



2021

ANNUAL REPORT



SHEKINAH
CENTER



Dear Friends,

With 10 years of experience celebrating this year and through your great support, we have been able to build an Integrated Development Approach to promote Social Life in rural area.

Shekinah approach is based on a strong collaboration with the Community with synergy of sectors (education, health, family economy, clean water) for sustainable social development

We have learned that social development is not only resolved by the construction of social infrastructures, a support for a better understanding of our common values by learning from each other is more necessary. Finding a way to “social change” for a better life requires a holistic approach in all our community development programs.

We thank you for joining us to make the journey together!

*With love, Joy & Gratitude
Micheline*



Micheline Barandereka
Founder & CEO

About Us

Shekinah Centre is a local non-governmental organization rooted in Rusaka, Mwaro in the countryside of Burundi. Starting as a school project in 2011, Shekinah Centre has grown to be a program that also encompasses healthcare services, clean water distribution and family economic empowerment. Our vision is to see rural communities transformed from the inside-out through sustainable development programs. We believe in a holistic approach to education in the rural areas to ensure children are able to stay in school and develop within a resilient ecosystem, starting from their homes.

EDUCATION

Shekinah school is at the core of Shekinah Centre's program to offer excellent education to children from vulnerable backgrounds who do not have access to it. To achieve this, infrastructures are built every year to accommodate more pupils and optimize their learning experience. Teachers dispense classes to 265 students as of school-year 2021/2022 with the oldest cohort being in the 11th grade graduating in 2024. Shekinah also provides school meals and regular health checks by medical professionals in order to alleviate malnutrition effects in students.

HEALTH

The healthcare division covers the nutritional health of students and on the other promotes sexual and reproductive health (SRH). On the one hand, this program facilitates a careful monitoring of students' health and growth through collection of Body Mass Index figures in order to reduce effects and symptoms of malnutrition that were detected in majority of the student population (25% of the students were underweight while 68% were on the lower average of BMI values). On the other hand, the SRH section addresses the lack of medical assistance and the precarious living conditions that vulnerable pregnant women face by providing prenatal consultations, ultrasound sessions and lab tests, nutritional guidance and post-partum assistance.

FAMILY ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

Shekinah Center's program also incorporates a family economic empowerment plan to boost the financial economy of households. This project touches different groups: Families of Shekinah School students receive goats to sustain the wellbeing and support the education of their children. Additionally, we help women grow their capital, invest in entrepreneurial ventures and contribute to the betterment of their households and their community by extension. With this objective, VSLAs of 25-30 women are formed every year and members receive goats and entrepreneurship training. Following an almost similar concept, Shekinah Centre has just launched a youth entrepreneurship project to enable young people in Rusaka to start small enterprises while farming to grow their capital.

CLEAN WATER

The Shekinah scheme also comprises a clean water project consisting of creating and sustaining reliable sources of clean water across the community of Rusaka. Thanks to a water-drilling system and an 8m³/hour water pump, Shekinah Centre is able to store up to 18,000L of water every day that is distributed to 900 households of Rusaka.

Education

- A **new classroom** was built to accommodate new students
- A **lab room** that allows students to practice their science lessons and find useful ways to apply them to daily life
- A **new dormitory** and a **shower block** with a hosting capacity for 20 students.





REVENUE GENERATING INITIATIVES

To support all of these undertakings, Shekinah Centre has put in place income-generating activities that will, as they grow, contribute to the longevity of the program and the financial viability of the organization. These activities include a rabbit project, a pig project and a soon to launch soap factory



