2023 LEAP CHALLENGE

LEAP Final Deliverable(s)

Project Host:

Kenya Connect

Fellows:

Prof Natalia Kucirkova, Team Lead, Research Fellow

Clint Bartlett, Social Entrepreneur Fellow

Dr Sharon Wolf, Research Fellow

Swetha Prakash, Social Entrepreneur Fellow

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary

Introduction

Despite large increases in school enrollment rates around the world, nine out of ten children in sub-Saharan Africa can not read a simple sentence by the end of primary school. Kenya Connect supports children's literacy development through three primary programs in Kenya, including a school library program, literacy clubs for children, and a livelihood program for mothers. Evidence-based literacy programs are crucial to address this urgent need so that children have foundational literacy skills to succeed at school and in life.

The aim of this LEAP project was to support Kenya Connect with recommendations drawn from best practices in order to enhance their programs with a comprehensive research and funding plan as well as to generate evidence on and support for Kenya Connect's programs.

Organization's role & strength

Kenya Connect's mission is to empower students in rural Kenya for success in the 21st Century through breaking down barriers to education and providing educational enrichment and empowerment programs. Improving literacy skills and fostering a love of learning have been at the forefront of their work. They achieve this through three school-based programs - School Libraries, LitClubs, and LitMoms. These programs integrate digital and physical literacy resources, provide training for mothers, and emphasize the joy of reading, making a lasting impact on children's reading habits, engagement in learning, and social and emotional well-being.

The organization's mission is to "engage and empower students and teachers in rural Kenya to succeed in the 21st Century."

Need summary

Kenya Connect is committed to evidence-based practices and seeks to collaborate with researchers to enhance the impact of their programs for schools, children and families through its dedicated initiatives. The organization has identified several funding and research priorities. A primary focus of the LEAP project was to highlight Kenya Connect's core strengths relevant to children's outcomes, determine its unique features in the broader landscape of literacy initiatives in Kenya, and identify the key components of the programs. From this, a plan to document evidence of impact was developed. Considering the high costs associated with

research, a significant goal for the organization has been to establish a practical and sustainable funding plan for research and implementation activities. The LEAP project also aimed to assist with the development of the funding plan and align it with the recommended research activities.

Solution summary & next steps

The Fellows extensively mapped the activities in each of the programs that Kenya Connect runs to articulate their unique proposition and supplemented this with direct testimonials from program participants, independently obtained by our Fellows. This provided anecdotal evidence of effective practices and helped to highlight the voices of program beneficiaries (Deliverable 1). Subsequently, we crafted an evaluation plan rooted in a thorough mapping of all Kenya Connect activities and tailored to the organization's need for evidence-generation for the focal programs (Deliverable 2). This plan includes a proposed research design (both impact and process evaluations), as well as suggested measurement tools aligned with key outcomes targeted by the programs based on Deliverable 1. As mentioned, the focal programs include the School Libraries, LitClubs, as well as the supplementary value of LitMoms, through a quantitatively-focused study. In Deliverable 3, we charted the funding strategy currently pursued by Kenya Connect and aligned it with potential funding avenues pertinent to the activities and unique value of Kenya Connect in the field. This information was integrated with the research plan to ensure research activities align with and inform fundraising priorities, as well as additional evidence-building strategies, into an overarching evidence strategy document for Kenya Connect (Deliverable 4). This final strategic document will guide the organization's

forthcoming evidence-building efforts, and its methodology can be tailored by other entities in the sector to aid charities and NGOs in their evidence-building journey.

Deliverable 1

Introduction

Kenya Connect's offering to its stakeholders encompasses multiple programs in keeping with its mission to empower students with literacy and life skills that will prepare them for the future. The interconnected nature of these programs, targeting multiple stakeholder groups across students, teachers and mothers, speaks to the depth of their engagement with the community, an approach that Kenya Connect believes will help families build a better life for themselves. Therefore, as the first step, we believe that it is imperative to understand the participants' journey across these programs in order to then provide relevant recommendations on impact evaluation and fundraising strategies.

Kenya Connect first started as a Pen Pal program, connecting students in rural schools with their peers in other countries. The challenge, as the team discovered, was that reading & writing weren't traditionally a part of the local culture and learning process. This prompted them to start a library with 500 books, encouraging teachers to borrow books for their students. When accessibility due to distance and teachers' own literacy levels presented a challenge, Kenya Connect introduced the mobile library as a way to cater to the needs of rural school students.

Today, Kenya Connect has multiple programs. In this section, we will introduce the Library, LitClubs and LitMoms programs and also give a brief introduction to other interventions undertaken by Kenya Connect. We map the distinction and overlap across the programs to provide a visual for which programs overlap and which operate independently.

