

Heights and Minds Foundation

2023

Annual Overview



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As 2023 comes to an end, the Heights and Minds Foundation has been scaling up and reaching out to more mothers, their children, and partner organisations to improve maternal and child nutrition status on a global scale.



Now operating in Senegal, Uganda, Indonesia, Malaysia and with a program planning to be operating in Cambodia in 2024, more than 1400+ participants regularly attend MindUp clinics for counseling, centre activities, and classes educating about the importance of good nutrition the first 1,000 days of life.



SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
GOALS

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Acronym Guide


HMF: Heights and Minds Foundation


HMF-DS: Heights and Minds Foundation Digital Solution


MUM: MindUp Manager


M&E: Monitoring and Evaluation

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Message from the HMF Team



It is a great pleasure to report on Heights and Minds' continuing growth in 2023. It has been an excellent year for our MindUps in Senegal, Indonesia, and Uganda who saw participation in the growth promotion program increasing rapidly and successfully added additional services which are described in detail in the country specific reports below.

We are excited to report we opened a new MindUp in Malaysia, sponsored by the Selangor Health Partnership (SELHEP) program, and preparations have started to open a new MindUp in Siem Reap, Cambodia, in Partnership with Chef Nak and international Development Entrepreneurs (iDE), in March 2024. We are delighted to report that the Government of Senegal has obtained funding to open three more MindUps in Greater Dakar in 2024.

Heights and Minds starts 2024 with 4 MindUps in 4 countries, covering about 25,000 households across the catchment areas. We have created 24 local jobs and trained local coaches, MindUp Managers and MindUp assistants. We have about 1,400 registered participants (pregnant women and children under two) in the 1,000 days child growth promotion and development program.

Our HMF-Digital Solution, the transformational decision support and monitoring system, has been revamped. We will start rolling out early 2024 and start sharing results in the second quarter of 2024. The HMF innovative training and coaching program has been tested, successfully adapted to the four countries, and will continue to be expanded in 2024. With the help of our intern program we have developed a new edutainment game which will be rolled out in 2024. All our MindUps have started exciting new activities and plans for new services, which are detailed in the below country specific report.

None of this would have been possible without the help from our sponsors, national and academic partners and most importantly our local partners. A big thank you to all!

We would like to give a huge thank you to our new and regular sponsors: Service Heroes, CISCO Foundation, Rotary International Club of Stockholm, Aram Group, and all private donors - Thank you from the Heights and Minds Team

Another huge thank you to our Partners, without whom we could not have achieved much, Conseil National du Développement de la Nutrition (CNDN) Senegal, Selangor State Government, Malaysia, Little Steps, Malaysia, Tunas Nusa, Bandung Indonesia, Kawempe Youth Center, Kawempe, Uganda, and we look forward to welcoming new partners in 2024, Foundation For Equal Citizens, iDE and new local partners in Senegal.

And thank you to our long-time academic partners who allow us to choose their best and brightest interns: Odisse, Gent Belgium, McMaster, Canada, Maastricht University Global Health program and most recently we are excited to add highly appreciated International Medical University, Malaysia. And we are very excited to have started collaboration with the E3 Nutrition Lab | Brown School at Washington University in St Louis to expand our MindUp package and focus on women empowerment.

Finally, on a personal note I, Claudia, would like to thank the Heights and Minds Core team, which also expanded in 2023 with our local coach in Malaysia, our Global IT specialist, M&E specialist and M&E advisor, new consultant support for the Training and Coaching program, and new Corporate Board member and our new Local coach in Senegal. Please check out our Webpage for their bios. A heartfelt thank you to all for your dedication, hard work, and going the extra mile for our MindUp participants.

Here's to a fabulous 2024!

Senegal Overview



Overview of MindUp operations over the year

As the first official MindUp program opening in January of 2020, the Tawfekh Keur Jaboot (TKJ) MindUp has been a fantastic example of how the MindUp program continues to thrive and grow providing essential support for local mothers and children in the Jaxaay community. The Partnership with CNDN allows Heights and Minds to continue building on the existing MindUp Package, and with new funding, we can open three more MindUps and test additional services in 2024.



Solidarity Circle

We are proud to have over 500 regular participants registered in the 1,000 days child growth program and regularly attending the various workshops and events. The Solidarity Circle is a weekly group get-together for pregnant and lactating women providing a safe space to share experiences, open up about concerns, ask questions or share their pregnancy journey with the support of other community mothers and facilitated by MindUp MUMs for professional support and advice.

