

so they can

Annual Report 2024

Australian Aid

Australian Council For International Development

What's inside...

Table of contents

4	Letter from our CEO and Co-Founder
5-6	Impact Story - Sustainable Development
7	Letter from our Chair
8	Board of Directors
9-10	Impact Story - Improving School Infrastructure
12	2024 Impact in Numbers
13-14	Impact Story - Community Health
15-17	2024 Project Highlights
18-19	Impact Story - Climate-Smart School Farms
21-22	Our Community Spotlights
23	Impact Story - Empowering Role Models
24	Our Approach to Education
26	Financial Information
27	Partners & Supporters
28	Our Future



With focused sustainability planning, strategic partnership, and steadfast commitment, So They Can is on track to leave an indelible and catalytic legacy. As a vanguard of the global movement for inclusive education, So They Can has both the opportunity and obligation to continually push the boundaries of what is possible when communities are empowered as agents of their own change.

— Quote from Independent Evaluator,
Tanzania Program Evaluation (2019-2024)

Cassandra Treadwell

A message **from our CEO**

This year brought home to me the loyalty and generosity of our partners. We raised over AUD $4.5 million which I believe is a direct result of the impact of our programs in East Africa. It was fantastic when the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade recognised this by awarding us full accreditation in 2023, and the ripple effect of that recognition is now being understood by individuals, foundations and companies who are joining our So They Can global family.

Not only have we supported the education and livelihoods of 49,500 children and their communities in Kenya and Tanzania, but we are investing donor funds effectively to ensure school enrolment, attendance and retention is achieved as a result of the work we do outside and inside the classroom. Our work building schools' infrastructure, establishing safe and reliable water sources and school farms, improving the quality of the education delivered by teachers, training the schools' management committees and community leadership, all ensure the sustainability of our partner schools, and accordingly our donor partners' investments, when we exit and start our 8-year development cycle again in a more needy area.

So They Can is in great hands now that we have six entities: Australia, Kenya, Tanzania, New Zealand, America and the United Kingdom. I am extremely proud of, and grateful for, our international team across these locations. They give me great confidence. I sleep soundly now, knowing that we are well past the founder syndrome risk stage. Rather, So They Can is a leading international development organisation with an extremely strong and deep leadership team, ensuring that So They Can is around centuries after we are.

There are always so many stories that challenge and inspire me each year, but Edwin's, being our first tertiary graduate in Kenya, is the one that made me smile the most this year. Seeing him in his graduation cap as a qualified artist, makes me extremely happy. I love that Edwin's goal now is to create an art workshop where he can inspire children to follow their dreams, and generate income for himself and his family.

In Edwin, I see all that we strive and work for, breaking the poverty cycle for those with an unjust lottery of life, being born into extreme poverty.

While Edwin will always be that gorgeous little boy at Miti Mingi Village that used to start my car for me, he also carries the torch that shows the impact of what we are doing together.



Top: Cass planting a tree in Tanzania, 2024. Bottom: Edwin (right) graduating alongside his brother and mother.

Thank you for being such a fundamental part of our So They Can family.

Cassandra Treadwell
CEO/Founder
So They Can



A Story of Impact: Our Sustainable Development Model

How So They Can's Model Generates Economic, Social & Environmental Capital for Long Term Sustainability

So They Can's unique partnership-led model, embedded in local structures, not only improves education outcomes, it builds the local capital for those outcomes to be sustained for the long term. Here's how we do it, across the 3 key pillars (economic, social and environmental) of sustainability:

Economic Capital

In both Tanzania and Kenya, rural school campuses include vast areas of agricultural land to generate income. Our partner schools in Tanzania have an average of 10-acres - but what they don't have is the capital, water, resources, or knowledge, to establish farms that are climate-smart, at a scale to generate a reliable income stream required for the true sustainable development of these schools.

Through So They Can's Shamba Letu (Our Farm) project, we have established school farms that first and foremost provide food security, by supplementing school feeding programs. At scale they generate income that is significantly higher than schools' annual Government funding.

In Kenya, Perkerra Primary School's government funding was $4,080 in 2024. In the same year, So They Can supported a 9-tonne harvest of maize from their 6-acre plot, that profited $10,000.

In Tanzania, we introduced drip-irrigation on 1-acre plots in 2023, and the best performing school generated 3 times more than their annual government funding - AUD $5,200 from 8 tonnes of onions and tomatoes. For the first time, schools have a reliable source of income for operations, one that has potential for further growth and profit.

We have also seen economic sustainability through increased Government budgets for schools' infrastructure, as a result of our advocacy work with national governments and their realising the efficient impact of our public private partnership.

In 2023/2024 the Tanzanian government allocated AUD $352,000 to our partner schools. In 2024, the Kenyan government constructed 18 classrooms (to accommodate Junior Secondary School being domiciled at primary schools) — both as a result of our work with the government.

