

# Insights for Education Annual Report | 2022-23



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# Foreword

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**Randa Grob-Zakhary**

Founder & CEO

The past twelve months have signalled the coming of age of Education.org, as we moved from post-COVID-19 pandemic operations to our central and principal mission – supporting leaders in making the best use of education evidence in their decision making.

The introduction of a new kind of synthesis focused on steps education leaders can take to improve post-pandemic learning, based on a novel evidence synthesis approach, and expanded country partnerships catalysed our momentum towards global visibility and credibility as a new actor in education evidence.

This past year played a crucial role in proving and demonstrating the effectiveness of our distinctive approach, set forth in our 2021 'Education Knowledge Bridge' [White Paper](#), and I am honoured to showcase in our annual report the outcomes produced by our small, yet rapidly expanding and adaptable, team.

The period from 2022 to 2023 not only marked the organization's third year in operation but, more importantly, it concluded the initial three-year phase in a ten-year plan. The most noteworthy milestones were:

- The publication and release of our first evidence synthesis for policies to strengthen [Accelerated Education](#) and the accompanying High-Level [Policy Guidance](#), to support learning recovery using approaches that are new to the field of evidence-based policy making and based on a commitment to elevate and amplify voices from frontline practitioners. Our [press release](#) announcing the launch – and major opportunities for learning recovery – led to widespread acknowledgement of the effectiveness of our methods in the [global media](#).
- The advancement our existing partnerships with the Kenyan Ministry of Education through the convening of our first International Working Group, in Nairobi, in June 2023, and the launch of the Leading with Evidence to Achieve Real Reform Now (LEARRN) Sierra Leone project after signing a Memorandum of Understanding with the country's Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education (MBSSE). These partnerships provide a springboard from which to expand our activities across the continent.

Against this backdrop of a growing international profile and recognition of our efforts by partners and like-minded organisations, and on our fourth birthday in June 2023, we launched our new [Strategy 2023-2028](#), entitled 'Ready for lift off!'. This will guide the next phase of our work as we move from a small start-up to an established organisation with a proven record of success and scaled-up level of impact.

With the remarkable efforts demonstrated by our organisation, coupled with the steadfast commitments of our valued partners and supporters, I have great confidence in the magnitude and impact of our future work.



# We exist to fill a critical gap

Education.org is an independent, non-profit initiative whose vision is, “**A world where the education of all children and young people is transformed by the best evidence**”. To help accomplish this, our mission is: “**To improve the learning of every child and young person by helping leaders access and use the best evidence to guide their national policies and plans**”. Based in Africa, North America and Europe, our growing team has deep expertise in education policy, evidence synthesis, knowledge translation, and executive decision making.

As the global population grows to over eight billion people, with projections that it will reach 9.7 billion by 2050<sup>1</sup>, the world is already facing a **global learning crisis**, with 260 million children out of school<sup>2</sup> and a significant number of students not achieving basic literacy and numeracy skills. The COVID-19 pandemic further exacerbated education inequities and hindered progress towards achieving Sustainable Development Goal 4: Ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning for all. Education policy makers – particularly in Low- and Middle-Income Countries (LMICs) – are acutely aware of this crisis, and that there is significant research conducted around the world on how to improve educational outcomes for children and young people.

Unfortunately, much of this research is conducted for other researchers, meaning it is backward-looking, full of technical jargon, and lacking in relevant, actionable guidance that speaks to policymakers. Additionally, research evidence is frequently drawn from elite academic sources, leaving out potentially valuable contributions, such as government reports, working papers, project evaluations and unpublished research, so called ‘grey’ literature, which contains valuable contextual information, but is often difficult to source and appraise.

This is where Education.org steps in: we are an independent knowledge translator that closes the ‘**knowing-doing**’ gap, by synthesising existing research and distilling actionable insights for leaders. Crucially, we move beyond traditional academic literature by incorporating ‘grey’ literature to offer timely and contextualized insights.

Education.org is distinctive in that it does not simply stop at synthesising a wide range of existing evidence; we want to ensure this guidance is shared with key decision makers, and further enable them to strengthen their institutional systems to create a culture of sustainable evidence use. By connecting the right evidence with the right policymakers, we act as a ‘**knowledge integrator**’ in making this evidence useful. Through our distinctive approach, we aim to be a ‘**constructive disruptor**’, shaking up the status quo in the field of education research and policy.

“... the world is already facing a global learning crisis, with 260 million children out of school<sup>2</sup> and a significant number of students not achieving basic literacy and numeracy skills.”

<sup>1</sup> ‘WDI - World’s Population Will Reach Nearly 10 Billion by 2050’. <https://datatopics.worldbank.org/world-development-indicators/stories/world-population-will-continue-to-grow.html>.

<sup>2</sup> ‘Out-of-School Children and Youth’, 18 November 2016. <http://uis.unesco.org/en/topic/out-school-children-and-youth>.

# Our achievements and impact

## A look back: 2020-2023

In only three years of active operations since 2020, Education.org has already established itself as an important new contributor to the education evidence sector. In 2020 we launched our COVID-19 School Reopening Tracker, and this followed the publication of the Education Knowledge Bridge White Paper in September 2021. That year was also significant for the initiation of Meaningful Ministerial Engagement and Partnerships with Kenya.

The principal focus of Education.org’s work in 2022-23 was in developing and validating the key components of our work, **to prove that our approach offers great value to education policymakers** – particularly those in LMICs.

## Major Milestones

### 2020

#### Dispelling misconceptions

Education.org was the first organisation to [dispel the myth](#) that opening schools necessarily led to a rise in COVID infection rates, and launched the COVID-19 School Reopening Tracker to assist education systems to keep schools open to pupils.