Workshops, Programs and Community Store

On top of regular individual counseling sessions provided for local mothers and the Solidarity Circle, supportive and fun workshops are facilitated in the MindUp, called Tawfekh in Woolof. This includes a weekly education session on childhood nutrition, complementary feeding and overall child health.

Regular cooking workshops are a fun and interactive community highlight that demonstrates application of nutritious cooking using local ingredients including the protein enriched flour variations and grains sold in the new Community Boutique to make foods such as vegetable soups and porridges

Gouy Gui and CNCN

Our local partner organisation Gouy Gui is a vital partnership for the MindUp programs and other programs to operate effectively. Since the opening of Tawfekh Keur Jaboot in January 2020, working with Gouy Gui has meant the facilitation of the cooking workshops, daily meal service for children and MindUp counseling services has been well organised, and has meant the 500+ participants have continued to get involved.



@tawfekhkeurjaboot



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Participants Story - Djonta Koné

“My name is Djonta Koné and I'm the mother of twins Ndeye maguette Thiam and ndeye Anita Thiam. I've been coming to the center since my babies were 4 months old, and I haven't regretted it. The MindUp organizes educational discussions to teach us about nutrition and what's important for a child's growth. I recommend every mother to come to the MindUp to offer their children the opportunity to grow well and to offer themselves the keys to ensure the health of their children. Not only physically but also mentally.”



Participant Story - Ndeye Fatou Seck

“My name is Ndeye Fatou Seck, I'm 29 years old, and I have a daughter named Ndeye Awa Toure. She is now 7 months old. The advantages for me of visiting the MindUp are the educational discussions about nutrition and complementary feeding. Thanks to those discussions I learn a lot about healthy nutrition for my baby. The culinary demonstrations gives me the opportunity to discover new recipes. I also really like the play corners and the stimulating games, my daughter can play in a safe environment and she seems really happy.”





Reflection of 2023 Operations

Now in the third year of operation, Ruang Riung Ceria centre (RRC) has remained a staple of the local community administering the MindUp stunting reduction program among other local programs. In 2023, RRC provided counseling and growth monitoring to about 150 pregnant women and children under the age of 2. As many as 250 children and women visited the RRC throughout the year.

Together with the technical knowledge regarding healthy eating habits, good feeding practices and growth monitoring and promotion (GMP) from Heights and Minds, and Tunas Nusa Foundation's community-centred approach to address the issues of access to food and environmental sustainability, RRC is an excellent example of the MindUp concept implemented by a local partner.



Mobile Kitchen & Meal Preparations

The use of a mobile kitchen in RRC is a fantastic way to demonstrate healthy recipes from a local perspective. The MUMs and cooking demonstrators play a pivotal role in addressing the fundamental need to understand how to prepare nutritious meals using locally accessible food. By preparing and delivering wholesome meals in a communal manner, the activity contributes to Heights and Minds' and Tunas Nusa long-term goals of educating about stunting prevention and fostering community engagement.

Community Garden & Fish Farm

Another communal element of RRC includes the community garden and fish farm. The centre has flourished into a reliable source of healthy vegetables and healthy proteins from quails eggs and fish in Rancaekek Wetan to supplement the diet of the local community. Supported by the local government agencies who provided the initial fish seeds and feed, the local community has taken ownership of the program and now harvests the vegetables, fish and quails eggs on a weekly basis.





Local Partners and Collaborators

The RRC is a working collaboration between Heights and Minds Foundation and Tunas Nusa Foundation. After 3 years of operations, our partner has noticed a big difference from the community members who visit the RRC.

“Strong bonds form within the groups visiting the RRC. First, the core of RRC - consisting of MUMs and Kang Odoy, who manage the daily operations and consult the founder team in special cases. Second, the cadre - who connects the posyandu, collaborates with Puskesmas staff, and enhances health services. Third, the RRC activists, local neighbors, and influential figures who lead daily activities with MUMs' guidance. And finally, the group which consists of food-aid recipients who gradually integrate into RRC activities. We see strong bonds, good camaraderie and kinship developing within and among the groups”, Ramalis Sobandi, RRC.



[@ruangriungceria](https://www.instagram.com/ruangriungceria)



Early Childhood Development

The year 2023 saw the start of weekly early childhood development activities held in RRC. Spearheaded by the MUMs, the younger children in the community benefited from sessions of story-telling, sensory play and even potty training! These sessions help to build the brain connections of infants and young children, leading to brighter minds and even brighter futures!





