



Grand Challenges Canada®  
Grands Défis Canada

# Grand Challenges Canada Annual Report 2022-23

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BOLD IDEAS WITH BIG IMPACT™

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# Message from the Chair of the Board of Directors



A message from Guylaine Saucier, Chair of Grand Challenges Canada's Board

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For the past 13 years, Grand Challenges Canada (GCC) has been steadfast in its commitment to supporting innovation as a powerful tool to address the world's most pressing challenges.

Through the power of locally-led innovations in 102 countries, our funding has resulted in more than 21 million lives improved and 62.5K lives saved. These innovations are on track to improve up to 64 million lives by the end of 2030. These results are a testament to the power of innovation for good.

GCC has undergone significant growth and transformation since its inception. We have remained nimble in our funding approach and have launched new initiatives and challenges that have expanded our reach and impact.

I would like to express our sincere appreciation to Jocelyn Mackie for her dedicated service as Co-CEO over the past five years, and for the nearly 12 years she has spent in service of Grand Challenges Canada. Although I know Jocelyn's decision to step down from an organization that she loves was a difficult one, we are excited for her future endeavours and are grateful for her tireless efforts and commitment to our work. Jocelyn's strategic vision and leadership have resulted in significant achievements for the organization and were instrumental in shaping the success of GCC.

As we look to the future, we are inspired by the prospect of continuing our journey under the leadership of Dr. Karlee Silver. Her experience,

deep knowledge of our work, and unwavering dedication to our mission will undoubtedly guide GCC to new heights. Karlee's leadership ensures that we will continue to grow, innovate, and lead in the space of global challenges.

I extend my heartfelt thanks to all of the members of GCC's board and committees. Your commitment, wisdom, and guidance have been instrumental in our growth and success. I would especially like to acknowledge the contributions of our committee and council chairs for their time and expertise.

Our journey would not have been possible without the support of our valued partners. We extend our sincere thanks to Global Affairs Canada, Women and Gender Equality (WaGE), the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and all members of the Grand Challenges Network, among many others. We are grateful for the support of Fondation Botnar, the United States Agency for International Development's (USAID) Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance, the UK's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, and the Government of the Netherlands' Department for Stabilisation and Humanitarian Aid. Your partnership reinforces our collective commitment to making a difference.

My deepest gratitude to all of you for your support. Together, we will continue to catalyze innovation for a better world.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. Saucier'.

**Guylaine Saucier, Chair of the Board**

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# Message from the Co-CEOs

Grand Challenges Canada's Co-CEOs reflect on their five years leading the organization in partnership.

As our term as Co-CEOs of Grand Challenges Canada comes to an end, we want to take this opportunity to reflect on our accomplishments and look toward the future.

We are extremely proud of the progress we have made together at GCC. Our co-leadership has proven to be a successful model of sharing power and accountability. It brought immense resiliency to the organization; for example, the Co-CEO model allowed us to maintain continuity even as we each took parental leaves.

We challenged each other to make better decisions for the organization, relying on our different and complementary areas of expertise to best support the innovators and communities we strive to serve. Some key ingredients for success were that we shared in the wins and failures equally, and we disagreed in private until we came to a consensus to move forward united.

This past year, we continued to make great progress toward our strategic goals and initiated a number of new challenges to tackle emerging global issues.



We launched Being, a youth-mental health initiative that focuses on the prevention and the promotion of mental health and wellbeing in 13 priority countries.

The Stars in Global Health team piloted the Ghana Country Innovation platform, co-creating the initiative in partnership with the Ghana Health Service, USAID-Ghana and AMP Health, as part of our commitment to localization and powershifting.

In October 2022, we put out a request for proposals focused on the Health Impacts of Climate Change, and received 772 applications from 80 countries our call for innovations in focused on the intersection of climate adaptation and health.

We provided USD \$5M in catalytic funding to the Transform Health Fund, a new initiative launched by the Health Finance Coalition and AfricInvest to strengthen health ecosystems in sub-Saharan Africa.



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We kicked off the first phase of a grand challenge to create sustainable diagnostic labs in resource-limited settings alongside the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH), Global Affairs Canada and partners. These are just a few examples of how GCC's funding is actively contributing to a healthier, more equitable world.

We also continued to grow some of our flagship programs. We celebrated the fifth anniversary of the Humanitarian Grand Challenge, Creating Hope In Conflict (CHIC). To date, this partnership has funded 76 innovations in conflict-affected countries, reaching 3.5 million people.

The work being done in the Humanitarian Grand Challenge portfolio speaks to our commitment to address the critical challenges faced by humanity, even in the most adverse circumstances. We continue to grow our Humanitarian Innovation pillar and are excited at the prospect of undertaking new work in that area in the years ahead.

The Indigenous Innovation Initiative launched its second request for proposals, seeking

innovative ideas at the proof of concept and transition-to-scale stages.

We continue to evolve as an organization. This year, GCC's Knowledge Management and Translation team, working in collaboration with Duke University's Global Health Innovation Center, conducted an evaluation of the impact and sustainability of innovations that GCC has supported in the transition-to-scale portfolio over the past decade. The lessons learned from this review will guide our future strategies and are invaluable in helping us to refine and optimize our funding approach.

Our success as Co-CEOs would not have been possible without the trust and support of the amazing GCC team, dedicated board members and advisors, like-minded funders and partners and all of the inspiring innovators doing the hard work to save and improve lives.

Thank you for your support and partnership on this journey.



**Jocelyn Mackie**  
Co-CEO



**Dr. Karlee Silver**  
Co-CEO

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# Farewell, with gratitude

As she embarks on a new adventure, Co-CEO Jocelyn Mackie reflects on her time with Grand Challenges Canada



I am filled with a mix of emotions: sadness as I leave an organization I love and helped build for more than decade, gratitude for all that I have learned, and renewed energy and excitement for the future.

Since I joined GCC almost 12 years ago, I have had the privilege of collaborating with inspiring innovators, government and private sector change-makers, amazing colleagues, a dedicated board and many thoughtful advisors and partners.

I have also learned a lot about partnership, with gratitude to Dr. Karlee Silver. I am so looking forward to cheering her and the team on as they continue GCC's important work!