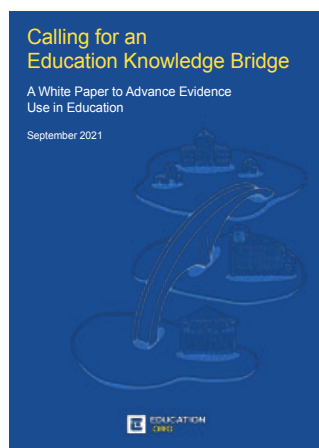


#### Launched in Kenya

Education.org initiated its first Meaningful Ministerial Engagement and Partnerships with a Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry of Education in Kenya, and the delivery of the Leading with Evidence to Achieve Read Reform Now (LEARRN).



Director General Elyas Abdi Jillaow, from the Kenya Ministry of Education and Dr Kilemi Mwiria, Education.org’s Managing Director, Africa.



### 2021

#### Our new approach

The publication of the [Education Knowledge Bridge White Paper](#) outlined our unique approach to improving educational outcomes, in direct response to the challenges identified by policymakers, practitioners and leaders, and formed an innovative mindset focus for our work.

### 2022

#### The first synthesis

The publication of our first [Synthesis on Accelerated Education Programmes](#) and the accompanying [High Level Policy Guidance](#) signalled a new way of working with, and analysing, evidence and attracted engagement with education leaders as well as significant media interest globally following the dissemination of our [press release](#). The uptake of recommendations and guidance in the synthesis is continuing to grow among policymakers.



#### Launched in Sierra Leone

In November, we launched LEARRN Sierra Leone project, which follows the guiding principles and objectives of its Kenyan counterpart, but with adaptations to fit the country’s individual context. We initiated this project by signing an MoU with the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education (MBSSE).



## 2023

Education.org was represented at events and conferences, including the Education in Emergencies (EiE) Data & Evidence Summit, hosted by the Geneva Global Hub, where our CEO was involved in three key panel discussions. Our participation reflected the growing reputation of Education.org as a major new player in the evidence-based policy making space.

“ ”  
“ ” “ ”  
“ ”

**270**

**presentations, blogs  
and interviews**



*Letoire Primary School*

Following our IWG discussions, Education.org and IWG members visited Letoire Primary School, in Kajiado, to see the impact of our AEP work with the National Council for Nomadic Education in Kenya (NACONEK) and how we are supporting its mission to ensure all children have access to education. There are now 2.5 million children in Kenya and Sierra Leone who are receiving a better education because of our publications, guidelines and partnerships.



*Dr. Randa Grob-Zakhary, CEO and Jonas Ayoub, Programme Associate at Education.org at the EiE Data and Evidence Summit.*

*Above: Dr. Suzanne Grant Lewis, Chair of Education Science and Policy at Education.org and Dr. Erin Sorensen, Education Officer, attending the Comparative and International Education Society Conference, Washington DC.*

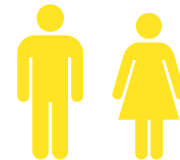


*Director General Elyas Abdi Jillaow opens the IWG, June 2023*

We convened the first International Working Group, in Nairobi which brought together academics, education experts and leaders from 17 countries to strengthen the evidence base for policymakers, particularly using of ‘grey’ literature. The event was launched by Director General Elyas Abdi Jillaow, from the Kenya Ministry of Education.

**17** 

**2,500,000**



*AEP Synthesis Workshop Kenya*



## A new kind of evidence synthesis for leaders

**COVID-19 had a detrimental effect on most education systems globally** – widespread school closures led to substantial learning losses, especially in countries where remote learning was difficult to implement. While learning losses were universal, COVID-19 exacerbated existing inequities, meaning already marginalised children, including groups such as girls, refugees and children with learning differences, were more likely to face the greatest impact. Indeed, research estimates that a Grade 3 student who has lost one year of schooling due to the pandemic was likely to lose three years of learning in the long-run.<sup>3</sup>

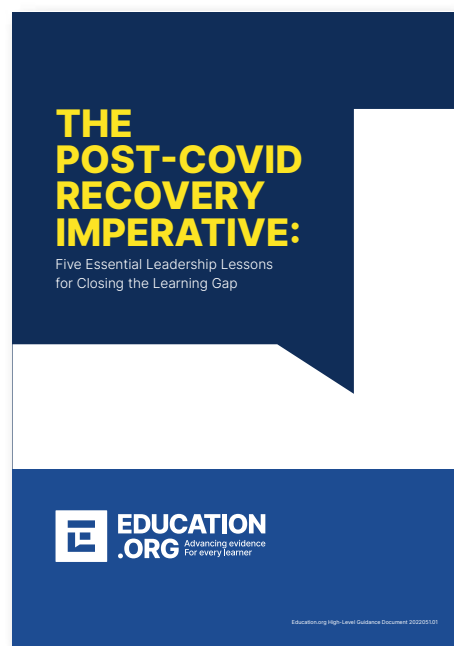
**Education.org's first evidence synthesis for education leaders focused on addressing the need for the delivery of quality catch-up learning to plug learning gaps through Accelerated Education Programmes (AEPs).** Some of the most effective AEPs condense three grades of primary school into one school year, cutting the overall length of instruction by two-thirds. These programmes have successfully prepared students' transition into the formal education system, often with better learning outcomes and at lower cost, by compressing the curriculum to focus on the essentials of literacy and numeracy, while recruiting and training educators to teach in a more child-focused, activity-based way and supporting students' wider wellbeing.

“... research estimates that a Grade 3 student who has lost one year of schooling due to the pandemic was likely to lose three years of learning in the long-run.”<sup>3</sup>

*Accelerated Education Programmes: An evidence synthesis for policy leaders*, was published by Education.org in mid-2022 as a 33-page actionable and practical guidance document. Our related Policy Brief, *Post-Covid Recovery Imperative: five essential leadership lessons for closing the learning gap*, was published in September 2022 to support education policymakers incorporate the findings of the synthesis into their plans, policies, and guidelines.