MUM Story - Mutiara and Citra

According to the MUMs, one aspect of the MindUp that the community finds particularly attractive is the group activities organized at the RRC.

“The RRC hosts excellent activities that are always awaited eagerly by residents – such as gardening and harvesting activities, activities with parents such as cooking, and children’s activities (playdate). Activities that residents can participate in person are in great demand. From these meetups, usually the residents will exchange stories and experiences. For example, during cooking activities, mothers will share small tips of what they do at home or the favourite recipes they usually cook for the family.”



Citra



Mutiara



Participant Stories

In the three years since the RRC started, impact on the diet and caring practices of members of the Rancaekek community can be seen. Through the weekly cooking demonstrations, recipe sharing and recipe competitions, mothers and carers who attend the RRC are exposed to healthy recipes, and we noticed an improvement in the awareness and diet diversity of the community.

Ibu Ranti Supartini

Mrs. Ranti had just given birth to a beautiful and healthy baby girl in November. During her second pregnancy, Mrs. Ranti experienced chronic energy deficiency (CED). She also had to take care of toddlers and her weight did not increase during her pregnancy.

With the help of the RRC MUMs and the network of cadre in Rancaekek, Mrs. Ranti received the monitoring and support that she needed for the rest of her pregnancy. She received counseling from the MUMs and vegetables and quail eggs from the RRC garden every week. Her daughter, Humaira, was born with a healthy weight of 3.7kg and a length of birth 50 cm. Mrs. Ranti continues to receive counseling and support from the RRC on topics such as breastfeeding and the first 1,000 days of life. CED during pregnancy is associated with low birth weight which in turn increases the risk of stunting and other health complications. Thanks to the good work of the mums and cadres of the RRC, Humaira is now off to a good start in life!

For Mrs. Ranti, RRC is a blessing, because the existence of RRC allowed her to understand what she initially did not know. RRC makes Mrs. Ranti feel relieved because of the anxiety she faced related to the growth and development of children and pregnancy. The counseling session at the RRC is very beneficial for Mrs. Ranti. Likewise with all the games available at the RRC, making her eldest child feel at home playing while Mrs. Ranti received the counseling



Ibu Sri & Shayna

“Alhamdulillah, from the time I took part in RRC activities starting from my pregnancy, to now when my second child is almost 2 years old - there have been much knowledge that I gained especially regarding the health and nutritional needs for mothers and children.

I become more aware of the importance of the first 1,000 days for children, how to maximize their daily nutritional needs, build a healthy family, and prevent stunting. Thank you RRC.”



Ibu Inoh & Fatimah

Mrs. Inoh’s daughter, Fatimah, was born prematurely at around 28-31 weeks. Fatimah was born with a weight of 1.9kg. Realizing the need to give more support to Mrs. Inoh, the MUMs and cadres of the RRC encouraged Ms. Inoh to visit the MindUp often, where she received counseling on topics such as breastfeeding and complementary foods. She also received vegetables planted and harvested by community of the RRC.

Despite being born small, Fatimah was able to overcome the challenge because of the love of her mother and the RRC community. Fatimah is now a healthy 1-year-old who follows her growth curve.

Mrs. Inoh is happy because she also has peers to share stories and experiences with. In addition, it is also very fortunate that Fatimah can get friends of her own age while playing at RRC.





Overview of MindUp operations over the year

After a full 18 months of operation, the MindUp program in Uganda has been a reliable and well utilized maternal and childhood health resource for the community in Kawempe District (Kampala). The regular participant rate went from over 100 participants in 2022 and has increased significantly to over 500 regular participants in 2023.

Nutritious Porridge

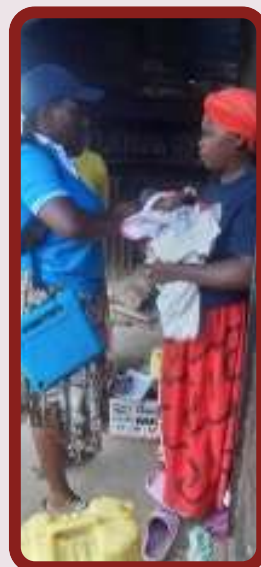
During the month of October, our MindUp service continued to support and provide nutritious porridge to breastfeeding mothers and babies aged above 6 months. This service aims to enhance the nutritional well-being of mothers and infants, promoting healthy growth and development



Regular Community Workshops

Offering regular workshops to the community focusing on maternal and child nutrition has continued to thrive this year. Topics of workshops include Family Planning Methods, Health Snack and Health Boosting recipes for Mother and Baby, Hygiene and Growth Stimulation, and Nourishing Brighter Futures: Empowering 100+ Mothers and Caregivers for Proper Nutrition.

