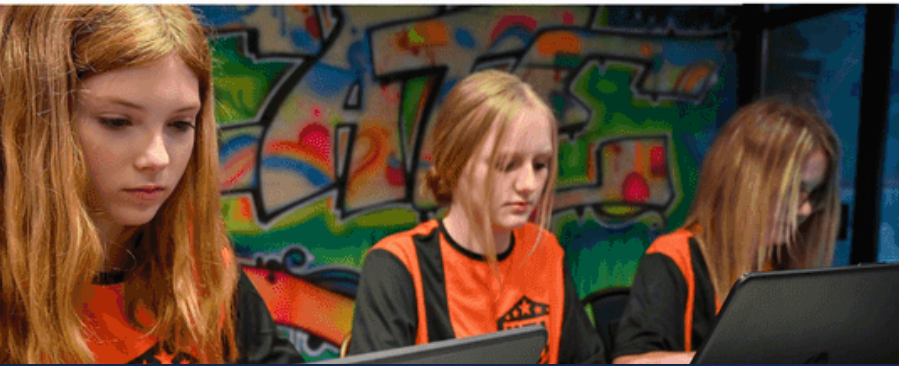# Cisco Foundation Impact Report

2024 · Cisco Public

A message from
Cisco Foundation leadership

What does it mean to make an impact?

Since 1997, the Cisco Systems Foundation (Cisco Foundation) has been on a mission to answer that very question.

Established by a gift from Cisco Systems, Inc, the Cisco Foundation set out to support basic human needs across the Bay Area by partnering with California-based nonprofit and non-governmental organizations (NPOs/NGOs). Twenty-seven years later, that localized support has grown to a global mission across multiple sectors—one that leverages our people, our technology, and our catalytic funding model to promote a healthy planet and increase the well-being of people and communities everywhere.

Over the years, we've continued to accelerate on impact-surpassing our ambitious 10-year goal to positively impact the lives of one billion people worldwide–a full year ahead of schedule. After achieving our One Billion Lives goal, we felt inspired to share lessons learned, celebrate the transformative work of our partners, and communicate our unique social impact investment model.

This year, we're proud to share our first ever Cisco Foundation Impact Report, which covers the Foundation's commitments, strategic investments, and key accomplishments from fiscal year 2024. Below are just a few examples of this year's meaningful work:

- Positively impacted more than 170 million lives around the world
- Launched new partnerships and expanded existing partnerships to tackle all 17 of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
- Deepened collaboration with our partners through follow-on investments, roundtable discussions to develop communities of practice among partner organizations tackling common issues, expert pro-bono consulting, communications support, employee engagement activities, features at Cisco events, and more
- Provided funding to more than two dozen organizations innovating to create and test AI solutions
- Completed the third year of our 10-year, US$100 million climate commitment
- Implemented the second year of our Regional Solutions Grant program supporting hyper local issues and organizations

Looking ahead

Though we have accomplished much, we recognize there is always more to be done. We will continue to build upon our learnings and successful investment model: early-stage investments that lead to scale, proximate investments and client-centric solutions, ecosystems change, and organization capacity building for sustained impact—backed by the full force of Cisco's global offerings and capabilities.

In just a few short weeks, we'll be celebrating Cisco's 40th anniversary and the impact of Cisco and the Cisco Foundation. We look forward to sharing more about Cisco's four decades of Purpose—and the Cisco Foundation's role in that critical work—later this year.

On behalf of the Cisco Foundation, thank you for all you've done to help support our mission.

Brian Tippens

Chairperson and Trustee, Cisco Foundation; Senior Vice President and Chief Social Impact and Inclusion Officer, Cisco

Charu Adesnik

Executive Director, Cisco Foundation; Director, Social Impact and Innovation Investments, Cisco

What we accomplished

FY24: A year of purpose, partnership, and impact

We are proud of the results we achieved over the past year. Through our partnerships, more than **170 million** people were positively impacted across more than 100 countries, in every region of the world. Beyond the number of people impacted, the depth and sustained impact of our investments is clear.

- **Forty percent** of the solutions we have invested in today are reaching more than **1 million** people per year—advancing successfully from idea to scale
- **Ninety-seven percent** of our partners have secured new funding which they directly attribute to Cisco's support—evidencing the catalytic nature of our investments
- **Fifty-six percent** of our partners operate on less than **$5 million** annual operating budget—proving that small organizations can have an outsize impact
- **Eighty-one percent** of our partners have more than **75 percent** of their staff based in the country/ies of their program operations—showing the importance of a proximate, client-centric, and community-focused approach

Each of these highlights is meaningful on its own but collectively, they paint a compelling picture of a diverse and balanced portfolio of partner organizations who are innovating to deliver technology solutions that drive impact at scale—demonstrating a high return on our investments and validating our strategy and approach.

Fiscal year 2024 impact

Funding:

- **Cash grant funding**: **$18M** in cash grants to non-profit organizations

- **Technology donations**: **$12M** of in-kind donations of Cisco® technology to Cisco Foundation nonprofit partners[1]

Types of non-profit organizations funded:

- **Size of organizations: 56 percent** of grantees with less than $5M annual operating budget

- **Proximity: 81 percent** of grantees have more than 75 percent of staff based in country of program implementation

- **Gender diversity: 52 percent** of grantees have more than 50 percent of their management team who identify as female

- **Additional funding catalyzed: 97 percent** of our partners secured new funding which they attribute to Cisco support

People and communities supported:

- **170M+** people positively impacted across our social impact investment sectors

- **81 percent** individuals supported through our non-profit partnerships are underserved[2]

Solution success:

- **Replication: 70 percent+** of solutions funded replicating beyond the initial country of operation (rolling average)

- **Scale: 40 percent+** of solutions funded are now reaching 1M+ people per year (rolling average)

Progress against our 10-year, $100M climate commitment:

- **$7M** in climate grants in FY24,[3] $17M cumulative to date (FY21–FY24)

- **$8M** in climate impact investments in FY24, $18M cumulative to date (FY21–FY24)

---

[1] Technology donations are provided by Cisco
[2] We define underserved as low-income, under-resourced, or vulnerable people and/or populations
[3] Climate grants are included in total cash grant funding above

Our strategy for impact
and theory of change

(Photo credit: CommonLit)

Our vision and mission

Thriving communities and a healthy planet.

