so they can

Educate to Empower



Annual Report 2020

Australian Council For International Development

Australian Aid

Contents Page

3 Letter from our Chair

4 Letter from our CEO and Co-Founder

6 Board of Directors

10 Our History

11 What We Do

14 2020 Year in Review

18 Our Impact

31 Impact Stories

34 Looking Forward

35 Our Supporters

37 Financial Information





Peter Hunt AM
Chair
So They Can

Letter from our Chair

2020 has certainly been a challenging year for the vast majority of people around the world. Like all global crises, the poor get hit the hardest and the COVID pandemic has proved no exception to this. I am very proud to have Chaired So They Can as we not only pivoted during COVID, but successfully continued our development work, implementing our project plans while also expanded to design and implement our COVID community support plan to educate and protects the 45,000 children and their families across our three communities.

One of many highlights this year was being awarded accreditation from the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) managing Australia's Aid Program, supporting our robust and transparent governance and giving comfort that all donations to So They Can are well invested. To maintain accreditation, So They Can's systems, policies and processes are rigorously reviewed by the Australian Government. It is important to note that only 58 of the 700 international charities in Australia have DFAT accreditation.

Article 28 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989 stipulates that education is the right of every child. Education is So They Can's core focus. It is the key to breaking the poverty cycle and sustainable development. We continually work to ensure that a child's right to education is realised. We started with our Aberdare Ranges Primary School in Nakuru, Kenya and we now have a teachers' college and work in 37 schools across Kenya and Tanzania where our holistic approach focuses not just on the whole child, but also the teacher, the school board of management, the parents, the broader community and all levels of government to ensure we can deliver our vision to change the future of children living in poverty through education.

In the 12 years since we started So They Can, we have gathered very tangible empirical and statistical evidence proving the power of education to break the poverty cycle. Once again, our Teachers' Training College again ranked 1st out of all teachers' colleges in Tanzania – public and private – this year and our schools perform 20% better than other public schools.

Our partnerships with the Kenyan and Tanzanian governments, from local to national level, enable both our scale and long-term sustainability of our work.

Looking at all we have achieved over the past decade, it is with pride that I retired in December 2020 from the Board of So They Can after 9 amazing years. I thank you all for being such wonderful people and supporting such wonderful work. Because of all of you, So They Can is able to reach out and support 45,000 children and their families in Kenya and Tanzania. Thank you for being the people that you are and for everything that you do.

I am fortunate to be able to pass the Chairman's role on to Mr Munzurul Khan. I know that Munzurul's passion, integrity and professionalism will lead So They Can bravely and successfully into its next decade.



Peter Hunt AM
Chair
So They Can



Letter from our CEO

Cassandra Treadwell
CEO/Co-Founder
So They Can

Well what a year 2020 has been.

I am so proud of our So They Can family. Our teams across Kenya, Tanzania, Australia and New Zealand worked tirelessly to stand by our communities, while our donors, who we needed more than ever this year, also stood strongly with us to enable us to achieve our budget and accordingly our development plans for this year. I thank you all.

As Peter mentioned, 2020 saw the expansion of our development work into our 4-fold COVID strategic plan that included:

- COVID Prevention and Education: Over 9000 masks were made by our Sew Women Can team. Personal Protection Equipment and basic medical supplies were provided to our clinics. A security gate was constructed at our Nakuru clinic to manage crowds and encourage social distancing. 154 60 litre Water stations in central locations across our 3 communities, manned by So They Can educators and water volunteers, were established and continue running for people to come and wash their hands and receive an education pamphlet explaining COVID and its prevention.
- Student Education: We created and distributed close to 15,000 Home Learning Packs to our students who otherwise would not have had any access to education for the majority of the year.
- Keeping Girls in School: Conscious of the heightened risk to girls that school closures bring, we created drop in centres, equipped 30 child protection advocates and brought in extra social workers to support our female students at risk of not returning to school and being sold into child marriage.
- Return to School Support: Before and during schools' return, we are providing extra classes to make up for lost learning.

The need for our community education work to prevent child marriage and female genital cutting (FGC), has been highlighted during COVID school closure. I had an unforgettable Zoom call with two village cutters this year who said they had stopped cutting due to our Champion Mothers talking through the harm of this practice. The decision was reinforced by the girls in their village telling them they would report them to the police as they had learned through So They Can's Keeping Girls in School program that FGC and child marriage was illegal.

The combination of the mothers' education and the children's courageous stance on their newly discovered human rights was profound. It is crucial that all children get an education. It is harder for girls to do this in the communities we work with in Kenya and Tanzania.

Education is important for these girls but also for us all globally. 130 million girls globally are out of school (1 million of those live in sub Saharan Africa). It is predicted that 10 million more school age girls will never return to school as a result of poverty caused by COVID.

Education protects these girls personally – as a direct example, many mothers are no longer making their girls undergo FGC as a result of our work, saving many girls and moving a step closer towards the retention of girls in school, enabling education to break their poverty cycle. We saw the impact first hand this year, as we saw a measurable increase in girls' attendance rates at our schools, in conditions where worldwide there are reports of girls' attendance decreasing due to COVID.

It is important to note that girls' lack of education affects us all globally. David Attenborough cites educating girls to reduce population growth as one of his four ways to save the planet.

A few years ago, I had my children with me in Africa and my then 12 and 14 year old daughters were chatting away with some of our girls, the same age as them, from our East Pokot community in Kenya. I watched them thinking how similar they were; their body language and the way they laughed together. My daughter asked them whether they would be going home from boarding school at the end of term and, without realising how shocking it would be, they said "no if we go home we will be sold or killed for disobeying our fathers and brothers." My children, while shocked, just got it. They saw how an uneducated girl is seen as the property of men, to be sold for their commercial gain, while an educated girl is seen as a person with human rights. It is a huge injustice that we need to resolve.

This is why education is at the core of So They Can's work.

Thank you so much for sharing our determination to support every child's right to education and break the poverty cycle. I am excited about the impact we can make in 2021 with your support.



Cassandra Treadwell
CEO/Co Founder
So They Can



Board of Directors



Peter Hunt AM
Chair of So They Can Board

As an investment banker, Peter advised local and muti-national companies and governments in Australia for nearly 35 years.

