

**Gates  
Philanthropy  
Partners**

Impact Report  
2021

# Progress, Resilience, and Hope

This report—a reflection back to 2021—was written as the world began to reopen after Delta, Omicron, and two years of living in a pandemic. 2020 was a year of challenge, quick action, and an outpouring of generosity. 2021, in turn, was a year of scientific breakthroughs, reasons for optimism, and adjustments to an evolving standard of the “new normal.” Through it all, your partnership and generosity have driven advances and ensured support, even in the toughest times, to vulnerable communities in the United States and around the world.

In this report you’ll find snapshots of lives and achievements, where the hope of possibility has turned into exciting reality. The stories of progress on the frontlines of our communities—in medicine and pandemic preparedness, in education, in the empowerment of women—are profiles of promise and resilience. They remind us how, despite setbacks and challenges, tremendous growth, hope, and learning can emerge to drive future innovation and creativity. And how changemaking can blossom to more.

At Gates Philanthropy Partners, we are honored to serve as a conduit for generous individuals to incredible organizations making a difference in the world.

Thank you for your partnership,



Robert Rosen  
**Executive Director, Gates Philanthropy Partners**

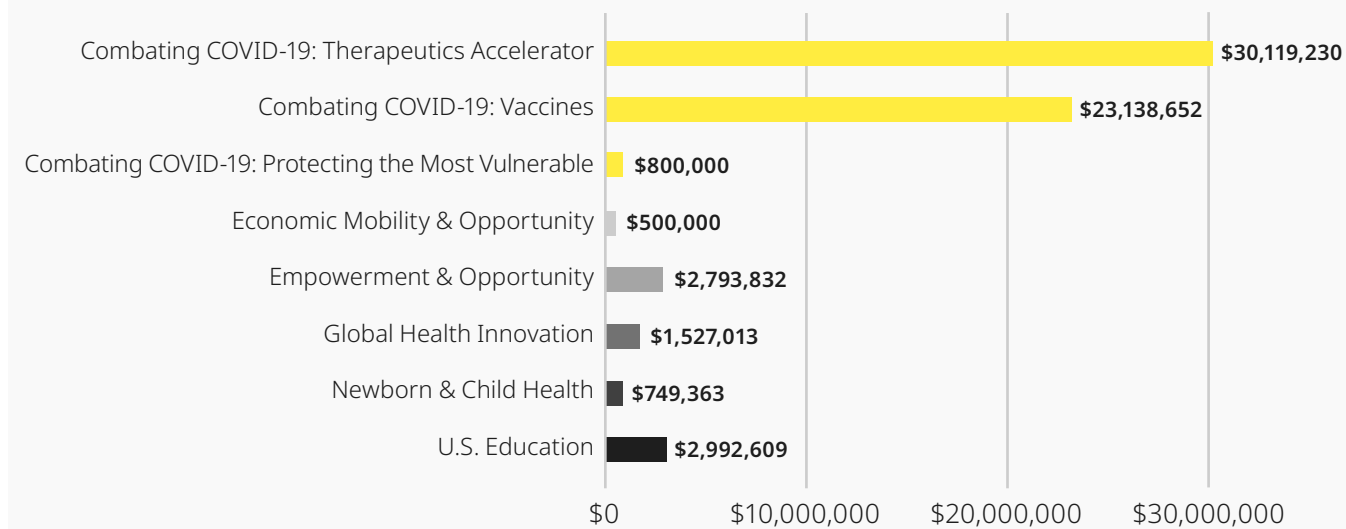
# 2021 in Focus—Your Generosity in Action

January 1, 2021–December 31, 2021

Gates Philanthropy Partners invests in high-impact organizations tackling complex, must-solve problems. Our grantee partners in 2021 include leaders advancing scientific innovations and delivering critical treatments and vaccines where they are needed most in our fight against COVID-19, removing barriers to help young people reach their educational goals, and helping women and girls achieve pathways out of poverty.