Our vision is a world of equitable, resilient, and empowered communities where everyone has the opportunity to reach their full potential and thrive.
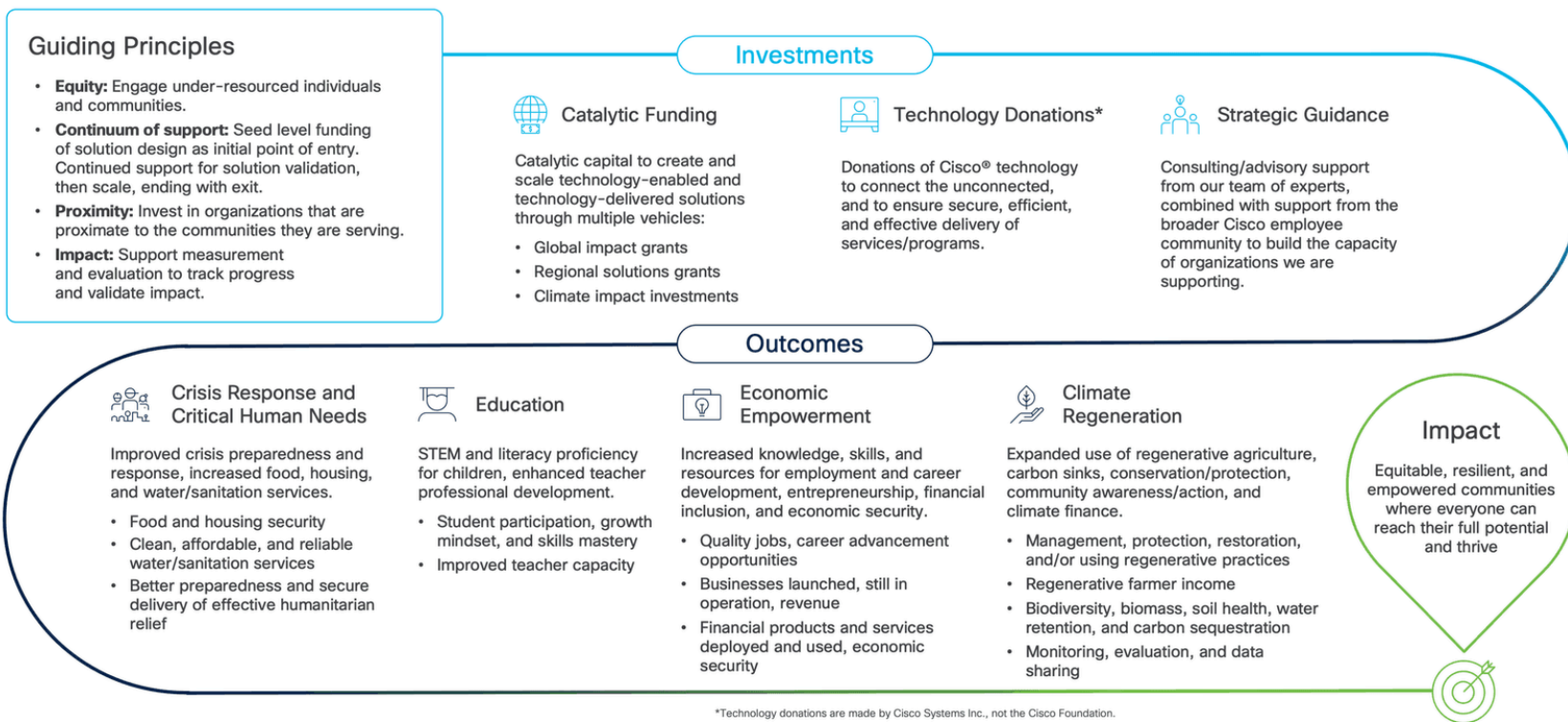
Our mission is to partner with organizations to create and scale innovative, digital solutions that promote a healthy planet and advance the well-being and self-reliance of underserved communities globally.

We accomplish this by harnessing the breadth of Cisco's offerings of strategic guidance, catalytic funding, technology donations from Cisco, and support from Cisco's employee community.

Theory of change

By supporting organizations and solutions with potential to innovate, scale, and replicate, we aim to catalyze a vibrant ecosystem of changemakers, working to promote a healthy planet and advance the well-being and self-reliance of under-resourced communities globally.

Guiding Principles

- **Equity:** Engage under-resourced individuals and communities.
- **Continuum of support:** Seed level funding of solution design as initial point of entry. Continued support for solution validation, then scale, ending with exit.
- **Proximity:** Invest in organizations that are proximate to the communities they are serving.
- **Impact:** Support measurement and evaluation to track progress and validate impact.

Investments

Catalytic Funding

Catalytic capital to create and scale technology-enabled and technology-delivered solutions through multiple vehicles:

- Global impact grants
- Regional solutions grants
- Climate impact investments

Technology Donations*

Donations of Cisco® technology to connect the unconnected, and to ensure secure, efficient, and effective delivery of services/programs.

Strategic Guidance

Consulting/advisory support from our team of experts, combined with support from the broader Cisco employee community to build the capacity of organizations we are supporting.

Outcomes

Crisis Response and Critical Human Needs

Improved crisis preparedness and response, increased food, housing, and water/sanitation services.

- Food and housing security
- Clean, affordable, and reliable water/sanitation services
- Better preparedness and secure delivery of effective humanitarian relief

Education

STEM and literacy proficiency for children, enhanced teacher professional development.

- Student participation, growth mindset, and skills mastery
- Improved teacher capacity

Economic Empowerment

Increased knowledge, skills, and resources for employment and career development, entrepreneurship, financial inclusion, and economic security.

- Quality jobs, career advancement opportunities
- Businesses launched, still in operation, revenue
- Financial products and services deployed and used, economic security

Climate Regeneration

Expanded use of regenerative agriculture, carbon sinks, conservation/protection, community awareness/action, and climate finance.

- Management, protection, restoration, and/or using regenerative practices
- Regenerative farmer income
- Biodiversity, biomass, soil health, water retention, and carbon sequestration
- Monitoring, evaluation, and data sharing

Impact

Equitable, resilient, and empowered communities where everyone can reach their full potential and thrive

*Technology donations are made by Cisco Systems Inc., not the Cisco Foundation.

Click image to enlarge

Our catalytic investment model

We invest in potential

We recognize that there is limited funding for early-stage ideas and solutions–yet it is this early stage where funding needs are the highest. This is a gap we aim to fill. We also recognize that investing in early-stage solutions requires a higher risk tolerance than investing in proven solutions, and that the time horizon to see results and impact is longer.

As a technology company with a long history of innovation, we are comfortable with a higher level of risk because we understand the potential for deep and sustained impact as the ultimate reward.

We are intentional about investing in potential–providing patient and catalytic capital for innovation. We provide early-stage, seed-level funding to high potential organizations to ideate, innovate, and experiment. To design, create, and test technology enabled and delivered solutions that can result in deep impact. And then to scale and replicate those solutions.

In doing so, we aim to demonstrate the viability of this investment model, and the ecosystem impact of the solutions and organizations we invest in.

Why the focus on digital solutions?

As a technology company, we believe in the power of technology to connect the unconnected–to close the digital and data divide–and to drive impact at scale.

We put this investment model to work in executing against Cisco's 10-year, 1 billion lives positively impacted goal. Our achievement of the goal a year ahead of schedule was driven by this investment approach and focus on technology enabled solutions–validating its efficacy.

Our investment model

Stage 1:
Create and Design

Stage 2:
Deploy and Test

Stage 3:
Replicate and Scale

Stage 4:
Achieve Viability and Exit

Initial funding, time, and flexibility for early-stage solution ideation and prototyping. We encourage creativity, unconventional thinking, innovation, and a talent for leveraging the unique opportunities engendered by emerging technologies.

Solution testing and validation to advance the solution from idea to proof of concept.

Once the solution is proven, we offer extended funding to help our partners replicate their solution to additional geographies, scale to reach more people, and demonstrate positive social impact outcomes.

Support for transitioning out of our funding, ensuring our partners have the capacity to continue operations and deliver impact long after the tenure of our partnership ends.

Throughout the lifecycle of our engagement with partner organizations, we complement our funding with additional offerings of technology donations from Cisco, advisory/consulting services, employee engagement opportunities, and communications support.

Our investment model in action

How does this investment model work?

One example is our investment in the LaborLink solution, conceived by [Good World Solutions](#), whose vision is a world where every worker is heard and where worker well-being is integral to business success. Their idea was to use mobile technology to connect directly with workers in real-time.

Stage 1 and 2

We provided initial seed funding both to design the initial version of LaborLink and conduct a proof-of-concept pilot with 100 apparel sector factory workers in Peru.

Stage 3

We then provided follow-on funding to help Good World Solutions replicate LaborLink to additional sectors and geographies, scale to reach more people, and add new features and functionality.

Within only a few years, more than 1 million workers in nearly 400 factories used LaborLink—in multiple sectors, and across 16 countries in every region of the world, enabling workers to securely and anonymously provide feedback to factories and enabling brands including Cisco—to share critical information with workers and get first-hand insights into key workplace issues. LaborLink drove improvements in workplace safety and communications, reduced sexual harassment and verbal abuse, and created transparency on issues related to worker pay, overtime, and more.

Stage 4

Throughout our engagement with Good World Solutions, we supported them with our advisory services to help them think through their model for scale, and to test pricing models for earned revenue. Our final exit grant supported their transition to long-term financial viability.

