



IMPACT REPORT

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Continuing to connect youth to proven
life-changing information.



DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

- We developed a phone-based education program that **kept 25,000 children learning across six countries.**
- Our phone-based math education program **delivered over one year of high-quality instruction per \$100.**
- After COVID-19 lockdowns, students receiving our phone-based health program were **84% more likely to return to school.**



**A MESSAGE FROM
YOUTH IMPACT
CO-FOUNDERS**



Moitshepi Matsheng



Noam Angrist

The last two years have been some of the most difficult of our generation. Millions of lives were lost; education and health services were dramatically disrupted. Over 1.6 billion children were out of school at the height of the pandemic, with devastating consequences including long-term learning loss and school dropout.

During these turbulent times, we are proud to have played our part.

We took immediate action at the onset of the global pandemic in March 2020, delivering health and education services to thousands of families and students. We acted swiftly, collecting phone numbers from over 10,000 households in Botswana right before schools closed. Access to internet and digital capabilities is limited in the communities where we work, but most households own at least a simple phone. So we pivoted all programming to be phone-based. It worked. Our phone-based education programming improved learning by the equivalent of 1 full year of high-quality instruction per \$100. Our health program increased school re-enrollment by 84%.

Our results provided some of the world's first rigorous experimental evidence in both adolescent health and primary education. Our mobile phone education program has since gone global, reaching 25,000 students across six countries and counting, including Botswana, India, Kenya, Nepal, the Philippines, and Uganda. We are lucky to have had fantastic partners who provided quick and flexible funding, and world-class implementation and research partners. In each country, we launched a randomized controlled trial to ensure the program worked across diverse contexts. This effort

represents one of the largest, fastest, multi-country efforts to generate evidence in education. We are proud to have enabled evidence-based, real-time, and large-scale action amidst historic uncertainty.

Our team also came together as a family. We instituted a suite of policies and support structures to ensure our staff's health and well-being. We shifted entirely to remote work, providing tools and support, extended emergency sick leave, and provided medical stipends to support testing and travel to clinics to receive vaccination. We retained nearly all our team members. Indeed, we grew. The needs of the communities we serve grew, and our team did too in order to meet the need.

Amidst it all, we embraced a new name: Youth Impact. Our new name celebrates youth: everything we do is to enable youth to thrive. We've reached over 100,000 youth and are rocketing towards one million. Our new name also reflects our commitment to impact, embodied in our COVID-19 response and the monthly rapid impact assessments we conduct to identify and scale-up the most cost-effective programming. Over the past eight years, we have grown from implementing one health program to multiple programs in both health and education. We have expanded our reach from one country to eight and built strong partnerships with researchers, implementing organizations, and governments. While our name has changed, our mission is the same: connecting youth to proven life-changing information. Our new name now captures this mission fully. As one senior government partner recently said, "Become who you are."

Over the past two years we adapted to the times and committed to the cause. Now, we build forward.

Noam and Moitshepi
Co-Founders, Youth Impact



What we do

We translate rigorous research into high-impact health and education programs delivered by young people for young people.

1

ZONES is a one-hour intervention that reduces HIV and pregnancy by encouraging youth to make healthy relationship choices and safely date agemates. The program has reduced pregnancy by up to 40%.

2

TEACHING AT THE RIGHT LEVEL is a 30-hour program that aims to achieve basic literacy and numeracy through fun activities targeted to a student's ability. In Botswana, 90% of Standard/Grade 5 students cannot do division and 40% cannot read a story in English.

3

PHONE-BASED VERSIONS of each of these programs deliver SMS messages and follow-up phone calls to students during and after COVID-19 school closures. We saw a 21% increase in numeracy and an 84% reduction in school dropout.



100,000+
students reached in
10 countries.

Innovation Hub/Headquarters



Botswana

Partner Countries



eSwatini



India



Kenya



Nepal



Philippines



South Africa



Malawi



Namibia



Uganda



Young love is now Youth Impact

On 22 March 2022, the eight anniversary of our launch, we announced our new name--Youth Impact. This change reflects our growth from one health program in Botswana to multiple health and education programs in eight countries. Our new name celebrates the 100,000+ youth we have reached, and our commitment to generating the highest possible impact through rigorous measurement and evaluation.