Click on the above to view document



Click on the above to view document

<sup>3</sup> Learning Loss Must Be Recovered to Avoid Long-Term Damage to Children's Wellbeing and Productivity, New Report Says'. Accessed 21 July 2023. <https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/learning-loss-must-be-recovered-avoid-long-term-damage-childrens-wellbeing-and>.



This synthesis is based on a global literature review of approximately **136 sources, 76% of which had been previously unpublished** are considered **'grey' literature**. In total, close to one thousand submissions were received, based on an open call for evidence to complement a traditional desk review. These figures are notable because they point to an urgent and significant need to strengthen the global education sector's capacity to identify and understand how largely untapped evidence can help accelerate improvements. Additionally, the Accelerated Education Working Group (AEWG) at the Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) was generous in sharing a wide set of resources, including evaluations, policy documents, and qualitative data analysis, which avoided a repetition of their sourcing effort.

The Synthesis and Policy Brief offered some major insights to help guide policy actions and implementation:

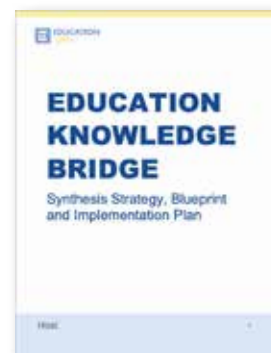
- **Effective AEPs share features across nine key dimensions** of design and implementation, which can be supported meaningfully by government engagement, including through national policy actions.
- Amidst growing calls for the alignment of accelerated education with national education systems, it is important to recognise that **alignment is not a one-size-fits-all** solution but takes many forms in different contexts.
- Learning from country experiences points to a **tactical, staged path to strengthening AEP alignment with national systems**, based on starting points of need and readiness.
- Countries with effective AEPs **prioritise alignment with goals, equity & inclusion, curriculum, assessment & certification, and other dimensions defined by programme implementers**.

The synthesis also provided conclusions on cost-effectiveness, financial sustainability and integration within national education data systems and cycles. The insights offered, and the future opportunities described, will help prioritise AEP funding and future research and data collection. While this report focused on insights from East and West Africa, its principles can be applied globally in similar contexts.

The positive response from senior education leaders in many countries to Education.org's AEP Policy Brief confirmed the unique value of translating, visualizing, and communicating evidence into contextualized guidance for decision-makers. Reviews highlighted that syntheses requirements for decision making are often poorly understood by academics, funders, and many practitioners; and that expertise in knowledge translation with the end user in mind must be a key feature of Education.org's future activities.

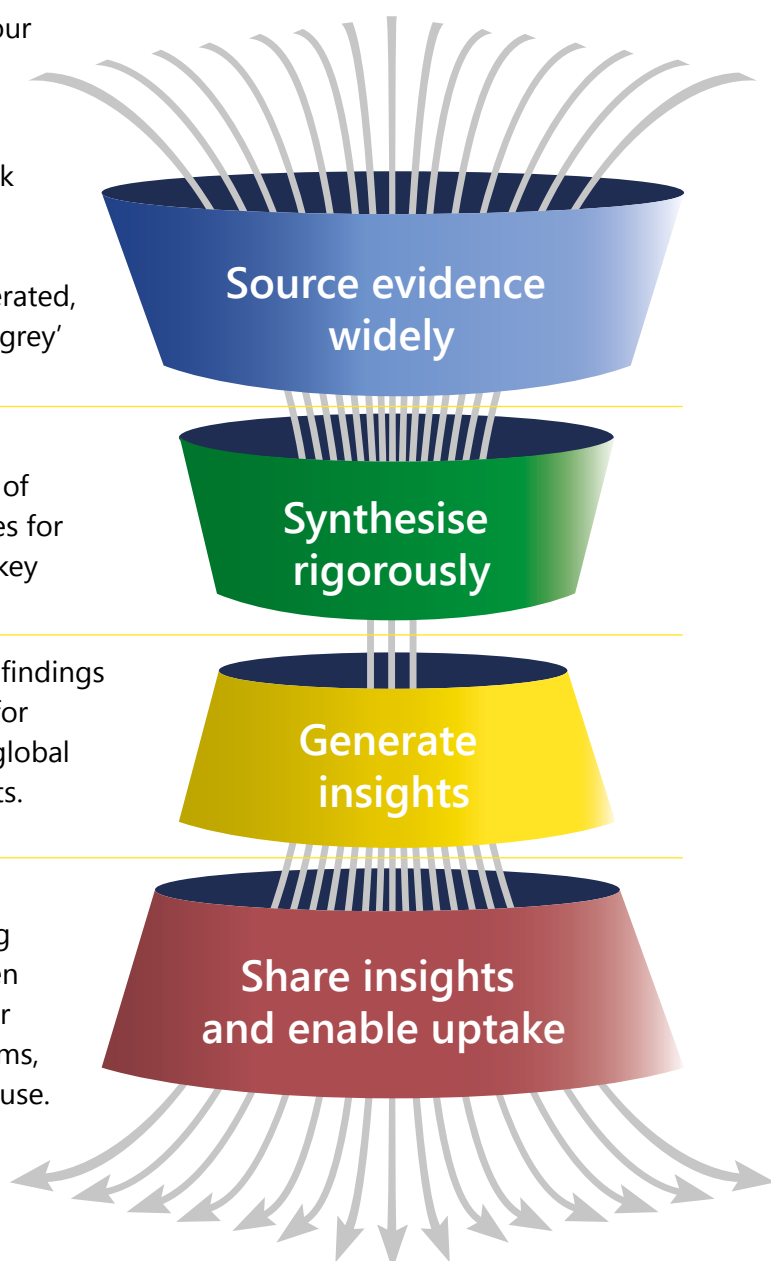
## Introducing our 'Education Evidence Pathway'

*Accelerated Education Programmes: An evidence synthesis for policy leaders*, was produced using a rigorous, novel approach developed by Education.org to synthesise both published and unpublished evidence in a new way to generate the most useful conclusions and recommendations for education policymakers. This new approach, which we call our 'Education Evidence Pathway', was developed after extensive methodological analysis and through the formation of a 'Blueprint' to guide Education.org's future synthesis activities.