As Good World Solutions explored various pathways to disrupt traditional factory audit models and advance toward financial viability, [ELEVATE (now LRQA)](#)—a leading global assurance company—acquired and integrated LaborLink into their offerings. In this way, LaborLink lives on and continues to drive impact for workers around the world.
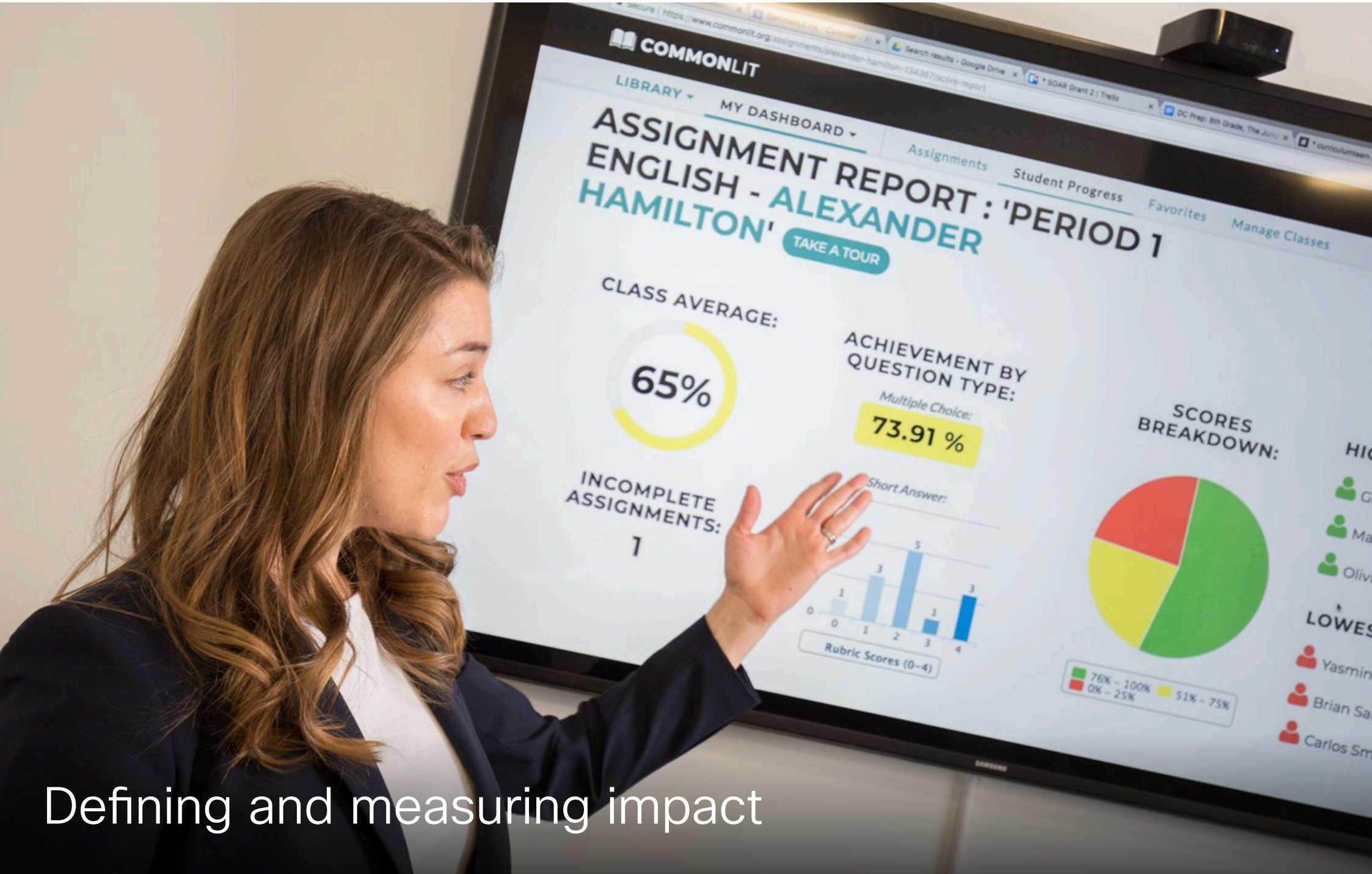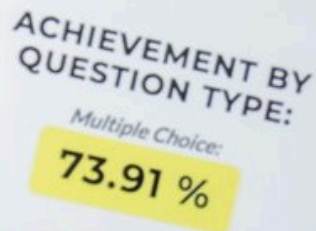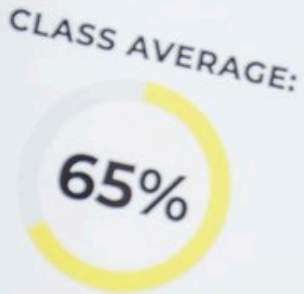
Defining and measuring impact

How we define impact

We define impact as a positive, measurable change in outcomes for individuals. Across our social impact investment portfolios, we further define positive impact as occurring when an individual has successfully gained access to a critical resource, demonstrated learning, and/or engaged meaningfully in the formal economy.

Beyond this, positive impact is defined as and varies by social impact sector. All our grants are intended to support underserved individuals and communities. Therefore, in some cases, we consider equitable access to information, knowledge, and resources to be early indicators of, and lead to, long-term positive impact.

How we define impact (continued)

Selected examples of positive impact for each of our social impact sectors include:

- **Crisis response/Critical human needs:** Quicker, more efficient, and/or easier access to essential humanitarian relief resources and services; increase in smallholder farmer yields, productivity, income, etc.
- **Education:** Enhancements in curriculum content and delivery that lead to increases in student attendance, interest, persistence, engagement, and/or confidence; decreases in drop-out rates; increases in student mastery of subject matter, etc.
- **Economic empowerment:** Technical and professional skills training that enables people to obtain jobs that provide stable and sufficient income and pursue career development opportunities toward independence and economic security; new businesses created and sustained, increase in business revenue, new jobs created, etc.
- **Climate impact and regeneration:** Growth in number of farmers adopting and maintaining regenerative and resilient agriculture practices, increased protection of natural carbon sinks, etc.

As we executed against our 1 Billion Lives goal, underscoring our commitment to accountability and transparency, we engaged PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) to conduct a limited external assurance of our methodology and impact. We published a detailed guide on how we approach impact evaluation, how we define positive impact, our measurement process, validation methodology, and more–including PwC's assurance report. Learn more: One Billion Lives Positively Impacted.