Nutritional Health

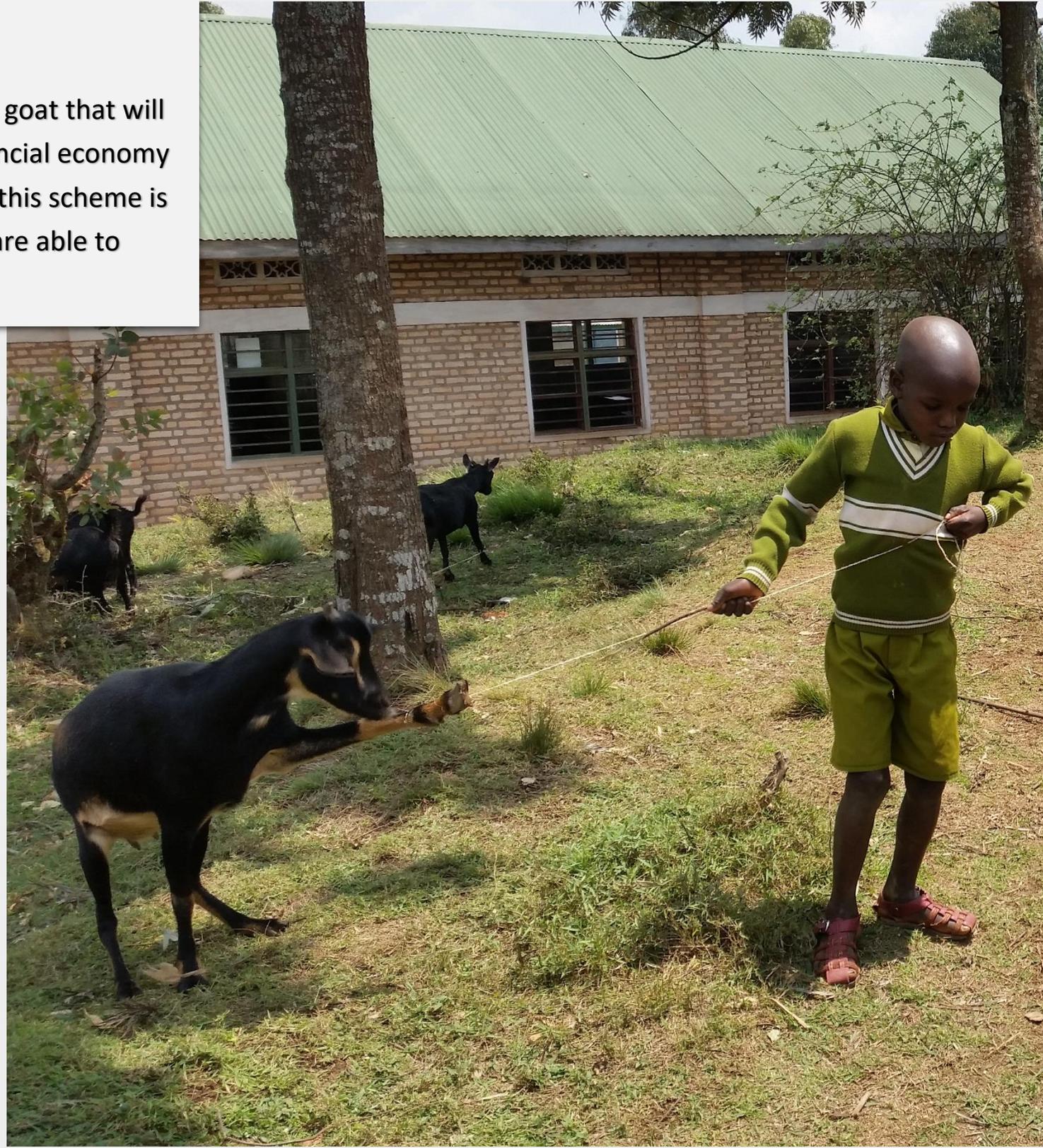
One of the main challenges that Shekinah school tackles is malnutrition cases among children in rural areas. Pupils that initially attended the school had a hard time focusing in class because they were hungry. This was and often still is the reason many children in Rusaka struggle with health problems that can, in the worst cases, prevent them from pursuing their education. In line with addressing hunger and malnutrition that were rampant in the student population, Shekinah Centre introduced school meals: A cup of porridge for breakfast and a wholesome meal for lunch every weekday for students.