The 'Education Evidence Pathway' sets out our distinctive synthesis approach in four steps.

1. **Source evidence widely:** Firstly, we work with education leaders to define their priorities, then source the most relevant evidence globally, including locally-generated, previously-underused and unpublished 'grey' literature.
2. **Synthesise rigorously:** Secondly, we create a coherent picture from the mass of evidence and findings, appraising sources for quality, relevance and context, distilling key conclusions.
3. **Generate insights:** Thirdly, we translate findings into plain-language actionable insights for leaders to use in national, regional and global education policies, plans and investments.
4. **Enable uptake:** Finally, we share this guidance with decision makers, including in-person at the ministerial level. We then support governments to strengthen their professional skills and institutional systems, ensuring effective, sustainable evidence use.



Through the production, dissemination and external engagement of Education.org's AEP synthesis, we tested and proved the value of the 'Education Evidence Pathway'

by:

- **delivering the first prototype of this unique synthesis methodology;**
- **deepening and expanding our country engagement work with Ministries of Education** in Africa;
- **extending the impact and reach of the synthesis and Policy Brief** through the media, active participation in key education forums, and exploring new partnerships.

## Widening the Evidence Base in the education sector

A critical component of improving education synthesis for leaders also requires acknowledging and incorporating a much wider range of evidence than is typically used today. The need for widening the evidence base in education was validated in our AEP synthesis, and is the foundation of Education.org's **International Working Group (IWG)**, launched in Nairobi, Kenya, in June 2023. A ground-breaking collaboration of technical experts from 17 countries who have international expertise as educational policymakers, practitioners, researchers, synthesizers, and funders, the IWG will develop ways of classifying and using a broader range of evidence in education decision making.



*Elyas Abdi Jillaow, Director General, Kenya's Ministry of Education*

*"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..."*

**Elyas Abdi Jillaow, Director General, Kenya's Ministry of Education**

The International Working Group is an initiative led by Education.org and supported by USAID and Education.org's principal funders, who are committed supporters of education research, including Dubai Cares, Echidna Giving, the Jacobs Foundation, Oak Foundation, and Porticus. The aim of the IWG is to improve the use of evidence, particularly 'grey' literature, for policymaking in the education sector. The IWG will develop comprehensive guidance on identifying, classifying, and appraising locally-generated evidence and 'grey' literature, which are frequently ignored or undervalued. This guidance will increase the accessibility, appreciation for and use of previously underused evidence sources. The IWG's guidance will also be an important methodological contribution to the effective use of a variety of evidence sources, to be disseminated and utilised by a wide range of actors.



The IWG was launched in June 2023, during a two-day event in Nairobi which brought together distinguished academics, educationalists and experts from around the world. The meeting was opened by Elyas Abdi Jillaow, Director General of the Kenyan Ministry of Education, on behalf of the Minister of Education, Hon. Ezekiel Machogu. Representatives from the Ministry participated in the IWG discussions. The event was highly successful with participants agreeing on:



*IWG Launch in Nairobi, Kenya*

- Why it is important to expand the range of evidence available, and that is used more widely;
- Who are the targeted users of the IWG guidance, and who is expected to benefit from it; and
- Key principles for guidance.

### Meaningful impact and engagement with education leaders

A key pillar of our work, as demonstrated in the Education Evidence Pathway, is sharing our insights with policymakers to improve evidence-based decision making. We ensure that the insights gleaned from the AEP synthesis reach policymakers by forging ministerial partnerships, with which we engage deeply.

This means going beyond a one-off sharing of a synthesis for a particular project but, rather, instilling a commitment and capacity within Ministries of Education to use evidence to guide decision making as a matter of course. We understand that each country has a specific set of challenges and context, so we deliver actionable guidance relevant to the needs of policymakers. This is where Education.org really adds value - and policy makers see the worth of our unique approach, agility, technical expertise, responsiveness and concern for their specific contexts.



We prioritise high-quality engagement over superficial partnerships, which is why our collaborations in Africa are based, for now, in just two countries. We ensure that our priorities are aligned before any Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is signed. As stated in our new Strategy 2023-2028, we are committed to expanding these partnerships with Ministries of Education throughout Africa.

## Kenya

In 2020, Education.org entered a multi-year partnership with the **Ministry of Education (MoE)** in Kenya, and in 2022 signed a **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)** under Kenya's new administration to deliver the **Leading with Evidence to Achieve Real Reform Now (LEARRN)** project, running until 2025. LEARRN's overarching goal is to enhance the uptake and utilisation of evidence in education policy decisions, including evidence pertinent to the finalisation of Kenya's National Education Sector Strategic Plan (NESSP) 2023-2027. This means going beyond a one-off sharing of a synthesis for a particular project but, rather, instilling a commitment and capacity within Ministries of Education to use evidence to guide decision making as a matter of course. We understand that each country has a specific set of challenges and context, so we deliver actionable guidance relevant to the needs of policymakers. This is where Education.org really adds value - and policy makers see the worth of our unique approach, agility, technical expertise, responsiveness and concern for their specific contexts.

In partnership with the MoE and its agencies, LEARRN Kenya will support the development of the necessary capacities and infrastructure for the utilisation of evidence in decision making. To strengthen this collaboration, an official partnership was forged with **Kenya's Council on Nomadic Education (NACONEK)**.

A **'Technical Team'** comprised of twelve Ministry delegates, civil society representatives, and Education.org staff supports the design, technical work, implementation and advancement of LEARRN, and identifies relevant stakeholders and networks to input into the project's planned activities.