"Youth Impact captures our dedication to evidence-based impact," said Co-Founder Noam Angrist. "We have conducted 20 rapid randomized trials to continually optimize programming for cost-effectiveness and scalability. During the COVID-19 pandemic, we produced some of the world's first experimental evidence on distance education.

"Our new name pays tribute to our commitment to ensure that all youth thrive. We have built strong partnerships with research organizations, implementers, and governments all around the world," said Co-Founder Moitshepi Matsheng.

Partners throughout the planet have sent messages of support for our name change. You can watch a video with some of their messages at our website, www.youth-impact.org and read a blog post about the thorough and deliberate process to change our name. Thank you for joining us on this journey, and please spread the word!

OUR VALUES



Youth First

Everything we do is by youth and for youth. We put young people first in all we do.



Truth

We aim to do good with a commitment to evidence and reflection.



Deliver

We value outcomes over inputs.



+

Staying positive is paramount, along with a focus on adding value and growth.



Greatest Good

We optimize for the greatest net impact for the greatest number of people.



EVOLUTION OF OUR COVID-19 RESPONSE



COVID-19 closes schools...now what?

At the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, 1.6 billion children were out of school, including in Botswana, where Youth Impact is partnering with government to scale our health and education programs to every school. However, with a national lockdown in place, we had to come up with a new way to deliver our programs and keep children learning.

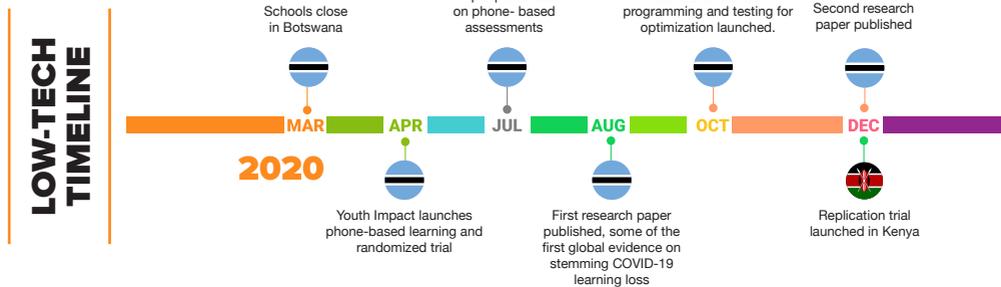
Phones as a way to keep children learning

In high-income countries, schools turned to computers and online classes to continue instruction during COVID-19 closures. But these “high-tech” solutions don’t work in Botswana and other low- and middle-income countries where internet access is low and most households don’t own a computer. However, most homes have a mobile phone, so we seized on phones as a “low-tech” way to continue delivering math and health instruction to students. In just a few days before schools closed, we collected 10,000 phone numbers from households across Botswana.

Drawing from our in-school health and education curricula, we designed a program to send weekly SMS/text messages to students’ households, either with math problems or a health-related lesson, and then call students several days later to walk through the content of the SMS messages.

For at least 463 million children whose schools closed due to COVID-19, there was no such thing as remote learning... The sheer number of children whose education was completely disrupted for months on end is a global education emergency.

UNICEF Executive Director
Henrietta Fore



**WHY LOW-TECH?
Choosing the right tool.**

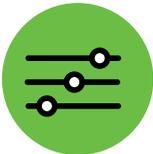
Our Phone-Based Solution
(SMS/Text messages, Phone calls)

'Middle/High-Tech' Solution
(Computers, Smartphones, Online learning)

<p>Accessible</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No internet requirements • Ease of use 		
<p>Cost-Effective</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No expensive hardware inputs • Little to no maintenance needs 		
<p>Context Appropriate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Familiar delivery mechanism enables user engagement 		

Randomized controlled trials to test our solution

Using our **experience from running more than a dozen rapid randomized trials** since 2014, and with support from the University of Oxford, Columbia University, and the Jameel Poverty Action Lab, we designed randomized controlled trials to measure learning gains from our health and education solutions. We called every phone number and spoke to the students' caregivers to gain permission for their student to participate. Then we divided households into three groups:



Control

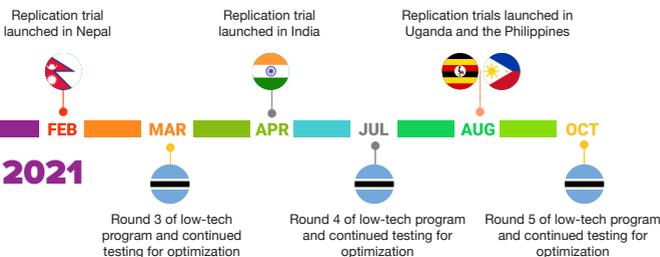


SMS/Text Only



SMS + Phone Call

We launched our program on April 27, 2020 and delivered SMS messages and phone calls for 11 weeks, assessing learning gains at the middle and end of the trial. As radio ownership in Botswana is nearly as high as mobile phones, we also produced math and health radio programs and urged students to tune in.