The body measurements collected in school-year 2019/20 indicated that the majority of students suffered from mild to severe malnutrition symptoms (68% of the students had a lower average body mass index (BMI) indicating they were underweight while 25% were confirmed malnutrition cases). These percentages evolved in school year 2020/21 with -21% in cases at malnutrition risk and -6% in malnourished students while there was a +27% in healthy students' numbers.

GOAT DISTRIBUTION

Families of students receive each a goat that will multiply and contribute to the financial economy of the household. The objective of this scheme is to support the family so that they are able to further their children's education.



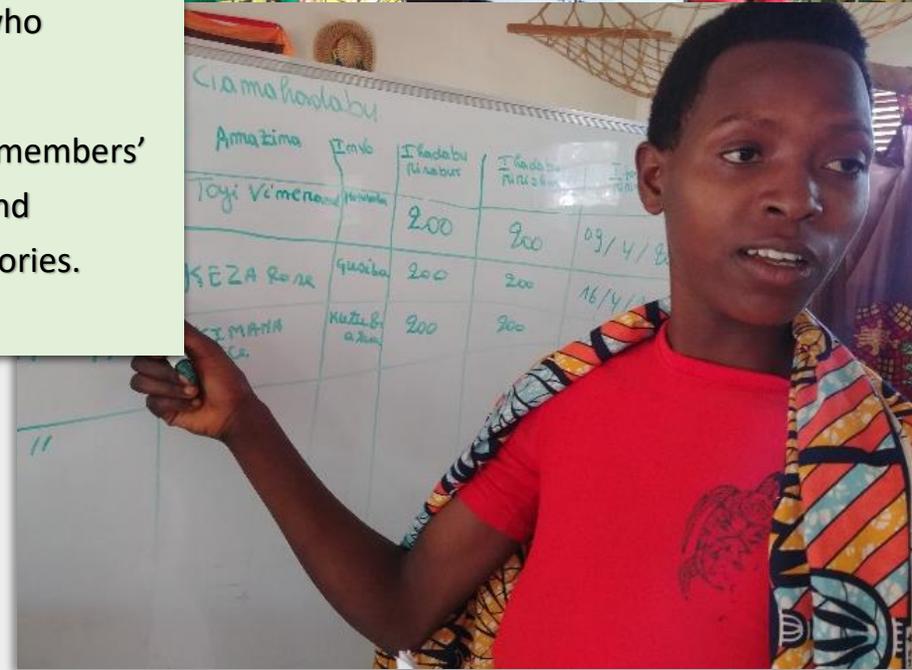
Family Economic Empowerment

VILLAGE SAVINGS AND LOAN ASSOCIATIONS (VSLAs)

Shekinah Centre launched in 2020 VSLAs with 5 groups of 20-25 women who were then trained and guided in producing paperwork required to formally register their groups. The VSLAs set off with a few principles including weekly group meetings where members put together their weekly capital contributions and a monthly meeting where all VSLAs meet under the guiding supervision of Shekinah Centre staff.

December 2021 marked the first profit sharing among 123 VSLAs members who collectively raised their capital by **58,84%**.

After a year of operations, the VSLA structures increased by half the women members' capital, it contributed to establish a positive environment for collaboration and benefited women in other ways that are further described in the following stories.



VSLAs Success stories

Radegonde Ndiokubwayo

I had recurring health issues when I first joined my VSLA. Thanks to the hardship fund that groups extend to members who are struggling to pay hospital bills, I was able to receive adequate treatment. Afterwards, I borrowed BIF100,000 to start a small retail business of selling vegetables. I had managed to save up BIF140,000 and made BIF197,000 at the end of the year. I reinvested part of that amount in my trade and used the remaining to buy a small plot of land. I have recently purchased a sheep to add to my goats.