He Co - Founded Greenhill Australia, one of Australia's leading independent investment banking advisory firms and Executive Chairman and Chairman between 1999 - 2018.

He Chaired the Securities Institute's Task Force responsible for the Mergers and Acquisitions Graduate Diploma Course from 1993 – 2000, was a Member of the ASIC Advisory Panel from 2009 – 2012 and a founding member of Adara Partners and Chaired Cambooya Services Pty Ltd, which runs the Family Office for the Vincent Fairfax Family, from 2010 - 2017.

Peter is Chairman and Co-Founder of Mind Medicine Australia and Chairman of Grameen Australian and Grameen Australia Philippines.

He is Co-Founder of Manly Women's Shelter and Founder and Director of Women's Community Shelters.

Peter is also Director of Project Rozanna and a Member of the Advisory Councils of the Monash Sustainable Development Institute and the Centre for Social Impact.



Cassandra Treadwell
Chief Executive Officer, Director and Co-Founder

Cass has over 12 years' experience in international development and NGO projects. She was nominated for 2015 New Zealander of the year (1 of 10 finalists) and nominated for 2018 New Zealand Women of Influence Awards (1 of 10 finalists) for her work at So They Can.

She has worked as Medico Legal Counsel Capital & Coast Health New Zealand and Fellow Medical Law and Ethics North Shore Hospital Sydney.

Cass holds a Bachelor of Laws and a Master of Arts, medical law and ethics.



Keri Chittenden
Director and Co-Founder

As Co-Founder of So They Can, Keri has 12 years' experience in international development and NGO projects.

She spent 3 years in project management with Lend Lease Development in Sydney and London, 10 years as Event Production and General Manager for David Grant Special Events and 10 years as owner/director of the Skywalk Company, operating as Executive Producer/ Project Manager.

Keri was recognised as one of Australia's 100 Women of Influence in 2015.

She holds a Bachelor of Business (Land Economy).



Paul Murnane
Director

Paul has over 35 years' experience in corporate finance, consulting and general management as a company director and corporate advisor in Australia, Asia and the USA.

His past roles included senior banker and advisory roles with Citibank, JBWere and Goldman Sachs and extensive not for profit Chair and Director experience in the medical research, education, corporate governance, disability services and public policy sectors. He is currently a Non-Executive Director of Grameen Australia, the Australian String Quartet and several private companies in the consulting and publishing sectors.

Paul has a Bachelor of Economics (USYD), Master of Business Administration (UNSW), FAICD, SF FINSIA.



Di Lucas
Director

Di has a background in education, specialising in early learning in disadvantaged schools. Additionally, she was formerly Owner and Director of Cell Care Australia.

Di developed a special interest in East Africa when her family participated with Flora & Fauna International in moving the last surviving White Rhinos to Ol Pejeta Conservancy, located in Nanyuki in the Rift Valley.

Di is now involved in philanthropic fundraising and strategic advice. She was formerly Chair of the Lort Smith Ethics Committee and is currently a Member of the Australian Committee for Human Rights Watch and a Patron of the Arts, actively supporting the Australian Ballet and Melbourne Theatre Company.

Her other interests include medical research, animal welfare, human rights, the arts and ethics.



Andrew Bloxham
Director

Andrew has been in the private sector importing/distribution business for over 35 years. Most of that time as a business owner and having recently sold his company, he is now working in a senior management position with a top 100 Australian private company.

Andrew and his family have been contributors to So They Can since 2012, with Andrew being a Director for the past 8 years.



David Southon
Director

David has a Bachelor Business in Land Economy and is Co-Founder and Executive Chair of Aliro Group. He has over 30 years' experience in the office, industrial, retail and residential property sectors.

In 1991 David co-founded Charter Hall Group, a diversified listed property investment and funds management group with over 40 billion of funds under management.

David's previous positions also include Director and Vice President of Property Council Australia, Member of NSW Advisory Board of the Property Industry Foundation and a member of various investment committees of unlisted property funds.



Jennifer Price
Director

Jennifer Price has significant experience in international development, having worked in a number of projects in the Pacific region investigating health systems finance, service utilisation, monitoring and evaluation, policy analysis and equity.

Jennifer also has private sector experience as a Financial Controller and Project Manager for an Australian based Social Research Company.

Jennifer is a former Member of the Australian Committee for Human Rights Watch.



Munzural Khan
Director

As an Accountant, Munzurul specialises in compliance and strategic accounting advisory services acquired through 26 years of professional experience, including Senior Management roles in PwC and BDO.

As an Entrepreneur, Munzurul's experiences expressed through financial and commercial acumen in SMEs, multi-national businesses and high net wealth family groups. Munzurul is well regarded as a thought leader and key-note speaker of property investments in Australia.

He is currently Principal of Keshab Chartered Accountants, Chair of KHI Partners and is involved with various commercial Boards in Australia. He is also a Member of the ICAA, Masters of Commerce, Public Practitioner, JP, ASIC SMSF Auditor, PIPA Member, NSW Real Estate Licence Holder.

Governance Bodies - So They Can Global Alliance

So They Can: New Zealand

Cassandra Treadwell
Diana Crossan
Linzi Ebbage-Thomas
Michelle Lupin
Ellen Cheyne
Samantha Hayes
Hayley Whatarau

So They Can: USA

Christie Esch
Melissa Kenly
Cassandra Treadwell

So They Can: Kenya

Terri Anderson
Delfina Reuben
Boniface Mouti

So They Can: Tanzania

Terri Anderson
Boniface Mouti
Godfrey Mogusu

Kenyan Advisory Board

Warren Stanley
Ernest Muibu
Teresa Ndegwa
Joseph Muya
Jas Bedi

Our History

So They Can was founded in 2009 in response to the 2007 Kenyan election violence that saw more than 300,000 Kenyans internally displaced.

Together with the Government and local community, So They Can was born to deliver on a direct request from this community:

'We need a school for our children - an education is the only inheritance we can give them'.

In 2010 the doors to Aberdare Ranges Primary School opened with the life-changing home for vulnerable and orphaned children, Miti Mingi Children's Village, opening in 2012.

In 2011 we were introduced to the run-down rural primary schools in neighbouring Tanzania and had to expand our reach.

In 2012, a Memorandum of Understanding between the Tanzania Government and So They Can and local stakeholders was signed. This was the first public private partnership in teacher training in Tanzania, and the first education partnership with the joint objective to improve the quality of education throughout Tanzania.