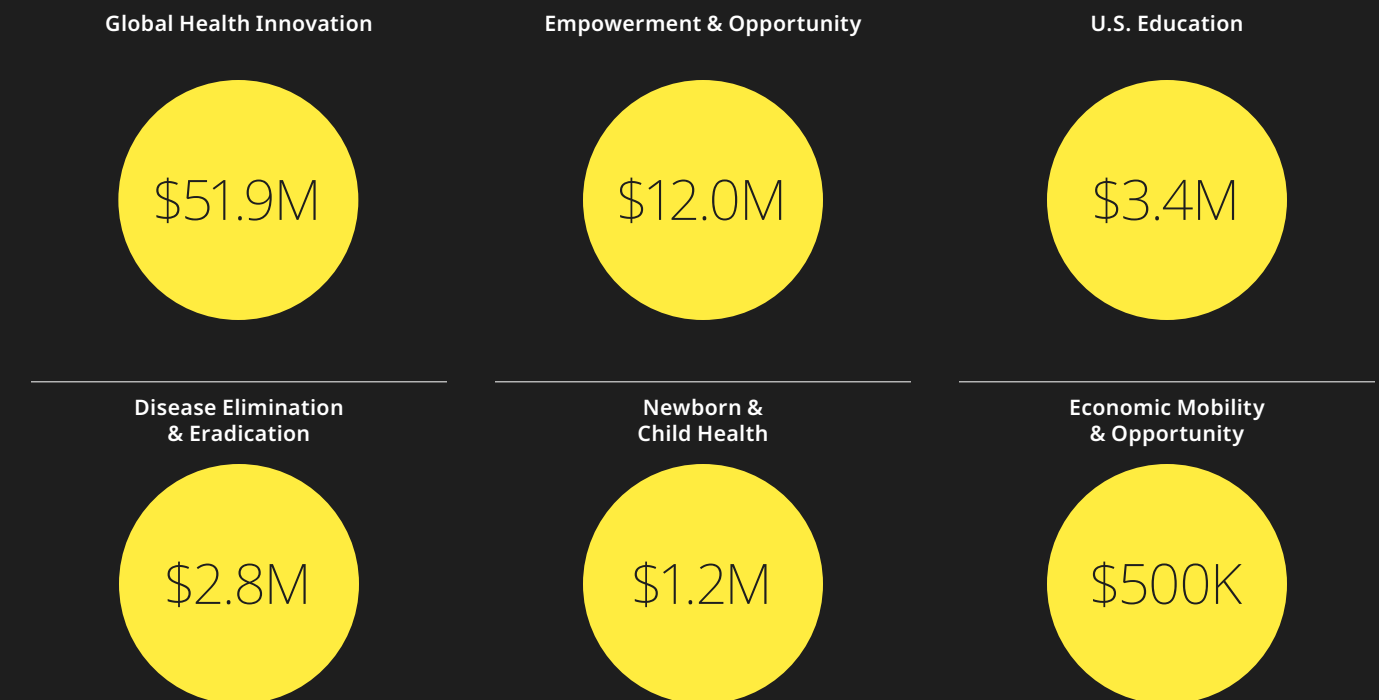
## 2021 Portfolios & Grants Distributed



# Our Collective Impact

2017–2021

Together, we have distributed more than \$192 million in grants to 78 unique grantee partners.





## COVID-19

### Answering Challenges at an Accelerated Pace

2021 was notable for the stunning pace of new challenges and achievements in the global pandemic response. As new variants emerged, questions arose about the effectiveness of our most powerful tools against COVID-19: vaccines, treatments, and even diagnostic tests. Continuing to ensure that people everywhere, regardless of resources or geography, have access to safe, affordable, effective vaccines and treatments remains one of the world's biggest hurdles.

Yet there is much to celebrate. In less than a year from the pandemic's start, scientists developed and gained approvals for several vaccines, breakthroughs resulting from global collaboration and decades of mRNA research. To date, more than 10 billion doses have been administered globally. Just as the Omicron variant emerged in November, the first two oral antiviral treatments against this virus were granted emergency use authorization in the United States by the FDA—an encouraging signal for global distribution. Investments in innovative solutions today are laying the groundwork to bring this pandemic under control and prepare for the next.

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PHOTO CREDIT: ©GATES ARCHIVE/ALISSA EVERETT



PHOTO CREDIT: ©SCRIPPS RESEARCH

### Responding Swiftly, Thanks to Your Generosity

In another unprecedented year, your generosity to the Combating COVID-19 Fund fueled our response. Together, we invested over \$54 million across 19 critical projects to meet the demands of a changing pandemic: better tools for testing and disease modeling; stronger, resilient clinical capacity in more communities; accelerated access to COVID-19 vaccines in low- and middle-income countries; and deeper research into treatments.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, COVID-19's immense human, economic, and social toll has been evident in every country and community. Yet pandemics disproportionately affect people living in extreme poverty. During COVID-19, the health systems serving those communities have struggled more and more with each wave. Your support has helped ensure a more equitable recovery while saving lives.