Following So They Can's phased hand-over of infrastructure and capacity building throughout our 10-year partnership (2014-2023), the MTC reached sustainability in 2023. Through the partnership the Government invested AUD $700,000 in infrastructure, 3 times our investment, and today continues to operate the College with 230 graduates annually (60% female), with no funding from So They Can.

Social Capital

Through our partnership-led model, and focus on building the capacity of stakeholders, we have seen a significant shift in attitudes and behaviour towards education.

41% of children in our Baringo primary schools in Kenya don't have a birth certificate. Thanks to So They Can's Government partnership, and our Kenyan teams' advocacy, Tiaty's first ever Civil Registration Services office opened this year at Chemolingot shopping centre. It's a significant milestone. Children need a birth certificate to continue their education, get a job, vote, and become active citizens in their communities.

A Story of Impact: Our Sustainable Development Model

For the 3,500 children from our 8 partner primary schools in the area, this new facility means that they can now obtain a birth certificate, and so can children for generations to come.

Through So They Can's School Management Committee training, our partner School Boards now function effectively. In Tanzania, So They Can's encouraged school-based Self Reliance Committees, made up of parents, teachers and students, are operational, with transparency and accountability to manage the schools' farming income.

An essential component of our model's success is our active network of 172 volunteer Champion Mothers and Fathers, who are embedded in communities and are the cornerstone of community outreach. They act as active duty bearers in their villages, and work directly with families, schools and communities to protect every child's right to education and wellbeing, especially for girls at risk of child marriage.

Tanzanian parents' co-contribution for school infrastructure has quadrupled since we began working in Tanzania in 2015. In 2024, a minimum of 15% of the total project costs (42 classrooms) were contributed by parents in local materials and volunteer labor.

'When So They Can first started mobilising us to support the school, many parents resisted. They saw education as a waste of time that took children away from livestock herding and household chores. But the staff were so persistent and respectful in explaining the benefits. They made us reflect deeply on what kind of future we want for our children. Slowly we came to understand that the way to break the cycle of poverty is to invest in their schooling. Now education is the number one priority in our village.'

– Village Leader, Partner Primary School in Tanzania and Program Evaluation (2019-2024) Respondent.

Environmental Capital

With the brunt of the climate crisis being felt by marginalised communities, our transformation of schools preserves and protects communities' natural environments. We provide the capital for: reliable, cost-effective clean water security (19 water boreholes; 7 rainwater harvesting systems; 59 water storage tanks); solar systems for electrification and water pumping (20); climate-smart schools farms (25); energy efficient cooking stoves for school kitchens (12) and tree planting (2,800). All solutions utilise natural resources effectively, with low-cost maintenance that school farm income covers. For girls we supply reusable sanitary pads (59,545) which are produced by local mothers trained in production.

In 2024 alone, 25 partner schools collectively farmed 262 acres, and harvested 72 tonnes of produce. Numerous climate-smart methods are employed: drip irrigation for water conservation; intercropping to maximise land and resource use; agroforestry for biodiversity; and mulching to reduce water evaporation, and improve soil quality. Once trained, farm management is student-led with hands-on education, for life skills development.

'Our school used to have just a small, erratic maize garden that fed students maybe once a week. But with So They Can's improved seeds, fertilizers, irrigation equipment and agronomist training, we now have a thriving 3-acre plot bursting with vegetables! The harvests cover lunch every day, with surplus to sell for income. Best of all, the mothers have gained valuable skills they're applying on their own farms. It's a double impact - nourishing minds and livelihoods.'

– Head Teacher, Partner Primary School in Tanzania and Program Evaluation (2019-2024) Respondent.





Munzurul Khan

A message **from our Chair**

In a year that was shaped by ongoing global challenges, from war to climate change, So They Can has remained steadfast in its commitment to delivering transformative educational opportunities for the most marginalised, at risk of being left behind. Thanks to the unwavering dedication of our staff, local partners, donors, and supporters like you, we have made significant strides in advancing our vision of an Africa where every child has access to education, health and wellbeing, to thrive.

In 2024, the Australian Government published the report Future Foundations for Giving, concluding their public inquiry into the state of philanthropy in Australia. The national agenda to double philanthropic giving by 2030, is welcomed by So They Can, and all Australian charities. Everyone benefits when giving is encouraged across all levels of our society. The report's recommendations for revised regulatory mechanisms to enable increased giving is positive, and we hope it encourages Australians to further their support in Africa.

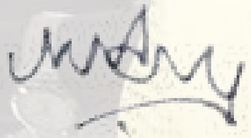
Whilst strengthening our supporter base in Australia, we also look beyond to expanding our global presence. This year we established a dedicated board in the United Kingdom, who are actively establishing new and exciting partnerships that expand our work.

Partners around the world can be assured of So They Can's effectiveness. A highlight in 2024 was the results of our independent Program Evaluations in both Kenya and Tanzania. Our impact, through a community-driven approach, was evidenced and is featured in this report.