We have accomplished so much together. I am the proudest of:

- Nurturing a trusting relationship with many government and non-government funders.
- Securing over \$400M in funding for GCC to continue to support impactful work around the globe.

- Incubating the Indigenous Innovation Initiative; I have learned so much from Indigenous colleagues and advisors.
- Investing in three health impact funds that would not have come to fruition had it not been for GCC's leadership.
- Working to shift power to decision-makers in low- and middle-income countries, including through our work with the International Development Innovation Alliance (IDIA).
- The growth of the Grand Challenges network, which started as a partnership with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, GCC and USAID, and is now at over a dozen initiatives and growing!
- And finally, enabling an incredible team who are poised to take GCC forward, under Dr. Silver's experienced leadership.

I have poured my heart and soul into Grand Challenges Canada, always trying to put the best interests of the organization first. Despite some sleepless nights, I have gained far more than I have given; rich experience and wisdom, and many colleagues I now consider friends. For this, I will forever be grateful.

As I move on in my career, I am very fortunate to be going to a platform where I can continue to support organizations making an impact at the intersection of innovation, government and industry. Although it is bittersweet to say goodbye, I do so with a full heart.

Thank you for your trust and partnership. Until we connect again.

**Jocelyn Mackie, Co-CEO**

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# Leading Grand Challenges Canada into the future

As Dr. Karlee Silver takes over as CEO as Grand Challenges Canada, she discusses her plans for the future



After five years of a truly remarkable partnership with Jocelyn Mackie as Co-CEO, I couldn't be more excited to continue to lead this organization. The work we do at GCC resonates deeply with me, and I am genuinely excited about our future.

We have been incredibly fortunate to attract talented individuals from diverse sectors and geographies who are passionate about contributing to GCC's mission. Our goal is not only to do good work but also to be a place where it feels good to work. In this spirit, we have introduced initiatives like the 4-day work week to promote work-life balance and well-being among our team members. We continue to experiment with new ways to adapt, evolve and drive meaningful progress as an organization.

We exist to fund innovation that addresses pressing global challenges. With GCC's support, innovators around the world have improved the lives of more than 21 million people in 102 countries, an increase of

nearly 10 million people in the last year alone. We are grateful for the opportunity to partner with them and to witness their unwavering dedication, creativity, and ingenuity as they work to address some of the most challenging problems facing their communities.

As we approach the final year of our current strategic period, we are embarking on exciting experiments in two key areas. First, we are building on work we've done with country and regional partners, such as Grand Challenges (GC) Senegal, GC South Africa, and GC Africa — to support early-stage innovations, nurturing them from inception. Second, we are working closely with country leadership, multilateral organizations and partners that have the power to pull innovations to scale.

Over the years, we have earned a reputation for excellence in transition-to-scale work. Since 2011, we have supported more than 250 innovations during the transition-to-scale phase, providing catalytic funding, technical support, helping to build an evidence base, and

facilitating connections with key stakeholders. With the mountain model (p.9), we have cultivated a staged approach to accompany innovators on their journey toward scale and sustainability. This will continue to be a focal point for us in the coming years.

I want to express my gratitude to everyone who has been part of this remarkable journey with GCC. As we move forward, I am excited about the opportunities, challenges, and successes that await us. Together, we will continue to make a profound impact on the world and drive positive change.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Karlee Silver". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Dr. Karlee Silver, CEO**

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# Measuring our impact

Since 2010, Grand Challenges Canada has been funding innovations that save and improve lives. To date, we have funded more than 1,400+ innovations, with a specific focus on low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), conflict-affected countries, and Indigenous innovations in Canada.

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**45.6M**

**people using innovations**

GCC-funded innovations have reached more than 45 million people worldwide



**21.04M**

**lives improved**

More than 21 million lives have been improved by GCC-supported innovations over the last 13 years.



**62.5K**

**lives saved**

Since 2010, innovations supported by Grand Challenges Canada have saved 62,500 lives

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**64M**

**lives improved by 2030**

Innovations supported by Grand Challenges Canada are on track to improve up to 64 million lives by 2030



**1,400+**

**innovations**

Grand Challenges Canada has supported more than 1,400 unique innovations that address pressing global challenges



**\$2.27**

**dollars leveraged per \$1**

For every \$1 that GCC has deployed from Global Affairs Canada, we have leveraged \$2.27 from other partners and investors



**102**

**countries**

GCC has funded innovations that have been implemented in 102 low- and middle-income countries and conflict-affected countries, as well as Indigenous communities in Canada



**65%**

**locally-led innovations**

Nearly two-thirds (65%) of innovations funded by GCC are led by local innovators in low- and middle-income countries and/or conflict-affected countries



**42%**

**women & gender-diverse leadership**

Women and gender-diverse individuals lead 42% of GCC-supported projects



**355**

**policies influenced**

GCC-supported innovations have influenced 355 policies; a critical milestone for scale and sustainability



**43.6K+**

**jobs created**

More than 43.6K jobs have been created in low- and middle-income countries as a result of GCC-supported innovations



**361**

**Canadian-led innovations**

Since 2010, 361 projects funded by GCC have been led by Canadian institutions

**Learn more about the impact of specific initiatives:**

**Humanitarian Grand Challenge:**



Read the latest annual report on the **Creating Hope in Conflict** website: [www.humanitariangrandchallenge.org](http://www.humanitariangrandchallenge.org)

**Indigenous Innovation Initiative:**



Read the latest impact and annual reports on the **I3** website: [www.indigenouinnovate.org](http://www.indigenouinnovate.org)



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# Strategic highlights

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## Scale and Sustainability Learning Initiative

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In 2022, GCC management analyzed the scale and sustainability of innovations that have been supported to transition to scale over the past decade. Using Duke University's Launch and Scale Framework to shape our methodology, we partnered with the Duke University Global Health Innovation Center to develop tools for data collection and analysis, drawing on their expertise in assessing scale and sustainability.

The results, which were based on in-depth, semi-structured interviews and an anonymous survey with 49 closed transition-to-scale (TTS) innovations portfolio and interviews with 49 transition-to-scale innovators, helped us to achieve thematic saturation with our sample.