*Cabinet Secretary Hon. Ezekiel Machogu Ombaki from the Kenya Ministry of Education and Dr. Kilemi Mwiria, Education.org's Managing Director, Africa*

As part of our efforts to disseminate and encourage uptake of our synthesis guidance, Education.org’s Hon Dr. Kilemi Mwiria, Education.org’s Managing Director for Africa, hosted a workshop to disseminate guidance from our synthesis, share numerous policies examples, and to provide technical support to Ministry officials developing Kenya’s AEP guidelines.

While Education.org’s work is technical and policy-based, we believe it is important to remain informed of on-the ground, practical realities. Therefore, during Education.org’s trip to Nairobi the team visited a school in which NACONEK operates in collaboration with the ‘Girl Child Network’, their key partner in “Operation Back to School.” This is a programme addressing out-of-school children to ensure all can access basic education, including those with disabilities.

*Visit to Letoire Primary School in Kajiado*



The **IWG launch** in Nairobi in June 2023 also marked an important milestone in the LEARRN Kenya project, as it engaged senior MoE officials and the LEARRN Technical Team with the many challenges inhibiting greater incorporation and use of locally-generated and under-used evidence in decision-making processes. The event also paved the way for IWG guidance on the use of ‘grey’ literature to be trialed in Kenya in 2023-2024..



# Sierra Leone

In late 2022, Education.org expanded its country engagement work to west Africa, where we launched the **LEARRN Sierra Leone project**. This follows the guiding principles and objectives of its Kenyan counterpart, but with adaptations to fit the country's individual context. We initiated this project by signing an **MOU with the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education (MBSSE)**, and began work with MBSSE officials on developing new Accelerated Education Programme guidelines for the country's schools, based on Education.org's synthesis and Policy Brief. Education.org will also trial its new IWG guidance in Sierra Leone in 2023, to determine the extent of the effective use of 'grey' literature in evidence for policymakers.

*"You provide an important opportunity to accelerate our progress by drawing on work from other countries. We would never be able to achieve this without your support. We really need this."*

**Professor Yatta Kanu, Chief Education Officer, Sierra Leone's Ministry of Basic and Senior Education**

*Dr. Randa Grob-Zakhary signing the MoU with Florence Bangalie from Sierra Leone's MBSSE*



# Education.org in the media

Coverage of our insights in the media is a critical component of our engagement strategy, and is a powerful and cost-effective way to reach leaders and influencers at scale around the world.

Since its inception, Education.org has been featured in the global media on no less than 250 occasions, with our work on learning recovery, and the launch of our first synthesis and the Policy Brief, attracting interest in such titles as the *Financial Times*, *African Business Magazine*, *CNBC Africa*, the *Kenya Standard* and *News Ghana*, as well as media outlets in Africa, the United States and Europe. The following examples illustrate our reach:

Click on an image to read the full story





Our team members have also shared their experience with broadcast media outlets, describing Education.org’s work and adding context to localised education issues.



Our CEO in an 8-minute [interview by CNBC Africa](#) on the unique evidence-translation role of Education.org, the potential of the AEP synthesis for African ministries, and the importance of evidence-based policies.

Click on the image to view the interview.

In December 2022, Dr. Evelyn Jepkemei, Education.org’s Senior Education Officer in Nairobi was invited to present to the Kenyan Presidential party findings from a research paper she co-authored on, ‘Identifying the essential ingredients to literacy and numeracy improvement: Teacher professional development and coaching, student textbooks, and structured teachers’ guides.’<sup>4</sup> She was also interviewed on [Citizen TV Ltd](#), highlighting the issue of gender balance in schools and the marginalization of girls in the context of the recent Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education exam scores. She highlighted the barriers that can hinder the retention of learners in Kenyan schools and called for measures to ensure children access education through flexible approaches.

Dr. Suzanne Grant Lewis, Education.org’s Chair of Education Science and Policy authored an article in the World Education Blog on the ‘Exclusion of Children with Learning Differences.’ The article describes the discoveries made by Education.org on the alarming scarcity of studies investigating effective approaches for addressing the needs of children with learning differences through AEPs. This highlights a larger issue of failing to acknowledge the obstacles encountered by children with learning difficulties. These contributions to the global education discourse reflect our commitment to sharing our findings and highlighting significant research gaps, ultimately ensuring that even the most marginalized individuals can benefit from our efforts.



Click on the image to view the interview.

<sup>4</sup> Piper, Benjamin, Stephanie Simmons Zuilkowski, Margaret Dubeck, Evelyn Jepkemei, and Simon J. King. ‘Identifying the Essential Ingredients to Literacy and Numeracy Improvement: Teacher Professional Development and Coaching, Student Textbooks, and Structured Teachers’ Guides’. World Development 106 (1 June 2018): 324–36. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2018.01.018>.

## Partnerships and collaborations

Alongside our partnerships with the Ministries of Education, **we are dedicated to collaborating with other organisations and groups** which share our vision. These partnerships are important to establishing a global Education Knowledge Bridge and maximising the impact of our work.



In May 2023 we initiated a three-year partnership with the **Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA)**, the aim of which is to establish joint programmes advancing the use of evidence to inform policies, plans and guidelines to strengthen foundational learning among marginalised learners in member countries. The partnership will allow Education.org to leverage ADEA's network to advance evidence-based policymaking across Africa.



In October 2022, Education.org was welcomed into the **Geneva Global Hub for Education in Emergencies**, which includes UNICEF and the International Red Cross, signaling our commitment to reach out of school children in emergency settings. It followed an invitation to serve as guest editor for a special edition of the Journal on Education in Emergencies (JEiE), to which we provided our first grant, aimed at increasing participation by French-speaking authors from the Global South.



Education.org is a member of the **International Education Funders Group (IEFG)**, a member-led learning and collaborating network for foundations, donor-advised funds, and other private grant makers, focused on advancing the education Sustainable Development Goal (SD4). Education.org was represented at the IEFG annual meeting, in May 2023 in Edinburgh, UK – an opportunity to build networks and promote its work.