Coupled with the Australian Government's Full Accreditation of So They Can, which entails rigorous annual monitoring and evaluation, existing and prospective partners can be confident in their investment with So They Can.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to everyone involved in our mission. Together, we are creating a brighter future for tens of thousands of children in East Africa.

As we look to the year ahead, we invite you to continue standing with us. Your support, whether through donations, partnerships, or advocacy, is more crucial than ever in driving the change we seek. We are excited for what we can achieve together in 2025 and beyond.



Munzurul Khan
Chair of the Board
So They Can

Board of Directors

Munzurul Khan
Chair, So They Can Board

Cassandra Treadwell
Chief Executive Officer, Director and Founder

Keri Chittenden
Director and Founder

David Southon
Director

Poppy Rouse
Director

Get to know our Global **Boards of Directors...**



Governance Bodies: So They Can Global Alliance...

So They Can: New Zealand

Ellen Cheyne
Diana Crossan
Samantha Hayes
Michelle Luping
Cassandra Treadwell
Hayley Whatarau
Margie Chambers
Linzi Ebbage-Thomas
(Resigned Dec 2024)

So They Can: Kenya

Roselyne Mariki
Boniface Mouti
Sean Mura

So They Can: USA

Valerie Danielewicz
Christie Esch
Harry Margolis
Cassandra Treadwell
Tom Benner
Wayne Hendricks

So They Can: Tanzania

Jesco Moiro
Boniface Mouti
Sean Mura

*So They Can was a co-contributing partner.

A year of impact



52
Schools partnered with to deliver projects



30,781
Students reached through our education projects



42
Classrooms constructed or renovated



388
Teachers participated in workshops and/or professional development



748
Student and teacher desks donated



125
Toilets constructed and/or renovated
**20 in partnership*



273
Students trained in climate smart agriculture



40
Families empowered through Family Strengthening initiatives



13,642
People medically assessed and treated at partner clinics and/or at medical camps



212
Student scholarships provided



10
Water tanks donated — creating access to 208,000L of clean water



5
Water boreholes/ rain water harvesting systems operationalised*



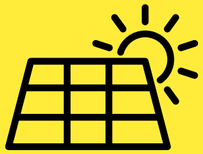
14,315
Washable sanitary pads and/or sanitary solutions distributed



16,031
Adolescents trained on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights



5,002,808
Daily school meals served



12
Solar systems operationalised
*2 in partnership



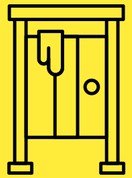
172
Community Champions advocating and protecting children's rights



3,489
ECD students reached through reading, writing and numeracy



203
Community farmers supported with farming inputs and training



11
Girls' changing rooms constructed



37
Mamire Teachers' College Graduates participated in 2-year Internship Program

Our Impact To Date

Since the beginning

49,500
Students reached through our education projects

72
Families empowered through our Family Strengthening initiatives

929
New teachers graduated to address Africa's concerning teacher:student ratio

23,800
Community members supported through our Community Development initiatives

1,595
Women empowered through our Women's Empowerment initiatives



Learn about the impact of **our work. Watch this video...**





A Story of Impact: Improving school infrastructure in East Africa

Transformed school environments, transformed education outcomes

In a typical rural school, children learn outside under trees, there is no clean water and toilets are unsanitary. If there are any facilities, they are generally in disrepair. Conditions are unsafe and not conducive to learning and teaching.

Our school improvement project directly addresses this. The visible impact of our holistic Education Program, is transformed school environments. We continue to close the gap on critical infrastructure needs - with Government and community co-contributions.

2024 Impact

- 42 classrooms constructed/renovated
- 5 water boreholes drilled
- 2 rain water harvesting systems installed
- 10 water tanks installed, providing 208,000L of clean water storage
- 114 toilets constructed/renovated
- 11 girls changing rooms constructed
- 3 dormitories (for 80-100 beds) constructed/renovated
- 720 student desks and 28 teacher desks provided

Government Support Mobilised

Through our direct partnerships with the Government of Kenya and Tanzania, we effectively lobbied for an increased allocation of Government funds for infrastructure in our partner schools. This year:

- $102,511 allocated by the Government of Tanzania as a co-contribution for classrooms
- 18 classrooms constructed, by the Government of Kenya, in our partner schools to accommodate Junior Secondary School being domiciled at primary schools

Parents' Contributions Increased in Tanzania

Parents' contributions have quadrupled since 2015 in Tanzania (EPE 2024). It is a reflection of the significant attitudinal and behavioural changes in our school communities, where now education is valued and prioritised.

Parents co-contributed a minimum 15% of the total project cost, for all school facilities constructed and/or renovated in 2024.