In conjunction with our government partners we founded the Mamire Teachers' Training College in Babati, committing to training quality teachers and improving the capacity of teachers in local schools.

In 2020, we completed our reintegration and reunification of our Miti Mingi children back into their families and community.

Our holistic approach has seen expansion in both Kenya and Tanzania, implementing Education, Women's Empowerment, Child Wellbeing and Community Health and Support Programs enabling learning and the opportunity for communities' to break the poverty cycle.



What We Do

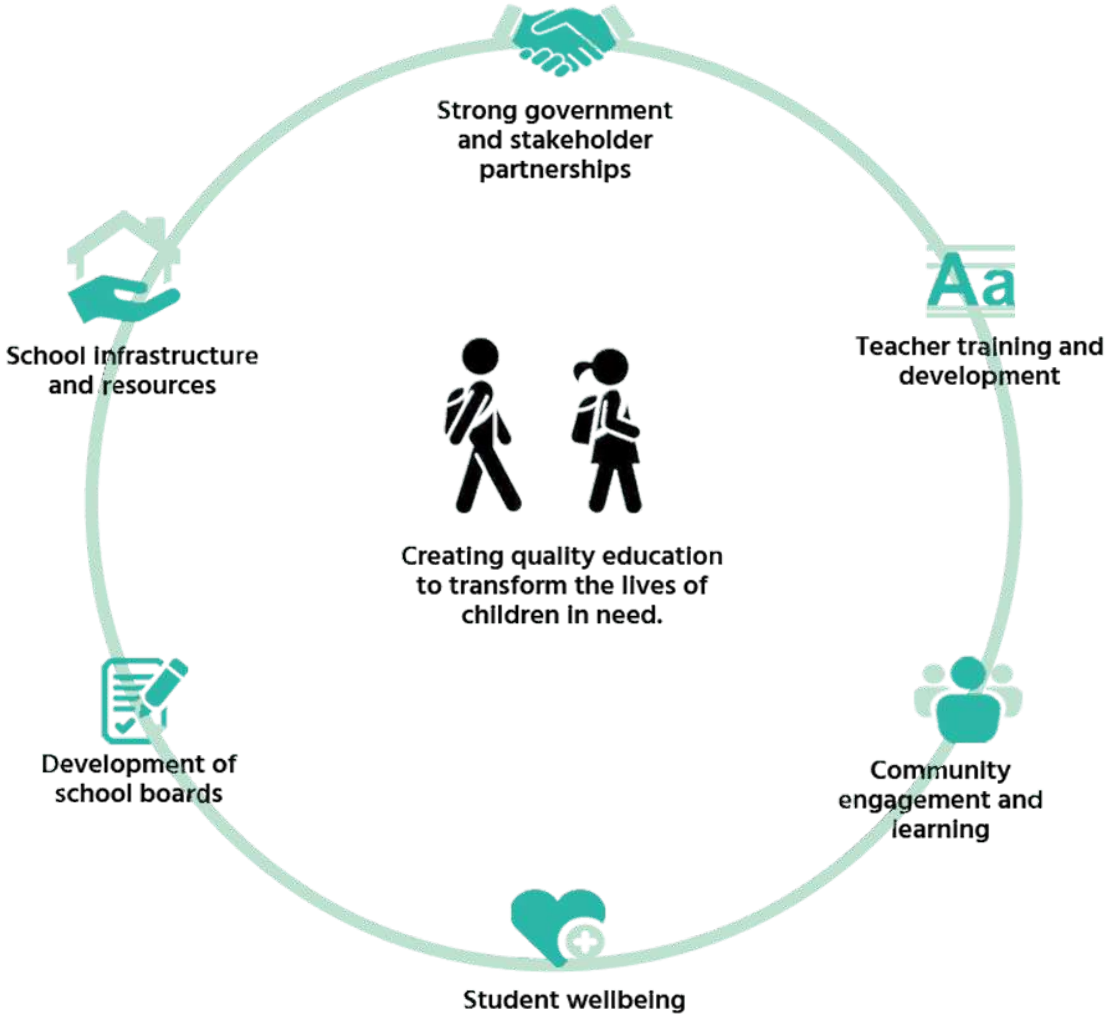
Every child deserves access to education.
It is a basic human right.

So They Can is creating sustainable impact in partnership with communities and their governments to deliver quality education. Education is at the core of what we do.

We partner with vulnerable communities and work with them over a 7-10 year development period. During this time, we work closely with the community to understand their needs and implement projects that will best support these needs.

Throughout this process we ensure transfer of knowledge and management skills to these communities to ensure sustainability of the programs. This enables us to eventually shift to governance role and focus our core resources on helping other vulnerable communities.

To enable a quality education, we build on six foundations of learning for every child.



Our Education Programs are designed to enable the best learning outcomes for the children we work to empower and are supported by three other community focused enhancement programs:

Child Wellbeing Program

Assisting the most vulnerable of children to attend school through strengthening families and nurturing family based care for children most at risk.

Women's Empowerment Program

Empowering mothers to educate their children through business skills training and start up loans.

Community Health & Support Program

Working with communities to ensure children are healthy and enrolled in school.







Our Sponsorship Program

Our Sponsorship Program began in Kenya in 2010 to support the enrolment of 120 children in Aberdare Ranges Primary School each year. Sponsorship contributions at this school provide a quality education, meals at school, learning resources and basic medical care for all students.

Sponsorship has also traditionally enabled up to 120 orphaned and vulnerable children to be given a loving home at the Miti Mingi Children's Village . The children came from vulnerable backgrounds where, for a variety of reasons, they were unable to remain with their family or in their community.

Over the years, we worked with their families to build their capacity and in 2020 we are proud to have completed our reintegration of all of our Miti Mingi children back into their community. We continue to support these children and their families through our Reintegration and Reunification project, which ensures that families are equipped and supported to provide a loving and healthy home for their children.

In 2020 our Sponsorship options expanded to:

- Sponsor a student in East Pokot
- Sponsor a school in Tanzania
- Sponsor a vulnerable family through our Family Strengthening Program in East Pokot.

All of the contributions from our Sponsorship Program support all of our life-changing education and enhancement projects.

Thank you to our amazing, caring sponsors.