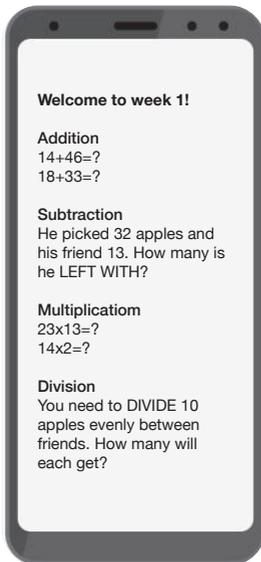
“[W]e provide some of the first experimental evidence on minimizing the fall-out of the COVID-19 pandemic on learning... We find large, statistically significant learning differences between treatment and control groups.”

- *School's Out: Experimental Evidence on Limiting Learning Loss Using "Low-Tech" in a Pandemic*

IMPROVING NUMERACY BY PHONE



Our phone-based numeracy solution has kept 25,000 children learning during and after COVID-19 school closures. The program targets students in grades 3 to 5. Each household receives a weekly SMS message with math problems, and one group also receives a call from a facilitator to review the problems. We assess students' numeracy levels using a test that we adapted for phone delivery, and then target our instruction to the student's level.



Sample weekly SMS/text message

Hello, Mma.

My name is Resego from Youth Impact. I'm calling to make sure you received our SMS.

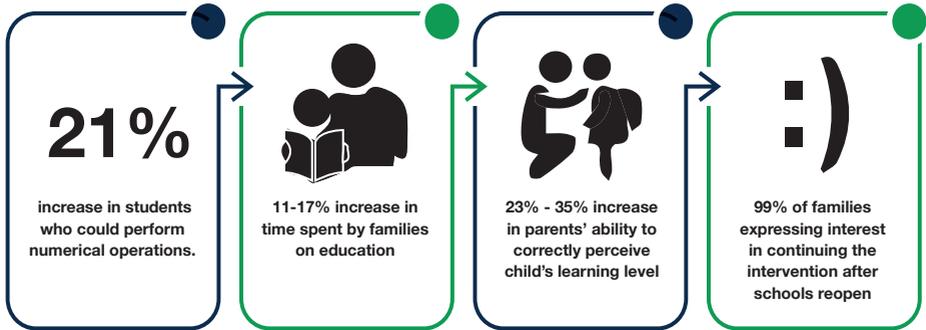
Has your child, Sunshine, attempted to solve any of the SMS problems? Please can we include your child in our call and put the phone on speaker so we can all hear the session. Sunshine, let's do a question together: I will share the number 284, how many hundreds, tens, and units?



Sample phone call introduction

Results

We published the results from our trial in two papers, providing some of **the world's first evidence of effective learning methods during the COVID-19 pandemic**. In 2022, our results will be published in *Nature Human Behaviour*, one of the world's leading peer-reviewed scientific journals.



A cost-effective solution

Our low-tech solution is cheap and feasible to deliver, relative to other popular education interventions. Our solution translates into up to 1.1 years of schooling in a high-quality education system per US\$100.



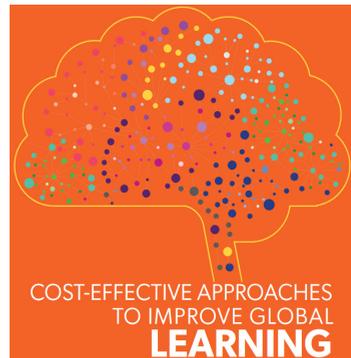
SMS Only
US\$2.13/child



SMS + Phone Call
US\$14/child

Policy influence

Our ground-breaking evidence led the Global Education Evidence Advisory Panel, co-convened by the World Bank, UK FCDO, and UNICEF, to declare our phone-based solution a **"Smart Buy"** for improving learning in low- and middle-income countries in its publication, *Cost-Effective Approaches to Improve Global Learning*.