Understanding Kenya Connect's programs
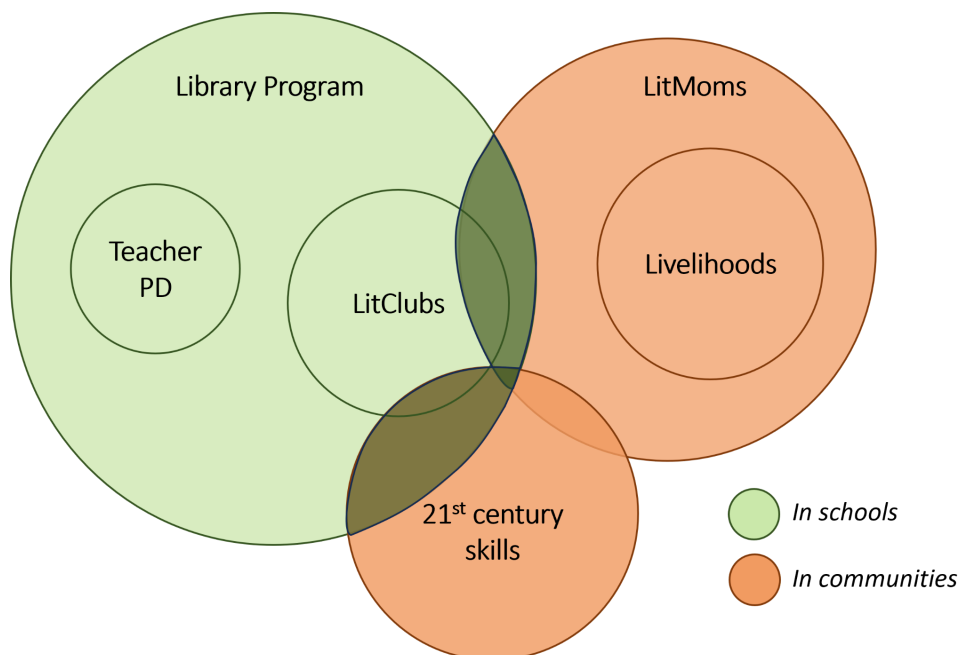
Figure 1: A diagram representing the reach of the literacy and technology programs of Kenya Connect

Library Program

Kenya Connect's community libraries play a significant role in the target communities. There are two types of library programs introduced by Kenya Connect to the communities. The first kind is the Kenya Connect library in the Library Learning Center that is open to all and is centrally located in Wamunyu. The second type of libraries are placed in the schools and are intended primarily for the students and teachers. With reading not being part of the traditional culture, non-academic books were not commonplace, with many adults in these communities never having experienced what it means to read a book. The libraries, therefore, opened up a whole new world of learning, storytelling and sharing for communities. Parents and children could read and borrow books any time they wanted, and teachers could borrow books to use in their classrooms.

In 2018, Kenya Connect introduced library cards, with parents paying a small fee to subscribe their child to the program. These cards served a dual purpose: for the students, it created a sense of belonging in the school and the program and made the experience valuable to them;

for Kenya Connect, it was an easy way to keep track of student enrollment in the program and the books they borrowed.

To circumvent the accessibility challenges of a physical library, which would be limited to one school/community, Kenya Connect started mobile libraries. These are vehicles that bring out hundreds of books to partner schools. The library team sets up tables filled with books so the students can choose books for checkout. Currently, 37 partner schools have access to this mobile library for 30 minutes, once every two weeks. Each child is allowed to borrow two books, which they are expected to read and return by the next time the bus comes to their school. Library mentors assist children in picking age and grade appropriate books, with additional support being provided by teachers for younger children.

LitClubs and LitMoms

The LitClubs and LitMoms programs were designed to empower students and their families with the literacy and socio-emotional skills required to thrive in today's world. Both of these programs have been built and customized in partnership with LitWorld (litworld.org). These programs target 7 core strengths and use activities, games and storytelling to explore and weave through the interconnectedness of these strengths.

- Belonging,
- Curiosity,
- Friendship,
- Kindness,
- Confidence,
- Courage and
- Hope
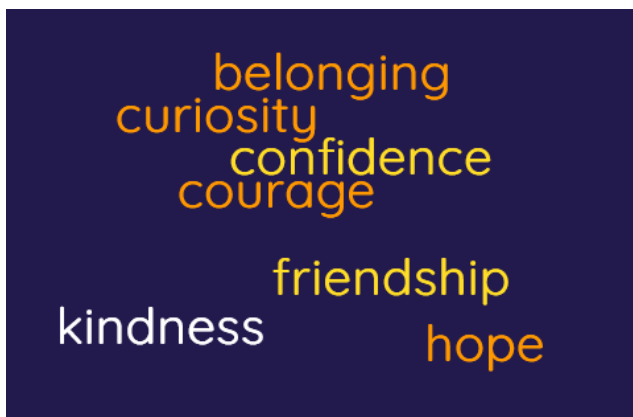
A typical session consists of the following activities:

- Greeting/Welcome and Hello song
  - Check-in question
  - Community building activity
  - Read-aloud and discussion
    - Core activity
- Discussion, Reflection and Wrap-up
  - Praise Circle
  - Goodbye song