Cisco Foundation climate commitment
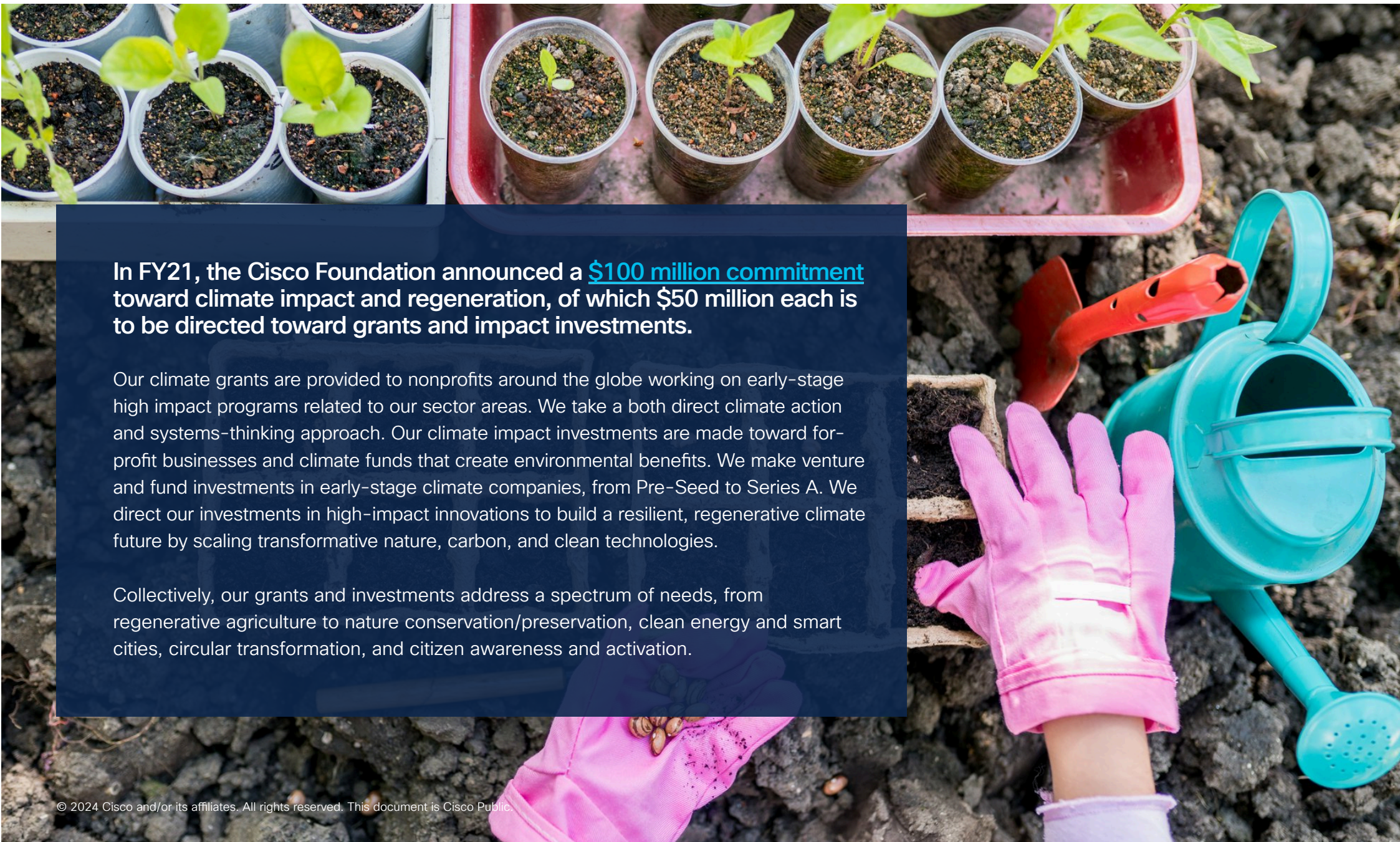
In FY21, the Cisco Foundation announced a $100 million commitment toward climate impact and regeneration, of which $50 million each is to be directed toward grants and impact investments.

Our climate grants are provided to nonprofits around the globe working on early-stage high impact programs related to our sector areas. We take a both direct climate action and systems-thinking approach. Our climate impact investments are made toward for-profit businesses and climate funds that create environmental benefits. We make venture and fund investments in early-stage climate companies, from Pre-Seed to Series A. We direct our investments in high-impact innovations to build a resilient, regenerative climate future by scaling transformative nature, carbon, and clean technologies.

Collectively, our grants and investments address a spectrum of needs, from regenerative agriculture to nature conservation/preservation, clean energy and smart cities, circular transformation, and citizen awareness and activation.

Climate impact and regeneration investments

Investing in for-profit climate solutions that avoid greenhouse gas emissions, promote regenerative agricultural practices, enhance carbon sequestration, and contribute to climate resilience and adaptation.

- To date, our climate investments portfolio has directly or indirectly (via funds) supported more than 140 high-impact climate startups across 20+ countries
- More than 65 percent of the portfolio company founders are from diverse populations

Increasing inclusive access to clean energy in Africa

Jaza powers over 15,000 homes and 100,000 people a month, across 120+ sites in Tanzania and Nigeria.

Jaza Energy is a company that builds and distributes rechargeable batteries powered with solar energy in Nigeria and Tanzania.

Problem: About 600 million people, 43 percent of Africa's population, lack access to electricity. The majority of off-grid houses use kerosene lanterns, candles, flashlights, or generators as primary sources of lighting and energy. These are often unsafe, inefficient, costly, inconsistent, and polluting.

Solution and Cisco support: Cisco Foundation made an early-stage investment into Jaza to enhance affordable access to clean energy across the region and drive climate action.

Impact: Jaza's model establishes shops or 'hubs' in remote communities of 1000+ residents to distribute rechargeable batteries to families to power home appliances, phones, lights, televisions, stereos and on occasion, support their small businesses.

Impact story:
Using climate-tech to accelerate sustainable agriculture
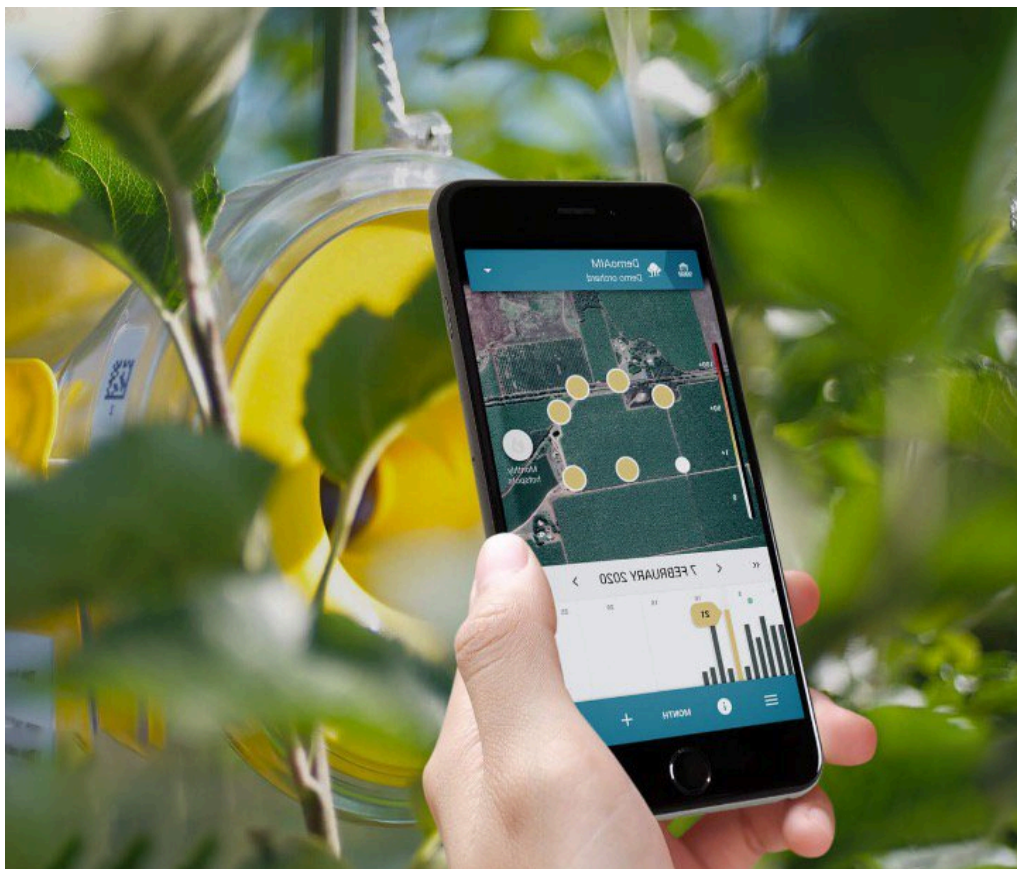
A 30-45 percent reduction in chemical cover sprays and instead a move towards shifting agricultural systems to more regenerative and sustainable practices.

RapidAIM is a company that uses AI and sensor technology for real-time crop monitoring to detect pests and reduce pesticide usage.

Problem: Today, more than 485,000 tons of insecticide are dumped on the planet each year, with 99 percent missing the targeted pests and creating toxic environmental pollution affecting biodiversity, human and environmental health. Insecticides contribute 8,002,500 tons of CO_2 annually.

Solution and Cisco support: Cisco Foundation made an early-stage investment into RapidAIM to expand key technology that enables the transition towards regenerative agriculture and more healthy and sustainable global agricultural practices.