2020 Year in Review





January

Schools commence their academic year. Our support for 37 Collaborative schools in Tanzania and Kenya continues, a total 22,262 students are enrolled

January

36 Mamire Teachers' College graduate interns were placed in 8 Collaborative Schools, putting their skills to immediate use and addressing the teacher deficit whilst they wait for permanent placement as a government teacher. Thanks LBW Trust for supporting this project.

February

We trained 96 community members in Tuowo village, East Pokot, on Child Protection and Rights. This important project encourages more community members to look out for their children and ensures that they are able to attend school instead of being forced into work.



February

University of Wollongong education students and academic staff spend two weeks at our projects in Tanzania working with schools and the College to build teacher capacity. 15 teachers participated and students from 2 schools benefited.



March

First cases of COVID-19 in Kenya and Tanzania. Schools closed in March and students were sent home.

March

We returned 80 children from MMV to their families due to COVID-19 and supported them through our Reintegration and Reunification project.





April

63 girls in Tanzania received washable sanitary pads as part of our Keeping Girls in School project. These were distibuted through our partner health clinics.

April

23 Kenyan families received food packages. 3000+ face masks were distributed in Kenya, as well as education on hygiene to protect them from COVID. In Tanzania, 66 COVID education and water stations were donated.

May

Our first Home Learning Packs were distributed in Kenya and Tanzania. In Kenya, 27 water stations were distributed for hand washing and community awareness program targeting 46,550 community members was launched.

June

4000+ more protective face masks were produced and distributed to vulnerable communities in Kenya. In Tanzania, 66 mothers and 39 girls were educated in the risks of Female Genital Cutting.



June

Economic and social assessments performed as part of our Reintegration and Reunification Project for our Miti Mingi Village children.



June

We raised $497,098 through our end of financial year appeal to help support our emergency COVID-19 response and ongoing development work. Thank you to all those who donated.

July

In Tanzania, 27 Champion Mothers ran education sessions in their communities. The sessions covered the risks of female genital cutting, the importance of girls' education and entrepreneurship, reaching 274 mothers and 72 girls.



July

In Tanzania, water well drilling at Ng'wang'weri Primary School was completed and the pupils are now guaranteed 6,000 litres water a day, which they can also sell on to the community as another income stream.

July

Our Kenyan team conducted a door to door campaign on Keeping Girls in School and distribution of 90 sanitary towels for girls with an objective to slow down cases of teenage pregnancy during the COVID school closure.



August

We celebrated Mamire Teachers' College 6th Graduation. This year 177 Teachers graduated. Out of 79 public and private teachers colleges nationally, our diploma students placed first and our certificate students placed second in the country.

August

800 masks made by the Sew Women Can team dispatched to Australia and NZ to raise additional funds to support our COVID-19 response. This was in addition to a further 2000+ masks for the local communities.

September

The Kenyan Ministry of Education recalled all teachers back to school to prepare for partial reopening of schools. 203 teachers reported back to schools.



September

412 vulnerable students in East Pokot received Solar Buddy lamps to enable them to study at home.

October

In Tanzania, 30 teachers from 15 program schools received training in child protection in partnership with Ministry of Education, Science and Technology.



October

The government relaxation of Covid-19 restriction led to partial, countrywide reopening of Kenyan schools for Grade 4 and Class 8 on 18th October.

October

Launch of our new sponsorship offers including the opportunity to support a student, a school or whole family.

November

Wezesha project delivered Business Skills training to 38 families of our Miti Mingi Village children to support the livelihood of the family.



November

Despite COVID-19, 1475 (83.1% - above national average) of our students in partner schools pupils from Standard 7 in Kenya transitioned to secondary school.

November

1176 Solar Buddy lights were distributed to vulnerable students in Tanzania.

November

Sew Women Can is handed over to the local community, becoming a fully Sustained project.

November

So They Can International hosted our first virtual event, where over 70 supporters joined us to hear about our response to COVID-19.

December

50 students from 10 schools in Tanzania attended Camp Africa at Tarangire National Park. The project builds students' self-confidence and connection across schools.



Our Impact

121
vulnerable children helped

22,477
patients treated

216
women empowered

22,262
students educated

37
schools supported

500,000 +
school meals served

177
teachers trained

295
teachers developed

4
classrooms built or renovated

2,131
solar lights distributed

1
water tanks installed

1,049
sanitary products provided

Kenya

Nakuru, Kenya is where So They Can's first project was born in 2009; our Aberdare Ranges Primary School. Since then, we've developed a range of projects that we deliver to Aberdare Ranges and 11 government schools that we now partner with in both Nakuru and Baringo Counties, depending on their needs.

Our Education Program consists of a range of projects that cover everything from teacher development and student wellbeing to community engagement and school infrastructure development, ensuring that we are building confidence and capacity across the entire school community. We touch on these in the following section of this report.

At So They Can, we know that in order to make an impact, we need to support the child beyond the classroom. As a result, alongside our Education program, our Kenyan team run 3 enhancement programs; child wellbeing, women's empowerment and community health and development. These programs consist of a range of projects ranging from our Miti Mingi Children's Village where vulnerable children were cared for and then reintegrated into their extended families and communities through ongoing support, to our Wezesha Business Skills project which provides training and micro-finance to female entrepreneurs, to partnerships with community health clinics.

This cross-cutting approach ensures that we are strengthening the whole community we work with over a 7-10 year cycle to a point where they can take ownership and we can see the long term sustainability of our work. From there, we are able to shift to governance role and shift our core focus to helping other vulnerable communities.



11
schools partnered with to deliver projects



2271
students reached through innovative class reader



700
girls provided with reusable sanitary pads



9,650
masks made and distributed



22,477
patients assessed and treated



80
students reunited with their families

Tanzania

In 2012 So They Can began investigating ways to improve the quality of primary education in the Babati District of Tanzania. Of a population of 320000, about 90% live in rural areas and only 44% of the 96 villages have health facilities. Like many rural areas of Tanzania, the standard of education in the District was very low with only 40% of primary school children making the transition to secondary school. The result was that these children were stuck in a life of subsistence farming, unable to break free of the poverty cycle. It was identified there was a significant teacher deficit in the district, and the quality of education offered little opportunity for change.