A Story of Impact: Improving school infrastructure in East Africa

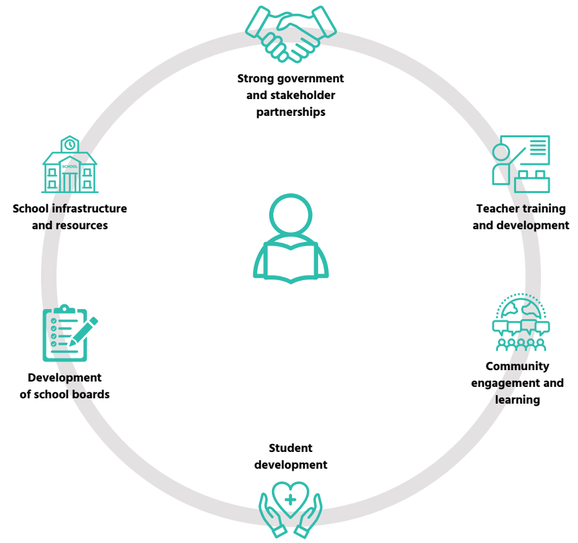
'Our parents have gone from reluctant observers to active partners in their children's learning. Every week they come to ask how their child is progressing and what more they can do to support them. They lobby local leaders to increase school budgets and volunteer for school improvement projects. This engagement has been a real game-changer in enhancing the learning environment.'

- Head Teacher, Partner Primary School in Tanzania and Program Evaluation (2019-2024) Respondent.

Birth Certificates for Children in Kenya

Every child needs formal identification to protect their rights. Another critical reason is that a birth certificate is needed for a child to be formally enrolled in the Government's system for education, which is used to calculate and disburse annual funding for schools.

780 Kenyan children accessed their formal birth certificate in 2024.



For every additional child with a birth certificate, the school receives equivalent to $17 per primary-age child, and $239 per junior secondary-age child for operations and infrastructure. Read more here.

We still have work to do, but we are making real progress. Today, 48% in Tanzania and 36% of schools in Kenya, have less than 60 children per classroom, as per our standard sustainable school definition.

75% and 72% of schools, in Tanzania and Kenya respectively, now meet the recommended 1:3 desk-to-student ratio.







So They Can’s work for girls' education has been simply revolutionary. Just a few years ago, most girls were condemned to an early marriage, early motherhood, lifetime of servitude. Now they are defying all odds and daring to dream big. We see girls topping exams, captaining debates, even winning science fairs! It's no longer a question of if they will complete school, but how far they will go. So They Can has helped shatter the glass ceiling and there's no going back.

— Gender Desk
Quote from Tanzania Program Evaluation (2019-2024)





A Story of Impact: Community Health Project

Healthier Students, Brighter Futures: Advancing Healthcare for Educational Success in Baringo

67% of families in Tiaty East, Baringo, live in absolute poverty. In the remote area, 1,250 children attend our 3 partner primary schools - Chesirimion, Lemuyek, and Nakoko. We also partner with two of the Government Health Facilities in Tiaty East - Chesirimion and Nakoko Health Clinics - responsible for the primary healthcare of 9,000 residents from the surrounding pastoralist communities. Better healthcare leads to better school attendance, improved concentration, and overall academic performance.

Impact of our Partnership

- Today 97% of community members have access to diagnostic and treatment services, compared to only 54% in 2018. The significant increase can be attributed to strengthened awareness, and outreach and services through our partnership;
- 20% increase in new patients accessing healthcare;
- 180% increase in pregnant women seeking care;
- 224% increase in women delivering at our Health Facility. Also an increase in women delivering at home (219%), with visits to newborns at home within the first 48 hours increasing (206%);
- 1,141% increase in women accessing Family Planning services.

An exciting development this year was the major infrastructure work we completed at Chesirimion Health Clinic. We improved access to maternal and child health care, so that young learners grow up healthy, well-nourished, and ready to thrive in the classroom.

Chesirimion Clinic Transformed

- 10-bed maternity unit, with an examination room, delivery room, nurses' station, laundry, kitchen and bathrooms and toilets was constructed;
- Outpatient toilet block with a septic tank and soak pit was constructed;
- Water borehole with solar-powered pump was drilled and operationalised;
- Water drinking points for the surrounding community were installed;
- Solar power system was installed;
- Perimeter security fence was erected.

In addition to the new infrastructure, medical equipment, medicines and consumables have been procured, and medical (6) and support staff (5) have been recruited for operations.

A Story of Impact: Community Health Project

Baby Boni arrived safely in June, as the first baby to be born at the new maternity unit. Boni's mother, 21 year-old Cheptoo, was relieved to have access to the new facility. When she gave birth to her first child in 2022, she had to walk all the way to Chemolingot Hospital, covering a distance of almost 30 km.

Advocating Access to Healthcare

In remote communities, Community Health Promoters (CHPs) are critical for community surveillance - finding, tracing and referring cases. CHPs work directly with families and community leaders through community dialogues, counselling services, advocacy and social mobilisation.

71% of CHPs have demonstrated improved knowledge and competency in health promotion, disease prevention, and patient care. In 2024, we conducted a 3-day training for 21 CHPs that support our Health Clinics in Baringo.

'The best part of my work has been seeing newborn mortality rates reduce significantly. I decided to become a Community Health Promoter (CHP) after seeing the need in our community. I wanted to spread the message about the importance of mothers giving birth in hospitals.'