Impact: RapidAIM helps farmers adopt more targeted and sustainable pest control methods. This shift enhances crop protection and contributes to reducing harmful environmental impacts associated with chemical insecticides. The adoption of biologicals and advanced monitoring technologies like RapidAIM is essential for meeting modern agricultural demands while promoting environmental sustainability. Their work is operational in Australia, Europe, and the United States.

Digitizing and advancing carbon monitoring
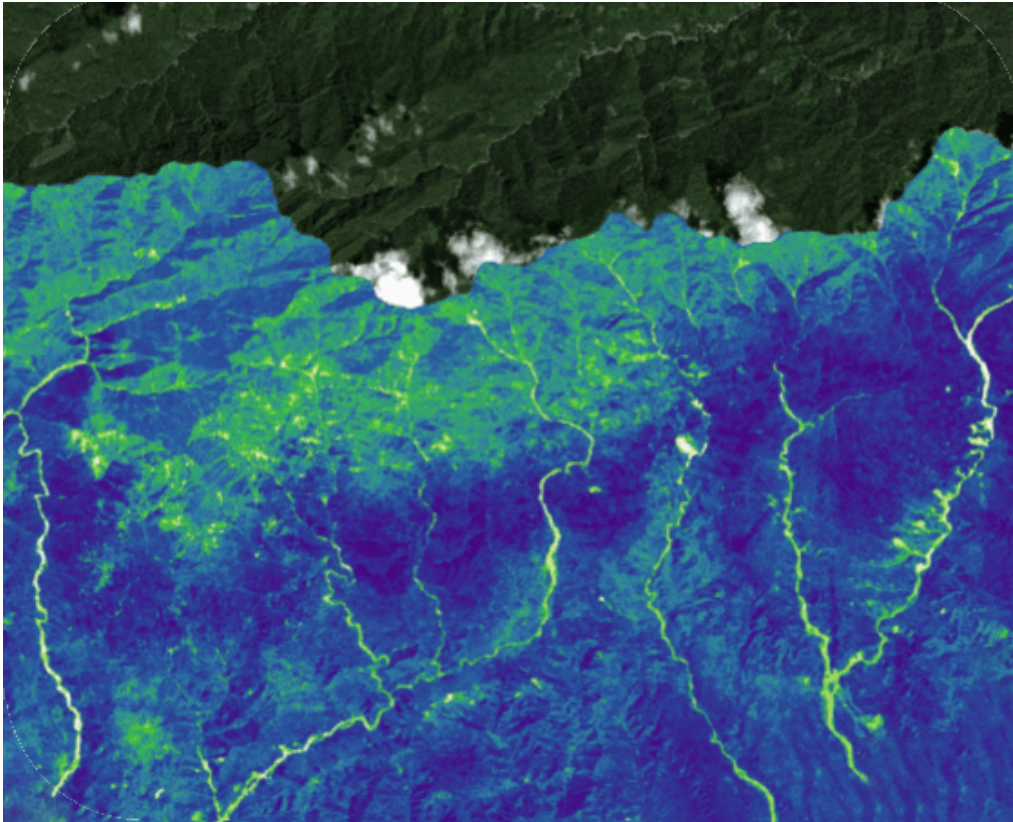
By providing accurate tracking of forest carbon stocks and changes, Chloris supports the protection and scaling of nature-based solutions and is integral for stakeholders aiming to meet global sustainability targets.

The company, **Chloris Geospatial**, is a data and analytics platform that turns space-based observations into data and insights about carbon & natural capital.

Problem: In the voluntary carbon markets—a market valued at $1.6 billion in 2023 and growing to $10-$40 billion by 2030, stakeholders are grappling with the challenge of verifying and monitoring carbon sequestration projects due to the time-consuming and error-prone nature of traditional methods. New technology solutions to standardize measurement, reporting, verification (MRV) can help buyers & sellers transact with assurance on the quality of carbon credits.

Solution and Cisco support: Cisco Foundation made an early-stage investment into Chloris to drive climate action by revolutionizing forest carbon monitoring and sustainability reporting.

Impact: Leveraging satellite imagery and AI/ML technology, Chloris offers high-resolution, accurate biomass data analytics through its cloud-based SaaS platform. The company addresses critical challenges in voluntary carbon markets and corporate greenhouse gas accounting by providing standardized, reliable data for carbon credit verification and Scope 3 emissions reporting globally.

Driving clean energy innovation across Southeast Asia

Unleashing innovation in utility scale renewables, distributed energy, grid modernization, electrification and green hydrogen across Southeast Asia.

Southeast Asia Clean Energy Facility (SEACEF) fund aims to direct early-stage development capital investment into high-impact clean energy projects and businesses in critical Southeast Asian markets.

Problem: Southeast Asia, despite being the 5th largest energy consumer and highly vulnerable to climate change, sources over 40 percent of its energy from coal. This persists despite the region's vast potential for renewable energy due to longstanding vested interests and incentive systems favoring fossil fuels that hinder climate innovation in this space.

Solution and Cisco support: Cisco Foundation invested in SEACEF's Fund II to provide early-stage development capital to solar, wind, storage, energy efficiency, electric mobility, and infrastructure businesses and projects in Southeast Asia.

Impact: SEACEF funding helps to de-risk businesses and projects to catalyze follow-on private sector investment for de-risked opportunities.

Climate impact and regeneration grants

Building an inclusive, regenerative, and resilient climate future through education and action, regenerative agriculture, protecting carbon sinks, and clean energy solutions.

· 135,000+ individuals engaged in climate education and advocacy initiatives delivered by our non-profit partners
· 110,000+ people benefited from clean/ green energy solutions implemented by our partners

Promoting climate resilience for farmers in Africa

Difina Kamadi (left) in Ihuru, Kakamega, Kenya enrolled with One Acre Fund in 2009, alongside One Acre Fund program officer Hesbon Samia Ang'alika (right).

One Acre Fund envisions a world where all farmers have big harvests, healthy families, and rich soils.

Problem: The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change estimates that increasing temperature and weather disasters will drive 10-30 percent yield reductions by 2050, but a lack of weather data leads to inaccurate forecasts and an inability to design local solutions for agricultural resilience.

Solution and Cisco support: Cisco Foundation supports One Acre Fund's integration of remote sensing technology into their core programming to support precision agriculture and deepen climate resilience for small holder farmers.

Impact: One Acre Fund has developed a remote sensing strategy to guide their flood mapping, digital weather advisory services, agroforestry, and crop yield monitoring programs. Pilots begun in Kenya are now replicating to four new countries in Africa.

- 96 percent of farmers adopting resilient farming practices
- 10.6K farmers reached with digital weather advisories
- 3K flood data points mapped in Kenya
- Remote sensing work piloted in four additional countries in Africa

Protecting and restoring the Amazon

Domingo Peas, President of ASHA addressing the Binational Congress of Achuar People of Ecuador and Peru. (Photo credit: Lorena Mendoza)

Amazon Sacred Headwaters Alliance (ASHA) works to protect 86 million acres of land from resource extraction and promotes a just transition to a wellbeing bioeconomy.

Problem: The Amazon is home to over 47 million people and approximately 10 percent of remaining biodiversity, but faces pressures from industrial processes like deforestation, mining, and oil drilling.

Solution and Cisco support: ASHA established a Bioregional Plan, governed by and in accordance with Indigenous principles of collective wellbeing. Cisco Foundation supports ASHA's strategic plan to improve living conditions, advance Indigenous rights, stop deforestation, conserve forests and restore degraded areas, as well as to establish an organizational governance structure for effective management, implementation, and oversight.

Impact: With Cisco Foundation support, ASHA developed a fully operational Geographic Information System (GIS) platform including a social atlas to track impact, the first comprehensive Indigenous Amazon designed-and-developed map representing territories.