## Advocating for an 'Education Knowledge Bridge'

Our participation in events has raised our profile and allowed us to advocate for the recommendations in Education.org's 2021 White Paper. These included:



**The Education in Emergencies (EiE) Data and Evidence Summit** in June 2023, hosted by the Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) in Geneva. The Summit focused on topics such as amplifying local voices, including research from the Global South, challenging the power of funders, and evidence integration in policy. Dr. Randa Grob-Zakhary spoke on three panels during the event.



**The Conference of the Comparative and International Education Society (CIES)**, in February 2023 in Washington D.C., USA, engaged researchers, practitioners and funders in dialogue around educational improvement. Our Education Officer, Erin Sorensen, presented parts of her research on educating refugees.

# Strategy 2023-28: Ready for Lift Off!

Our *Strategy 2023-2028, 'Ready for Lift off!'*, published in May 2023, sets out our ambitions for the second phase of our organisational growth, where we aim to build on the lessons we have learnt since Education.org's inception in 2020, further systematise our work, and invest in scaling up our activities. We have developed three Strategic Goals, each with a series of Objectives and intended Outcomes to focus our work in that area.

## Goal 1: Establish an Evidence Synthesis Gold Standard for Education System Leaders

*Education.org will pioneer and promote a new method of evidence synthesis specifically for leaders shaping decisions about education systems around the world; and provide syntheses and policy papers addressing the most important issues they face.*

Our ambition is to embed a high-quality standard for evidence synthesis that speaks to education leaders, building on the first synthesis we developed and tested in 2022. We aim to conduct a growing number of high-quality syntheses per year by 2028, beginning with priorities in Sub-Saharan Africa and considering geographic expansion as capacity allows.

## Goal 2: Transform the way Leaders Work with Evidence

*Education.org will catalyse a transformation in the way education sector leaders, starting in Africa, work with evidence, by increasing their commitment and capacity to put evidence at the centre of system-level decision making. We are continually learning from our two existing partnerships with the ministries of Kenya and Sierra Leone and hope to scale our models of engagement to be even more effective.*

We have set ourselves the objective of expanding our country engagement programmes to at least ten additional countries in Sub-Saharan Africa by 2028.

## Goal 3: Build an Education Knowledge Bridge

*Education.org will lead a global movement committed to building an Education Knowledge Bridge, by forging a network of individuals and partnering with organisations who share its commitment to evidence-informed policymaking.*

This goal aims for outcomes that will both contribute to and benefit from achieving Strategic Goals 1 & 2. Our White Paper advocating for an 'Education Knowledge Bridge' in 2021 has inspired the creation of new initiatives related to evidence use and knowledge brokering in the education sector. Over the next five years, and closely linked to the implementation of our other Strategic Goals, we will forge a network of individuals and continue partnering with organisations who share our commitment to evidence-informed policymaking.



# Complementarity with other initiatives

Types of Organisations	Their focus	Education.org will:
<b>Government Partners</b>	Provide free quality education for all (SDG4) through developing and implementing education plans, policies, guidelines, and programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make it easier to access and use available evidence in plans, policies, and guidelines to reach the most marginalised children and young people.</li> <li>• Elevate partners' know-how in strengthening institutional evidence culture.</li> <li>• Assist national teams to elevate evidence-based perspectives in dialogues with donors and partners.</li> <li>• Create and harness opportunities to step up visibility, political commitment, and funding for evidence synthesis and use.</li> </ul>
<b>Civil Society Organisations</b>	Ensure the delivery of safe, quality education especially for the hardest to reach children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connect local actors with global knowledge and activities and strengthen synthesis expertise.</li> <li>• Amplify evidence in greater need of visibility and uptake through their member organisations and networks.</li> <li>• Energetically leverage the Education.org network for joint advocacy and messaging.</li> </ul>
<b>Multilateral Agencies</b>	Spur economic development, by providing advisory services, technical assistance and funding to the public and private sectors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribute to closing the gap between funded and used research.</li> <li>• Extract maximal value from agency reports, briefs, etc typically published outside of academic or professional journals.</li> <li>• Contribute to their knowledge sharing and policy reform objectives by providing high quality syntheses and policy papers for sharing across their networks.</li> </ul>
<b>Bilateral Donors</b>	Fund education and development programmes for country partners from donor government resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complement portfolio and investment decisions with a stronger contextual evidence base.</li> <li>• Channel and integrate global and country mission experiences into evidence syntheses.</li> <li>• Contribute to their knowledge sharing and policy reform objectives by providing high quality syntheses and policy papers.</li> </ul>
<b>Philanthropic Organisations</b>	Act as development partners, providing financial and other resources, expertise, networks, and advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offer a new channel for effectively amplifying the work of grass roots grantees.</li> <li>• Heighten impact potential for own research investments in support of equity, inclusion, and accessibility.</li> <li>• Share current perspectives on challenges and issues faced by policy leaders and shifts needed in funding incentives.</li> </ul>
<b>Think Tanks</b>	Develop research on policy problems, incubate thinking on solutions, and convene relevant actors or influencers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribute an additional technical pillar for convening around syntheses for leaders.</li> <li>• Develop perspectives on potential new policy areas for focus.</li> </ul>
<b>Academia</b>	Conduct research and support professional development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spotlight policy pain points for research agendas.</li> <li>• Create greater visibility for research activities and outputs.</li> </ul>



# Our supporters

Our co-investor collective has been carefully cultivated with organisations sharing the mission of ensuring that all children and young people – especially the most marginalised – have access to a quality education that fosters holistic learning (socio-emotional development and resilience) alongside foundational skills development (ie literacy and numeracy).

Education.org’s co-investor collective and partners include Dubai Cares, Echidna Giving, Jacobs Foundation, Oak Foundation, Porticus and USAID.