The Scale and Sustainability Portfolio Review found that GCC-supported innovations continue to sustain and grow their impact in the years after GCC funding, and that in particular, innovations with local leadership were significantly more likely to sustain or increase impact after receiving TTS funding. Some of the key learnings included:

### 1) GCC-supported innovations continue to sustain and grow their impact in the years after our funding has ended.

- More than 38% of innovations supported at TTS are sustaining or increasing their impact after GCC funding. (This figure assumes all innovators who did not respond to the request had not sustained their innovation after funding ended).

- Our modelling suggests we need 30% of TTS-supported innovations to be increasing their impact to reach our 2030 targets of 64M lives improved and 1.78M lives saved.

### 2) GCC supported innovations are on track to achieve financial sustainability.

- More than a third of innovations supported at TTS have achieved financial sustainability to sustain or grow their innovation.
- By providing funding and organizational development opportunities for LMIC-based innovators, GCC fills a critical gap and removes a significant barrier to sustainable scale.

### 3) Innovations with local leadership are more likely to sustain or increase impact post-GCC funding.

- By providing funding and development opportunities for LMIC-based innovators, GCC fills a critical gap and removes a significant barrier to sustainable scale for innovators closest to the challenges.
- Over 80% of innovations that were sustaining or increasing impact had a local founder and/or leadership. For the 20% of innovations whose funding produced no significant impact, only 66% had local leadership.

### 4) Public sector scaling pathways were more likely to see innovations sustaining or increasing their impact.

- Building and sustaining government partnerships and buy-in can be a lengthy and resource-intensive process, but participants agreed that they are an essential element for scale.

**5) Flexibility in GCC’s funding and support enables innovators to build a solid foundation to sustain and scale impact.**

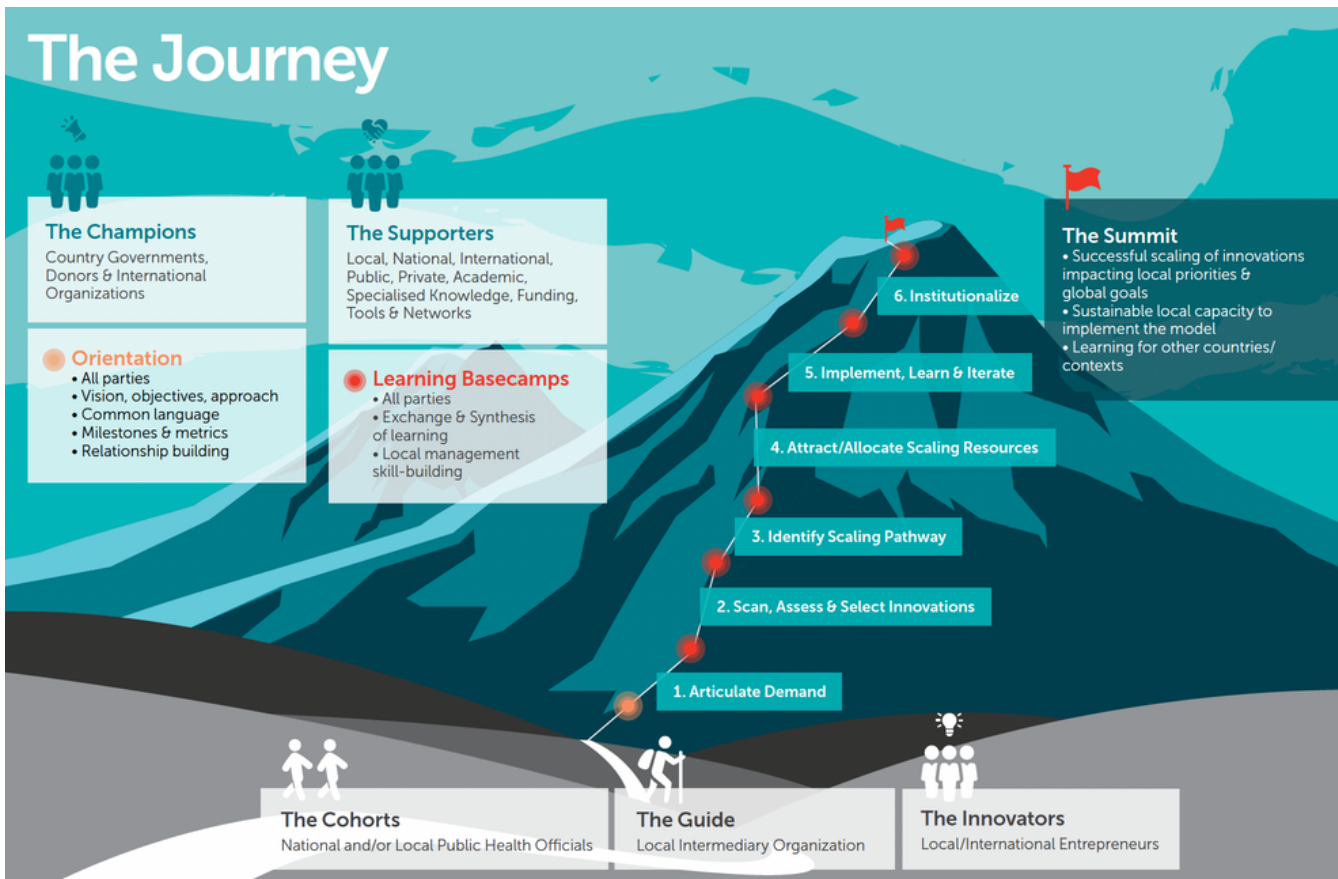
- GCC’s willingness to fund early-stage innovations and offer flexibility on the types of activities and milestones the funding is used for helps innovations progress towards scaling
- GCC’s flexible support enables innovators to invest time and energy in building trusting relationships, which is necessary for successful, long-term partnerships.
- Our technical assistance helps innovators build capacity to sustain and scale impact.