- 24 Indigenous organizations contributing to ASHA governance
- 700K Indigenous people living in Sacred Headwaters territory
- 104K plants from 102 species delivered to households
- 643 hectares reforested

Inspiring youth toward climate action

DOT Climate champions plan, implement, and lead place-based community projects.

Digital Opportunity Trust (DOT) mobilizes and inspires young people to create opportunities, apply digital solutions, and transform their communities.

Problem: There is little support for climate education and community-led climate solutions among youth and citizens in communities that are disproportionately affected by climate change, particularly Africa and the Middle East.

Solution and Cisco support: With Cisco Foundation support, DOT built a four-week curriculum to train and mobilize young people as leaders of climate awareness and community action. The program blends intensive climate science education with training in mindfulness, digital skills, climate advocacy, and social innovation.

Impact: The program piloted with climate champions across Tanzania and Lebanon and disseminated a custom toolkit to enable climate champions to guide small-scale action projects in their communities.

- 78 percent of community members indicated greater motivation to take climate action
- 600 community members engaged through projects
- 2 pilot countries: Tanzania and Lebanon
- 78 percent participants indicate they can "inspire those around them" after the program, compared to 22 percent before the program

Impact story:
AI for marine biodiversity

The installation of Yayasan Konservasi Alam Nusantara technology on a fishing boat.
(Photo credit: Sofwan Wilanda - Geeks)

Yayasan Konservasi Alam Nusantara (YKAN) partners with local communities to protect nature and preserve the biodiversity of the Indonesian archipelago.

Problem: Overexploitation puts Indonesia's fisheries and livelihood of the coastal people at risk.

Solution and Cisco support: YKAN working together with Geeks Without Frontiers and Intelion, and supported by Cisco, developed a sustainable fisheries management program based on data collected from local fishermen while leveraging an innovative software application called FishFace.

Impact: The digital solution can revolutionize fisheries research and management in Indonesia with real-time data collection. Beyond the initial design and pilot testing, YKAN now is planning for full integration with the government's e-logbook system providing insights for local regulations that will preserve nature and biodiversity in the region.

- Multiple vessels fully equipped to pilot solution in two regions (Kupang and Makassar) of the Indonesian archipelago
- 80 percent accuracy in fish identification via smartphone camera
- Operating in 14 provinces across Indonesia, comprising 17,500 islands, stretching 5000 km from east to west

Crisis response

Mobilizing to provide essentials to communities in need and those in crisis, including food, clean water, shelter, secure connectivity, and disaster relief.

· 1.3M+ people supported through our food security partnerships
· 770,000+ people supported through our water and sanitation partnerships

Connecting people with critical services and building resiliency

Ukrainians supporting Ukrainians with LifeForce, a secure, real-time humanitarian aid matching platform.

AI4Good is on a mission to support economic and community resilience through technology via three verticals: Intelligent societies, catalyzing innovation, and humanitarian aid.

Problem: After Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022, millions of people were displaced within the country and in need of humanitarian assistance. At the same time, publicly available on-line information was being used by Russia to target critical infrastructure such as hospitals.

Solution and Cisco support: Cisco Foundation is supporting LifeForce Ukraine, a Diia-authenticated geo-fenced secure digital platform that provides verified life-saving information and support real-time and enables coordination across governments, non-profit/non-government organizations, and individuals and families in search of assistance.

Impact: Cisco support has enabled AI4Good to develop advanced features including a community task manager, grant need verification and interactive dashboards, connecting IDPs with the services and supplies they need, and enabling governments to understand needs real-time and manage the flow of aid accordingly.

- LifeForce deployed across 5 regions in Ukraine, deliver critical information in a secure manner
- 100-200K unique platform users per month
- 252K average aid matches per month
- 2M+ aid deliveries verified and completed since platform launch

Building back better and changing unsafe construction practices

Improving vulnerable housing is nearly 75 percent cheaper and saves 68 percent of embodied carbon compared to new construction.

Build Change is working to reduce deaths, injuries and economic losses caused by housing and school collapses due to earthquakes and extreme weather events.

Problem: In recent years, the deadliest disasters have been earthquakes and windstorms in which most deaths are attributed to structural collapse. By 2030, an estimated 3 billion people will be living in sub-standard housing which is particularly vulnerable to these events.

Solution and Cisco support: Cisco Foundation is supporting BCtap, a technology platform that digitizes end-to-end management of disaster prevention and post-disaster resilient housing programs. It has been designed such that it can be quickly deployed and customized for local contexts.

Impact: Cisco support has enabled Build Change to streamline BCtap workflows resulting in a 95 percent reduction in time to stand up a new program, 33 percent reduction in field visits required, and improved transparency, data consistency and quality control. It has been leveraged in more than 40 post-disaster rebuilding programs across South America, Asia, and the Middle East.

- 1.1M people benefitting from improved housing/ schools since inception
- 230K buildings made safer since 2004
- 40 post-disaster rebuilding programs leveraging BCtap
- 26+ countries in which BCtap has been implemented

Bringing trust and transparency to agri-food supply chains
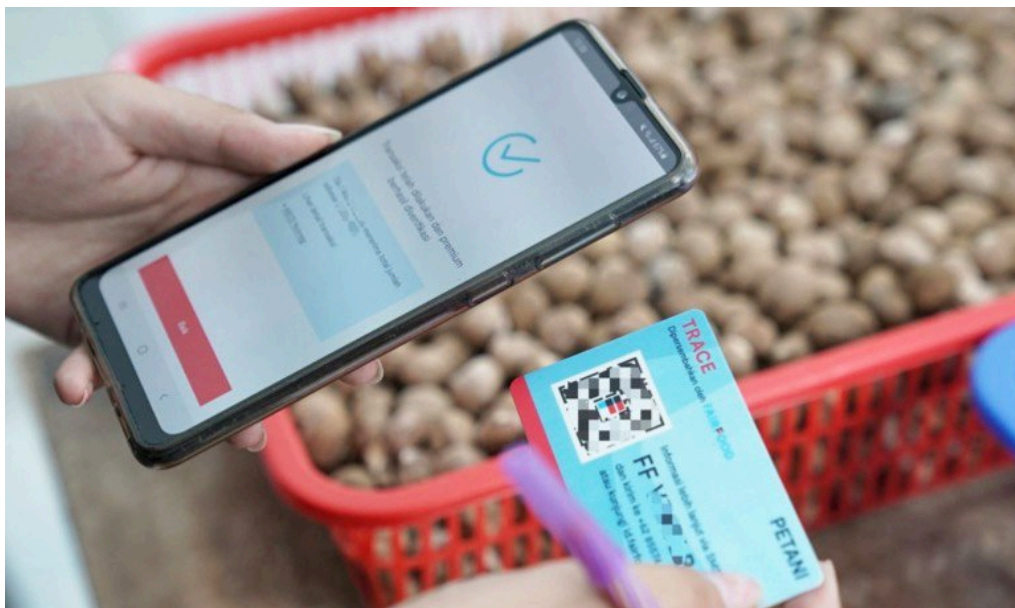
Trace gives farmers a voice by enabling them to verify the price they are being paid for their goods.

Fairfood is on a mission to accelerate change toward sustainable food systems and improve the economic prosperity of smallholder farmers and food workers.

Problem: Poor transparency in the agri-food supply chain contributes to a lack of ability and incentive for companies to manage human rights, environmental and other issues; and, to the exclusion of smallholder farmers and food workers from fair value distribution.

Solution and Cisco support: Cisco Foundation is supporting Trace, a blockchain-based platform that enables companies to trace products from farm to fork and log verifiable evidence to support claims around issues including fair pay, environmental stewardship, and more.

Impact: Cisco support has enabled Fairfood to extend their program presence from 10 to 22 countries and onboard over 30 new strategic partners to help them bring fully traceable products to market and improve responsible business practices across South America, Africa, and Asia.