— Newton, CHP in Chesirimion since 2010

Remote Outreach via Medical Camps

For many families, there are multiple barriers to accessing healthcare. Distance; inaccessibility due to the cost of transport and poor road infrastructure, especially during the rainy season; a lack of awareness on the importance of medical care; and a fear of treatment, are the most common reasons that prevent parents, and their children, from seeking healthcare.

So They Can's 1-day Medical Camps close the gap, reaching marginalised community members with basic health services, and referrals when necessary. 1,748 children and adults, and 268 infants/children under 5 were treated at a So They Can Medical Camp in 2024. We conducted 3 in Baringo, and 2 in Nakuru.

'The importance of So They Can's medical camps cannot be underestimated. During today's camp, we have seen a high number of undiagnosed health conditions – which if left untreated can be life threatening. Cases of community members who have severe hypertension and diabetes, but who are not receiving any treatment, were concerning.'

– Pauline, Public Health Nurse In-Charge







Highlights from our projects



Strengthening vulnerable families

41 families were supported through our Family Strengthening Project (FSP) - keeping 200 vulnerable children in school. Through FSP's direct family support over 3 years, children stay in school, and parents are equipped to improve their household income. 11 new families were trained in business skills, and were provided with business capital. 20 families exited the program, completing 3 years, with families having tripled the size of their goat herds.



Ending child marriage

In November, So They Can Kenya brought together Baringo stakeholders to facilitate Alternative Rite of Passage (ARP) activities over 3 days. A total of 64 students aged 10-16 years old from across our 10 partner primary schools (living in villages where female genital cutting still takes place illegally), participated. ARP is widely recognised in Kenya as a substitute ceremony in traditional communities, which as opposed to female genital mutilation, acknowledges when a girl enters womanhood, while upholding her rights, and protecting her health and wellbeing.



Empowering Kenyan female entrepreneurs

We supported 12 women's groups this year - 173 female small business owners were trained, and 58 women accessed capital loans totalling AUD $20,805 (94% already repaid). By supporting mums economically, we ensure that 500+ children go to school. One of our women's groups graduated this year. Over 3 years as part of So They Can's Wezesha Business Skills Project, they gained access to additional capital, and business skills training. The group graduated from our program, stronger and more determined, with AUD $1,610 in capital.



CEO Highlights

In March, our much loved ambassador Neil Finn and Cass came together for an engaging conversation at #GlobalCitizenNOW Melbourne. Neil's song for So They Can, 'Oh Hi', was officially released as part of Crowded House's latest album, and performed on their Gravity Stairs World Tour.
In July, Cass returned to Africa, to reconnect with our teams and communities.
In November, on special invitation from the King & Queen of Bhutan, Cass travelled to Thimphu to share our model of Humanity Centred Development.

Highlights from our projects



Our Global Community

AUD $586,000 was raised through community fundraising in 2024! In March, our 1HumanRace included 147 senior students from 10 schools in NZ and AU. Board Director, Dave Southon led sponsorship efforts through Chain Reaction. In May, our Sydney Dinner brought together over 220 supporters for a memorable night. In August, our Big Charity Auction was a global success and in November, our Ambassador, Conrad Smith, and CBRE heroes, Phil, Jimi, Jack and Elliot, completed the Lake Taupo Cycle Challenge.



Mamire Teachers' College (MTC)

In 2024, 193 Certificates in Primary Education and 37 Diplomas in Secondary Education were awarded to newly qualified teachers from MTC. In 2023, the College transitioned to become one of our sustained projects. Now, our partnership continues through our 2-year internship program. 37 MTC interns (46% female) supported teaching and learning in 27 primary and 4 secondary schools, benefitting over 19,000 students. Recognising the value of interns, schools are now directly supporting 61 interns too.



Teacher Training in Tanzania

This year the new Primary Education Curriculum, was central to our in-service professional development offerings in training, peer-to-peer network support, and mentoring. 172 teachers (45% female) participated directly in our Teacher Development Project activities.

World Teachers' Day was an opportunity to celebrate all of our dedicated teachers.



Youth Savings and Loans Associations (YSLA)

To start financial literacy early we initiated savings groups for children this year. YSLAs provide an alternative for youth with no access to formal banking institutions, providing a safe place for members to save their money and access group loans. In July, 30 participants (teachers, parents, and local Champions) from 6 of our partner primary schools participated in a Train-the-Trainer session over 5 days. Following training they set up 17 YSLAs, with over 350 members, in their schools.

Highlights from our projects



Medical Camp in Schools

For a second year, our Tanzania team facilitated a 5-day medical camp for all schools. The camp was delivered in partnership with the Babati District Medical Office, and specialised healthcare providers. 482 children and 977 adults accessed primary healthcare screening, identification, treatment and referral services. A key camp outcome was the referral of children with disabilities, including 30 children for corrective surgery at Kafika House and 15 children for assistive devices from Kyaro Assistive Tech.