The results of the Scale and Sustainability Learning Initiative were used to inform an Action Plan, which has four specific goals:

- **Goal 1:** Deepen tailored technical support for all Transition-to-Scale innovators with an expressed need.
- **Goal 2:** Develop and implement a portfolio approach to managing closed innovations.
- **Goal 3:** Develop simplified metrics for scale and sustainability for Transition-to-Scale innovators.
- **Goal 4:** Engage the wider innovation ecosystem on the portfolio review results.

Drawing on the key learnings from this review, we continue to refine our strategy to meet innovators’ needs as they grow and scale.

**The Mountain Model:** Grand Challenges Canada uses the Mountain Model approach in our work on transition-to-scale.



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# Being Initiative

This year, Grand Challenges Canada and partners launched Being, a new international mental health initiative for young people

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## Global Mental Health

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Being is an international mental health initiative working toward a world where young people feel well and thrive. Focusing on mental health prevention and promotion, the initiative funds research and innovation to help improve the mental wellbeing of young people aged 10 to 24 in thirteen priority countries: Colombia, Ecuador, Egypt, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Morocco, Pakistan, Romania, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Tanzania and Vietnam.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), one in seven adolescents worldwide faces mental health conditions, and suicide is the fourth leading cause of death among 15-29 year-olds. In low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), up to 90% of young people's mental health needs are unmet due to a lack of resources. Despite the growing need, national health budgets globally only allocate 2% to mental health. Young people facing mental health challenges are vulnerable to social exclusion, discrimination, stigma, and physical health problems.



Being was created to respond to young people's ongoing mental health challenges, particularly those in LMICs, and help influence change in programming, research and policies related to young people's wellbeing. Being's funding priorities will be determined solely by local stakeholders who will help understand young people's mental health needs in each priority country. Based on these identified needs, Being will target funding and support to activities in each priority country.

The initiative, which launched in October 2022, is hosted by Grand Challenges Canada (funded in part by the Government of Canada) in partnership with Fondation Botnar, The UK's Department of Health and Social Care, using UK aid through the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR), the Science for Africa Foundation, and United for Global Mental Health.

Visit the [Being Initiative website \(www.being-initiative.org\)](http://www.being-initiative.org) to learn more.



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# Ghana Country Innovation Platform Pilot

The Stars in Global Health Program worked with the Ghana Health Service, USAID-Ghana and AMP Health to co-create a new funding call.

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## Maternal and newborn health

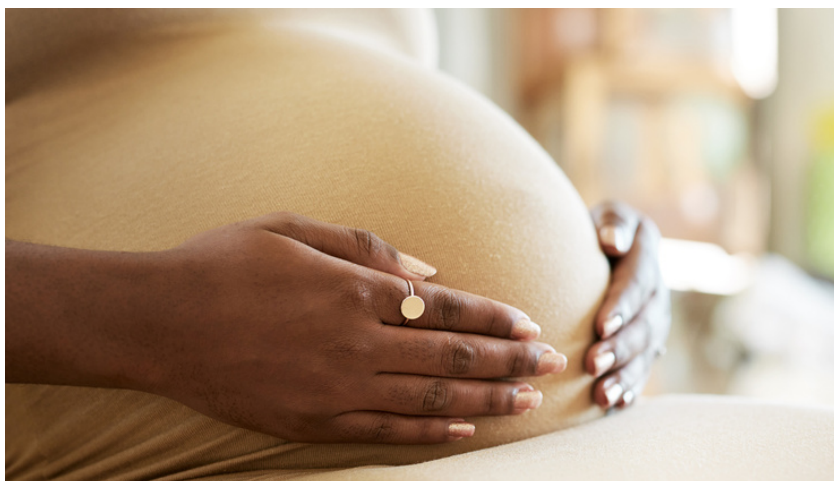
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Over the past few decades, Ghana has made considerable progress in reducing maternal and newborn mortality. However, several key challenges remain, including:

- Poor access to quality maternal and newborn health services, especially in rural & underserved areas.
- Low levels of skilled birth attendance and emergency obstetric care;
- Limited availability of essential medicines, medical supplies and equipment;
- Weak referral linkages between health facilities for maternal and newborn health services;
- Inadequate emergency transportation for maternal and newborn health services.

Ghana aspires to eliminate avoidable maternal and neonatal deaths and recognizes the role of innovation in improving maternal & newborn health.

In support of this goal, the Ghana Health Service partnered with Grand Challenges Canada, USAID-Ghana and AMP Health to



launch the [Ghana Country Innovation Platform \(CIP\) Pilot](#), a groundbreaking new initiative that brings together funders, local partners and government in service of pressing maternal & newborn health challenges.

The pilot's priorities were determined by a co-creation workshop, where CIP partners convened key stakeholders from across Ghana. At the three-day workshop in February 2022, the Ghana Health Service set the agenda and decided on peer reviewers. Grand Challenges Canada (with support from the Government of Canada) is funding the innovations, while USAID-Ghana and AMP health are providing funding and support for capacity building.

GCC's Stars in Global Health program launched the call for funding in June 2023, seeking innovations to address the core challenges in newborn and maternal health in Ghana's six priority regions. Selected proposals will receive seed grants of \$200,000 CAD to \$250,000 CAD for a period of 12 to 18 months.

For all partners, this pilot is a step toward true power shifting and localization, with local experts making decisions about how to best support and address the communities they serve.



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**Rotman  
Innovation Award:  
Max Foundation  
Bangladesh**





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# Rotman Innovation of the Year Award: Max Foundation Bangladesh

The **Rotman Innovation of the Year Award** was launched in 2020, as part of Grand Challenges Canada's 10th anniversary. The Award is given in honour of the late Joseph Rotman (Founding Chair of Grand Challenges Canada) and his family, in recognition of their unfailing support of GCC. The Rotman Innovation of the Year Award is presented to an innovation that has had the largest sustainable increase in lives saved or lives improved over the past year, and which emulates Mr. Rotman's vision for innovation for impact. The recipient institution receives a flexible \$10,000 CAD prize from the Rotman Family.

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When Suisaya was in the third grade, there were no sanitation facilities at her school. She had no water to drink or wash with during the day, and if she needed to use the toilet, she and the other children had to use a nearby field.