LitClubs:
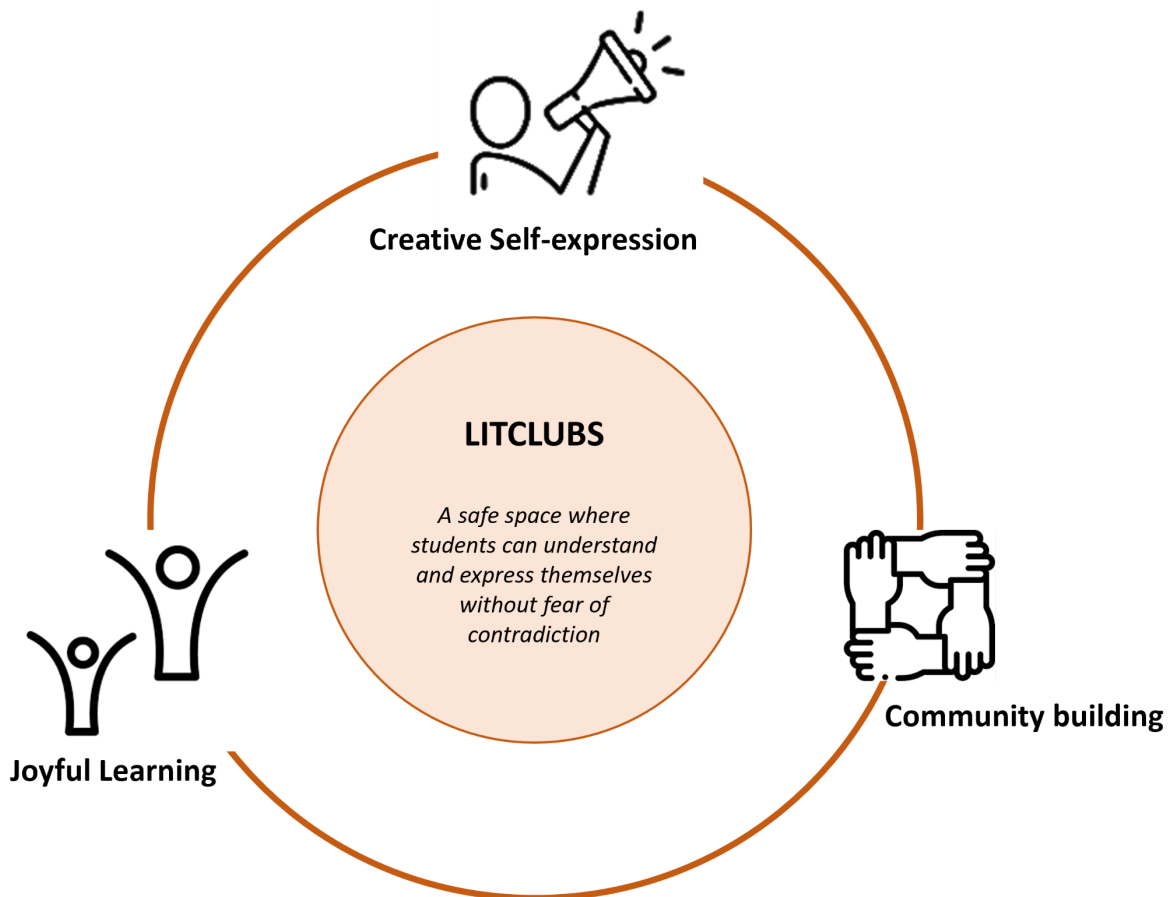
Figure 2: "LitClub is a space for joyful learning, creative self-expression, and community building." https://www.litworld.org/litclub

LitClubs are held once a week for one hour after school for students in grades 4-7. They are gender exclusive (separate for boys and girls) to allow for uninhibited conversations. Today, Kenya Connect runs 6 LitClubs, reaching 73 students total, and has graduated students from 8 others. Reading, writing and storytelling form the backbone of the LitClub, with mentors using books from the library and resources from the MakerSpace (consisting of sewing machines, games and other supplies) to engage participants.

The LitClub is intended to help students express themselves without fear of contradiction or reprimand. Key outcomes, therefore, of the LitClub are better writing skills, improved test scores, a feeling of safety and a sense of belonging.

LitMoms:

"LitMoms Clubs cultivate strong, confident, hopeful community leaders who believe in the power of story." - https://www.litworld.org/litmoms

The LitMoms program is designed to provide a safe space for mothers from the community to come together, learn new skills and empower themselves to confidently participate in the world around them. They are held once a week for about an hour and led by a mentor from Kenya Connect. The program also supports women's livelihoods by teaching them to save money and engage in entrepreneurial activities.

The objective of the LitMoms program is to:
● Build a social support network within their community;
● Build confidence so that they are better able to actively and constructively engage with their own children;
● Acquire strategies that can support their children's literacy development;
● Sustain and develop their own literacy skills.

Through these LitMoms programs, Kenya Connect hopes to encourage mothers to support their children at home by engaging in positive, joyful conversations and learning.

There are currently 2 LitMoms clubs with 55 mothers (and grandmothers), indirectly supporting 220 children. These mothers become ambassadors within their community, creating transformational change over time.