Alice Niyonkuru

I received a goat and started saving weekly when I joined my VSLA "Twiyounganyeye" in 2020. After a year I had managed to put away BIF206,000 and I now have 8 goats. I borrowed from my group enough to pay half the price of a cow that I bought together with my husband. Today my VSLA capital is of BIF325,000 and thanks to my farming investment, I now sell manure. I have since then been able to diversify my income and contribute significantly to the wellbeing of my family.



Ménédora Niyonkuru

I started regularly saving a small amount in my VSLA. Farming activities are my main occupation and I found myself in need of a considerable quantity of fertilizer. I decided to purchase a cow with a loan that I obtained from my group. At the end of a year of saving, I grew my capital from BIF201,000 to BIF317,000. I plan to buy another cow so I have decided to reinvest my gains in the VSLA. So far I have saved BIF65,000 and we have decided in my VSLA to raise our interest rate so as to boost our capital growth.

Shekinah Centre launched SHEKINAH WASH:

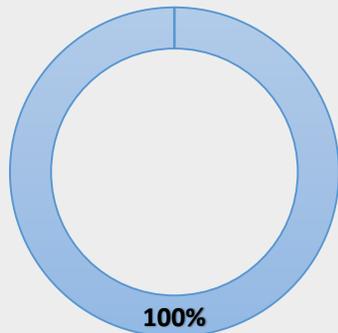
- Installed a new 8,000 L water tank
- Built two new public water taps to distribute water to over 600 neighboring households
- Distributed **200** water buckets, **200** masks and **400** soaps to parents of Shekinah School students



RESPONSE TO COVID-19

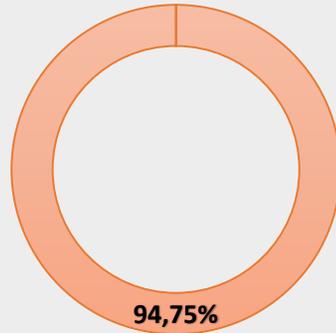
Impact

Pass rate



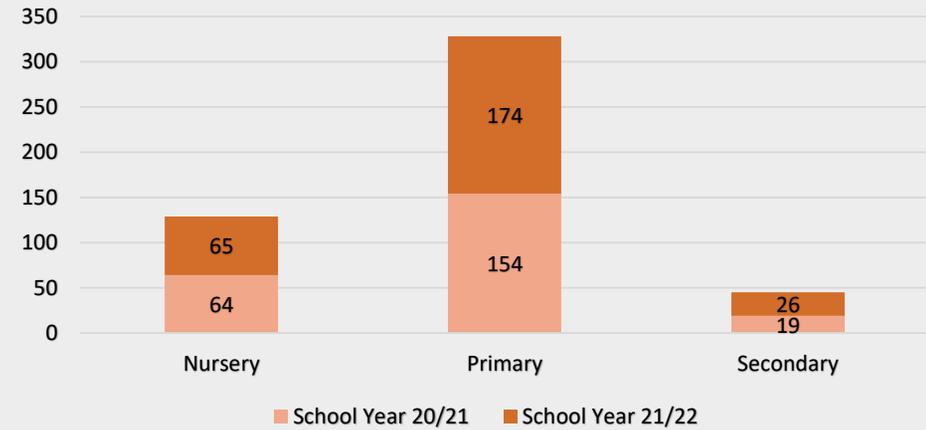
■ National Exam 2021

Pass rate



■ School Year 20/21

Students enrolled in 20/21 & 21/22



Sexual and Reproductive Health/YOUTH

- **1 monthly** SRH meeting with students (5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th & 11th grades)
- **48 packs** of sanitary pads distributed each term to 17 female students