# Financial report

## Management's statement

The Board of Directors and executive management of Insights for Education have considered and adopted the annual report of Insights for Education for the financial year 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023. The Annual Report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions of Swiss law. In our opinion, the financial statements give a true and fair view of the Foundation's financial position on 30 June 2023, and of the Foundation's activities and cash flows for the financial year 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023.

We believe the management's review includes a fair review of the development in the Foundation's activities and finances, the result for the year and the financial position of the Foundation, as well as a review of the most significant risks and elements of uncertainty facing the Foundation.

## Overview of expenses

In 2022-2023 Insights for Education completed the first three-year operational phase of its activities – operating under its brand name of Education.org – by validating its proof of concept and prototype production and use by policymakers of high-quality evidence synthesis. This phase was supported from resources provided by a strong investor group and new critical partnerships and team development. Insights for Education spent 97% of its income on Project costs and 3% of its income on Administration costs.

Project Costs included:

- Accelerated Education Programme Synthesis & High-Level Policy Brief
- LEARRN Project (Kenya & Sierra Leone)
- International Working Group
- Synthesis prototyping
- Country policy impact

Administration Costs:

- General organisational support
- Currency loss

## Auditor's report



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Report of the statutory auditor on the limited statutory examination to the board of foundation of

Insights for Education, Oberrleden

As statutory auditor, we have examined the financial statements (balance sheet, income statement and notes) of Insights for Education for the financial year ended 30 June 2023.

These financial statements are the responsibility of the board of foundation. Our responsibility is to perform a limited statutory examination on these financial statements. We confirm that we meet the licensing and independence requirements as stipulated by Swiss law. An employee of our company assisted in the bookkeeping during the reporting year. This individual was not involved in the limited statutory examination.

We conducted our examination in accordance with the Swiss Standard on the limited Statutory Examination. This standard requires that we plan and perform a limited statutory examination to identify material misstatements in the financial statements. A limited statutory examination consists primarily of inquiries of entity personnel and analytical procedures as well as detailed tests of entity documents as considered necessary in the circumstances. However, the testing of operational processes and the internal control system, as well as inquiries and further testing procedures to detect fraud or other legal violations, are not within the scope of this examination.

Based on our limited statutory examination, nothing has come to our attention that causes us to believe that the financial statements do not comply with Swiss law and the article of foundation, foundation deed and regulations.

Aarau, 25 August 2023

BDO Ltd

A blue ink signature of Thomas Schmid on a white background with a faint grid pattern. A small red circular stamp is visible in the top right corner of the signature area.

Thomas Schmid

Licensed Audit Expert

A blue ink signature of Yves Hüsey on a white background with a faint grid pattern. A small red circular stamp is visible in the top right corner of the signature area.

p.p. Yves Hüsey  
Auditor in charge  
Licensed Auditor



## Balance sheet

As of 30 June 2023 (in CHF)

<b>ASSETS</b>	<b>FY 21-22</b>	<b>FY 22-23</b>
Cash and cash equivalents	959,360	1,061,359
Trade receivables	3,347	3,318
Accrued income and prepaid expenses	6,724	3,800
<b>TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<b>969,431</b>	<b>1,068,477</b>
Furniture, installations	7,900	6,000
IT, communications technology	4,400	2,700
<b>TANGIBLE CAPITAL ASSETS</b>	<b>12,300</b>	<b>8,700</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>981,731</b>	<b>1,077,177</b>
<b>LIABILITIES AND SHAREHOLDERS' EQUITY</b>		
Trade creditors	34,486	96,609
Deferred income and accrued expenses	392,653	327,687
<b>TOTAL SHORT-TERM LIABILITIES</b>	<b>427,139</b>	<b>424,296</b>
<b>EARMARKED FUND CAPITAL</b>	<b>29,140</b>	<b>0</b>
Available earnings	823,314	475,451
Foundation Capital	50,000	50,000
Annual result	-347,862	127,429
<b>TOTAL FOUNDATION CAPITAL</b>	<b>525,452</b>	<b>652,880</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES, EARMARKED FUND CAPITAL AND FOUNDATION CAPITAL</b>	<b>981,731</b>	<b>1,077,177</b>

## Income statement

1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023

<b>OPERATING INCOME</b>	<b>FY 21-22</b>	<b>FY 22-23</b>
Received Grants	1,320,101	1,949,160
<b>PROJECT EXPENSES</b>		
Earmarked Fund Capital	0	-29,139
Project-Related Salaries and Benefits	817,663	999,862
Contracted Services	644,654	488,061
Travel, Conferences and Meetings	21,936	110,815
Project Shared Costs	90,365	94,627
<b>TOTAL PROJECT EXPENSES</b>	<b>1,574,617</b>	<b>1,664,226</b>
<b>ADMINISTRATION EXPENSES</b>		
General Administration Staff Costs	58,600	38,702
Other General Administration Costs	46,876	49,960
Finance Cost	-18,976	63,379
<b>TOTAL GENERAL ADMINISTRATION COSTS</b>	<b>86,500</b>	<b>152,041</b>
Administration Shared Costs	1,401	1,864
Depreciation and amortisation of fixed assets	5,444	3,600
Total Shared Administration Costs	6,846	5,464
<b>TOTAL ADMINISTRATION EXPENSES</b>	<b>93,346</b>	<b>157,505</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>1,667,963</b>	<b>1,821,732</b>
<b>ANNUAL RESULT</b>	<b>-347,862</b>	<b>127,428</b>

### Notes:

Project Costs are those costs that are required to meet objectives of specific projects, such as staff salaries, project travel, project training, external technical support or services, research, communications, and materials. These costs would not be incurred if the projects did not exist.

Project Shared Costs are the portion of Shared Costs allocated to projects. Examples of such costs include occupancy and facilities, utilities, telephone/internet access, etc.