Youth impact's program really helped us a lot. So much that my child now understands division and multiplication because of the homework sent. I hope that we can continue with this intervention. When you're a parent, there's only so much you can accomplish alone. But with joint efforts from teachers and Youth Impact, students will learn better. I am already seeing improvements in my child's comprehension. His understanding has vastly improved due to Youth Impact's programming.

—Cindy Makgoa, parent of a participant



CREATING PHONE-BASED SAFE SPACES AND RETURNING GIRLS TO SCHOOL



The COVID-19 lockdown created an urgent need to provide youth with information and resources to help maintain their physical and mental health at home. Indeed, the Government of Botswana reported a **rise in gender-based violence cases during the lockdown**. We quickly adapted our in-school sexual and reproductive health program, Zones, to phone-based delivery.

As with our phone-based numeracy solution, we conducted our intervention as a randomized controlled trial, with households sorted into a control group, a group receiving a weekly SMS, and a group receiving a weekly SMS + phone call.

Goals for our phone-based health program:



Impact 1: Empower girls to make informed choices about their sexual health.



Impact 2: Increase health-seeking behaviors such as disclosure and agency to seek health services



Impact 3: Encourage girls to go to school.

Once a week for four weeks, we sent a health-focused SMS message to participating households. Several days later, a Youth Impact facilitator called households in the SMS + phone call treatment group to discuss the SMS content and provide a “safe space” for the student to discuss other issues related to their well-being.



**Week 1:
Knowledge on HIV**



**Week 2:
Prevention Strategies**



**Week 3:
Links to Services**



**Week 4:
Words of Encouragement
and Students Make a Pledge**

Results

Our results, forthcoming in a paper, were some of the world’s first evidence on supporting adolescent girls to return to school after the COVID-19 lockdown.

84%

reduction in school dropout among the Treatment group.

2x

more likely to break the silence on issues such as pregnancy and gender-based violence.

91%

of girls in the Treatment group know that older partners are riskier.

I am grateful to have been receiving support from Youth Impact because this taught me a lot. I have since changed my lifestyle as I was not living how I wanted to before Youth Impact Phone-Based Health.

Program Participant



ACCELERATING TEACHING AT THE RIGHT LEVEL WITH GOVERNMENT



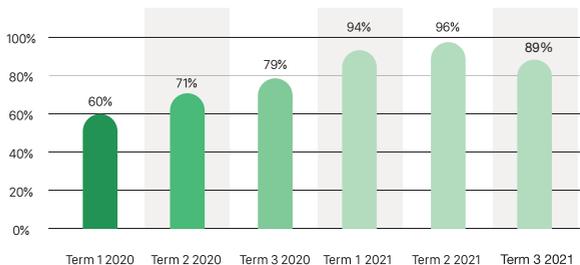
Building back better! Government produces unparalleled learning gains!

We began 2020 with a bang with **the opening of a new office** in Botswana’s second largest city, Francistown, to support expansion of TaRL to northern Botswana. In Term 1 2020, we began implementing TaRL in the North East region, the fourth of Botswana’s ten regions to take up the program.

When classes resumed after COVID-19 closures in August 2020, the North East region sprang into action. At every level of government, from the District Director to members of Botswana’s national youth service program who serve as facilitators, **the government embraced TaRL and ensured that delivery continued.**

Results from the North East were impressive, with a **nearly 50% increase in the number of students who could perform numerical operations** from the first term of 2020 to the final term of 2021. We are learning powerful lessons from government-led implementation in the North East that we are applying in the other three regions where TaRL is being implemented. In late 2021, we began expanding TaRL to a fifth region, North West, which puts TaRL into half of the regions of Botswana.