Suisaya's situation is still common in rural Bangladesh, which has one of the world's highest rates of childhood stunting. One in three children fails to achieve growth milestones due to a combination of poor nutrition and preventable childhood diseases such as diarrhea.

To give children like Suisaya the best possible start in life, the Max Foundation Bangladesh designed an innovation geared at helping families in low-income communities to tackle some of the leading causes of stunting and child mortality.

Through their 'Healthy Village' model, the Max Foundation has created an integrated innovation that is driven by communities,



The Max Foundation Bangladesh works with local partners to establish and maintain quality WASH, nutrition and maternal health services.

NGO partners, entrepreneurs, and local governments to ensure long-lasting impact.

Over a two-to-three-year period, these stakeholders work together to bring about lasting improvements in three key areas: water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH); nutrition; and maternal care.

The Max Foundation provides local NGOs with training and

resources, along with the flexibility and encouragement to adapt the programs to their local context and community dynamics. The NGOs enlist community members as mentors and health promotion agents, educating their peers on the benefits of better nutrition, handwashing, toilets, enclosed bathing areas, piped water supply, maternal care, and menstrual products.

The community education sessions create demand for sanitation and nutrition products provided by local entrepreneurs and suppliers. One of the most innovative parts about the model is that the NGOs are compensated through a 'pay-by-results' model. They receive an initial upfront payment to implement the project and receive a final payment upon delivery of the results.

Working with local governments, the Max Foundation and its partners help to mobilize resources to adopt and fund the Healthy Villages model. The local councils, known as Union Parishads, provide funds for ultra-poor households to purchase sanitation products and support the creation of community health clinics that can monitor child growth and development.

Healthy Villages are officially designated by local governments once over 90% of the community meets key WASH, nutrition and health care criteria and maintains those practices for a full year. By bringing these stakeholders together — NGOS, community health promotion agents, entrepreneurs, local governments, business associations and local suppliers — the Max Foundation fosters an ecosystem that is driven by the needs of the community, creates lasting behaviour



A child is weighed as part of a Max Healthy Villages maternal & child health care program.

change and improves the lives and livelihoods of all involved.

### Community impact

In Golkhali, Bangladesh, community partners installed a water well in the yard and separate latrines for boys and girls at Suisaya's school. The children received hygiene education from community health mentors and are now able to use the facilities on site and wash their hands after using the latrines. Through the Healthy Village model, the children and their families have access to improved nutrition, and pregnant women and new mothers in the community have access to care.

The result? Fewer children in Suisaya's village are suffering from malnutrition, bouts of diarrhea and related illnesses, and local NGOs, government,

and entrepreneurs are leading the way in providing essential services to their community.

Suisaya's village is just one of 409 Max Healthy Villages that have been officially designated in Bangladesh, with an additional 1,265 villages working toward certification.

With Grand Challenges Canada's Transition-to-Scale funding, the Max Foundation has reached 1.2 million people in the south coastal region of Bangladesh, resulting in measurable health improvements for more than 438,000 people, including nearly 150,000 children. With GCC support, the Max Foundation is now adapting the Healthy Village concept to urban settings in order to reach more children and communities across Bangladesh.

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# Stories of Impact: Kybele Ghana

A non-profit working in Ghana trains nurses and health workers to provide life-saving care to expectant mothers and their newborns.



The day a woman gives birth is the most dangerous day of her life.

That's why Kybele Ghana exists. Because when a pregnant mother or her newborn baby are in distress, minutes matter.

Pregnancy and childbirth are among the leading causes of death and disability among women worldwide. This disparity is greater in low- and middle-income countries like Ghana, where more than 800 women die in childbirth each year and three out of every 100 newborns die within days of their first breath.

Kybele, a non-profit organization working in Ghana since 2007, created a system to help hospitals and local health centres to recognize, triage and monitor danger signs in pregnant women. Using scenario-based role playing game and other tools, Kybele teaches nurses and other support staff to be on the lookout for potentially life-threatening complications and offer high-quality care, even in low-resource settings.

Their model is simple and highly replicable — it can be used in all settings, from urban hospitals to rural clinics. With Grand Challenges Canada's support, Kybele was able to expand their approach to 10 new healthcare facilities. A year later, Kybele found that 4 out of 5 women were being assessed within 10 minutes of arriving at the clinic, and nearly all of them had documented diagnosis and care plans.

The organization is now working with the Ghana Health Service to scale these initiatives, bringing Kybele Ghana's Obstetric Triage Implementation Package (OTIP) and Modified Early Obstetric Warning System (MEOWS) to labour wards in 75 regional and district hospitals.

Ghana Health Service is providing 15% in matched funds to help scale these activities nationally and are integrating Kybele's approaches into their in-service training for labour ward staff across the country.

Kybele Ghana's potential impact on maternal and newborn care in Ghana is nothing short of astounding. With transition to scale funding from Grand Challenges Canada, Kybele Health anticipates that they will be able to improve the lives of up to 347,000 women by ensuring that they receive timely and quality maternal health care. By 2030, Kybele projects that they will reach 2 million women across Ghana with their services.

For Kybele, that investment is critical. It means ensuring that a baby's first day isn't also its mother's last.



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# Stories of Impact: Ujamaa Africa

A training program in Kenya helps girls and boys aged 10-19 to address sexual and gender-based violence in their communities.

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Marion wishes that every school-age child could take Ujamaa-Africa's training course.

Growing up in Nairobi's Kibera district, she had witnessed the impact of sexual and gender-based violence firsthand. "I know too well the pain of sexual assault after witnessing my young sister being assaulted at a very tender age," Marion said. She wanted to learn how to defend herself and prevent future assaults from happening.

In an area where 1 in 4 high school-aged girls experience sexual assault each year, Ujamaa-Africa's self-defence and training skills are a lifeline. The Kenya-based NGO's efforts to stop rape by training adolescent girls and boys are having a transformative impact.

Ujamaa-Africa's Empowerment Transformation Training program is a 6-week, 12-hour program that teaches girls aged 10-19 skills such as boundary-setting, verbal assertiveness, and physical self-defence to prevent against potential attackers.