Bike2School Partnership

Long walking distances to school is a leading cause for high dropout rates in our partner secondary schools. In an exciting new partnership with ABC Impact we provided 150 secondary school students with bicycles. Rahma, a 16 year-old who walked a 14-km round trip daily to get to her school, is one of the proud owners of her own bike. 'Thank you so much for supporting me with this bike. I will use it properly to attend school every day and I am now sure that my dreams will come true. I want to become a medical doctor.'



Champions protecting girls' rights

Child rights training and community sensitisation is embedded in everything we do. In Tanzania 114 Champion Mothers and Fathers led our efforts in school communities. 334 children were trained directly, 8,062 parents were sensitised and 4,118 children were members of school-based My Voice Clubs. We saw the direct impact of increased awareness, in cases like 14-year old Mercy. When her Dad accepted a dowry for her marriage, she knew that the Champion Mother in her school could help her. Read more here.



Child & Youth Development

The educational journey of reintegrated students, who lived at Miti Mingi Village, continues. 111 families received direct support, to ensure that 146 reintegrated children have access to education. Our holistic support means that an additional 500 siblings and other family members also benefited. 107 caregivers participated in business skills training. During a recent home visit, following business training, a mother shared, 'I am able to provide for my family now and even buy nice clothes for myself and the children'.





Scaling up climate-smart school farms - a cornerstone of our sustainability strategy

Our Shamba Letu (Our Farm) project first started in 2015 - 5 primary schools in Tanzania collectively farmed 25 acres. Since then we have significantly expanded our school farm initiative, and 2024 marked our biggest year yet.

25 schools collectively farmed 262.25 acres, and harvested 71,809kg of produce.

In all schools, farm food is used to supplement schools' feeding programs, so that every child gets at least one nutritious meal a day at school. Any excess produce is sold, to generate much-needed school income. 277 children were trained to manage their school's farm.

'In our village, most families live hand to mouth. Even buying a pencil can mean going hungry that day. Before So They Can, many parents kept kids at home to help with farming, herding, or hawking instead of sending them to school. But now, with porridge every morning and sponsors covering books and uniforms, even the poorest of the poor are enrolling. The lunch alone keeps attendance high since for some, it's their only meal.'

- Head Teacher, Partner Primary School in Tanzania and Program Evaluation (2019-2024) Respondent.

Shamba Letu has multiple benefits:

- Food security and nutrition, which improves attendance and academic performance.
- Hands on education and skills development through training and student-led farm management.
- Climate change adaptation and environmental protection with modern farming techniques taught and applied.
- Water and resource efficiency through the introduction of drip irrigation systems and climate-smart agricultural practices.
- Economic development and sustainability with a source for school income that can sustain quality education, when Government funding is inadequate.

2024 Project Highlights

For the first time Shamba Letu was implemented in all 3 of our project areas, including Baringo, Kenya.

- During 2024, we innovated in the semi-arid region with large-scale farms at 3 primary schools. As anticipated, mitigating water security issues was the biggest challenge.

A Story of Impact: Sustainable School Farms at Scale

- One school's implementation was delayed due to the inoperation of their borehole (drilled by another organisation) and another school's farm remained inaccessible for most of the year due to heavy rains and flooding (the school is located next to a lake).

Our most successful pilot school - Perkerra Primary School - harvested 9,109kgs of maize, and generated AUD $10,000 profit. In comparison, the school receives AUD $3,094 a year for its operations from the Government.

- In Babati, Tanzania, 3 primary schools piloted 1-acre drip irrigation systems (DIS) on their crop farms. 981 children (46% girls) were trained on the use of DIS for farm management. Read more here.

Increased productivity resulted in AUD $12,207 income for the 3 pilot schools, which is more than double their collective Government funding of AUD $5,829 in a year. 8,500kg of onions and tomatoes from 2 harvests were produced, with effective water-use.

- Nakuru, Kenya, following project inception in 2023, the 4 schools' farms expanded, and so did their yields. 2,017kg of produce - beans, potatoes, maize, and kale - were cultivated and harvested over 2.2 acres of school farmland.

156 children (47% girls) were trained to lead their schools' Shamba Letu Clubs.

'I love farming. I enjoy the process of watching what I sow, grow. I am really pleased that I learnt how to make a proper seedbed, and about the different types of fertiliser to boost yields.

We don't have land at our home, so I got an idea to use buckets and sacks instead. I have planted kale and spinach, which my family eat, especially when there's no money to buy food from the market. The neighbours saw what I did, and now they are doing the same.'

Peter, is a Grade 7 student who participated in the Nakuru training. He lives with his family in an impoverished, over-crowded area of Nakuru, with no land at home to grow vegetables. For Peter, his school's Shamba Letu club lets him pursue his passion for farming. With what he's learnt, he's also come up with an innovative way to grow food for his family. Read more here.