% Increase in Students Who Could Perform Numerical Operations, North East Region, Term 1 2020 – Term 3 2021

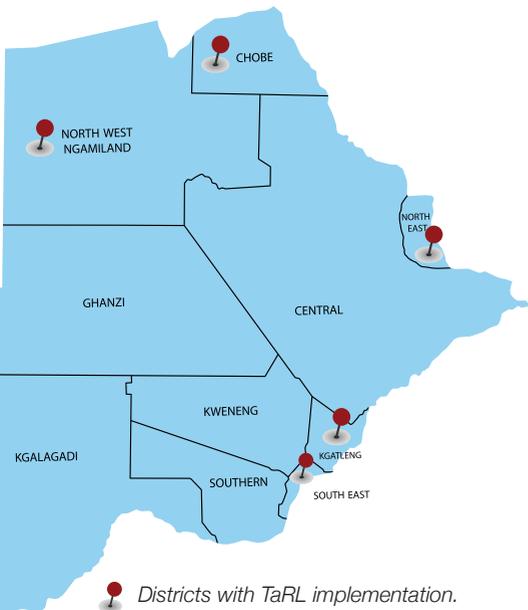




TaRL gets a literacy curriculum

Since 2018, we have delivered a TaRL numeracy curriculum in Botswana, reaching more than 13,000 students in 20 percent of Botswana primary schools. We began with numeracy, as our 2017 needs assessment showed that students in Botswana were further behind in mathematics than literacy.

After more than a year of development, **we launched pilots of our new literacy curriculum in March 2021** in two regions of Botswana. Every week, our team of facilitators, trainers, and curriculum designers meets to collect observations and ideas for improvement, which are incorporated into the next week's round of pilots. Our goal is to deliver targeted, remedial instruction to improve a foundational literacy skills set that enables students to "read for meaning." We will roll out the program to all schools beginning in 2022.



Ministry extends partnership to eight years!

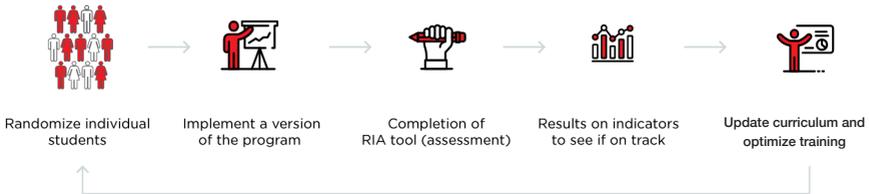
On 9 December 2021, Youth Impact signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Botswana's Department of Basic Education to collaborate on implementing Teaching at the Right Level in every primary school in Botswana by 2025. The Memorandum extends a partnership that began in 2018. Above are Youth Impact Co-Founder, Moitshhepi Matsheng and Mr. Ndondo Koolese, Director of Basic Education, Ministry of Basic Education at the signing.

USING BOTSWANA “LEARNING LABS” TO OPTIMIZE OUR INTERVENTIONS



Youth Impact is committed to optimizing our programs through a process we call “**Rapid Impact Assessments**” or RIAs. In each round of programming, we randomize and divide participants into groups and deliver different versions of the program to each group. We then analyze results to determine learning differences between each version. **Through our RIAs, we have learned that a small change can have a big impact on learning and cost-effectiveness.**

Iterative design process: Rapid Impact Assessments



Since 2018, **we have conducted more than 20 RIAs** to optimize our Zones and TaRL programming. In 2020, we extended our use of RIAs to tweak our “low-tech” programs. Alongside replication trials of our phone-based numeracy intervention in five countries, we delivered five additional rounds of programming in Botswana. In addition to keeping more than 4,000 students learning during and after COVID-19 closures, these rounds allowed us to quickly test different versions of the program for optimization.

For example, in RIAs for our phone-based numeracy program, we tested whether biweekly 40-minute follow up calls to households were as effective as weekly 20-minute calls. We found that they were! Given the amount of time that it takes a facilitator to reach a family by phone, biweekly calls will allow facilitators to reach 50 percent more households.

Youth Impact continues to serve as a Learning Lab for Teaching at the Right Level--through operating a “Real-Time Scaling Lab” in partnership with the Center for Universal Education at Brookings and as an “Innovation Hub” for TaRL Africa.



Republic of Botswana

Through our renewed Memorandum of Understanding with Botswana’s Ministry of Basic Education (see page 13), the **government has committed to “leading all aspects”** to “ensure implementation [of Teaching at the Right Level] in all primary schools in the country.”



In January 2021, we signed **our first-ever health-based Memorandum of Understanding** with Botswana’s National AIDS and Health Promotion Agency to serve as implementing partners of DREAMS, a PEPFAR program to reduce HIV rates among adolescent girls and young women. This is an important step in our scale strategy for Zones to strengthen bilateral partnerships.



Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal

We partnered with the World Bank and Nepal’s Ministry of Education, Science and Technology to conduct a replication trial of our phone-based numeracy solution. **We found that government teachers were a highly efficient and cost-effective implementation model.**



Republic of the Philippines

In another replication trial, we partnered with IPA and the Philippines Department of Education to design and deliver **one of the first randomized controlled trials for education in the country’s history.** The Department is highly invested, through direct involvement from the Undersecretary of Curriculum and Instruction and a dedicated coordinator from the Department.



GOING GLOBAL

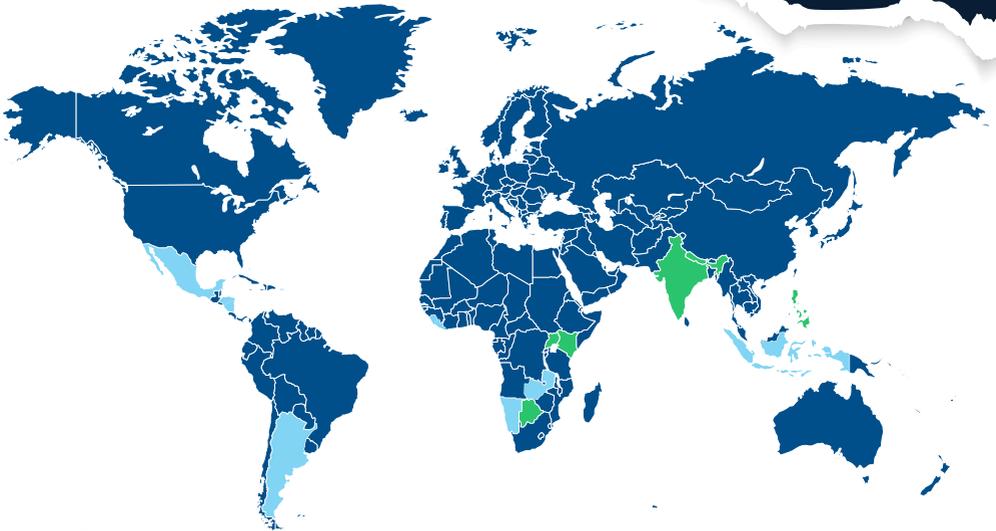
Six trials, six countries, 25,000 students, 18 months = some of the fastest, multi-country evidence ever generated in education

Results from our “low-tech” trial, some of the first education evidence produced during COVID-19, as well as publication of three research papers and presentations at numerous conferences has led to **global interest in our phone-based solution**. We implemented a “revealed action” process to identify potential partners, ultimately choosing five countries, Kenya, India, Nepal, Uganda, and the Philippines, in which to test our intervention across countries and contexts. We developed an Implementation Toolkit and are working with governments, bilateral organizations, and non-governmental organizations to implement the trials.



I was worried that it would be difficult to teach a girl over the phone who could not even recognize numbers, but I am now confident that she is learning. She attends the phone call every week when she takes the cattle to the farm for feeding.

Tulase Kafle, community school teacher, Nepal



Early results from Nepal, published in a World Bank brief in July 2021, showed a 30% increase in foundational numeracy among students receiving calls and SMS messages. Government teachers were highly effective.

- Completed Trials
- Trials in Progress
- Information Sharing

Bringing safe relationship information to the youth of eSwatini



Following a thorough review of potential partners, we selected Super Buddies Club (SBC) in eSwatini as the first with whom we are working to **roll out our sexual and reproductive health program in a new country**. Travel restrictions and lock-downs from COVID-19 have forced nearly all of Young 1ove's training online, including our first training in May 2021 with SBC to train them in implementing the Zones curriculum, which they piloted in June 2021 with students in three eSwatini schools. In October, we worked with SBC to conduct its first RIA to test program delivery.

Planting TaRL throughout Africa

We are proud to be part of TaRL Africa, a joint venture by Pratham and J-PAL that supports partners addressing the learning crisis in Africa's primary schools. Within the TaRL Africa community, Youth Impact is the Innovation Hub, providing a demonstration site for interested governments and organizations, and collaborating with a broader TaRL community to host workshops on the TaRL approach.