The Role of Mentors:
Mentors play a crucial role in the success of the LitClub and LitMoms programs. They are typically young professionals from within the community, thereby bringing with them crucial local knowledge of cultural and societal norms.

A Mentor has two responsibilities:
● Administrative - facilitating discussions, ensuring tasks are completed, ensuring sessions are progressing as planned without straying off-topic.
● Role-model - A mentor is expected to be a role model, presenting a positive, supportive demeanor and ensuring everyone in the session participates. The mentor's role is to be a guide, facilitating learning in an unbiased, inclusive environment.

Teacher Professional Development

Teachers play an important role in supporting Kenya Connect's work, particularly the library program. Given their role, they are best placed to make the right reading choices for their students and help them in their literacy journey. However, with lower than average literacy skills and very little exposure to reading, teachers themselves are ill-equipped to support their students' attempt to develop their reading skills.

To change this, Kenya Connect has been conducting professional development programs and workshops for teachers where they learn how to use books to supplement their teaching and also the importance of encouraging their students to read outside of the classroom.

Kenya Connect's Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) provide peer support and guidance as well as a space for teachers to discuss classroom teaching practices. More recently, Kenya Connect has been piloting "Teach 2030," a program of UK based Commonwealth Education Trust.

Technology programs

The technology programs offered by Kenya Connect are aimed at reducing the digital divide for students and to foster 21st century skills. For many of the families in the communities where Kenya Connect works, access to computers is extremely limited. Many saw a computer for the first time when the Learning Resource computer lab was set up by Kenya Connect. Today, Kenya Connect conducts coding classes at schools, where students are taught to code using Scratch. Students also learn robotics after school hours and during breaks. Teachers are also taught to use computers effectively in their classrooms.
Technology programs are beyond the scope of this project and hence a detailed analysis of the various programs has not been provided.

Interviews with the children

In an effort to understand the impact of Kenya Connect's programs on students, we interviewed two LitClubs participants, which included video interviews with one boy and one girl. Both interviews were attended by a Kenya Connect mentor and the children's mothers. The mothers and children provided their consent to the KC Team to participate in the interviews and have their photographs taken. The interviews were not recorded; notes were cross-checked with the Kenya Connect team prior to publication.

Interview 1 was with a 12-year-old boy attending LitClubs, who shared his fondness for the program, highlighting the choice of books and his enjoyment of "journalling," where he records personal experiences including potential bullying incidents. He mentioned learning seven "strengths" from LitClub: confidence, courage, kindness, curiosity, belonging, friendship, and hope. His mother noted the program's positive impact on her son's confidence in articulating his emotions, as well as interest in reading. She emphasized that LitClubs was his first exposure to numerous books. The boy was fluent in English and very articulate about the books he enjoyed reading. He drew his favorite book, "Thirst," about a girl fetching water and expressed interest in creating a book about littering, underscoring his concerns about environmental cleanliness in Kenya.

Interview 2 was with a 12-year-old girl from LitClubs, who chose to draw her favorite book, "I love reading," featuring a girl named Natasha who shares her passion for reading. The girl expressed enthusiasm for journaling and "friendship memory books" in LitClubs, where they jot down details about their peers. She also mentioned that LitClub comprises 29 children, and they're segregated by gender during sessions.

Interviews with LitMoms revealed their great enthusiasm for the program and friendships they built through attending the sessions. One mother, who has been attending LitMoms since 2020, expressed her enjoyment of the program so much that she doesn't want to "graduate," even though the plan is for all mothers to eventually do so. She told the interviewer that she cherishes the hands-on activities like sewing and dress-making offered in the mornings, followed by the LitMoms curriculum in the afternoons, which includes singing, dancing, reading aloud, community activities, and a farewell song. She also enjoys attending the Makerspace, available throughout the week, to utilize the sewing machines. The mother commented that a significant takeaway for her from LitMoms is the importance of "sharing with children". She learned to spend quality time with her son, supporting his learning, which has subsequently improved his academic performance and reduced punishments at school.

Takeaways and Recommendations

- Interviews with the children revealed unforeseen outcomes from the LitClubs intervention related to children's prosocial skill development. Beyond the anticipated literacy benefits, the program also fosters activities that curb peer-bullying and emphasize values like friendship and kindness, which could enhance children's social skills. These newfound insights have been incorporated into our evaluation study plans, as they may have broader implications for children's developmental trajectories in school and beyond.
- Interviews with LitMoms revealed that their engagement with the program often extends beyond the intended one-year curriculum, spanning multiple years. They form strong bonds with mentors and establish friendships with fellow participants. This

community-building aspect significantly contributes to the program's success, sustainability, and expansion.

- Teachers play a very important role in ensuring the long-term continuity of Kenya Connect's programs. As role models for their students, teachers need to subscribe to the values and skills that Kenya Connect's programs teach. While some effort is being made in this regard, greater cooperation from teachers, local school and government administration would give much needed mobility to the programs.