Before My Voice, I was terrified to speak up, even if a teacher or boy harassed me. I thought it was my fault and didn't want to bring shame. But the club taught me about my rights and helped me find my voice. Now I know I deserve to be respected and to get an education. When my parents tried to marry me off last year, I refused and got the whole club to support me. The head teacher and So They Can staff came to my house and convinced my parents to let me stay in school. Now I am the top student in my class.

— Standard 7 Student
Quote from Tanzania Program Evaluation (2019-2024)

Stakeholder spotlights



Anna Mbogo

Babati District Executive Director — Babati, Tanzania

'I am so grateful for So They Can's ongoing support of infrastructure improvement in our primary schools in the Gallapo zone. You have made a significant contribution to the enhancement of pupils' academic performance. The distribution of sanitary towels and the stand against child violence have boosted the pupils' confidence and supported their studies, leading to a decrease in truancy. The plan which is ongoing for the construction of the dormitory will allow many pupils, especially girls, to avoid early pregnancies and other challenges they face on their way to school. This will help them achieve their dreams and ensure they have ample time to study; we expect that their performance will improve greatly.'



Hasani Dodo

Councillor for Endakiso Ward, Babati District — Babati, Tanzania

'So They Can has significantly improved our situation in Mamire and Endakiso Wards, raising the quality of education for our children in primary schools. They have encouraged the provision of school lunches for students, which has helped reduce absenteeism and teenage pregnancies. Furthermore, their efforts in constructing and renovating school infrastructure, including girls changing rooms and accessible classrooms, has brought major changes. Overall, we greatly benefit from So They Can's support, particularly regarding the drought problem brought on by climate change. They drilled boreholes, alleviating the burden that used to fall on children who had to carry water jugs for many kilometres.

Stakeholder spotlights



Betsy Rono
Gilgil Sub-County Director of Education — Baringo, Kenya

'The partnership between The Ministry of Education and So They Can is very important and plays a key part in this community, complementing the government's role to ensure children attend school. There has been a big difference in school infrastructure in our schools since So They Can's support. This is an important partnership and we continue to look forward to working together with So They Can, so that our children can benefit from good learning environments within schools.'



Bishop Yusuf Losute
Chair of Tiaty stakeholders & Community Leader — Baringo, Kenya

'This is a true partnership between Pokot and So They Can and is critical in terms of holistic development, enabling our children – boys and girls – to go to school. Our work together is important as it enables us to work through challenges, learn from one another, and address the most urgent challenges within our community. We trust one another and are walking on this journey together — ensuring that what we start, we accomplish. So They Can and the community is one.'







A Story of Impact

Moureen, a Msomi Scholar and role model for other girls in Pokot

Moureen is a remarkable young woman, who has beaten the odds to become a university student.

In her hometown most girls face early marriage and pregnancy. Moureen not only finished secondary school, but she also achieved outstanding academic results. She was the only girl in East Pokot to receive a university placement last year, and she is now in the second year of a Bachelor of Education (Arts) at Kisii University. Her inspiring educational journey has been made possible through our Msomi Scholarship Program.

'So They Can gave me an important opportunity, their support enabled me to go to school. I'm so grateful that they continue to believe in me, and now support my university fees.'

What makes Moureen even more remarkable is her commitment and sense of duty to give back. For her, it's important to be an example to others and show them that no matter where you come from, with determination, hard work, and a commitment to giving back, that you can be the difference.

'I want to be a role model to other girls in my community. I do not want to be idle with the skills that I have gained, and continue to gain, at University. I must give back to my community.'

She is already actively doing so! Over her recent 3-month holiday from university she volunteered at a local school, Chemolingot Boys High School, and taught Literature and English, something she is keen to continue doing throughout her 4-year degree.

'I think that my presence in the school (during her 3 months as a volunteer) demonstrates that it is possible to achieve whatever we want, regardless of our circumstances. Also by sharing my University life experience with school students, they become motivated to work harder, and join me'.



Our Commitment & Values

Our approach to education

So They Can is committed to implementing ethical, accountable and effective programs that support marginalised communities in East Africa, with a continual focus on child protection and fundamental rights.

We place communities at the centre of everything we do, and as an accredited international non-government organisation our work is underpinned by best practices in international development.

Locally-led

Meaningful local partnerships are at the core of our work. Our impact is a result of collective action sustained through a participatory approach. Students, parents, teachers, school leadership, local government and the broader community lead our development processes, and as a result projects are responsive to the unique needs of each community.

Cross-cutting

We know that poverty is multifaceted and requires cross-cutting solutions to tackle its root causes. Our Community Development Program is delivered in parallel to our Education Program, to focus on improving the health, wellbeing and livelihoods of all. We improve the living standards of the whole community to break the cycle of poverty.

Inclusive and Rights-based

Undeterred by hard-to-reach locations, we prioritise the most vulnerable communities through our commitment to leave no one behind. Our work is guided by the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and international protection frameworks. Every community member, regardless of their identity, is valued, and their rights are acknowledged, protected and promoted across our programs.