- 30K farmers registered on Trace platform
- 375K people benefitting from increased farmer incomes
- 60 companies engaged to improve supply chain transparency
- 22 countries covered across three regions

Transforming communities' access to clean water

Jose Freyle (R) and Isabel Uriana (L), local Wayuu and WaterAid team members, perform water quality testing and maintenance on water infrastructure, La Guajira, Colombia, July 2024. (Photo credit: WaterAid/Keoma Zec)

WaterAid transforms lives by improving access to clean water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) in the world's poorest communities.

Problem: In La Guajira, Colombia, water scarcity is common among the rural communities where water is untreated, exposing people to microbiological contaminants, elevated salinity levels, and heavy metals.

Solution and Cisco support: With Cisco Foundation support, WaterAid rolled out the first mobile water quality lab in La Guajira and trained local community partners to conduct tests, analyze water quality data, maintain and sustain the lab to ensure longevity and effectiveness of water systems.

Impact: This program ensures rural communities' access to clean and safe drinking water. Cisco support for the successful pilot resulted in plans for replication and scale to additional communities in Columbia.

- First water testing facility and mobile lab established in La Guajira
- 500 people from two pilot communities have access to clean water
- Signed contract with the Colombian Ministry of Housing to replicate this model in 46 additional communities in La Guajira

Education

Supporting students, teachers, and schools by increasing engagement, building skills, promoting subject mastery, and expanding their capacity to thrive.

- 45M+ students gained skills and made progress toward subject mastery through programs delivered by our education partners
- 7M+ teachers supported with professional development and other capacity building resources

Impact story:
Closing literacy gaps

CommonLit unlocks the potential of every child through literacy by accelerating their reading, writing, speaking, and critical thinking skills.

Problem: On a global scale, 250 million children are failing to acquire basic literacy skills. Research indicates that 80 percent of low-income students read below grade level and 50 percent of students lack foundation reading skills with students living in poverty receiving poor instruction.

Solution and Cisco support: Cisco Foundation has supported CommonLit's global platform to improve teacher and student learning experiences, create inline learning annotation, ensure web accessibility, and implement Single Sign On interoperability with data security and infrastructure upgrades. These investments enable expanded adoption by larger school districts, improved platform performance and reduced maintenance costs.

Impact: CommonLit has demonstrated a 2x increase in learning acceleration with significant improvements for all students, including those from low-income backgrounds, English Language Learners (ELL), and students with disabilities. A comprehensive study revealed that schools implementing CommonLit classes improved student engagement in North and South America.

- 6.8M active students demonstrating learning on the platform
- 479K teachers with students on the platform across North and South America
- 1.6M students completed 6 or more digital lessons
- 88 percent school customer renewal rates for CommonLit services

Scaling computer science education globally

Problem: In an increasingly digital world, computer science should be a foundational subject. Yet more than 260 million children and youth (students) are out of school and over 600 million students are not meeting minimum learning standards globally. In this context, students' access to computer science education in the classroom is not equitable and is even further out of reach for most students.

Solution and Cisco support: Cisco Foundation has supported Code.org to broaden their international partner development model, translate curriculum into multiple languages, implement platform translation tools and capabilities, and introduce platform interoperability and digital divide low-bandwidth curriculum for last-mile regions with limited to no internet capabilities.

Impact: Code.org's platform reaches teachers and students around the globe, opening access to pre-reader through AP level computer science education in 180 countries in every region of the world in over 67 languages.

- 13.3M students and teachers engaged in computer science education globally
- 67 percent underserved students and 45 percent women
- 180+ countries and 67 languages
- 1.7B hours of code supported

Code.org expands access to computer science in schools, increasing participation by young women and students from underrepresented groups.

Providing climate and STEM resources for teachers

Problem: Globally, there is a teacher shortage widening, and more teachers leaving the profession compared to those entering. Teachers often are assigned to teach subjects outside their area of expertise. Pairing these dynamics with high student anxiety, the climate, and overall declining student engagement in school points to a need for innovative supplemental climate and STEM classroom resources for teachers.

Solution and Cisco support: Cisco Foundation investments have enabled the teach platform transformation of Cool.org into an educator-customized platform to deliver meaningful, high-quality content to educators, with AI lesson plan supports to reach teachers and students with evidence-based sustainability and climate education supplemental curriculum.

Impact: Since the platform's launch, educators save 3 hours per lesson on average, with 69 percent of teachers surveyed using this time to enhance student engagement. Additionally, educators report increased confidence in teaching complex topics, including environmental, social issues, and STEM. Their work has expanded beyond Australia to where it is fully global.

- 2M+ students taught/engaged
- 24K teachers and parents supported globally
- 203K lessons downloaded
- 92 percent Australian schools have a Cool.org teacher

Cool.org enables teachers and parents to be the best educators they can be by providing exceptional climate, STEM and cultural learning resources in Australia.

Empowering teachers in Thailand

Five alumni appointed to the Committee of Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA) Educational Policy.

Over the last ten years, **Teach for Thailand** has been developing a trained workforce of educators to transform the Thai education system for the better.

Problem: There are systemic challenges to support student education. Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) scores are well below Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)'s average, and 50 percent+ of recent graduates ranked "teacher" as least preferred occupation.

Solution and Cisco support: Cisco Foundation support enabled Teach for Thailand to create a data dashboard for training, data collection, and informed decision-making on student performance—as well as the creation of a Fellow site and e-training modules for shared learning.

Impact: Offerings positively impacted student performance as fellows track their progress and use data to drive necessary action to support student needs.

- 36K students supported
- 25 percent growth in student academic proficiency
- 80 new teaching fellows trained and place in schools

Economic empowerment

Transforming communities through skill development, long-term career opportunities, entrepreneurship, and access to financial products and services.

- 25M+ people participated in skills training and employment programs delivered by our non-profit partners
- 20M+ people gained access to financial products, services, and capacity building resources

Impact story:
Promoting pathways out of poverty around the world

For people in extreme poverty, coaching is essential to their personal transformation and economic success, enabling skills building and changes in attitudes and social norms.

Trickle Up partners with women in extreme poverty to build economic opportunity and drive inclusion globally.

Problem: Three billion people globally survive on less than $2.50/day and do not have access to the financial tools and basic services that enable equitable progress toward better lives.

Solution and Cisco support: Trickle Up works with partners to equip women in remote, rural areas with tools and support as they forge resilient pathways out of extreme poverty. Through savings, market access, and solidarity groups, women collectively build their skills, livelihoods, savings, and confidence to invest in the future—supported by personalized coaching. Cisco Foundation has funded the development of Trickle Up's coaching app, enabling them to scale their work while maintaining contextual sensitivity.

Impact: Updates to Trickle Up's coaching app lowered costs, improved productivity and efficiency, increased quality, and standardized content, allowing the organization to reach thousands of additional individuals. Our support also unlocked additional funding from other donors.

- 50+ Trickle Up partners engaged globally
- 32K individuals engaged in the past 12 months
- 86 percent of participants saved enough to cover household expenses for three months
- 82 percent of participants play a newly active role in household decision making

Impact story:
Helping entrepreneurs thrive

Graduates of Centro's entrepreneurship training program; 93 percent of all Centro graduates are BIPOC.

Centro Community Partners build thriving communities by providing existing and aspiring small business owners with business planning support, one-on-one business coaching, mentorship, and access to capital.

Problem: Thirty million small businesses in the United States generate $5 trillion in revenue annually—but there is a lack of equitable access to tailored, customized entrepreneurship education and capital for low income and underserved individuals.

Solution and Cisco support: Cisco Foundation support enabled Centro to create and test their CEO application, an AI-driven entrepreneurial resource platform.

Impact: Centro has supported more than 8500 small businesses, provided 13.6K hours of business coaching, and facilitated $7M in small business loans across the United States. They are also supporting entrepreneurs across Central and South America.

- 59 percent of aspiring entrepreneurs successfully launched businesses within one year
- $11M in entrepreneur graduates' average annual revenue
- 94 percent of entrepreneurs expressed increased confidence in their knowledge and their businesses
- 20 percent hired staff in the first year

Creating equitable access to digital financial products and services

Opportunity serves families, students, farmers, and entrepreneurs in 31 countries around the world.