To address this identified need So They Can established the Mamire Teachers' College as a public/private partnership with the Ministry of Education. The College opened its doors in October 2014 to 79 students from the Babati District who then graduated in 2016. So They Can Tanzania has since expanded its work in Tanzania and now also works in 26 local government schools to raise the quality of education in the district.

The approach of So They Can Tanzania is to integrate training at the Mamire Teachers' College with activities to support delivery of the competency-based curriculum at local public primary schools. The Education Program is steered by a unique public-private partnership between So They Can Tanzania, the Babati District Council, the Manyara Regional Office, the Babati Rotary Club and the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology. This partnership now oversees the Mamire Teachers' College, which is in turn used as a learning hub for 26 the public primary schools that we partner with.

Our target is to continue to expand our Education Program in Tanzania to work with 60 public primary schools by 2030.



26
schools partnered with to deliver projects



1719
solar lights distributed



177
quality teachers graduated



50
students attended the inaugural Camp Africa



124
on-school hectares farmed



7675
students trained in child rights

Collaboration and Innovation: Our Emergency COVID-19 Response

COVID-19 wreaked havoc around the world, and the communities that we work with in East Africa were not exempt. The first cases of COVID-19 were reported in Kenya in early March and Tanzania shortly after.

Both governments acted swiftly, closing down schools and universities, imposing social distancing and, in Kenya, mandating the use of masks. Our projects were immediately interrupted, and the teams in both countries were quick to respond to the needs of our most vulnerable communities; choosing to be bold and tackle these new challenges head on.

The Kenyan and Tanzanian governments took differing approaches to the long-term management of COVID, however our teams collaborated, experimented, innovated and learned from each other as the months progressed.

Education

Our Education teams developed and distributed Home Learning Packs to keep students learning and increase their likelihood of returning to school. To support this, our partnership with Solar Buddy allowed us to distribute more than 2000 solar lights to ensure that children were able to study in the evenings and, in Nakuru, our amazing librarian delivered books to our Aberdare Ranges Primary School students.

The teams in both countries delivered door to door Keeping Girls in School campaigns, distributing washable sanitary pads and educating children in sexual and reproductive health in order to slow down teenage pregnancy rates during the pandemic and prevent child marriage. In Kenya, the strict lock down measures had contributed to 152,000 teenage pregnancies across the country for a period of 3 months. Thankfully, our initiatives greatly reversed the trend in So They Can's program schools, with only 3 girls reported to be pregnant in 2020. These girls are being supported by our team.



Child wellbeing

Due to the risk of mass infection and the Kenyan Government declaration for all children's homes to be closed down, we were able to find homes for our Miti Mingi Village children with their extended families through our expedited Reintegration and Reunification Project. Our team completed economic and wellbeing assessments on families and provided ongoing education and support to these vulnerable families throughout the year to ensure that our children were in healthy and happy homes. We also expanded our Family Strengthening Project in East Pokot to provide additional education, emergency food packaging and healthcare to the most vulnerable families.

Women's empowerment

Our Sew Women Can team sprung into action, making over 9000 masks for the local community and internationally. This not only ensured the safety of their community, but also kept the women employed and their families economically supported. Despite the COVID-19 restrictions, we supported beneficiaries through the Wezesha Business Skills project to help them to pivot their businesses and explore new opportunities where possible.







Community Health and Development

In Kenya, So They Can was the first NGO in Nakuru and Baringo Counties to courageously come out and show solidarity with the community. Partnering with the local governments and Ministry of Health, our teams in both Kenya and Tanzania created awareness campaigns to educate over 13400 community members in Tanzania and 10000 in Kenya on hygiene, sourced and distributed water stations, and distributed the 9000+ masks made by the Sew Women Can team.

A meaningful impact

As a result of these efforts we are relieved to share that as of the end of 2020, no deaths had been recorded as a result of COVID-19 among our beneficiaries.

"We are grateful to receive the support from So They Can. Through the donated water stations and hand sanitizers during COVID-19 breakout is an indicator how So They Can Cares and value the lives of its people/partners''. ~ Ward Education Community Member, Gallapo

On June 29, 2020 the President of Tanzania announced the reopening of schools; pupils and teachers returned to school. After schools reopened, teachers and pupils had busy schedules designed to cover the lost time due to school closures. So They Can Tanzania quickly ramped up their projects again, and was able to make up for some of the lost time. As a result, the team was able to achieve the majority of their action plan targets, with some results even surpassing the initial targets.

Unfortunately in Kenya schools remained closed until October, stalling some of our planned Education program activities to go ahead. Nonetheless, we were still able to achieve between 40-45% of our Education Action Plan for 2020 and have mitigation plans in place to get our students back on track with their education over the next 2 years.

We're incredibly proud of everything our teams achieved throughout the 2020 pandemic. Their actions required courage and determination, something each and every team member stood up with to support the vulnerable communities we work with.

Education Program

Education is core to everything we do at So They Can. Our Education Program forms a cross-cutting sustainable development approach which, along with our enhancement programs, allow us to empower the communities we work with to reimagine their futures for generations to come. All of our Education Projects are delivered through partnerships with local government schools, ensuring that we are also building capacity of the school community to take over and deliver the projects on an ongoing basis.

Our 3 Phase Model starts with building relationships with the community and strengthening the **Foundations** of the school. We typically begin a relationship through the Our School Community project. This project focuses on understanding the unique culture and needs of the community, as well as developing trust with parents and leaders. This is a critical first step that often defines the success of our other projects.

From there, we expand our relationships to the students, helping them understand their fundamental rights as a child through our My Voice project. We also explore a range of projects based on the needs of the school and the community, such as School Improvement and Let's Learn. In 2020 we were in the Foundation phase with 17 schools.





As our relationship builds, we progress our relationship to the **Core** stage of our 3 phase model. This is where our work really focuses on lifting the quality of the education for our students; leveraging the trust we have built at the Foundation phase to encourage growth and development in the community. This can include everything from Teacher Development to enhance the capacity of the staff to Keeping Girls in School to educate the community on the importance of girls' education and associated risks of Female Genital Cutting and early marriage. In 2020 we partnered with 17 schools to deliver projects at the Core phase.