### Innovating with the COVID-19 Therapeutics Accelerator

One of the boldest initiatives we support is the COVID-19 Therapeutics Accelerator, or CTA. This unique collaboration—led by philanthropy with government support—drives start-to-finish efforts to research, develop, and fast-track the manufacture of COVID-19 treatments for low-income countries. Effective, affordable, and accessible therapeutics are essential to help people recover quickly and remove income as an availability requirement.

Although seeking new COVID-19 treatments is not without risk, the potential rewards for such treatments could dramatically alter the pandemic's trajectory. CTA investments supported projects across the research and development (R&D) spectrum, from examining how existing compounds and drugs might be repurposed to exploring new therapies easily administered in outpatient settings. As timeliness was crucial for these projects, typical R&D processes were accelerated to generate data quickly, enabling scientists to identify, eliminate, or advance possible treatments at record-making speeds.

The CTA also advanced the development of new diagnostic tools, such as the LumiraDx Platform. The specialized technology used for this portable instrument, distributed across Africa, can process high-quality, rapid antigen tests without the support of a laboratory or highly skilled technician. As a result, the tool allows people to be tested for COVID-19 and, if positive, receive immediate treatment. Though the pandemic inspired its creation, LumiraDx has the potential to transform the future of testing for other diseases, and for all our global citizens, long after COVID-19 has run its course.



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## U.S. Education

### Creating Pathways to College Education

School closures and COVID-19 protocols for classrooms drew significant attention around the United States over the last two years. But there's another story that hasn't made the headlines: the decline in the number of students transitioning from high school to college. Undergraduate enrollment was down 3.4 percent in 2020, and early research suggests that 2021 will follow a similar pattern. Combined, this is the largest two-year decline in enrollment in at least a half-century. There are more than 1 million fewer students enrolled in college now than before the pandemic began.

The pandemic changed the trajectory for millions of students who dreamed of completing their postsecondary education and moving into the workforce with the skills, experience, and confidence needed to succeed. For students from low-income communities, the majority of whom are students of color, the final two years of high school and the first year of college can pose the greatest challenges.

Many of these challenges are rooted in systemic inequities. They range from inadequate postsecondary advising in low-resourced high schools to lack of teacher training or mentors to help students achieve their postsecondary ambitions.

At the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Pathways team within the foundation's United States Program recognized in 2017 the need to strengthen the bonds between K-12 education, postsecondary education, and the workforce. During the pandemic, with a strong network of diverse organizations, the foundation was well positioned to help pivot grantee partners' programming to address the needs of students. Together, the Pathways team and its partners are aiming to achieve a dramatic increase in Black, Latinx, and low-income youth enrolled in college—and giving them the experiences, skills, and opportunities to thrive in the workforce and in life.

### Driving Academic Equity at Scale

**OneGoal** is one of the Pathways and Gates Philanthropy Partners grantees working to promote equitable college opportunity for all young people. The organization has developed a teacher-led model that is effective, affordable, and scalable.

Since its founding in 2007, OneGoal has worked with 17,250 students and now partners with 127 high schools and 45 postsecondary institutions. Their unique model addresses multiple fronts and includes programming embedded into students' daily schedules, teacher training, and solutions to strengthen student-teacher relationships and create culturally relevant curricula.

In addition, as an organization focused on learning, OneGoal seeks continuous feedback from students and schools. In 2021, they interviewed 75 students about what they termed "stopping out"—which describes the sudden stall of students on a postsecondary path. Through their research, OneGoal found two leading causes of "stopping out": the financial and social-emotional challenges faced by these students as well as a misalignment between their degree programs and their aspirations. Two other academic-related trends may also have been factors: Underresourced high schools do not prepare students well for college-level academics and some educational systems are not suitably designed to enable first generation students of color to thrive. OneGoal is incorporating these insights into its programming and sharing them with partner institutions in an effort to break down persistent, systemic barriers to student success.