307

Families have received goats

5

VSLA groups created

900

Households have access to clean water

25

Teachers have received capacity-building training

Impact

Capital growth per VSL group

TWIYUNGUNGANYE

57,8%

TWITEZ'IMBERE

65,4%

TWIZERANE

57,4%

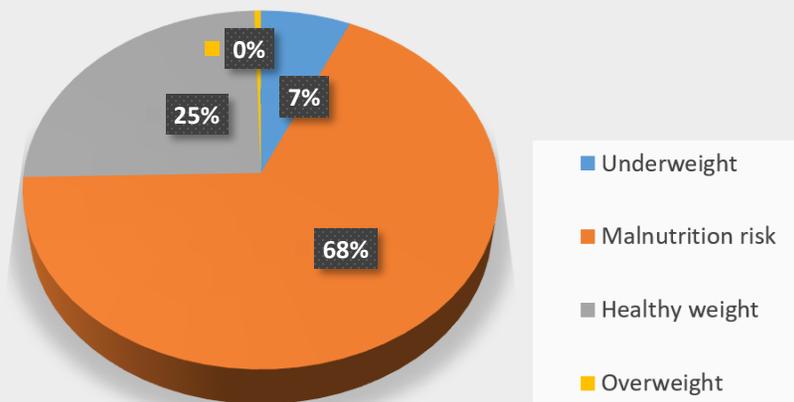
ABANAMARIMWE

65,5%

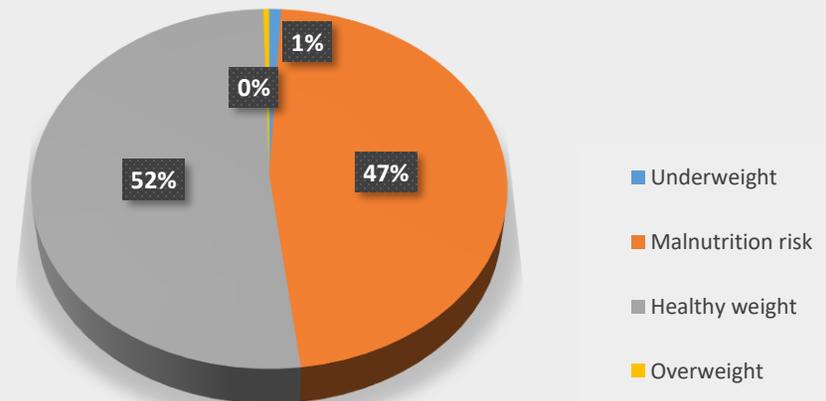
DUFATANE MU NDA

49,9%

Nutritional Health 2019-2020



Nutritional Health 2020-2021



Additional programmatic work



Youth entrepreneurship “KEREBUKA”

Having impacted multiple layers of Rusaka's demography, we wanted to reach out and include young people in our program. So was launched the youth entrepreneurship initiative that gathers 61 girls and boys from 4 collines of the community. This initiative aims:

- To stimulate young people's entrepreneurship spirit through farming livestock;
- To help them grow capital that they can invest in the future
- To build a sense for accountability and empower them to achieve financial freedom.



Healthy pregnancies, healthy newborns

Every year, 50 pregnant women from vulnerable livelihoods are recruited in a project that aims to provide healthcare (Ultrasound sessions and lab tests) needed during pregnancy, training and guidance on nutrition and hygiene as well as postpartum medical support. 50 women joined this project in October 2021 and more than 80% of them have already given birth to healthy babies in safe conditions.



Highlights

10 YEAR ANNIVERSARY

Shekinah Centre celebrated 10 years of impact since its launch in 2011 as Shekinah School



1st RANKING AT THE NATIONAL EXAM

Chanella is an 11th grade student, in the sciences option.

Chanella sat for the National Exam in order to move up to 11th grade. Hers is the best result of all the province of Mwaro. She rose above the precarious living conditions of an unemployed single-parent household to be the best she could be. Chanella is the pride of Shekinah School, of her family and of her mother who strives to provide the best education for her and her siblings.

Chanella says she is fortunate to be attending Shekinah School where she receives excellent education and enjoys school meals with her friends. She wants to pursue higher education in sciences and acquire a Doctorate in Mathematics.



Ten for One

Daegu Dongshin Korea Church

Segal Family Foundation

UNESCO

Communities of Hope

Manor Trade

Giving Hands

Shekinah Foundation Canada

THANK YOU

TO OUR

PARTNERS



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