Lastly, when we are confident that the school community is strong and able to provide quality education independently, we progress schools into the **Sustained** phase. While we may continue to support schools through ad hoc enhancement projects, this phase sees So They Can in more of a governance role and gradually reduces the need for financial support. Our local leaders remain involved in the Board of Management, however the community is capable of ensuring their children receive the best possible education in an environment that enables them to thrive. In 2020, we started to transition our founding project Aberdare Ranges Primary School, to the Sustained phase.

Foundation Projects

Our School Community focuses on building relationships and capacity in the schools, not only securing a position on the Board of Management (BOM) for So They Can, but also engaging and training parents and community members to join us. Despite COVID restrictions, we are proud to share that in 2020, 100% of the schools supported by So They Can have active BOM and Parent Teacher Association. Through them, we have increased community support for the schools, resulting in a stronger sense of ownership and desire for the school's success within the community. We also trained 129 community members across Nakuru and East Pokot in Kenya for their BOM positions.

Our **My Voice** project's main objective is to develop children's knowledge on child rights, and improve their skills and capacity through building their self-esteem, well-being and confidence. In many of the communities and diverse cultures we work with in East Africa, children don't understand their fundamental rights, believing that their role is to enhance their parents' economic status and therefore should either be forced to work or (for girls) early marriage.

In 2020, we were able to train 840 students in Kenya and 7675 students in Tanzania on their fundamental rights, helping empower them to stand up for their dreams. In Tanzania, 76.2% of surveyed My Voice participants in 2020 demonstrated an understanding of their rights and confidence to express themselves, while 70.4% reported an increase in self-esteem.





School Improvement is designed to enhance the learning environment for our students so that they can thrive. This involves improving or building teaching and pupil learning infrastructure through the provision of grants for classroom renovations, desks donations and improved pupil health by providing water tanks, and cooking pots through the Feeding Program initiatives.

The Feeding Program in particular often attracts more students to attend school and also enable them to be more alert in class. In order to ensure that projects are sustainable, these grants must initially be matched by the community. Eventually, elements such as the Feeding Program are fully funded by the community themselves.

This year, in Tanzania we saw an increase in feeding programs since the number of pupils benefitting from our feeding program has increased by 12.5% to 4428 students. This is still only 25% of the student population in our Tanzanian partner schools and will be a major focus for 2021. This project is supported by the Australian Government through the Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP).

In order to engage students in learning and inspire them to complete their education, **Let's Learn** (formerly Let's Read) focuses on building students' confidence in literacy and numeracy from an early age. We run events such as Book Awareness Day, support students with learning materials, including the Solar Buddy lights so that they can study at home, and run education sessions for parents on the importance of learning. We also engage teachers in professional development to enhance their own knowledge for developing early learners.

In 2020, over 5200 students in Tanzania and 4150 students in Kenya benefited from our Let's Learn initiatives. In Tanzania, we saw a 37% increase in children engaged in literacy activities. What's more, the distribution of over 2131 Solar Buddy lights resulted in 100% of students interviewed indicating an improvement in their academic performance.



Core Projects

We continued to enhance **Teacher Development** through coaching and mentoring, as well as hands on support from our Mamire Teachers' College interns. This includes sharing teaching pedagogies, classroom management practices and development of teaching aids.

In Tanzania, 48 (68.5%) of the targeted 70 teachers received coaching on curriculum delivery, participatory pedagogies and use of teaching aids, facilitated by So They Can Education team in collaboration with the Ministry of Education. In addition, 40 (13 Male, 27 Female) teachers conducted peer coaching using the Growth Coaching model. This project is supported by the Australian Government through the Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP).

In Tanzania, **Shamba Letu** enhances food security for the communities So They Can works with by educating teachers and students on improved farming techniques. These techniques lead to improved food quality and yield, thereby creating opportunities for income generation for the school. In 2020, we trained 470 students and 6 teachers in modern farming techniques, seeing the number of on-school hectares farmed increase by 25% compared to 2019.

We also linked the schools and farmers with buyers of yellow nutritious maize to facilitate opportunity for the farmers to sell the surplus. This activity is a complete development circle, as these community farmers are the parents/grandparents of the pupils at our program schools, so the food and the income generated from their farms will directly support our pupils academically; being financially secure secures school attendance, and leads to them having food security.

Keeping Girls in School addresses the declining school attendance rate and increasing drop-out rate of girl students as they reach puberty and start menstruation. The goal of the project is to empower girls and mothers by equipping them with knowledge on adolescence and women's health, rights and the skills to manage their health and advocate for their rights to education, health and well-being, so they can fulfil their learning potential and become a contributing member of the community.

The project also equips girls with knowledge on how to avoid unwanted pregnancies, early marriages, trains them on management of menstrual health with dignity and addresses cultural issues affecting the girls such as Female Genital Cutting (FGC).

In East Pokot, 85% girls aged 9-13 years old are subjected to FGC and early marriage. By ensuring these girls receive an education, we are able to protect them from these outdated cultural practices.

In 2020, our work was more important than ever, with girls often the most at risk of not returning to school after a pandemic. In Kenya, our project team delivered education sessions, door to door visits and washable sanitary pads to over 635 girls.

Meanwhile, in Tanzania 414 girls received washable sanitary pads, 1194 students received training on their rights and 58 Champion Mothers were trained in women's health and risks of Female Genital Cutting in collaboration with health facilitators. These women, in turn, trained over 200 mothers from their local communities. As a result, a large number of women have stopped cutting their daughters.



In Tanzania, we launched our inaugural **Camp Africa** enabling students to experience learning outside of their formal classrooms, and give them an opportunity to nurture their creativity and develop life skills to build self-esteem, resilience and problem-solving skills. The project brings together schools from across the region, which also encourages new cross-cultural connections and learning.

The team took a co-design approach to this project, targeting students, parents and teachers from 10 partner schools to develop the Camp activities together. The Camp was held at Tarangire National Park and saw 50 students and 6 teachers come together to deliver a range of activities alongside our project team. The outcomes saw increased confidence and connection with students from different schools.



While our core focus is primary education, we know that many of our students fall in love with learning and want to progress to Secondary School. However, according to the Tanzanian government, up to 70% students aged 14-17 are not in school. We developed our **Msomi** ("Scholar" in Kiswahili) project to enable our best and brightest students in Kenya to continue their studies and reach their full potential.