We co-organized and co-led a virtual ten day workshop in April 2021 for more than 20 nongovernmental organizations. Sessions covered the basics of TaRL, with a focus on TaRL classroom methodology. Roughly one-third of participants were already implementing TaRL but the remainder were new to the program.

Through an innovative partnership, we are expanding TaRL and our phone-based numeracy program to Namibia. The Namibia team has already piloted TaRL with more than 600 learners across four regions, resulting in 80 percent of learners improving numeracy by one level or more. The Republic of Namibia has signed a letter of support for TaRL to improve literacy and numeracy in primary schools.



SPREADING THE WORD

We are committed to sharing our work with the widest possible audience to produce a long-term public good in the form of knowledge on effective learning approaches, and galvanize global action in support of inclusive and equitable quality education. We appreciate the organizations listed here that have provided us platforms to do this.



We shared our phone-based numeracy solution and results from our Nepal replication trial at a July 2020 symposium organized by the World Bank as part of the Global Education Summit.



THE WORLD BANK

In July 2020, we participated in a webinar titled, “Innovations in phone-based assessments to support learning,” organized by the World Bank and Center for Global Development.



The Center for Universal Education at Brookings featured Co-Founder Moitshepi Matsheng in an August 2020 podcast discussion on how Real-time Scaling Labs inform efforts to bring impact in education to children around the world.

School's Out: Experimental Evidence on Limiting Learning Loss Using “Low-Tech” in a Pandemic

—
Noam Angrist, Peter Bergman & Moitshepi Matsheng

In August 2020, we collaborated with Columbia University, the University of Oxford, and J-PAL to publish some of the first evidence on minimizing the pandemic’s fallout through the Centre for the Study of African Economies.



Only together can evidence-informed decision-making become reality.

We presented on our use of rapid impact assessments to improve delivery of HIV prevention messages to youth at an August 2020 webinar hosted by the Africa Evidence Network.

A historic shock to parental engagement in education

Parent perspectives in Botswana during COVID-19

With the Center for Universal Education at Brookings, we undertook a study that presents one of, if not the only survey of parent perspectives about children’s education during the COVID-19 pandemic. The results appeared in a policy brief in October 2020.

The New York Times

Pulitzer Prize-winning columnist and founder of the Solutions Journalism Network Tina Rosenberg featured our low-tech intervention in her 6 October 2020 New York Times "Fixes" column, For Kids at Home, 'a Small Intervention Makes a Big Difference'.



In November 2020, Young 1ove's implementation of Teaching at the Right Level in Botswana was chosen by HunderED, a nonprofit that seeks and shares inspiring innovations in K-12 education, as one of the "100 inspiring innovations that are changing the face of education." More than 5,000 innovations were reviewed by the selection committee. In November 2021, our TaRL implementation in Botswana was relisted to the HunderED Global Collection 2022.



In January 2021, Observer Research Foundation, India's largest think tank, published an article by Young 1ove's Co-Founders on the use of TaRL to address Botswana's learning crisis.



In February 2021, Young 1ove was one of two organizations to receive the COVID-19 Relief Grant Prize from the UBS Optimus Foundation. Young 1ove shared the \$1.5 million prize with Healthy Learners, a non-governmental organization focused on school-based community health in Zambia. Young 1ove's grant prize is supporting replication trials of our Botswana low-tech phone-based intervention in up to five developing countries and will help leverage the research's results to influence global education policy and build a path to scale for low-tech interventions



Middle East & Africa | April 10th 2021

One step backwards, two forwards | Covid-19 creates a window for school reform in Africa

Many pupils already needed catch-up classes. The pandemic may jolt countries into providing them

The Economist featured our TaRL work in Botswana in an April 2021 article.



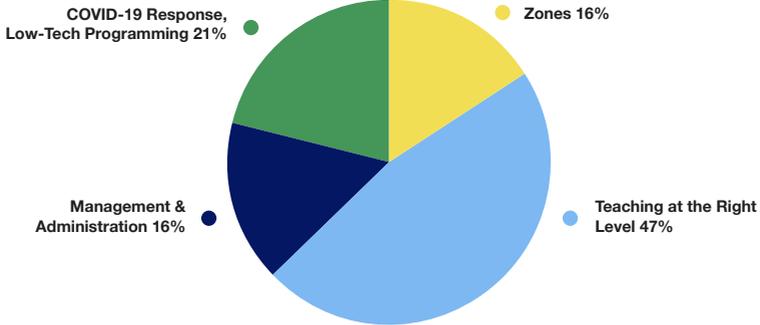
In October 2021, we led a panel at the What Works Global Summit on Learning from COVID-19: Innovations, impact, and opportunities for remote educational approaches. The panel featured three of the partners who are replicating our phone-based numeracy intervention: World Bank (Nepal), Alokkit (India), and IPA Philippines.