Deliverable 2

Evaluation Proposal for Kenya Connect

Deliverable 2 provides an outline for two different studies focused on key programs of Kenya Connect based on the identified needs: (A) an impact evaluation to evaluate Kenya Connect's school-based literacy programs, and (B) an impact and process evaluation of the LitMoms program.

The deliverable includes research questions and proposed methodological designs, survey measures, and focus group assessments. Further, we suggest several steps needed to conduct a high-quality evaluation, as well as suggest potential institutions within Kenya that might be good research partners to execute the research.

Figure 3: Overview of assets offered as part of Deliverable 2

(A) Impact Evaluation for Library Program and LitClubs

The proposed plans will allow Kenya Connect to assess the effects of two of their programs on students using a *change-study* (smaller, more feasible, but will not allow for causal claims to be made about the program; a "proof of concept") and a *randomized controlled trial* (larger, expensive, but will allow for causal claims about the program to be made). Specifically, the proposed design focuses primarily on the LitClubs and the School Library programs and student outcomes. In addition, a second study is proposed focused on the LitMoms program implemented separately within communities.

Research questions: Library and LitClubs Program

The LitClubs and Library programs are rich and multi-faceted and likely change many different outcomes for students. The research questions are divided into primary questions (the main

outcomes of interest to Kenya Connects) and secondary questions (allowing for a broader, exploratory examination of other potential impacts the programs may be having on students and mothers) and aim to understand the added value of implementing both programs together versus implementing the Library program on its own, as is done in many schools. The LitClubs program targets children in primary grades 4-6, while the Library program includes children of all grades in the school.

Primary research questions
1. What is the impact of the Library program on students' engagement in reading, motivation and joy to read, and basic reading and writing skills?
2. Is there an added impact of the LitClubs program on these outcomes?

Secondary research questions
3. What is the impact of the Library program on school attendance, social-emotional skills (i.e., self-esteem and sense of safety and belonging), sense of hope, and numeracy skills?
4. Is there an added impact of the LitClubs programs on these outcomes?

> *Additional potential questions to explore in future research: Does the teacher professional development training implemented as part of the Library Program improve teaching practices and further impact student learning outcomes?*

Research Designs

Two designs are proposed: a *change-study*, which examines on a small scale change over time in the primary and secondary outcomes in a small set of schools, and a *randomized controlled study,* which examines change over time on a much larger scale in a causal framework. Both will target the same set of research questions. Note that while the change study is not sufficiently powered statistically, it will serve as a "proof of concept" that can inform a future larger study.

1. Change study

Sample: 3-6 schools that share similar characteristics.

Program Implementation: Schools will be assigned to one of three conditions (1-2 schools in each): Library program, Library program+LitClubs, or comparison (i.e., "business as usual, no intervention).

Participants: Within each school, all program participants will be assessed. In the comparison condition, it is recommended that a set of students who would be eligible if the program were to be implemented be recruited and assessed to allow for a comparable group of students.

Data Collection: Given the small-scale nature of this study, it is important that "baseline" assessments be conducted in all schools before the start of the project that assess the outcomes of interest and a set baseline characteristics. These will be measured at the end of the program period as well, and allow for the examination of if / how scores on the outcomes change in each of the three different conditions. A pre-post change design requires that data be collected before (pre) and after (post) the program implementation. The collection of sociodemographic variables will allow for an analysis of how similar the small set of schools and students are, and control for any sociodemographic differences that you might find across the schools. A data management plan will need to be put in place in order to ensure that individual students can be tracked over time.

Data Analysis: Examine how outcomes have changed from baseline to endline, and compare how these changes differ in the program and comparison communities.

2. Randomized Controlled Trial

Randomized Controlled Trials (RCTs) can be useful for evaluating the causal impact of a program on a particular set of outcomes, and are regarded as one of the most valued research methodologies for examining the efficacy or effectiveness of interventions. To sufficiently isolate the impact of the intervention on the outcome, RCTs must be thoughtfully designed and conducted and must involve team members with expertise across all relevant practical and methodological aspects of the study. Because schools are the target of implementation, you will need a large set of schools in order to be sufficiently powered statistically for a RCT that can lead to causal conclusions.

Sample: 240 schools*

*This sample size is estimated based on power calculations using Optimal Design software. This approach assesses what sample size would be needed to detect the "minimum detectable effect size" of 0.19 Standard Deviations. In other words, this sample is sufficient to detect changes at least this size. If additional discussions with Kenya Connects yield a potentially larger expected impact of the program, the sample size can be reduced.

Note that for the second research question--focused on the added value of the Library program implemented with the LitClubs program–this same contrast holds. So, if it is determined that the anticipated differences between the Library program alone and the Library program implemented with the LitClubs may be smaller, a larger sample of schools would be recommended.

Other assumptions in this power analysis: Intra-cluster correlation of outcomes of 0.22 (based on previously collected data on literacy skills from one of the Fellows' projects); R-squared of 0.20 (given baseline characteristics), and an alpha of 80%.

Program Implementation: Schools will be assigned to one of three conditions (80 schools in each): Library program, Library program+LitClubs, or control (i.e., "business as usual"/no intervention).