On December 12 one of our MUMs states “Today we had a Nutrition session with mothers and thereafter gave them a package (from the fundraiser). Over 100 women attended the session and got a package.”





Community Outreaches: Kilokole (Lost City) and Kisowera


In November, we will conduct an outreach program in Lost City Upper to register new mothers in the MindUp program. This initiative will allow us to continue expanding our reach and provide vital services to more mothers and infants within the community. We were pleased to welcome 53 new mothers to our MindUp program in October. This new addition demonstrates our ongoing commitment to reach and support more mothers in need within our community.



Local Partners and Collaborators – KYC

Operations continue being held at Kawempe Youth Centre (KYC) which includes activities and community members of all ages creating a lively community centre for children and teenagers, also an inspiring learning environment for pregnant women and young parents. Interactive cooking classes, educational videos, games, and workshops are major weekly highlights along with the highly valued individual nutrition counseling services to mothers by our local MUMs. In regards to KYC, Ruth also comments “Empowering youth to become Trainers (ToTs) which will expand our outreach. By equipping them with basic knowledge and leadership skills, we amplify the promotion of KYC Mind - Up services and they help in maintaining the MindUp centre, conduct.”



 [Kawempe Youth Centre Uganda](#)





Participants stories - Nannozi Hadijah

Nannozi Hadijah, a devoted mother to two-year-old Nabakazi Martha and expecting another child, has found invaluable support through the MindUp services at Kawempe Youth Centre (KYC), Uganda. MindUp's emphasis on maternal and child health has provided her with essential resources, including nutritious food, guidance on proper baby feeding practices, and access to a growth monitoring system. Hadijah, expressing her gratitude, highlights the transformative benefits of these services. The nutritious food has enhanced both her and Martha's health, ensuring a robust start for the new addition to their family. Moreover, the guidance on feeding practices has empowered Hadijah to provide optimal nutrition for Martha's development.



Before:		Now:	
DOB	Dec 25, 2022	Date of follow-up MindUp visit (day 500-600):	Nov 21, 2023
Birth Weight:	2.3 kg	Weight:	10.0 kg
Birth Length:	45.5 cm	Length:	81.0 cm

MUM Story - Ruth

"MindUp demonstrates its commitment to the community by generously providing basic necessities such as clothing and nutritious foods for babies. We extend heartfelt appreciation to our dedicated team members whose unwavering efforts made this impactful initiative possible. Together, we continue to uplift and empower the lives of those we serve. Kudos to all!"

Teaching parents basic entrepreneurship skills helps them support their families. Training practical, like budgeting and starting small businesses. Encourage saving and connecting with banks. This simple approach has led to more stable and prosperous homes."






LITTLE STEPS

Pusat Anak Cerdas Ceria Selangor (CERDAS)

The first Malaysian MindUp, named Pusat Anak Cerdas Ceria Selangor (CERDAS) opened its door for visits mid-October 2023. Pusat CERDAS is managed by two MUMs who are trained community members and is located at the Pusat Aktiviti Kanak-Kanak (PAKK) or Children's Activity Centre of Pangsapuri Enggang. The PAKK, managed by the Welfare Department, provides school-going age with a space for learning and activities after school in the afternoon. Pusat CERDAS utilizes the space for first 1,000 days families in the morning, while the PAKK uses the space for school-going age children in the afternoon.

In the short period since opening of its doors, Pusat CERDAS has successfully provided GMP services as well as age-appropriate counseling to close to 20 first 1,000 days of life families. Pusat CERDAS also held several events, including two cooking shows and one breastfeeding tips and sharing event with women in the community.

 [Pusat Anak Cerdas Ceria Selangor](#)

 [@pusatcerdas](#)

Selangor Health Partnership Program

In early 2023, Heights and Minds was selected as a Selangor State Government partner focusing on early childhood nutrition for the inaugural Selangor Health Partnership (SELHEP) Program. The SELHEP program is a pioneering public health initiative by the Selangor State Government.

On 10 August 2023, the Heights and Minds Foundation signed an agreement with the State Government of Selangor in Malaysia to undertake "The MindUp Project: Good Nutrition, Smart Brain, Bright Future". Together, Heights and Minds, the State Government of Selangor and our local partner, Little Steps Foundation, aimed to establish a MindUp in the community to address the growth and development of children in the first 1,000 days of life.