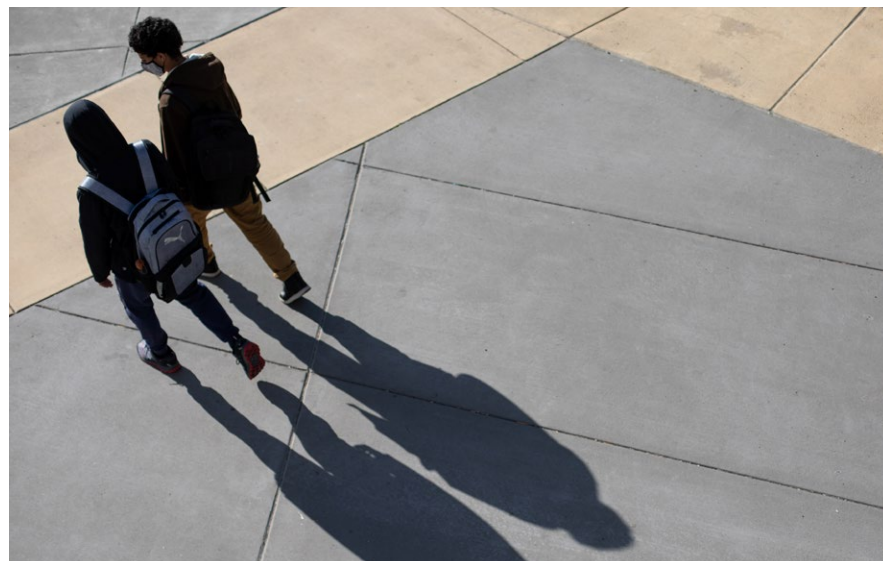


PHOTO CREDIT: ©ONEGOAL



PHOTO CREDIT: ©GETTY IMAGES



## Gender Equality in India

### Emerging from the Pandemic with New Opportunities

In March 2020, when countries around the world were shuttering businesses and closing schools to mitigate the spread of the newly identified coronavirus, India implemented the world's largest lockdown. The country restricted the movement of nearly 1.4 billion people. This sudden, swift action had a dramatic effect on the sizable informal workforce, including street vendors, caregivers, and household staff, that previously animated city streets and households.

As with women around the world during the pandemic, women in India were the hardest hit by the shutdown. Of all women in the Indian workforce, 94 percent are employed in the informal economy—and of those, more than 50 percent are the sole supporters of their families. Jobs as nannies, housekeepers, and food vendors evaporated because of the lockdown and fears of infection. For women living on the threshold of poverty, fears of getting sick were matched by fears of financial loss and food scarcity.

When the second and a harsher wave of COVID-19 cases spiked in April 2021, lockdowns were inevitable, again impacting businesses and restricting movement among households. During this wave, the rapid spread of the virus coupled with financial devastation resulted in expansive losses—particularly for women living in poverty.

But out of loss and grief come hope and innovation. While many women still face an uncertain economic future, many others have achieved new pathways out of poverty—often thanks to the collective action of other women in their community.

Here are the stories of those innovators, advocates, and learners who demonstrated courage, resilience, and generosity to support their communities and lift other women up.

'Our villages are remote, and there was a lot of fear and misinformation about COVID-19. We trained women in identifying symptoms, so they were able to raise awareness and share resources with our sisters and brothers in Tapi.'

Lataben Gamit





### SEWA Bharat: Bringing Women in the Informal Economy Together

For nearly 40 years, SEWA Bharat, a Delhi-based organization, has worked to promote workforce opportunities, financial independence, education, health, and legal rights for women engaged in India's informal economy. Through its expansive network of women's cooperatives, SEWA Bharat reaches more than 1.9 million women in 17 of India's 28 states.

#### Parveen Ben – Rajasthan state, Educator

More than half of India's population does not have internet access. However, thanks to a digital literacy project hosted by SEWA, Parveen understood how to use the internet and was motivated to do so as a way to educate herself about COVID-19. She had read that masks were important for preventing the spread of the virus. But instead of buying masks at a local market, she decided to make her own from readily available fabric. She taught herself how by watching YouTube videos online. Her neighbors ultimately benefited from her curiosity and creativity. In the early days of the pandemic, when there were many unknowns, she visited them, sharing what she had learned about the virus and distributing among them the 200 masks she had stitched.

#### Lataben Gamit – Gujarat state, Organizer

Lataben is a farmer and the chairperson of a women's cooperative called Megha Mandli, which provides 1,000 indigenous women farmers access to seeds and tools as well as healthcare and insurance.

During the pandemic, Lataben and 75 women farmers from Megha Mandli pivoted to become organizers. Together, working through their cooperative, they reached out to 36,000 people in their district, offering information on COVID-19 and delivering 2,000 health kits, including masks and sanitizers, to those in small and remote villages, where those resources were unavailable. They also linked farmers suffering from economic losses to small loans and supplied them with okra seed kits so they could continue generating an income.

#### Sarabjit Kaur – Punjab state, Advocate

Sarabjit, a widow, lives with her son. To earn money, she works in private homes as a domestic worker and on farms. Before the pandemic, she supplemented her income by cooking for weddings. When the lockdowns started, even as she faced her own economic hardship, she identified people in her community who, as migrant families, were unable to access food and financial support. Sarabjit alerted local SEWA staff members as well as political leaders to the plight of these families. Thanks to her advocacy, they received food rations and access to other support services.