**Girls take part in Ujamaa-Africa's Empowerment Transformation Training**

Boys take part in the Hero in Me (HIM) training, where they learn about male attitudes and behaviours, with the goal of reshaping harmful beliefs around gender and sexuality. HIM promotes consent-seeking and empowers boys to intervene when they witness violence against women and girls.

What sets Ujamaa's model apart is their focus on individual training and prevention, equipping girls and boys with the tools to recognize danger signs and prevent sexual violence in their own lives.

Grand Challenges Canada has been supporting Ujamaa's Empowerment Transformation Training since 2019, helping them to extend their reach to students beyond Kibera. To date GCC's support enabled Ujamaa to train 115,279 adolescent boys and girls in school. Among this cohort, 26,062 girls have reported using the skills they learned in training to defend themselves, and 11,279 boys reported intervening in an assault.

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“Since the inception of Ujamaa’s program, we have experienced a positive change in both girls and boys,” says Isaac Oiye, a teacher of the program. “The boys have learned how to interact with the girls and are no longer intimidating them. We have further noticed the influence they have in society, especially mobilizing other parents and the community at large to educate the girls.”

Ujamaa’s results speak for themselves. A 2011 study published in the Journal of Adolescent Health found that among girls and women who had taken Ujamaa’s self-defence training, there was a 62.6% decrease in sexual assaults over a 10-month period, whereas there was no change in incidences of sexual assault among a comparison group who received the didactic life skills program that is the current national standard.

More than half (56.4%) of the girls and women in the intervention group reported having used self-defence skills (physical and/or verbal skills) to successfully fight off an attacker and avoid the assault in the year after the training.



Marion has become an advocate since taking Ujamaa’s training

**“I am confident I can defend myself from an assailant and I am more confident than ever before.”**

**— Marion, Ujamaa-Africa participant and youth leader**

The Ministry of Education and the Kenya Teachers Service Commission have taken notice. Ujamaa-Africa is now working with the government to adapt their approach and roll out the first ever country-wide scale up of a gender-based violence prevention program.

Today, Marion is recognized within her community as a gender defender and advocate, thanks to her time in Ujamaa’s program.

“I am confident I can defend myself from an assailant and I am more assertive now than ever before.”



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# Management discussion & analysis

In the 2022-23 fiscal year, we continued to make progress in achieving the ambitious plans set out in Grand Challenges Canada's Strategic Plan to 2025, including our five core strategic goals.

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## Goal 1: Mature existing development innovations

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Recognizing the increasing maturity of our funded portfolios, this past fiscal year has been focused on defining Grand Challenges Canada's optimal role in supporting innovations' successful transition to scale.

The Scale and Sustainability Portfolio Review (see Strategic Initiatives) yielded a number of key insights and an action plan for our transition-to-scale work.

We continue to fund in the key thematic areas where we developed deep expertise, including:

- Maternal, newborn and child health
- Early childhood development
- Sanitation
- Mental health

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## Goal 2: Incubate new grand challenges

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Our incubation of new grand challenges is progressing well. In addition to our work in the global health innovation space, we have initiated new grand challenges in the following areas:

- Youth mental health
- Safe pregnancy termination
- Climate and health
- Humanitarian innovation
- Indigenous innovation

In 2022-23, we launched Phase One of the Being Initiative for youth mental health (see Strategic highlights) and conducted a landscape analysis in each of the 13 priority countries to inform funding and programming.

In the Stars in Global Health portfolio, we initiated a funding call on the Health Impacts of Climate Change (see next page), and launched the Ghana Country Innovation Pilot (see Strategic highlights).

The Indigenous Innovation Initiative launched a second request for proposals this year, seeking transformative innovations in four priority areas: land story (solutions that directly address or mitigate climate change); food sovereignty (solutions that help address food security); technology (digital access and data sovereignty) and wellness.



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## Spotlight on new grand challenges: **Climate and Health**

There is no doubt that climate change is undermining our ability to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. From communicable diseases and malnutrition to cardiovascular, respiratory diseases and mental illness, the adverse effects of our shifting climate threaten to roll back the progress we've made in global health to date. The impact is particularly pronounced in low- and middle-income countries, where climate shocks threaten to destabilize already-fragile health systems.

A recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report highlighted how limited financing constrains the health sector's ability to respond to climate change. We recognize the clear need

for funding directed specifically towards the implementation of climate adaptation efforts in low- and middle-income countries.

As a result, Grand Challenges Canada's Stars in Global Health team and the South African Medical Research Council issued a Request for Proposals on the Health Impacts of Climate Change, seeking bold, innovative interventions designed for communities that are vulnerable to climate change and are not adequately served by current approaches.

Successful applications addressed a wide range of interventions related to climate change and health, including malnutrition,

mental & psychological health, air quality, and heat stress, as well as vector, water- and food-borne disease threats. Successful seed grants are being awarded up to \$150,000 CAD for 18 months to develop and test the proposed innovation.

There was a huge response to the call for proposals, with 772 applications submitted, the majority (75%) coming from sub-Saharan Africa. In this first round of funding in the climate and health portfolio, we have selected 43 innovations with the potential to have a significant impact on the communities they serve.

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### Goal 3: Secure financial sustainability

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We continue to operationalize a seven-year, \$200-million Institutional Support Grant signed with Global Affairs Canada in late 2021. Efforts to source complementary funding continue for all portfolios. We secured funding from Fondation Botnar and partners to expand our youth mental health programming through the Being Initiative and will be welcoming new donor partners to fund our humanitarian innovation work.

With previous funding from the Government of Canada under the Development Innovation Fund in Health (DIF-H),

Grand Challenges Canada invested \$10 million in the Global Health Investment Fund (GHIF) in 2011–2012. This investment allowed us to subsequently invest in Cross-Border Impact Ventures and, importantly, to establish a prudent reserve fund that will make our organization more stable in the face of transitions to come.

With funding from the Government of Canada, we provided USD \$5M in catalytic funding to the Transform Health Fund, a new initiative to strengthen health ecosystems in Africa led by the Health

Finance Coalition and AfricInvest.

The fund was announced at the US-Africa Leaders Summit in late 2022. The first close of the fund occurred in June 2023 and another is expected by year's end.