MindUp Core Training Program

In early October, Heights and Minds recruited 6 women from the community to undergo the MindUp Core Training Program which was developed by the Heights and Minds team in 2023. Over the course of 5.5 days, the women learned about the first 1,000 days of life, nutrition, healthy diets and healthy lifestyle, infant and young child feeding, child development, pregnancy, breastfeeding, hygiene and sanitation as well as monitoring and evaluation from the Heights and Minds team.

By training and working with women from the community, Heights and Minds empowers the community with the knowledge and tools to prevent stunting while ensuring the knowledge stays within the community.



Noraini

Yuhana

MUM Story - Noraini

“Participating in the MUM training has been very inspirational. I have gained so much valuable knowledge with the modules prepared by the HMF Team. I have learned new aspects of breastfeeding, nutrition and hygiene, for instance they demonstrated exactly how small the size of a baby’s stomach is! After attending the training, I started applying the knowledge while feeding my 2 year old. I will always make sure to include a variety of food groups in his plate.

As a MUM who just recently gained knowledge in this field, some challenges I faced are giving appropriate counseling and remembering the key points learned during the training. The services that we provide in the MindUp are all very beneficial to the community, and I hope we can continue serving the community here for a longer time.”

MUM Story - Yuhana

“After joining the MUM training programme, I acquired more understanding on mother and child nutrition. I now know what a healthy meal looks like; it should be complete with various foods from different food groups, mainly carbohydrate, protein, and fruits and vegetables. The things that I learned can be applied not only for children in the first 1,000 days of life, but also for older children as well. I started introducing various vegetables to my children now since I was taught about different types and vegetables.

Challenges that we MUMs face are the difficulties in explaining to the public on healthy eating. Our community has very little awareness on what a healthy meal generally looks like. For us, a plate of rice with potatoes is considered carbohydrate with vegetables. Also, another challenge is implementing a diet from various food groups is costly, hence even if we do advise the community about healthy eating, it’s hard for them to apply the knowledge. What I like about the MindUp services is how it’s free of charge. Although most of us get the same service from our health clinics, there are some who usually visit private clinics. This is advantageous for them since they do not need to spend extra money getting the services that we provide for free.”



Digital Solutions Revamp

HMF takes the approach that cutting edge technologies are transformative in delivering high quality nutrition and child growth promotion services. This led to the development of the Heights and Minds Digital Solution (HMF-DS). The first version of the Heights and Minds Digital Solution – ‘Service Highway’ was sponsored by our Netherlands-based partner Service Heroes, who provided Heights and Minds access to proprietary software and systems as an in-kind donation.

HMF-DS is purpose-built and enables GMP and nutrition services to be digitized, minimizing paper-based recording, reducing interpretation errors, and allowing MUMs access to key messages on child growth at their fingertips. More importantly, it is a job aid for the MUMs - making one-on-one counseling easier for both the MUM and the caregiver. Further, HMF-DS will help to connect and empower all MindUps and MUMs in a Global Network where they can contact each other, share experiences, post pictures, and share videos. This system has now been tested and utilized in the HMF Uganda and Malaysia.

With the CISCO grant we have been able to invest time and resources into the development of the new system based on lessons learned from the Service Highway, create the monitoring and evaluation scheme that will be integrated into the platform, and the team is currently working on enhancing the platform's ability to function offline. Heights and Minds is excited about this new tool and the integration in to the MindUps





Training and Coaching Packages developed

The education of the MindUp team and development of educational materials is a major part of what HMF offers. The HMF-DS plays a vital role in how MUMs, counsellors and coaches are trained when working at the MindUp. The HMF-DS also provides the MindUp Team with a job aid.

The current structure of the basic HMF training program includes 8 modules which the trainee works through to learn about vital maternal and childhood nutrition topics. Advanced training modules are in development and testing.

These comprehensive modules include:

1. The first 1,000 days
2. The MindUp
3. Growth and Monitoring Program
4. Healthy development and lifestyle
5. Healthy Diet
6. Healthy Pregnancy
7. Breastfeeding
8. Complementary feeding

Each module contains topic content, group activities and quizzes to assist in the learning for the MUMs. Each module has been designed to deliver information in an easy-to-understand manner, with many visual aids and videos which make learning interactive and easy.

Alongside these digital resources on HMF-DS, our team has produced standardised trainee workbooks, GMP counseling manuals and facilitator guides that can be implemented across all country MindUp programs. The team is working on producing a training-for-trainers package.