Scalable, Sustainable and Innovative

We work in a 6-8 year development cycle. School communities move through three phases of support - foundation, core, sustained - which advance their capacity until a level of development is reached that can be independently sustained, so that we can transition our support out and commence working in a new surrounding community that is in need. The lessons learnt and knowledge acquired from our experience of more than 15 years working within national education systems, enables us to be innovative and agile in our programming and respond to evolving needs.



Accountable

First and foremost we are accountable to the communities with whom we work. This responsibility also extends to the staff, supporters and partners of our organisation. Transparency ensures that we maintain our accountability to all of our stakeholders. Our operations are regulated through comprehensive policies and procedures; our impact is measured and assessed through a robust monitoring and evaluation system; and our fiscal health is overseen by an independent Board of Directors.

Learn more about our history, commitment and values by scanning or clicking here:

I never imagined my daughter would reach secondary school. None of the women in our family ever studied past Standard 7. We couldn't afford the fees and didn't see the point since she would just get married. But So They Can changed our mindset. They helped us understand the importance of girls' education for her future and our whole family's wellbeing. Now my daughter is determined to become a teacher herself so she can empower even more girls.

— Parent at Partner Primary School
Quote from Tanzania Program Evaluation (2019-2024)



2024 Financials

So They Can's **Financial Report**

2024	Group	Australia
Revenue	4,588,256	3,971,897
Expenses	4,170,522	3,913,298
Surplus (Deficit)	417,734	58,599
Cash Balance	2,846,035	2,340,271

2023	Group	Australia
Revenue	4,006,949	3,116,731
Expenses	3,877,618	3,536,147
Surplus (Deficit)	129,331	(419,416)
Cash Balance	2,471,549	1,838,659

- Full financials can be found on our website
- Group inclusive of Australia, New Zealand, the United States, Kenya and Tanzania
- All amounts are in Australian Dollars (AUD)

Our Partners

So They Can is accredited by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), responsible for managing the Australian Government's aid program and receives support through the Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP).

We are thankful for all our supporters including the many individual donors, sponsors, trusts and foundations who give so generously.

So They Can is a signatory to the ACFID Code of Conduct, which is a voluntary, self-regulatory sector code of good practice. As a signatory we are committed and fully adhere to the ACFID Code of Conduct, conducting our work with transparency, accountability and integrity.

We would like to thank the following supporters, and those who have chosen to stay anonymous, for their support in helping us empower more children living in poverty through education.

Government Partners

The United Republic of Tanzania
Republic of Kenya
Australian Aid
United States of America
New Zealand Embassy
Baringo County Government
County Government of Makueni

Trusts & Foundations

The Generations Foundation
The Khan Foundation
The Mary Alice Foundation, Inc.
The Forrester Family Trust
Hunt Family Foundation
smec foundation
Morris Family Foundation
the Phillips Foundation
Education changes lives
The Peters Family Foundation
Australian Communities Foundation
beyondcharity
The McCusker Charitable Foundation
eurofins foundation
ripple foundation

With thanks to...

NGOs & Social Enterprises

B1G1
i=Change
A member of Girls Not Brides
The Global Partnership to End Child Marriage

Education

Wellesley College
Chilton Saint James School
Samuel Marsden Collegiate School
Iona College
Empowering Girls for Life
St Andrew's College
University of Wollongong Australia
Wellington International Leadership Programme

Business

LVP Foundation
7MCC Seven Miles Coffee Company
Get RARE
Your gateway to a richer life
KHI Partners
Momentum Media
wotton kearney
zenitas
Growth Coaching International

Business Continued...

Clayton Utz
adora fertility
Kofkin Bond & Co.
EthicalJobs
work for a better world
elephants can dance
GLG
Leading Teams
Lesaffre
academyEX

Coalitions, Networks & Implementing Partners

Kyaro Assistive Tech
abc IMPACT
Power Providers
elimu ni haki yetu
Elimu Yetu Coalition
Serving Friends International
camara education tanzania
World Vision Kenya
Africa Inland Church Kenya
Tanzania Education Network
TenMeT
AFNET
inspire
velafrica
Mobility with perspectives
KAFIKA HOUSE
Transforming childhood
DOT GLASSES
Better sight. Better life.
sun partners
KAHESO
Karimu Heart and Spirit Organization



Looking to the future...

Our global community of dedicated staff, partners and supporters are bound by the vision to change the future for children and communities living in poverty through education.

By remaining defiant together, we have empowered over 49,500 children since 2009 in 52 Government schools in Kenya and Tanzania. Beyond that, we have reached 23,800 community members with health and community development support, and have enabled 929 new teachers to graduate — helping to address Africa's concerning teacher-student ratio.

Our impact is significant, and is a testament to our bold courage, determination and resilience. Together, we can be the difference.

Follow us on Instagram

Follow us on Facebook

Follow us on LinkedIn

Learn more about us: sotheycan.org
Join 1inaMillion: sotheycan.org/1inamillion
Sponsor a student: sotheycan.org/sponsor

so
they can



Australian Aid

Australian Council For International Development