2021 Annual Report

Highlights from the Duke–UNICEF Innovation Accelerator
Increased Growth, Deeper Impact

2021 was an exciting year of growth for the Duke-UNICEF Innovation Accelerator (DUIA). We increased the number of social entrepreneurs we fund and support across Africa, we refined and added to our robust curriculum of skill-building webinars and workshops, and we grew and expanded our ecosystem of support to include more expert mentors, global partners, and collaborators across campus at Duke University. Strategically expanding our support and networks paid off – our social entrepreneurs have collectively impacted over 10 million girls, women, and children with products, services, and programs that dramatically improve their lives. From safe and affordable menstrual products to last-mile sales of toilets and sanitation goods to safely managed waste in cities, our social entrepreneurs are tackling some of the most pressing challenges facing children and youth today.

We have also increased our performance in addressing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Our 2020 and 2021 cohorts are focused on expanding education and access to menstrual health and hygiene and creating broader access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all (targets that touch on SDG 3 - Good Health & Well-Being, SDG 4 - Quality Education, SDG 5 - Gender Equality, and SDG 6 -Clean Water and Sanitation). Together, Duke and UNICEF are working towards a healthier, more equitable world. As we move on from 2021, we look forward to even more growth and impact in 2022 – supporting more social entrepreneurs, engaging new friends and partners in programming and events, and continuing to raise the profiles of the changemakers we support.

We look forward to continued growth in 2022 and welcome you along in our journey!

In solidarity,
The Duke-UNICEF Team
2021 Accelerator By the Numbers

- 7 social enterprises selected for Cohort 2 out of 79 applicants
- 6 social enterprises accelerated and graduated in Cohort 1
- 6 of 13 enterprises women-led
- 10 of 13 enterprises local-led
- 26 webinars and workshops in 2021
- Support touchpoints with 300+ mentors in our network
- 154 in capacity building scale
- 175k grants awarded
- 10m+ girls, women, and children cumulatively reached by entrepreneurs
Cohort 1 Menstrual Health and Hygiene

Gender inequality, discriminatory social norms, cultural taboos, poverty, and lack of basic services often cause girls’ and women’s menstrual health and hygiene needs to go unmet. At DUIA, we share UNICEF’s vision of a world where every girl can learn, play, and safeguard her own health without experiencing stress, shame, or barriers to information or supplies during menstruation, which is why the Accelerator’s first cohort of social entrepreneurs are actively counteracting these obstacles to set girls up for success across Africa. We know that investments in adolescent girls’ well-being yield triple dividends: for those girls, the women they become, and for the next generation.

After nearly two years in the Accelerator program, we officially graduated our first six social innovator teams in October 2021. We look forward to continuing to engage them as alumni in our programming, events, and opportunities.

“[DUIA] was the worthy journey of growth personally, professionally and business wise. Through the accelerator I was able to deal with the root causes of many of our challenges tactfully and in a more sustainable way. I am proud my organization was able to build a strong foundation and credibility that allowed us to gain more contracts and partners.”

– Hyasintha Ntuyeko, Kasole Secrets

Cohort 1 Feedback and Growth

We are also encouraged by Cohort 1’s feedback and their growth while in the Accelerator:

- 100% of graduates would recommend the Accelerator to other social entrepreneurs
- 100% of cohort 1 innovators increased their confidence in entrepreneurship skills like pitching, fundraising, expanding networks, and refining business plans
- Despite set-backs from COVID, 5 out of 6 cohort 1 teams increased their human capital
- 5 out of 6 innovator teams increased their total gross revenues from baseline to endline
Most importantly Cohort 1 created remarkable impact in their communities

13k+ Over 13k students provided with access to modern water ramps for handwashing across Burundi

16k+ Femme International brought over 16K safe and affordable menstrual hygiene products to rural women across Tanzania

100k+ Kasole Secrets, Ltd sold safe and sustainable pads across sub-Saharan Africa

555k+ Over 555k people using the Lily Health app globally for sexual and reproductive health guidance

1m+ Over 1m Tanzanians that heard Tai TZ’s health and safety PSAs on public transport
Cohort 2 Sanitation, and Hygiene

Water and sanitation are at the core of sustainable development and underpin poverty reduction, economic growth, environmental sustainability, and health. Adequate sanitation is essential to childhood survival and development, improving children’s education, increasing productivity and building resilience in the face of disease and disaster. Every child, no matter where they live or their circumstance, has the right to safe water and sanitation. Selected and on-boarded in May 2021, Cohort 2 is comprised of 7 brilliant, young social enterprise teams with the innovative solutions to build the sustainable markets for water and sanitation across Africa that we need.
In the coming year, we will build on our impact momentum and continue to support Cohort 2 as they create even greater change in the world.