General Administration Costs are costs for activities or services that support the organisation as a whole rather than any particular project. These are not costs associated with the delivery of projects; nonetheless, they are essential costs of maintaining and managing the organisation through which project objectives are achieved. Examples: fees for personnel relating to general administration and fundraising, finance and accounting support, human resources, bank fees, and board meetings.

Administration Shared Costs are the portion of Shared Costs allocated to administration. Examples of such costs include occupancy and facilities, utilities, telephone/internet access, etc.

## Notes

### GENERAL INFORMATION

The Insights for Education Foundation was established on 16 July 2019. The year of business presented in these financial statements encompasses the period from 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023. The financial statements are presented in Swiss francs. Unless otherwise stated, all values are to be understood in CHF. The financial statements were prepared in accordance with the provisions of Swiss law, in particular the article on commercial bookkeeping and accounting of the Swiss Code of Obligations (Art. 957 to 962).

### RESPONSIBILITY OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT FOR THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The Board of Directors and executive management are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in Switzerland; this includes the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Board of Directors and executive management are responsible for assessing the Foundation's ability to continue as a going concern; disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern; and using the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements unless the Board of Directors and executive management either intends to liquidate the Foundation or to suspend operations or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

### LIMITED STATUTORY AUDIT

The Foundation was audited in accordance with the Swiss standard of Limited Statutory Examination, since an Ordinary Examination is to be performed if two of the three following values are exceeded on average over the year in two consecutive financial years (Art. 727 para. 1 no. 2 and 727b para. 2 of the Swiss Code of Obligations in conjunction with Art. 83b para. 3 of the Swiss Civil Code): a balance sheet total of 20 million Swiss francs; a turnover of 40 million Swiss francs; 250 full-time positions on average over the year. Furthermore, the regulatory authority may require an Ordinary Examination if it seems to be necessary for a proper assessment of the financial situation of the Foundation.

### OPERATING INCOME AND EXPENSES

Expenses and income are recorded on an accrual basis. The changes in earmarked fund capital are disclosed in the notes.

### TRANSLATION OF FOREIGN CURRENCY

Transactions in foreign currencies are translated into Swiss francs using the foreign exchange rates applicable on the transaction date. Monetary assets and liabilities in foreign currencies are translated into Swiss francs using the foreign exchange rates applicable on the balance sheet date. Realised and unrealised foreign exchange gains and losses are recognised in the income statement under financial income and expenses.



## **TAXES**

Insights for Education is domiciled in Switzerland and exempt from direct taxation by the Swiss federal government, the canton of Zurich and the municipality of Oberrieden, owing to its exclusively charitable purpose.

## **DETAILS ON POSITIONS OF THE BALANCE SHEET**

### **YEARLY AVERAGE OF FULL-TIME POSITIONS**

Average number of full-time employees: Less than 10.

### **LONG-TERM LEASE OBLIGATIONS**

Residual amount of the liabilities from sale-like leasing transactions and other leasing obligations, unless these expire or may be terminated within twelve months after the balance sheet date: 0

### **EARMARKED FUND CAPITAL**

Earmarked Fund Capital as per 30 June 2023: 0

### **REQUIREMENTS FROM REGULATORY AUTHORITY**

Currently there are no pending requirements from the regulatory authority.

# Governance

## Governing Board & Advisory Board

- Dr Jan Mischke, Partner, McKinsey Global Institute (Director)
- Eric Grob, CFO and Co-Founder, Greenreb (Director)
- Eunice Zehnder-Lai, Vice Chair, Geberit Group (Director)
- Sandro Giuliani, Executive Director, Impact Fund/Forum, Geneva Science and Diplomacy Anticipator (Advisor)
- Hendrina Doroba, Manager - Education Human Capital and Employment Division, the African Development Bank (Advisor)
- Larry Cooley, Founder and President Emeritus of Management Systems International (Advisor)
- Deng Deng Hoc Yai, Co-Chair of Education.org Global Council (Advisor)
- Ulrik Juul Christensen, Chief Executive Officer at Area9 Lyceum



Education.org is an initiative of Insights for Education, a foundation created to advance evidence and improve education for every learner. Our sole purpose is to make existing evidence easier for education leaders to access and use in plans, policies and guidelines. 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.

# Foundation details

## Auditor

BDO AG

## Supervisory authority

Swiss Federal Supervisory Board for Foundations (ESA)

## Contact

Insights for Education  
Seestrasse 156  
8810 Horgen, Switzerland  
Website: [Education.org](https://www.education.org)  
[info@education.org](mailto:info@education.org)

## Bank

Zürcher Kantonalbank  
Bahnhofstrasse 9  
8001 Zurich, Switzerland  
SWIFT: ZKBKCHZZ80A

### Beneficiary:

Insights for Education  
CHF (Swiss Francs) account:  
1148-2805.339  
IBAN: CH28 0070 0114 8028 0533 9

USD (US Dollars) account:  
1300-9166.599

IBAN: CH23 0070 0130 0091 6659 9

Company number: CHE-325.156.341

Tax Exempt Ruling in Switzerland: 002117611 19/10 423

### For U.S. based funders:

U.S. public charity equivalence determination certificate can be requested from NGOsource



Education.org is an independent, non-profit initiative, dedicated to bringing the best available evidence to education leaders worldwide.

Our 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.

We are distinctive in adding value both as a 'knowledge bridge' – connecting the right evidence with the right policy makers – and a 'knowledge integrator' in making this evidence useful.

For more information about who we are and what we do, visit us at [www.Education.org](http://www.Education.org). There you can see our [Evidence Syntheses](#) with accompanying [High-Level Policy Guidance](#) and [Country Case Studies](#); our manifesto on building a global [Education Knowledge Bridge](#); and a deeper look at our unique approach to [widening the evidence base in education](#).



Improving evidence | Strengthening systems | Transforming lives



[Education.org](http://www.Education.org)