



Improving evidence | Strengthening systems | Transforming lives

Director General, Elyas Abdi Jillaow, from the Kenya Ministry of Education, launches a major international initiative headed by Education.org.

Nairobi, June 14

Elyas Abdi Jillaow, Director General of the Ministry of Education, today (June 14) launched the International Working Group (IWG), an important new international initiative bringing together leading education policymakers, academics and practitioners from Kenya, Africa, and the rest of the world.

The IWG is the initiative of Education.org, an independent non-profit foundation dedicated to improving the learning of every child and young person by helping education leaders to access and use the best evidence to guide their national policies and plans.

The two-day event, being held in Nairobi, is the start of a year-long mission to create new ways of identifying, classifying, and appraising 'grey literature' – evidence that is locally generated, unpublished, and not peer-reviewed – to unlock untapped knowledge, contribute to improved learning for all children, and to ensure this information is used more widely and effectively by education leaders.

The IWG is comprised of 35 delegates from 17 countries – nine of which are African – reflecting the interest in the work of the group for education policymaking and practice on the continent.

Launching the IWG, Director General Jillaow, standing in for CS Hon Ezekiel Machogu, whose Ministry of Education already has a Memorandum of Understanding with Education.org, said better evidence would lead to improved policymaking to address the educational challenges facing national leaders.

“Frustratingly, my Ministry colleagues often find it hard to access and use high-quality, relevant, contextualized evidence that speaks to our needs and provides actionable guidance for decisions that we take,” he told the dignitaries and participants attending the event.

“I am delighted to launch this International Working Group as it supports the Ministry’s own improvement agenda and our stated goal of enhancing evidence use in the education sector. Our evidence base is severely limited by the failure to tap a huge volume of work by Non-Governmental Organizations, Civil Society Organizations, and local researchers in countries like Kenya. Yet this untapped, and often unpublished,

locally-generated evidence can dramatically complement internationally published research, as it is highly contextualised and practice-derived, having often been conducted by those who understand the local research environments they work in and the policy gaps that need filling.”

He added: “I am particularly pleased that this initiative will help to raise the profile and use of African-produced research. I am delighted to see that distinguished Kenyan and African contributors to the domain of locally generated knowledge and practice-derived evidence are members of the IWG.” Members of the IWG also include Emis Njeru, Deputy CEO of the National Council for Nomadic Education in Kenya, Martha Muhwezi, Executive Director of the Forum for African Women Educationalists, Lucy Heady, CEO of Education in Sub Saharan Africa (ESSA) and Promise Nduku, Deputy Director, South Africa Centre for Evidence (SACE) NPC and Africa Evidence Network.

Dr Randa Grob-Zakhary, CEO and founder of Education.org, said: “The presence of the Cabinet Secretary, members of his Ministry, and eminent international academics, experts, and practitioners is a testament to the importance of the International Working Group’s objectives. I am proud Education.org has assembled such a distinguished group of global experts passionate about improving evidence use to carry out this vital work. Greater use of the invaluable experience and insights of African practitioners and researchers will lead to improved education policies and better outcomes for children and young people in Kenya and around the world.”

The International Working Group is an initiative led by [Education.org](https://www.education.org) and supported by USAID and [Education.org](https://www.education.org)’s principal funders, who are committed supporters of education research, including Echidna Giving, the Jacobs Foundation, Oak Foundation, Dubai Cares, and Porticus.

For further information about Education.org please contact Ms. Dorothy Lepkowska at: dorothy@education.org.

Notes to editors:

- To find out more about Education.org’s work in Kenya, please go to: <https://education.org/cp-kenya-1>.
- To read Education.org’s Accelerated Education Programme Synthesis and Policy Brief see: <https://education.org/evidence-synthesis>

About Education.org:

Education.org is an independent, non-profit initiative, dedicated to bringing the best available evidence to education leaders worldwide. Its mission is to transform the learning of every child and young person by helping leaders access and use the best evidence to guide their national policies and plans. Operational since 2020, Education.org is supported by a visionary co-investor collective and is growing partnerships across governments, agencies, NGOs, universities, businesses, and foundations around the world. For more information see: [www.Education.org](https://www.education.org).