**3k+**
Over 3k toilet slabs sold to improve sanitation across Ethiopia

**9k+**
Over 9k children across Tanzania with improved hand hygiene thanks to TAYEP’s Maji Tap

**10k+**
Over 10k Smart Bags sold or distributed by Smart Girls, keeping more girls in school during their menses

**20k+**
Over 20k people in Kenya with safely managed sanitation due to Sanivation’s waste treatment operations

**175k+**
Over 175k children reached by Toiletpride with safe sanitation promotion in Nigeria

**21m**
21m of bars of recycled soap sold or distributed globally by Eco-Soap Bank
Expanding Our Ecosystem

2021 Virtual Forum on Social Innovation

At the Duke-UNICEF Innovation Accelerator, we understand that social entrepreneurs do not operate in a vacuum—they need support from funders, changemaker networks, governments, and peers in order to thrive. In an effort to bring the broader ecosystem closer to our social entrepreneurs, DUIA hosts an annual, week-long virtual event that brings together voices around the world—from academia, international NGOs, business, and social enterprise—to deepen the conversation around the sustainable development goals and social innovation. This year’s Forum represents notable growth from 2020, both in terms of the number of sessions and number of attendees.

The 2021 Fall Virtual Forum’s focus was on Sustainable Development Goal 6, which aims to ensure the availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all by 2030. Conversations throughout the week with high-level experts, UNICEF, Duke faculty and students, funders, social entrepreneurs, and others celebrated progress toward reaching SDG 6, while also delving into the many remaining challenges and complications.

Forum Highlights

- The Art of Selling Water, Sanitation, & Hygiene Products
- Staying Lean & COVID-resiliency
- WASH Lean Prototyping Through Pioneering Partnerships
- Market Based and Private Sector Engagement in Sanitation
- Tactics and Pitfalls: Scaling Impact through Government Partnerships
- Catastrophic Nexus of Climate and WASH
- Careers in Social Innovation
- Innovator Showcase and Pitch Event

Panelists and partners included representatives from:

- Whitten & Roy
- Draper Richards Kaplan Foundation
- Grand Challenges Canada
- Aisle
- SATO/Lixil
- iDE
- Social Finance
- Toilet Board Coalition
- Center for the Advancement of Social Entrepreneurship at Duke University’s Fuqua School of Business

13 sessions focused on the intersection of social entrepreneurship and SDG 6

1300+ attendees

65+ UNICEF staff engaged

70+ Duke students involved
Expanding Our Ecosystem

UNICEF Engagement and Support

UNICEF continues to provide dedicated support to the DUIA program, bringing sanitation, hygiene and menstrual hygiene management expertise to training and coaching sessions and utilizing their vast network to support our innovators. Innovators have had on-demand access to technical WASH expertise and been supported with a variety of topics such as monitoring WASH impact and market-based sanitation.

Innovators have engaged with and benefited from the networks of UNICEF country offices and WASH experts in the countries of their operation. In 2021 SaCoDé become a contracted partner of UNICEF Burundi to provide WASH education in schools and EcoSoap was able to find an NGO partner to test their new child-friendly soap product.

Updates from the DUIA program have been shared widely within UNICEF internal platforms. More than 70 WASH UNICEF staff from across the world joined the Duke-UNICEF Virtual Forum on Social Innovation as participants, panelists and session facilitators – providing an opportunity for continued relationship building, learning, and resource sharing. At the Forum, the Duke-UNICEF team was thrilled to welcome the UNICEF East Asia and the Pacific Young Change Makers innovators participate and share their innovation journeys during five global panel discussions.

The DUIA program has supported other innovation initiatives within UNICEF, including participating in the West and Central Africa Regional Office multi-country Sanitation Hackathon, with training and mentoring support to be provided in 2022. We anticipate providing similar support to other UNICEF regions in 2022.
DUIA Engagement Across Campus

Being housed at Duke University, DUIA has a tremendous opportunity to engage faculty and students, including highly knowledgeable graduate and professional students and fellows, in meaningful opportunities for innovation, learning, and knowledge development through the Accelerator, encouraging a new generation of leaders and scholars to engage in global efforts for social change. Forging ties with relevant schools, departments, centers, initiatives and student clubs across Duke, the Accelerator acts as a clearinghouse to promote opportunities across these communities, enriching the student experience, supporting innovations for children in partnership with our cohorts, advance a culture of academic inquiry, and inspire a commitment to change-making among a new generation of students.

In 2021 we upped our game, increasing our presence within the Duke community through our global events like the 2021 Virtual Forum on Social Innovation, partnering with groups and courses across campus to deliver DUIA programming, and by hiring student workers for highly specific DUIA and/or Duke-UNICEF innovator projects. This year, students were even inspired to start a house course – a course designed and taught by students – on UNICEF. Other student projects included:

- Writing an academic case study to be used in the classroom about Oky, the period tracker, made for girls, with girls
- Proposing scaling options for SaCoDé and the Dignity Pad (a pad that can be worn without underwear in poor or low-resource settings)
- Supporting the undergraduate-led Duke UNICEF Club
- Evaluating our first year impact with the Accelerator

More projects and collaborations to come in 2022.

Our campus partners include:
To learn more about the Duke-UNICEF Innovation Accelerator, explore our website and sign up for our newsletter at [www.dukeunicef.org](http://www.dukeunicef.org).

If you would like to partner with us or contribute to our impact, please reach out to us at DUIA@duke.edu.