Participants: Within each school, 15-20 program participants will be randomly sampled to be assessed from Kenya Connects' program rosters. In the control condition, it is recommended that a set of students and moms who would be eligible if the program were to be implemented be recruited and then randomly sampled for assessments to allow for a comparison.

Data Collection: A similar data collection plan as the change-study is recommended, but on a much larger scale. A data management plan will need to be put in place in order to ensure that individual students and mothers can be tracked over time.

Data Analysis Plan: The main approach is to examine differences in outcomes at endline across the three treatment groups. Several decisions will need to be made based on the data that is collected and how the project goes. Two minimum guidelines for the statistical analysis should be regression-based models that adjust for baseline scores of each outcome examined. Kenya Connect should consult with their research partner on the final data analysis plan.

Suggested Measures for Evaluation

Selecting good measures that are validated and appropriate for the context in which the research takes place is critical for a successful evaluation. For the proposed research studies, it will be important to identify measures that have been used in the Kenya (or a similar) context for as many outcomes as possible so that measures are contextually appropriate and valid assessments of the outcomes of interest. We make several recommendations below for the primary and secondary outcomes listed in the research questions.

The first step would be to assess the basic psychometric properties of all measures used (e.g., examining the internal consistency of scales, and distribution of key variables). Second, it

would be important to compare how treatment and control communities differ at baseline to have a sense of how comparative students and schools are across the treatment conditions. Third, a regression-based analysis can be used to compare how changes in key outcomes differ across the two arms over time.

Measures for Primary Outcomes

1. *Literacy skills*: Kenya Early Grade Math Assessment (EGRA): EGRA is an oral student assessment designed to measure the most basic foundation skills for literacy acquisition in the early grades: phonological awareness (awareness of and ability to manipulate the sound units of language), recognizing letters of the alphabet, reading simple words, understanding sentences and paragraphs, and listening with comprehension. Ed Data II developed the EGRA methodology and has applied it in 11 countries and 19 languages. It has been adopted and used by other implementing partners in more than 30 other countries and more than 60 other languages. It is recommended that both the English and the relevant local language (if it exists) versions be used.

> *Additional recommendation: We recommend that the KC team pilot the EGRA in their sample to assess whether the items are too easy (or difficult) for children. While the assessment is designed for early-grade readers, research in many countries, including Kenya, indicates that it is still appropriate for use in older grades given low learning levels. If it is deemed too easy of an assessment, we recommend supplementing it with additional items assessing more advanced literacy skills (e.g., from the Young Lives Ethiopia assessment).*

2. <u>Motivation to Read:</u> There are several existing measures on children's motivation to read[1]. All have been developed on samples of children from the United States or other high-income countries. We recommend one particular scale be considered and evaluated for appropriateness to the population of students in Kenya by the KC team, and pilot tested. The

---

[1] Davis, M. H., Tonks, S. M., Hock, M., Wang, W., & R[...] scales. *Reading Psychology*, *39*(2), 121-187.

Motivation for Reading Questionnaire has two versions - a long-form (53 items covering reading self-efficacy, reading challenge, reading curiosity, reading involvement, the importance of reading, recognition of reading, reading for grades, competition in reading, compliance, reading work avoidance. We recommend the "short-form" (**Perceptions of Reading Motivations Questionnaire (PRMQ)**), which is 20 items covering autonomy in reading, self-efficacy, challenge preference, and knowledge goals/curiosity.

3. Reading Enjoyment: The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) includes a 4-item self-reported scale measuring reading enjoyment. An example item is: "I like talking about books with other people". Children rate items and we recommend the following scale: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = somewhat disagree, and 3 = somewhat agree, 4 = strongly agree.

> *Additional recommendation: The quantitative assessments can also be supplemented with individual student interviews focused on children's favorite books and activities related to reading. A similar approach has already been piloted in Deliverable 1.*

Measures for Secondary Outcomes

In addition to the impacts on literacy, our interviews with participants and staff at KC revealed that the programs likely impact a much wider range of outcomes that are related to school and life success. We consider these "secondary outcomes" that would be important to measure.

1. School attendance: Given challenges in reliably collecting school attendance record data, we recommend two approaches: child self-report (i.e., "In the last full week of school, how many days of school did you miss? Answers range from 0-5); and school administrative records (collecting overall attendance rate over the school year).

2. Self-esteem: The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale has been widely used globally, including in Kenya. It consists of 10 self-report items measuring global self-esteem. Each item requires participants to choose one of four response options [ranging from one ("strongly disagree") to four ("strongly agree")]. Example items include: "On the whole, I am satisfied with myself", "I feel I don't have much to be proud of" (reverse coded), and "I am able to do things as well as most other people."

3. <u>Sense of safety and belonging:</u> The 18-item Psychological Sense of School Membership (PSSM)[2] is a widely used and validated (in the US context) scale. Items are reported on a 5-point Likert scale with choices ranging from not at all true (1) to completely true (5). Example items include: "I feel like a real part of [school name]," "People here notice when I'm good at something," "people at this school are friendly to me," and "I wish I were in a different school" (reverse coded)."

