are often not empowered to have control over their own bodies and are coerced into unwanted sex or early marriage.

Our Solution: Impact Girls aims to holistically address critical issues facing rural girls and young women – a lack of power to make decisions about their own education, health, bodies, and lives. Keeping school-age girls in school is one of the biggest factors that help to secure long-term changes in communities across Zambia.

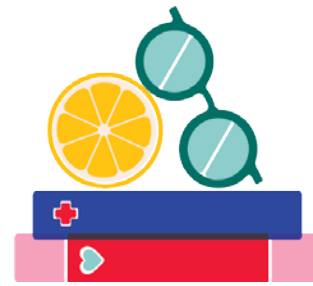
What Happened in 2021: Impact Girls programs continue to thrive, despite the pandemic. We are happy to report that across almost all grades and subject areas, our female students perform similarly to our male students. Additional programs implemented in 2021 include:

- Girls Leading Our World (GLOW) clubs at Upper Primary Schools, covering difficult topics such as HIV/AIDS, puberty, peer pressure, negotiation and refusal skills, healthy relationships, gender-based violence and consent, and women's rights. We have expanded the program to reach a total of 586 girls over the last two years.
- Menstrual Health Hygiene programs for both in-school and out-of-school women and girls, reaching 4,700 participants. This program teaches young women to make their own reusable menstrual pads, and a small bag to store them in.
- NetGirls Zambia, a rural netball league for young women, which restarted after COVID-19 in 2021, and reached 700 participants.



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HEALTH



The Problem: Reproductive health information is essential for the futures of young people in rural communities, but only a third of primary school students in Eastern Province are provided with sex education. Young women are rarely given adequate life skills training to help them deal with gender-based violence, and more importantly, young men are not taught the importance of respect, consent, and advocacy for the women in their lives.

Our Solution: Each of our students has access to a trusted adult to confide in, and access to a trained counselor to support them. Impact Network is committed to a 'zero tolerance' of all forms of child abuse, neglect, exploitation, and violence. All students in grades 5 and higher complete weekly Life Skills and Sexuality workshops.

What Happened in 2021: Impact Health rose to the occasion during the pandemic, expanding programs to make over 40,000 masks for students, families and communities. In addition to this:

- Our Life Skills & Reproductive Health curriculum served 2,000 Upper Primary students, teaching skills to support students as they transition to adolescence.
- We hosted community workshops on child protection to almost 1,000 family members. These workshops are critical to our child protection efforts in the areas that we serve.
- A multi-year survey completed in 2021 found that our child protection work had significantly improved student safety in our schools.



IMPACT

EARTH



The Problem: Despite policy and legal initiatives centered on environmental protection, little has been achieved on the ground to reduce the consequences of environmental degradation for the country and the toll that it continues to take on the people. Over 85% of rural households are affected by worsening crop land conditions, exacerbating the situation beyond an environmental issue, but also a food security one. In particular, the areas that we work are drought-prone and the conservation and efficient use of water becomes critical.

Our Solution: Our Impact Earth initiatives include solar power, rainwater harvesting, tree-planting, and educational upcycling to rethink the use of trash in our school environment. Each of our students participates in environmental activities culminating in an Environmental Awareness Week.

What Happened in 2021: Impact Earth was a part of our programs from the very start — we just didn't name it! Each of our schools is powered by solar panels and sustainability has been a core value since Impact's inception. In 2021, we formalized these under Impact Earth:

- We have planted over 8,250 trees to-date, combatting deforestation in the areas where we work.
- We implemented upcycling and student-centered environmental initiatives, including an environmental awareness week culminating in projects that students make out of “trash”.
- We have piloted a rainwater harvesting structure at our school to collect rain water, and have built some small structures out of glass and plastic bottles.

KNOWLEDGE SHARING



FT FINANCIAL
TIMES

‘In a rural place where you don’t get to go on field trips, you don’t get to go visit a museum, there are barely any signs in the village for you to read, I think the technology gives you an opening into a different world where you can learn about other things.’

rest of world

‘Impact-run schools adapted Rising’s radio lessons, since a majority of their students live in homes without electricity. Faced with the shutdown of the 43 schools she supervises, Patel relied on the ‘forgotten stepchild of tech interventions’ to reach students: radio.’

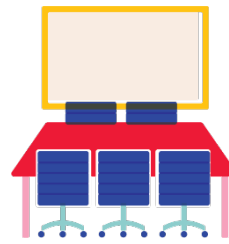
**HundrED
Global Collection:
2022**

‘The low cost of implementation, \$5 per student/month, and use of solar energy makes this innovation scalable and suitable for many other low-income countries or rural regions.’
- HundrED Academy Member

devex
Do Good. Do It Well.™

‘Impact Network has prioritized at-risk students — particularly adolescent girls, given the rise in domestic violence, teenage pregnancy, and early marriage brought on by COVID-19.’

LEADERSHIP TEAM



One of our greatest assets is the strength of our small but diverse and accomplished team. In Zambia, our team brings local knowledge and working relationships with government and donors at local, provincial, and national levels. Our team in the US is comprised of leaders with exceptional business acumen, project management and financial skills, research training, and international experience in fundraising and marketing.

Zambia Board of Directors

Hope Zimba ● Chikosola Chuula ● Anna Murru ● Jay Patel ● George Barlow

US Board of Directors

Dan Sutera ● David Seidenfeld ● Anup Patel ● James Lum ● Jennifer Rackliff
Swan Sit ● Stephan Spencer ● Diane Fusilli

Co-Founders

Dan Sutera ● David Seidenfeld ● Michael Weiss

Executive Director

Reshma Patel

Senior Management Team

Samuel Shawa ● Promise Makala ● Lweendo Maanya ● Steven Chirwa ● Sakalani Phiri
Katie Kerr ● Annabelle Hardy ● Karly Southworth

AUDITED 2021 FINANCIALS

Total Support and Revenue

\$1,027,648

Program Expenses

\$760,332

Management and General Expenses

\$74,734

Fundraising Expenses

\$67,829

Total Expenses

\$902,895

Total Assets

\$433,770

Total Liabilities

\$26,896

Net Assets

\$406,874



A young girl with her hair in a bun, wearing a striped shirt, sits at a desk in a classroom. Other children are visible in the background, some looking towards the camera. The scene is dimly lit, with a green chalkboard in the background.

**“ We believe that every child deserves
access to a quality education.**

**It is that simple.
Thank you for making this possible in 2021.**

IMPACT
NETWORK

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