FINANCIALS

1 April 2019 – 31 March 2021
 Figures are in US dollars

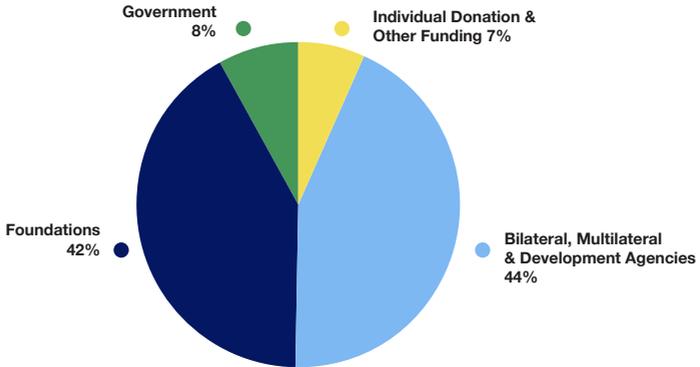
Expenses

Average, 2019-2021



Income

Average, 2019-2021



Budget Comparison

% increase from previous year

Period	Total Budget (US Dollars)	% Increase from Previous Year
1 April 2019 - 31 March 2020	1,063,258.00	25%
1 April 2020 - 31 March 2021	1,076,273.67	1%
1 April 2021 - 31 March 2022	1,642,987.00	53%

OUR GOVERNANCE AND ADVISORS

Youth Impact is guided by leaders worldwide who generously donate their time and talents to provide support and strategic direction.

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Director
Douglas B. Marshall, Jr. Family
Foundation

Kirk Friedrich
Board Member

Director of Strategy
No Means No Worldwide
Co-Founder
Grassroot Soccer

Ndondo Koolese
Advisory Forum Member

Director of Basic Education
Ministry of Basic Education

Moitshepi Matsheng
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Co-Founder, Youth Impact
Chair, Botswana National Youth
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Nkobi Pansiri
Advisory Forum Member

Professor
University of Botswana

Gabatshwane Tsayang
Advisory Forum Member

Head of Primary Education
University of Botswana

PARTNERS

GOVERNMENT PARTNERS

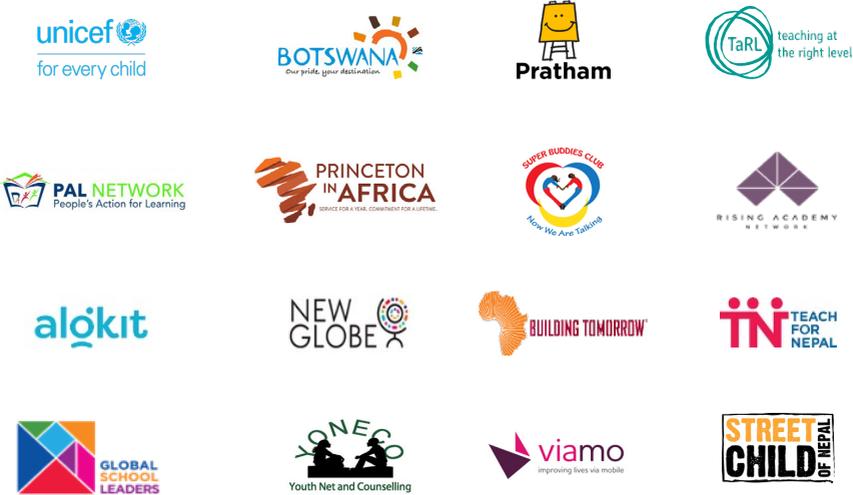


FUNDING PARTNERS



Our impact is only as great as our partnerships. We are very grateful for the following government ministries, nongovernmental organizations, agencies, and foundations for supporting our work in 2020-2021. We also extend thanks to our individual supporters.

IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS



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Continuing to connect youth to proven life-changing information.