We currently partner with 8 Secondary Schools to support them in teacher development and student wellbeing, and, in 2020 the scholarships provided over 400 students with extensive support services including mentorship, books, uniforms, transport and food. In fact, there was a 99% transition rate for students in Form 2 and 3, who were being supported fully through the scholarship project in Nakuru.

Our founding project, **Aberdare Ranges Primary School** is the only school that we have constructed from scratch, as we have since sharpened our focus and ability to make an impact through our partnerships with government schools.

In 2020, Aberdare Ranges began its transition to become our first "Sustained" school by 2024. We have a number of projects that we continue to work with the school on to ensure that we are continuing to enhance the quality of education delivered to this amazing community.

We couldn't have reached this stage without the generosity of our sponsors and investors, who have enabled us to not only build a school for the Pipeline community but build their capacity to a stage where they can take responsibility for the school for generations to come.

We were proud to see a 12% increase in enrolments at Aberdare Ranges between 2019 and 2020, reflecting the reputation of the school and its facilities. We also saw over 95% attendance rate at ARPS compared to nearby schools 65-70% attendance rate. We believe this is in part due to our continued subsidisation of the School Feeding Program, which feeds over 1200 students each day and helps maintain concentration through the day.





Sustained Projects



Mamire Teachers' College was established by So They Can in partnership with the Tanzanian government in order to address the teacher deficit in the region. Since opening its doors in 2014, over 470 teachers have graduated from Mamire and the college has maintained its position as one of the top 3 colleges in the country due to exceptional results.

In 2019, the Tanzanian government took full responsibility of running the school and So They Can moved this project into the Sustained phase of our 3 Phase Model, assuming a governance and enhancement role.

In 2020, 177 teachers graduate from the college – our largest cohort of graduates to date – and 4897 students benefited during their internships at their schools. In fact, one female graduate topped her year and a number of our graduates have secured permanent positions in local schools.



During the COVID-19 lock down, the interns were responsible to maintain the schools, ensuring they were ready for students' return. They also provided much needed direct support for students while they were at home.

After signing a partnership with Silverleaf Academy in 2019 to support our graduates from our Mamire Teachers' College into their Teacher in Training program, with the potential for permanent employment. In 2020, 6 months into the program, four of our female graduates were offered permanent employment by Silverleaf.



Our Impact: Child Wellbeing

Miti Mingi Village Reintegration and Reunification, Nakuru

Our Miti Mingi Village (MMV) project was developed to provide the best possible holistic development encompassing emotional, mental and physical care for the wellbeing of children at MMV to enable them to become self-sufficient, successful, contributing members of society.

Since 2016, the goal of this project has been to build capacity in the families of these children in order to reunite the children with their communities through our Reintegration and Reunification Project. This is because research shows that it is in the child's best interests to stay with their family instead of being in institutionalised care.

In January 2020, we had 81 children at MMV and over 98% of school going age children from the Family Strengthening Project supported families were attending school regularly.

In March, our teams had to act swiftly to rapidly reintegrate the children with their extended families. and community. Over the coming months, we supported the families by providing food, masks, health care, funding for income generating activities and a series of entrepreneurial and parenting capacity building sessions in order to ensure that the children were in healthy and happy homes.





Family Strengthening, East Pokot

Our Family Strengthening project ensures that vulnerable families are supported, developed and empowered over 3 years so they can become self-sufficient, informed and able to provide for the basic needs of their families and send their children to school.

Due to COVID-19, additional funds were assigned to this project, enabling the team to deliver support to 20 families with 67 children in East Pokot.

The life-saving support including emergency food packages and medical care was invaluable during the pandemic. What's more, our education sessions for care givers were opened up to the broader community and attended by 126 individuals, demonstrating a desire and need for this work to continue.

Our Impact: Women's Empowerment

Wezesha Business Skills, Nakuru and East Pokot

Microfinance programs have proven to be important instruments to fight against female poverty and vulnerability in developing countries. Among the 81.9 million poor clients served by microfinance programs in 2015, 84.2% were women (World Bank 2015). The Wezesha project, by targeting women, not only improves gender equality, but also effectively reduces poverty for a whole community.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, only 41% of our targeted women received training in 2020, however 162 women graduated from the Business Skills Program. What's more, we were able to approve and provide micro-finance loans to 76 women to support their income generating activities.

The team also mentored 216 women who have previously been through the project to ensure they were supported in their business activities and able to pivot or access new business products where required.

In 2020, 565 school-aged children benefited from their mothers participation in the Wezesha Business Skills program, which equipped them with the skills and opportunities they need to sustainably support the health, wellbeing, and education of their children.





Sew Women Can, Nakuru

Sew Women Can aims to create sustainable futures for vulnerable women and their families in rural communities through skills enhancement and sales opportunities. Sew Women Can works with vulnerable women in Nakuru to enhance their skills in producing high quality products using locally available materials.

In 2020, the team of women embarked on production of masks for the staff and communities the program works with. The amazing team produced 8,645 pieces of masks for Kenya, 250 for Tanzania and 800 for Australia and New Zealand.

Towards the end of the year, the women also started making school uniforms again and picked up the designs of washable sanitary pads for So They Can's Keeping Girls in School project.

Excitingly, at the end of 2020, this project moved into the Sustained Phase and the Sew Women Can business was handed over to the team in Kenya. The women employed by Sew Women Can have become independent business women and continue to receive mentoring as part of the Wezesha Business Skills project, as well as continuing to make and sell school uniforms and reusable sanitary pads to Sew Women Can.

Our Impact: Community Health and Development

Healthy Communities, Nakuru

The overall development objective of this project for the period January 2019 to December 2021, is to support existing local health care services in the communities in which we work.

Currently only 17 % of Kenyan households are covered by health insurance of any type, while the rest of the population relies either on donor aid, government spending or out of pocket spending for accessing health care. The Kenyan health system is not able to deal effectively with the growing epidemics and the growing burden of chronic diseases.

Our partnerships with Health Care clinics see that community members are healthy, informed and able to take a proactive role in supporting the health and education of their children. Healthy children and communities have the best chance of thriving.

22477 patients were assessed and treated at the facility in 2020, which was 6% lower compared to 24000 patients in 2019, however this is attributed to the emergence of COVID-19, as a number of people avoided going to health facilities as a means of avoiding infection.