In addition to the catalytic funding, we also invested \$500K CAD in the Health Finance Coalition Deal Construction Platform, which offers technical assistance and support, bridging the financing gap for promising innovations with the potential to scale.

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### Goal 4: Be the preferred impact for innovation partner

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Grand Challenges Canada has been synthesizing and implementing learnings from its maturing portfolio over the past fiscal year, as a model and resource for others invested in innovator-centric approaches to funding and meaningful powershifting in the context of innovation for impact.

This work is being informed through the lessons from our scale and sustainability portfolio review, innovator surveys, and through efforts to engage those who are closest to the challenges. The Ghana Country Innovation Pilot (see Strategic Initiatives) provided key lessons



The Ghana Country Innovation Platform pilot was co-created with the Ghana Health Service, USAID, GCC, and AMP Health.

on how to work with governments and other implementing partners to meet the needs of local communities. We continue to actively engage with our peers in the global Grand Challenges network and

to collaborate with partners in the International Development Innovation Alliance on scale and sustainability, as well as on efforts to meaningfully shift power in our sector.





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## Goal 5: Be the preferred impact for innovation employer

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We continue to work toward making GCC a place where diverse, high-performing team members want to work and develop. Much of our work in support of this strategic goal is summarized in the Living our Values section.

In 2022-23, we hired a new Senior Director, People and Culture, who is leading the team toward greater cohesion and collaboration.

Management and GCC's Board are examining how to strike the right balance of remote and in-person work to ensure a healthy organizational culture and employee experience.

Based on the positive results of our pilot program, we made the decision to continue our four-day work week in 2023-24. In this model, which we will review on an annual basis, the aim is to achieve 100% productivity, at 100% pay, while working only 80% of a conventional work week.

In an independent survey conducted by Boston College, we heard from our staff and partners that the four-day work week model allowed for greater flexibility, reduced burnout, and higher overall satisfaction, with no discernable interruption of service or productivity.



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# Living our values

Grand Challenges Canada’s core values of integrity, boldness and creativity, excellence, diversity and inclusion, and humility are central to our work.

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Grand Challenges Canada continues to work toward making Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility (IDEA) a cornerstone of our work. ‘Walking the talk’ also requires having the courage to be uncomfortable, to strive for authentic relationship-building with communities, and to hold ourselves accountable in implementing these values consistently. In 2023, the board approved our third IDEA Action Plan, which takes a holistic approach across individual, communal, and institutional initiatives. The goal of the IDEA Action Plan’s three-tiered approach is to focus on inclusive design and tackling structural inequality to create institutional processes, ideas, and a culture that encourages and facilitates belonging.

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## Integrity

As part of our Senior Leadership Diversity Plan, we created a new role of Senior Manager, Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility (IDEA) to lead our Action Plan goals and create an inclusive environment for employees, innovators and our stakeholders.



In 2022-2023, the Senior Manager conducted two rounds of focus groups with all teams of employees and integrated feedback collected from innovators in 2018 and 2021.

Recommendations from the Decolonization Working Group helped identify barriers in our processes. We drew on these insights as well as recommendations from the International Development Innovation Alliance’s spoke in Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion; Cooperation Canada’s Anti Racism Framework; and Pride at Work to create a three-year

plan that focuses on intersectionality, accountability, and community.

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## Boldness and creativity

The Decolonization Working Group identified areas of improvement focused on decolonizing our funding processes, as well as on removing barriers for innovators. In 2023, the group collectively decided to transition into a power shifting council — a platform for innovators to provide regular feedback and direction to GCC on how to identify and reduce barriers in our work.





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## Excellence

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The International Development Innovation Alliance's Equity and Inclusion Taskforce (co-chaired by Co-CEO Jocelyn Mackie) was designed to address the interrelationship between equity and inclusion, the individual, the institution, and the ecosystem.

While working with two learning partners and several global innovation advisors, the task force identified several goals for shifting power from funders to innovators, including:

- encouraging flexible funding that enables local organizations to test, implement, and scale high-impact innovations;
- eliminating implicit bias by co-creating a selection process that is efficient, seamless and less cumbersome for applicants;
- building healthy, trust-based relationships by hiring and consulting people of diverse identities, skill sets, and lived experience;
- involving those directly affected when defining problems and creating solutions in aid, development, and philanthropy;
- encouraging setting expectations for reciprocal, open and honest communication with innovators;

- implementing innovator advice on how to improve funding efforts and partnerships for a stronger innovation ecosystem.

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## Diversity and inclusion

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In 2022- 2023, IDEA hosted several recurring workshops on topics of anti-oppression, intersectionality, privilege, and allyship. Sessions touched on topics that included how to build psychological safety for leaders, how to identify and interrupt micro-aggressions, and topics around cultural humility.

# Key moments



**BEING INITIATIVE PARTNERS FROM GCC, FOUNDATION BOTNAR AND UNITED FOR GLOBAL MENTAL HEALTH DISCUSSED YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH AT WOMEN DELIVER IN KIGALI, RWANDA**



**GLOBAL HEALTH INNOVATION ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR CAROLINA KWOK SPEAKS AT THE 2ND GLOBAL FORUM ON CHILDHOOD PNEUMONIA**



**GCC AT THE SANKALP AFRICA SUMMIT**



**DEEPIKA DEVADAS, DIRECTOR, PROGRAM STRATEGY (INTERIM) WITH MINISTER HARJIT SAJJAN AND CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS AT WOMEN DELIVER, RWANDA**





**JOE TORRES, SENIOR DIRECTOR, PARTNERSHIPS AND FUNDRAISING, SPEAKS AT THE WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY**



**ADEGUNJI ELESO, DIRECTOR OF SCALE AND SUSTAINABILITY, SPEAKS ON A YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH PANEL AT THE SKOLL WORLD FORUM**



**GCC SPEAKS AT THE GLOBAL MENTAL HEALTH ACTION NETWORK CONFERENCE IN CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA**



**FAWAD AKBARI, DIRECTOR OF HUMANITARIAN INNOVATION, SPEAKS AT A CREATING HOPE IN CONFLICT PITCH EVENT**



**CO-CEO JOCELYN MACKIE + DIRECTOR OF SCALE AND SUSTAINABILITY ADEGUNJI ELESO WITH MEMBERS OF THE CLEAN TEAM AT THE IDIA CONFERENCE IN GHANA**

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# Financial statements

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## Overview

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This year's total spending was \$50.9 million, compared to last year's total spending of \$49.5 million. The increase in spending of \$1.4 million was mainly due to an increase in grants issued for various programs, personnel associated with increase in programs spending, due diligence cost as a risk management strategy and increased travel costs.