4. <u>Sense of hope:</u> The Children's Hope Scale[3] is the most commonly used measure of hope and has been adapted to multiple countries and is publicly available. It has been used in several studies in Kenya as well. It is a six-item self-report measure to assess hopeful thinking in children and adolescents. Responses range from 1 (none of the time) to 6 (all of the time). Example items include: "I think I am doing pretty well", "I can think of many ways to get the things in life that are most important to me", and, "I think the things I have done in the past will help me in the future."

5. <u>Numeracy skills</u>: Early Grade Math Assessment–Kenya: The EGMA is an assessment of early mathematics learning consisting of six subtests measuring number identification, reasoning about magnitude, recognition of number patterns, addition and subtraction, and word problems. The EGMA is an oral assessment administered individually to primary school students. The EGMA was developed by RTI International and has been used in over 14 countries,

(B) Impact and Process Evaluation for LitMoms Program

A parallel program that KC runs is the LitMoms program, focused on improving livelihood for mothers and literacy engagement with children. This program is run in the community and has some (but minimal) overlap with the school-based programs. Thus, a separate study and set of research questions are proposed to understand the causal impact of the LitMoms program on mothers and children, as well as a process evaluation to help KC understand the broader impacts of the program through focus group discussion with participants.

The key research questions for the impact evaluation are:

---

[2] Goodenow, C. (1993). The psychological sense of school membership among adolescents: Scale development and educational correlates. *Psychology in the Schools*, *30*(1), 79-90.
[3] Snyder, C. R., Irving, L. M., & Anderson, J. R. (1991). Hope and health. *Handbook of Social and Clinical Psychology: The Health Perspective*, *162*, 285-305.

1. What is the impact of the LitMoms program on mothers' self-efficacy, social support, financial health, and empowerment in their households?
2. What is the impact of the LitMoms program mothers' engagement in their child's reading practices and education more broadly?
3. What is the impact of the LitMoms program on children's academic and non-academic outcomes?

Research Design: Impact Evaluation

We propose following the same research design template that is outlined above based on feasibility: a *change-study*, which examines on a small scale change over time in the primary and secondary outcomes in a small set of communities, and a *randomized controlled study,* which examines change over time on a much larger scale in a causal framework. Both will target the same set of research questions. Note again that while the change study is not

sufficiently powered statistically, it will serve as a "proof of concept" that can inform a future larger study.

Suggested Measures for Evaluation

The first six outcomes would be evaluated through mother reports in a directly administered survey. The final set of items (child outcomes) would be collected through direct assessments with children.

1. **Self-efficacy:** If time allows, we recommend using the **Tool to Measure Parenting Self-Efficacy** (TOPSE: Kendall & Bloomfield, 2005), which has been used in South Africa and assesses six parenting domains: emotion and affection, play and enjoyment, empathy and understanding, control, discipline and boundary setting, pressures of parenting self-acceptance and learning and knowledge. This assessment is lengthy (48 items), and if time does not allow we recommend the **Brief Parental Self-Efficacy Scale** (BPSES), a short, 5-item measure of parental self-efficacy that can be completed by parents or carers of children and young people and has also been used in sub-Saharan Africa.

2. **Social support:** One widely used measure of social support (including in sub-Saharan Africa) is the 19-item **Rand Medical Outcomes Study (MOS) Social Support Survey scale** (Sherbourne & Stewart, 1991[4]). This scale measures four categories of functional social support: tangible support, affectionate support, positive social interaction and emotional/informational support. Each item is scored on a 1–5 basis. An additional single item (number of close friends and relatives) in this scale assesses structural support.

3. **Financial health:** We recommend a module from Innovation for Poverty Action's "Measuring Financial Health around the Globe"[5] measure. These measures were created through extensive piloting and measurement validation efforts across 5 countries, including Kenya and Tanzania. Three modules are included: access-to-funds (final outcome), financial behavior (intermediate input), and access-to-finance (intermediate input: includes savings, credit, and payments). The items are free and publicly available.

4. **Empowerment**: Measuring women's empowerment in their households can be a sensitive topic. Thus, we recommend using a module from the Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) which focuses on decision-making power between a woman and her

---

[4] Sherbourne, C. D., & Stewart, A. L. (1991). The MOS social support survey. *Social science & medicine*, *32*(6), 705-714
[5] https://poverty-action.org/measuring-financial-health-around-globe

partner. These items have been implemented around the world, including Kenya. The 5 items focus on who makes decisions about major household issues (woman, her husband/partner, or joint decision-making), including: (1) Who usually decides whether your children should go to school: you, your husband/partner, or you and your husband/partner? (2) Who usually decides how the money you earn will be used? (3) Would you say the money you make is more than your husband/partner makes, less than what he makes, or about the same? (4) Who generally decides how your husband/partner's income will be used? (5) Who usually makes decisions about major purchases in the household? (Example: construction and improvement of houses, television, cell phone, bicycle or motorcycle)?