Champions of Change, East Pokot

To promote school enrolment, Champions of Change intends to continuously educate the communities on the importance of accessing and remaining in school for all school age children. This incorporates child rights, role of parents in the child's education, positive and negative aspects of cultures and traditions, how to access and use locally available government and non-government resources and family economic empowerment.

So They Can identifies community members to spearhead this initiative, builds their capacity and knowledge to spread the message and then supports them to disseminate this in their local communities.

The Champions of Change continued supporting families even during COVID-19 period, visiting a total of over 570 families throughout 2020. This kept the families alert on the need to take their children back to school after re-opening and also keeping them busy during the long stay at home. This project will be absorbed into the Family Strengthening Project from 2021.

Impact Story: Opportunity flows at Ng'wang'weri Primary School

IIn Babati, Tanzania, about 90% of the population live in rural areas and depend on agriculture and livestock for their livelihood. Our Shamba Letu project focuses on sharing new farming techniques with farmers and schools to help them maximise the output of their land.

Our So They Can team has been working with Ng'wang'weri Primary School and their nearly 600 students, 14 teachers and hundreds of community members since 2018.

The school has struggled historically to maintain their facilities, farm and feeding program due to lack of access to water.

In 2020, a surprise donation from a generous supporter enabled us to drill a well for the school.

The well can produce up to 6000 litres a day. Now, the school is not only seeing their vegetable garden flourish, but also their students. The food they grow in their garden is used for the school feeding program, ensuring students are well fed and able to focus on their studies.

The school has also been selected to pilot a Green Study Area (GSA) - establishing gardens for pre-primary and lower primary to play and learn at - as one of the initiatives of conserving school environment.

We are thrilled to see the gardens and, importantly, the students thriving as the water, and the opportunities it brings for the community, keep flowing.





Before and after the well was installed at Ng'wang'weri

Impact Story: Omary Finds His Voice

Omary, 8, is a Standard 1 student at Manyara Primary School in Galapo. Like many of his friends, he loves to read, play sports and games. He's the second born of his father's family but lives with his step-mother as his father is busy with work.

When So They Can's team met Omary in 2018, his academic results were not good and, when he did attend school, he was often falling asleep in class. So They Can ran child protection training in partnership with the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology and the Police Gender Desk from Babati Police Station at Manyara Primary School as part of the My Voice project.

My Voice is designed to educate children on their rights and give them the confidence to speak up and advocate for their own education. Omary was one of the students who participated in the project and, after the training, revealed that his step-mother had been abusive, forcing him into hard labour and often refusing to let him attend school. The Policy Gender Desk went to speak to Omary's parents and explained to his father the importance of his son's education and wellbeing.

Omary's father decided to allow his son to start boarding at this school, where he could be looked after properly and receive a better education.

Ever since, Omary has been thriving. He spends his time immersed in books and focused on his learning, so much so that in the November 2020 exams, Omary topped his class of 84 students.

"Thanks to So They Can and the Police Gender Desk, my parents now understand the importance of my education and I am free to focus on my studies. It's changed my life," Omary shares.



Police from Babati Gender Desk speaking to students.

Impact Story: Champion Mothers Change the Future for Generations



Lucia Daniel shared her thanks with So They Can.

As part of our Keeping Girls in School project, we have engaged a group of Champion Mothers. These are 4 selected mothers from our 37 schools who receive public health education about the risks associated with Female Genital Cutting (FGC) - including infection, severe blood loss, death and painful pregnancies and labour — and techniques and skills for mothers to have conversations with their daughters in relation to sexual and reproductive health. The role of our Champion Mothers is to then pass on this information throughout their communities.

In June 2020, Lucia Daniel went through one of our KGiS education workshops, provided by one of our Champion Mothers. Lucia is a mother of 9 children (4 boys, 5 girls). As an Iraque (tribe from Manyara region Tanzania) woman she used to follow all regulations of her tribe, including Female Genital Cutting (FGC), believing if a girl is not circumcised she will be segregated by other women in her community due to their belief that an uncircumcised woman is a prostitute. Three of Lucia's daughters have undergone FGC and she was planning to do the same for her last two daughters and her 1 granddaughter in July.

However, due to the education she received from our Champion Mothers, Lucia decided she will never let her last 2 daughters nor her granddaughters undergo FGC.

In the same month, one of the lead FGC cutters told our team that she will never cut again after learning from our Champion Mothers. It is from these conversations that we start to see the long-lasting and far reaching impact of our projects. Without this information, these women would have continued to cut their daughters, grand daughters, nieces and community members. Now, thousands of girls will be saved as a result of this important education.

Looking forward: Our vision for 2030

2020 has been a challenging year for so many around the world. COVID -19 stopped the world in its tracks. It is always those living in poverty that get hit hardest with a global pandemic and economic crisis. Accordingly, 2020 has made us more determined than ever to achieve our vision for 2030 to support as many of the neediest children in Kenya and Tanzania that we can to break the poverty cycle and realise their potential.



By 2030, our goal is to change the future for 36,000 children in Africa who, through no fault of their own, are living in poverty. We are not alone.

Education is firmly placed on the global agenda thanks to like-minded, progressive organisations such as Global Partnership for Education with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals mandate paving the way.

As stated by the United Nations, the reasons for lack of quality education are due to lack of adequately trained teachers, poor conditions of schools and equity issues related to opportunities provided to rural children.



UN's Sustainable Development Goal 4

"Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all."

At So They Can, we are driven by goal number 4 and committed to addressing these inadequacies and inequalities. We believe education changes everything and without it, there is no hope for a poverty-free, environmentally sustainable, peaceful world.



Through our holistic approach, our vision is to see 2,100 teachers, either graduated or mentored, delivering quality education to 36,000 children, in 60 schools supported by So They Can by 2030.

We know that with our dedicated global team and incredibly generous supporters, we can achieve this together.

THANK YOU.

Our Supporters

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).

Australian Aid

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

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

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Financial Information

All amounts are expressed in Australian dollars.

2020	Country	Revenue	Expenses	Surplus/ (Deficit)	Cash balance at 31 December 2020
So They Can	Australia	2,326,862	1,898,883	427,979	1,827,304

2019	Country	Revenue	Expenses	Surplus/ (Deficit)	Cash balance at 31 December 2019
So They Can	Australia	2,209,211	2,450,550	-241,339	1,115,268

* Full financials found on website.