Despite the pandemic, Grand Challenges Canada is on track to achieve the strategic goals articulated in the 5-Year Strategic Plan and accompanying Costed Operations Plan that covers FY 20-21 to FY 24-25 that formed the basis of Institutional Support Grant agreement signed with Global Affairs Canada.

Grand Challenges Canada continues to receive funding from diverse revenue sources. For the Fiscal Year 2022–23 ending March 31, 2023, non-Global Affairs Canada funding accounted for 33% of total revenues. We continue to work to maintain a diversity of funding sources.

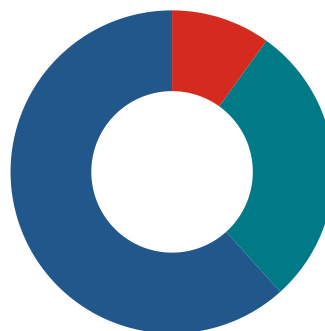
Net assets decreased over the past year, primarily due to unrealized market-to-market losses on investment of operating reserves.

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## Leverage

An important element of Grand Challenges Canada's innovation platform is the ability to leverage funding from other investors and partners. For every \$1.00 that Grand Challenges Canada has deployed from Global Affairs Canada, we have leveraged \$2.27 from other investors and partners. We track and report leveraged funds that come in at the program and project levels.

### Leveraged funding from all sources (2010-2023)



#### Organizational leverage (\$96,319,394)

represents funds that have been provided to and spent by GCC from funders other than Global Affairs Canada

#### Program leverage (\$275,431,731)

represents funds that have been provided by funders other than Grand Challenges Canada or Global Affairs Canada, to support the achievement of program outcomes. These funds do not flow through GCC.

#### Project leverage - (\$598,355,229)

represents funds that have been provided to innovators to support their innovations, and that do not come from Grand Challenges Canada or Global Affairs Canada; this funding does not flow through Grand Challenges Canada and is often also called "project match funding".



## Revenues

Year	Global Affairs Canada	Other*	Amount
2022-23	67%	33%	50.1 million **
2021-22	54%	46%	51.3 million **

\*Other funders include: U.S. Agency for International Development’s Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance, Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office – UK, Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Dutch Government Stabilisation and Humanitarian Aid Department, ELMA Foundation, Women and Gender Equality Canada, Indigenous Services Canada, U.K. Department of Health and Social Care, Department of Health and Social Care – Global Mental Health-Being, Fondation Botnar and World Organisation for Animal Health (IOE).

\*\* Revenue includes other revenue from non-grant project loan repayments in fiscal year 2022-23, which was set aside to establish operating reserve funds as approved by the Board.

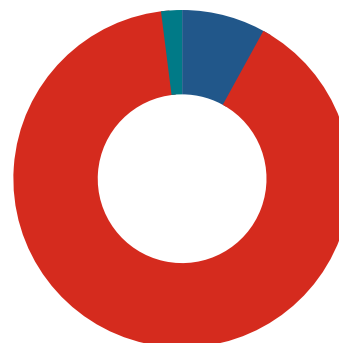
## Expenditures

### Direct program expenditures



Transition to Scale 33%  
 Humanitarian 17%  
 Global Mental Health/Being 16%  
 Saving Brains 10%  
 OPTions Initiative 9%  
 Stars in Global Health 9%  
 Saving Lives at Birth 3%  
 Catalytic Grants 1%

### Organizational expenditures



Program activities (90%)  
 Corporate and admin (8%)  
 Other (2%)



View our latest audited financial statements on our website:  
[www.grandchallenges.ca/what-we-do/annual-report/](http://www.grandchallenges.ca/what-we-do/annual-report/)

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## Risk management

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Grand Challenges Canada continues to be deeply committed to managing and mitigating risk across all functions of the organizations. At the end of this fiscal year, and looking forward to fiscal year 2023-2024, there are three primary risks the organization continues to face and is actively working through.

Management continues to strengthen due diligence procedures to proactively identify and mitigate the risk of innovators incurring ineligible expenses that are not recoverable from them. In the instances that such risks cannot be successfully mitigated, management reports these risk instances to the Audit, Finance & Risk Committee on a quarterly basis. Ultimately, this Committee approves any write-offs arising out of innovator ineligible expenses that cannot be fully eliminated, which are also summarized in the organization's annual audited financial statements.

Management acknowledges that despite a robust due diligence process, the risk of innovators incurring ineligible expenses that they cannot repay will never be fully eliminated.

With respect to information technology, emerging AI technology is changing the way we work and will ultimately impact how the organizations interacts with innovators and stakeholders. Management is currently working on understanding to what extent and where it is appropriate to leverage AI to further Grand Challenges Canada's work.

The disruption posed by the COVID-19 pandemic continues to be felt across industries, in particular with respect to personnel changes. Comprised of a young and dynamic work force, Grand Challenges Canada has experienced significant personnel change post-pandemic. Management and the organization's Board are considering and analyzing

what impact a hybrid working model has on GCC's culture and employee experience. In addition, this year the organization will be undergoing a leadership change, with Co-CEO Jocelyn Mackie leaving the organization and Co-CEO Karlee Silver continuing on in her role as sole CEO. The evolution from a Co-CEO to a sole CEO model uniquely allows for a level of stability that is normally not present in such leadership changes. As with any leadership shift, the internal organizational structure will be subject to review, resulting in a natural period of evolution where management will collaboratively work through challenges that may arise.

The organization continues to refine and adapt our Risk Appetite Statement, and is currently engaging in a Risk Appetite Analysis. This is a learning endeavour led by management to ensure that our approach to risk is effective in meeting our objectives, including those around increasing localization and shifting power.



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