ILLUSTRATION CREDIT: ©UPASANA AGARWAL



ILLUSTRATION CREDIT: ©UPASANA AGARWAL

'The She Creates Change lab introduced me to other women like me who are equally mad about changemaking, who ask bold questions, and who become each other's biggest cheerleaders! I learned how a simple online petition can be used not just to gather signatures, but also to document the journey of a changemaker.'

**Spurthi Kolipaka**

### Change.org Foundation | She Creates Change

Change.org Foundation is a global organization that promotes change by empowering individuals with a platform to drive solutions. In 2017, the organization launched an initiative in India called She Creates Change, which sought to equip women with storytelling, campaign building, and community organizing skills.

COVID-19 lockdowns pushed She Creates Change activities from in-person to online, yet the women inspired by She Creates Change remained undeterred. As Shalini Menon, Global Director of Training, observed, "She Creates Change was born out of the need to support a generation of women leaders to drive systems change and build movements. We know from previous experience that when we introduce additional support for women changemakers, a significant increase in impact and change is created on many issues."

Here are two changemakers who continued to raise awareness about important issues impacting women by taking their campaigns online—and continuing momentum despite the challenges posed by the pandemic.

#### **Nirmal Chandel** – Himachal Pradesh state, Changemaker

Nirmal was 27 years old when she lost her husband to a heart attack. Widowed and perceived as "helpless" by everyone around her, including her own family, she left her home to prove them wrong. Thirty years later, she leads a 16,000-member collective that works to raise awareness for the rights of single, widowed, or abandoned women. Even with very little exposure or access to the digital world, Nirmal recently received training from She Creates Change, which gave her collective the tools needed to start an online campaign that is seeking to raise the income limit for pension schemes, to help other single and widowed women—now struggling to make ends meet—gain financial security.



#### **Spurthi Kolipaka** – Telangana state, Changemaker

In India, it is still the custom in many marriages for the bride's family to offer a dowry. Sometimes, following the marriage, the husband's family tries to obtain additional financial gain—often by verbally or physically harassing the new bride. Spurthi witnessed a family member suffer such dowry harassment and was motivated to launch a campaign for the creation of a women's commission to fight gender inequality in her community.





## Remembering Girin

### Honoring a Life Well Lived

On September 29, 2021, we lost a visionary colleague and friend, Girindre (Girin) Beeharry. Girin spent his career leading, inspiring, and serving others. During his years at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, he was pivotal in shaping our health and education strategies, in India and far beyond. Yet his light shone brightest in the quietest moments, often in his connections with other people. To honor his memory, Jennifer Alcorn, Deputy Director, Philanthropic Partnerships, shares some reflections on Girin's generosity and compassion—and the legacy he leaves behind.

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### “Memory creates the illusion of continuity.”

This quote from Sri Nisargadatta Maharaj sits with me as I write this remembrance for a friend and colleague, Girindre Beeharry.

The past two years—for all of us—have held many goodbyes to friends, family, colleagues, and people we admired. Too often, those farewells were not given in person, and we are left with pre-pandemic memories of those we miss as we reenter the world.

Why am I writing to you about Girin? Because he was extraordinary. Like Bill, Melinda, and Bill Gates Sr., he was the heart and architect of the Gates Foundation's work. He shaped our early global health strategies, he led our India office, and he explored what the foundation could do in global education. He mentored great minds; he hired the best teams. His spirit of curiosity, humor, and honesty affected everyone he worked with, whether they were a colleague, an on-the-ground partner, or the founders of the Gates Foundation.

Girin was the smartest person in the room—always—but he didn't show it. He was the softest-spoken person in the room, too, but you didn't remember that after he spoke. Girin would quote poetry, a story from *The New Yorker*, and health statistics in the span of a three-minute conversation. He always talked about his daughter. I remember him telling us how she discovered what a “google” really was.

My last in-person memory of Girin was an interview I did with him for the launch of the Empowerment & Opportunity Fund. He told me the story of the mother and daughter who are featured in a picture familiar to all of us at the foundation. He was there the day the picture was taken during a trip to the field in India. In his conversation with the mother, she asked him to take her daughter and give her a better life. His heart broke as he told her he couldn't do that. I will never forget his eyes as he told me that his work—from that day on—had been for that girl and her mother.

That was Girin. He left this world too soon, but his light continues to shine and guides those he left behind. In his memory, we work each day to make a difference for that girl and her mother and all of the families like them.

Jennifer Alcorn

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