Opportunity International empowers people living in poverty to transform their lives, their children's futures, and their communities.

Problem: 1.7 billion people globally are unbanked, yet two-thirds own a mobile phone that could help them access financial services. Digital finance has the potential to add $3.7 trillion to the GDP of developing countries.

Solution and Cisco support: Opportunity International helps people in every region of the world living in poverty build sustainable incomes, educate their children, improve their farms, and build brighter futures for their families. Cisco Foundation has provided multi-year support to design, test, and scale digital financial products and services for financial inclusion, as well as funding for in-house digital ideation and product development solutions.

Impact: Improvements in poverty status, new job creation, increased girls' literacy, higher income for women, and better health.

- 20M unique clients in 2023, accessing financial products, services, and capacity building resources
- 2K women in India trained as banking agents
- 93 percent of clients reported improvements in quality of life, 86 percent increased income, 80 percent increased savings, and 90 percent were better able to manage their finances
- Women's income increased by 73 percent, wellbeing by 70 percent, and 88 percent experienced greater decision-making power in their household

Impact story:
Supporting aspiring women entrepreneurs

Nairobi-based hairdresser, Nbumberi, learns entrepreneurial skills to help her afford better housing, healthcare and education for her family.

Hand in Hand equips underserved women with skills and resources to earn money and ignite local economies, lifting families and nations out of poverty.

Problem: Worldwide, 400 million women live trapped below the poverty line of just $2.15 a day. For these women, entrepreneurship is the only route out of poverty.

Solution and Cisco support: Cisco Foundation provided support for Hand in Hand to develop and test a targeted, inclusive-learning platform in Kenya to complement its in-person business training. The new e-learning system will support Hand in Hand to meet its goal of reaching 265,000 Kenyan entrepreneurs by 2027.

Impact:

- Hand in Hand's entrepreneurship training delivers an average ROI of 475 percent. For every $1 invested, member entrepreneurs earn $4.75 in additional income (money that they would not have earned without the training)
- 82 percent of the women we work with now have equal decision making in the home
- 93 percent of the micro enterprises our members establish are still operational after one year

"Thanks to our partnership with Cisco, we will be able to unlock the power of technology to equip even more women entrepreneurs with the skills and resources they need to launch thriving businesses, lifting more families out of poverty."

— Amalia Johnsson, Deputy CEO, Hand in Hand International

Habitat for Humanity grant program

Our partnership

Housing is critical to ensure the economic prosperity and security of families, and for thriving communities. As housing availability shrinks and costs rise, families with limited incomes face increased housing instability. Habitat for Humanity helps first-time homebuyers build stability and independence through homeownership.

Cisco and the Cisco Foundation support Habitat for Humanity affiliates around the globe by providing grants to cover a portion of the costs to build homes for families in need, engaging our employees, our customers, and our partners opportunities to work together to build these homes, and matching employee contributions of time and money.

In fiscal year 2024, Cisco and the Cisco Foundation provided cash grants and matching donations to support more than a dozen Habitat home build projects around the world, engaging our employees and multiple Cisco customers.

Habitat for Humanity: Greater Indy

In Indiana, the average hourly wage necessary to afford a two-bedroom fair market rent unit is $14.03; more than half of Indiana's renters cannot afford the fair market rate, according to an Indiana 211 Partnership Community Report.

Charles, who works for an Indianapolis-area company doing truck and trailer repair, and his wife Shonda were renting a house—but it was not meeting the needs of their family. The home afforded little privacy, and the ongoing problems and repairs required were coming out of their pocket—or taking months to be resolved, with a rent increase at the end of the waiting.

They were connected with Greater Indy Habitat for Humanity, who since 1987 has provided safe, affordable homes for countless families. Cisco Foundation and Cisco provided cash grants in support of the home build. And, we partnered with Eli Lilly and Company, who also provided a cash grant and their employees joined Cisco's employees, working side by side to help build the house.

"Participating in a Habitat for Humanity project fosters a shared experience that greatly enhances team cohesion. There's a genuine sense of satisfaction in contributing through volunteer work."

— Matthew Wright, Renewals Manager, Americas Sales

Charles and Shonda now have a safe and secure place to call home.

"Homeownership has always been our dream...the American dream. Owning our own home will give us the opportunity to plant roots, both literally and figuratively, and to become a part of something bigger than ourselves."

— Charles and Shonda, new homeowners

Our new partners in FY24
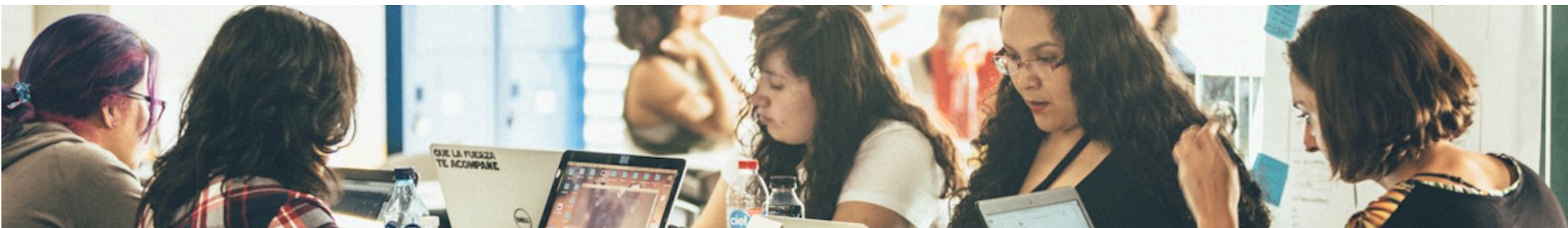
In FY24, we were pleased to welcome new partners to our portfolio across all our social impact investment sectors:

New grantee partners:

All We Can Save Network
ALUS Canada
Ashoka Innovators for the Public
Asociación Cultural Femenina – ACF
Cal Doughnut Economics Coalition
CARE PERU
Center on Rural Innovation (CORI)
Climate Mental Health Network
Collaborative Earth
Color My Outdoors
Comunità di S. Egidio – ACAP APS
Defy Ventures
Enseña Peru
FareShare
Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina
Foundation for Hearing Research, Inc.
 – dba Weingarten Children's Center

Fundacion Desafio Levantemos Chile
Fundación Lifting Hands
Global Forest Generation
Global Warming Mitigation Project
Hand in Hand International
Ocalenie Foundation
Open Earth Foundation
Open Future Coalition
Palestine Children's Relief Fund (PCRF)
Rocky Mountain Institute
Shelter Movers
Stitching Boxwise
TEENSMART INTERNATIONAL
The Algebra Project
The Nawaya Network
Work On Climate
World Wildlife Fund

New climate investments:

Aikido Technologies
CarbonBuilt
Carbon Reform
Chloris Geospatial
Ecotone Renewables
Jaza Energy
Miraterra
RapidAIM
SEACEF Fund II
SHYFT Power Solutions
The Catalyst Fund Resilience I
Third Sphere

Foundation leadership

Foundation Board of Directors

© 2024 Cisco and/or its affiliates. All rights reserved. This document is Cisco Public.

Social Impact Investments Team

Erin Connor
Director, Cisco Crisis Response

Elias Habbar-Baylac
Climate Impact and Regeneration

Sue-Lynn Hinson
Crisis Response and Critical Human Needs

Jocelyn Matyas
Climate Impact and Regeneration

Julie Rose
Economic Empowerment and Habitat for Humanity

Peter Tavernise
Director, Climate Impact and Regeneration

Kyle Thornton
Education

Hoa Tran
Regional Solutions Grants
and Cisco Foundation Administration

Alex Wilkins
Climate Impact and Regeneration

Additional resources

Global impact grants

Grant giving policies

More information on investment portfolios

One Billion Lives campaign

FY23 Cisco Purpose Report

CISCO

Thank you for reading

Cisco Foundation
Annual Impact Report