



2023 ANNUAL REPORT



Providing learning solutions to underserved communities by offering library services and alternative learning activities to children of every background.

A NOTE FROM THE MANAGING DIRECTOR



Technology is changing how libraries deliver their services. More than ever before our future will be shaped by the systems we create and deploy today. In alignment with the changing world, Natubelenge Children's Library is focused on planting innovative children's libraries in communities to create societies that thrive.

At the heart of our library's mission is the commitment to end the cycle of poverty by fighting illiteracy, and ensuring access to books, libraries, learning activities and technology. In 2023 our library restructured our mission into three main projects: literacy, learning through play, and Access projects. Through the access project, with the commitment of our staff, we saw library visits rise from 7,396 the previous year to 9,860 in 2023.

I am pleased to inform you that this past year we partnered with two more institutions: the government of the Republic of Zambia through the Constituency Development Fund (CDF) and Global Giving, a nonprofit that connects donors with grassroots programs like ours. Through CDF we have managed to commence our literacy project which will see hundreds of children in our community and beyond have access to much-needed literacy classes.

Over the course of last year our library successfully resumed holiday reading camps. Natubelenge reading camps are play-based reading intervention camps. Activities are designed to help children develop a love for reading. Beyond the joy of reading, our camps offer an abundance of engaging activities. From dramatic readings and storytelling to literary-themed arts and crafts, and games. Part of our focus also went to the preservation of local languages and native games through programs such as Native Day that encourage the use of local languages. Play-based activities are a major part of Natubelenge Children's library's programming, capturing over 5,000 participants in 2023 alone.

This past year has seen repeated challenges such as limited space to accommodate more children, insufficient funding to extend our programming and inadequate staff. As we look to the future, there are obstacles ahead, especially for the permanent locations project, but the library remains committed to ensure our children receive the free services and resources they need.

To our donors and friends, thank you. Our achievements in 2023 were made possible with your support.

Mainess N. Chilumbwa

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mainess N. Chilumbwa". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Co-founder/ Managing Director

OUR 2023 IMPACT

Learning through play
participatiion

5,349

Number of library
visits

9,860

Books received

1,138

Registered members
since 2019

909

Impact of the Access Project on the Children

“Thanks to Natubelenge Children’s library, I had access to a wide range of educational materials that I couldn’t find at my school or at home. I passed my final Grade 12 exams with flying colors, and I am very excited for the future.” - Trantson, 17.

17-year-old boy of Chilenje South, Trantson is just one among the many beneficiaries of our Access project, a community-driven project dedicated to bridging the digital and educational divide among underserved children. The access project has lightened Trantson’s burden to pursue his education and now he is an inspiration to other children in his community who are facing similar challenges.



Play, Read, Learn

Since the introduction of native games, children have started to learn each other's local languages and English through playing games. Our library aids the preservation of local languages and games through Native Day, one day in a week dedicated to local languages and games.

When we first introduced learning through play activities, some parents were not accepting of the method, but through sensitization and seeing the outcomes of the project, there has been a tremendous change in attitude for the better.

Thabo is one of the children who have benefited from the project. When she first became a member of our library, she hardly socialized or played with other children because of factors such as language barrier (Zambia has over 70 Languages, so it is common for a group of children to have different native languages). Patronizing our library has helped Thabo socialize with children her age through play and it has also enabled her to understand new languages.



Impact Summary

At Natubelenge Children's Library, we assess the impact of our work in different ways to ensure that we are always making the biggest difference in the lives of the children that we serve.

Each year we capture both quantitative and qualitative data. With our staff, volunteers and children, we evaluate our performance and brainstorm on how we can make our programs better.

Since our founding, our library has strived to protect children's right to have access to quality education. We believe reading is the foundation on which all other learning is built, and access to educational and social resources is a matter of dignity and human rights.

About Our Programs

Our programs strengthen the communities that we serve by welcoming children of all backgrounds and providing support and opportunities for those underserved.



Challenges and Accomplishments

In 2023 we encountered repeated challenges:

- Limited space for activities
- Inadequate staff
- Insufficient funds

Accomplishments

What we were able to accomplish:

- We partnered with the government of the republic of Zambia (CDF)
- We partnered with Global Giving
- We became a member of the consortium for Sustainable Development.
- We resumed reading camps and literacy classes (post COVID-19)
- We held a mini children's book festival
- We recorded over 9000 visits

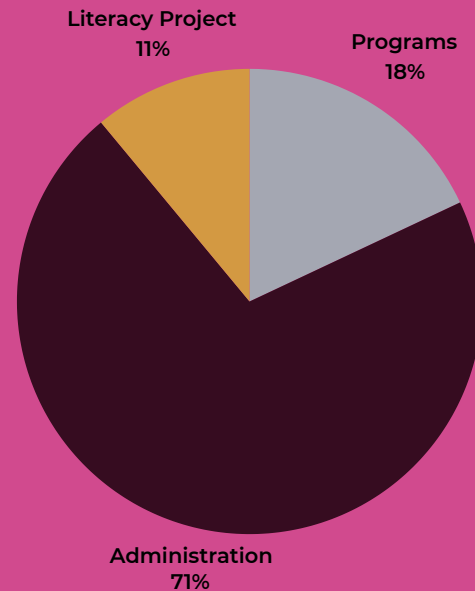
2023 IN NUMBERS

Income

We received a total of \$16,092 in the last year, most of which came from institutional donors.

Global Fund for Children- \$8,663
Chinese Embassy in Zambia- \$5,694
Government of Zambia (CDF)- \$1,603
Library fees-\$133

Expenses



PERMANENT SOLUTIONS: OUR VISION FOR 2024

In 2024, we hope to partner with more like-minded institutions both locally and abroad. We will continue to grow our registration of participants and amplify our programming to match the technological, social and educational needs of communities.

In addition, we plan to replicate Natubelenge Children's Library as a model library, a permanent solution to bridging technological and educational gaps in communities. This will include fostering local partnerships and fundraising for permanent locations in various communities.

Other than just providing access to books and alternative learning solutions through our access project, we hope to make technology accessible to the children that we serve. We envision a future where all children, regardless of their socioeconomic background, have equal opportunities to access technology. Our libraries will serve as safe and nurturing spaces where children can explore educational software, conduct research, and enhance their digital literacy skills under the guidance of trained facilitators and volunteers.

While some parents are more welcoming of our community programs and outreach, others don't do so well. Over the years we have realized the need to involve parents and guardians in our programming as this enhances the participation of the children. As we plan to reach even more children this coming year, we are not leaving parents behind.

HOW WE CAN REACH THIS VISION TOGETHER

We are asking you to be part of the solution. In order to achieve our vision, we need your help!

Your support will enable us to end the cycle of poverty in communities and create permanent alternative learning spaces for children; a move intended to create equal opportunities and provide quality education for all.

Natubelenge Children's Library needs \$ 50,000 in donations to make our vision a reality. We are ready to partner with well-meaning donor organizations, businesses, embassies and individuals, etc.

THANK YOU.

Our achievements are not possible without the dedication and support of our partners. Together we will end the cycle of poverty by bridging the digital and educational divide. You made this past year possible!

Special thanks to our official partners



Chinese Embassy
in Zambia



www.natubelenglibrary.org



To donate please email us at: natubelenge@gmail.com