Cambodia

As we celebrated the opening of our fourth HMF MindUp program in Malaysia in 2023, the foundations of our fifth site and Mindup program in Cambodia has been going strong.

With a country visit and collaborative partnership between iDE Innovation Lab, World Bank and Chef Nak, we set up a work plan for designing and testing a business model for a MindUp in Cambodia. We also had the pleasure to visit Chef Nak on set where she was filming videos about traditional Khmer recipes from every province in Cambodia which are linked to messages about healthy feeding practices.

The project focuses on the conceptualisation of an experimental marketing and business model ready for application and official opening in 2024.

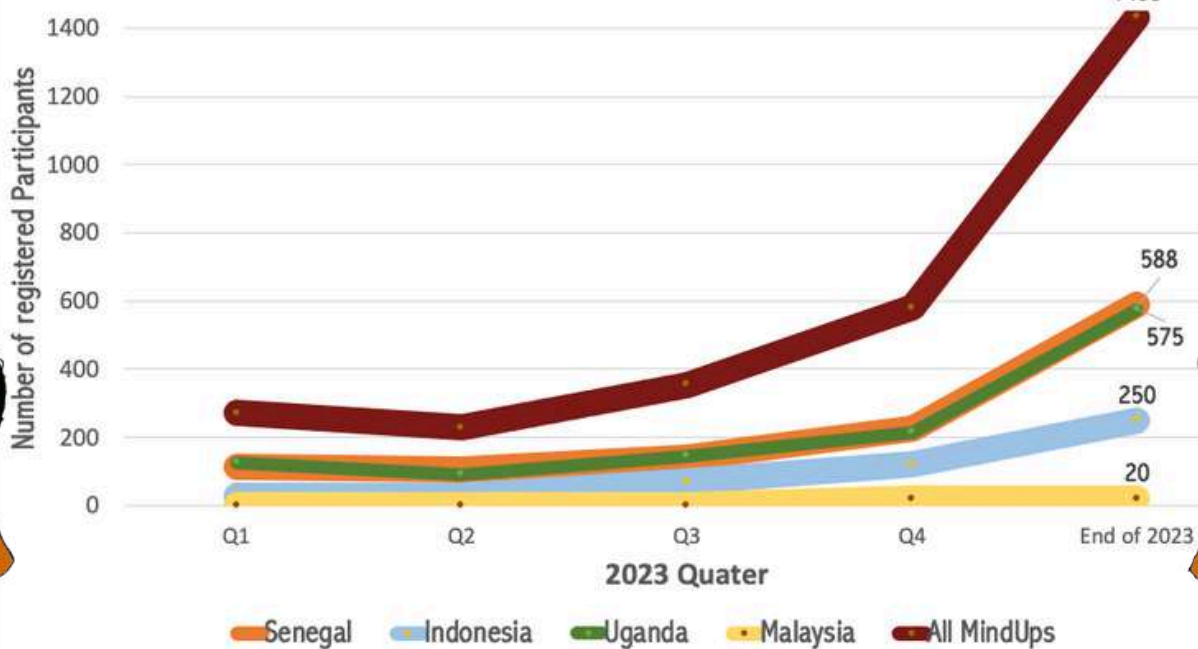




Total Participants in 2023!

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
Senegal	115	107	140	226	588
Indonesia	30	30	70	120	250
Uganda	125	91	145	214	575
Malaysia	-	-	-	20	20
Total	270	228	355	580	1433

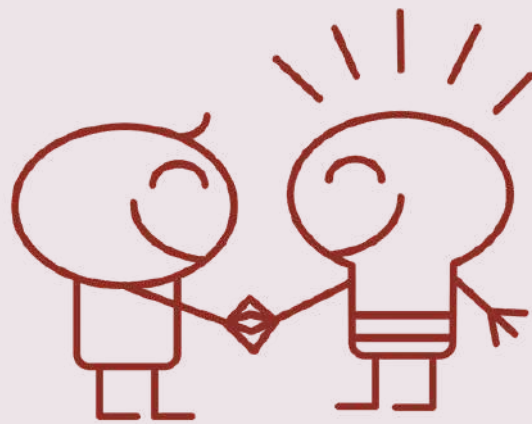
Number of registered participants in MindUp 1,000 days program by country, 2023





Thank you for your support!

**We look forward to a busy and
exciting 2024!**



**Heights and Minds
Foundation**