5. **Engagement in child's reading practices:** An adapted survey from national reading surveys requesting information about how often the child reads on their own and how often together with the parent/main caregiver or other family members, as well as the child's favorite reading titles and number of books at home (e.g., the reading survey used in the national study here: Kucirkova, N. I., Campbell, J. A., Stangeland, E. B., & Hoel, T. (2023). The importance of sensorial and spatial aspects in family reading at home:

Insights from a national survey in Norway. *International Journal of Educational Research Open*, *4*, 100227.)

6. **Engagement in child's education:** An adapted checklist from UNICEF Multiple Indicators Cluster Survey (MICS 29) and Young Lives Panel Study), which has been used around the world, including Kenya. Mothers report on whether they or anyone in their household has engaged in the following 6 activities with their child in the past 3 days. Specifically, "In the past 3 days, did you or any household member over 15 years of age engage in any of the following activities with [CHILD]?": "Read books to or looked at picture books"; "told stories"; "sang songs to or with [CHILD] including lullabies"; "Taken outside the home? For example, to the market, to events, visit relatives?"; "played"; and "Named, counted, or drew things". Two additional items created for use in Ghana can be added and include: (1) "In the past 4 weeks (30 days), how often have you or has another adult in the household helped [CHILD] with (his/her) homework?" and (2) In the last month or the last month with regular school [if [CHILD]'s school had vacations in the preceding month], how often have you asked [CHILD] what he/she did at school? (Not at all, Rarely, Occasionally, Regularly).

7. **Children's academic and non-academic outcomes:** Please see the section in the proposed study above to select measures the team thinks are most relevant to the LitMoms program.

Process Evaluation: The KC team is also interested in evaluating their LitMoms program at the end of the implementation year through focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews. This would provide important insights into participants' experiences and provide important anecdotal data on the effects of the program that the KC staff believe occur. It will also provide some guidance on how the program may be improved through garnering insights from participant experiences. This can be conducted as a separate isolated study, or in conjunction with the impact evaluation proposed above.

Focus Group Discussions Protocol

1. **Tell us about your experiences in the LitMoms program this past year.**
    a. PROBE: What do you like about this program?
    b. PROBE: Which aspects of the program did you attend the most often?
    c. PROBE: Was there anything that you think could be done differently in the program?
    d. PROBE: What challenges and difficulties did you experience during your participation in the program? What should be done to address those? (If No challenges, progress to the next question).

2. **How has the program changed the way you engage with your child's education and schooling?**
    a. PROBE: If POSITIVE: Please provide some examples If NEGATIVE: Do you know why? Say more
    b. PROBE: Do you feel better equipped to support your child's schooling after participating in this program? How so?

3. **Tell us about your experience with the income generation portion of the program.**
    a. PROBE: How has the income generation portion impacted you?
    b. PROBE: Do you have a consistent source of income that you did not before? If YES: What are they using the additional income for?

4. **How has participation in the LitMoms program changed your relationships with your partner? (or joint caregiver for the target child).**

5. **How do you rate the length of the LitMom program, could it be longer or shorter, what would be the gain or loss if the length changed?**

6. Tell me about some moments in the LitMoms program that made you think differently about reading, writing or childhood education.

7. Have you met people in the LitMoms program that you are still in touch with? Tell me more

8. Have you noticed any changes to your attitudes towards literacy or other education aspects for your child after or during your participation in the LitMoms program?

9. Have you noticed any changes to your attitudes towards your own reading, writing or other education aspects after or during your participation in the LitMoms program?

10. If you were to describe LitMoms to your friend who has never heard about it, what would you say?

Additional recommendations: In addition to these questions, we recommend collecting demographic information for children and their families that will inform the analysis. Standard variables for this aspect are: Participants' Age, Mother tongue, Highest education achieved, Number of children, Marital status.

Schools' characteristics:

- *Geographical location (area, rural/town)*
- *Type of school (state/private)*
- *Year groups taught (with QE)*
- *Student-teacher ratio*
- *Medium of instruction in the school (English or local language)*

General Recommendations for Implementing Focus Group Interviews

- The questions should be pre-tested (piloted) on a subsample of the target population and questions refined in light of the results (incl. both for content and the clarity of the wording)
- The focus group interviews should be conducted independently of KC staff or affiliated mentors (KC staff can facilitate access to participants but the interviews or surveys should be independently conducted by the research partner)
- The focus group plans should be approved by an Ethics Board and all answers should be anonymised.
- The answers should be analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively (for open-ended questions) in alignment with the RQs
- Ideally, to vet the quality of the research, the results should be published in a peer-reviewed academic journal.
- These and other quality assurance mechanisms are described in detail in Kucirkova, N., Brod, G., & Gaab, N. (2023). Applying the science of learning to EdTech evidence evaluations using the EdTech Evidence Evaluation Routine (EVER). *npj Science of Learning*, *8*(1), 35.

Pre-registration

It is recommended that both studies be pre-registered. Pre-registering a trial is increasingly common in the social and education sciences and a requirement for publication at many journals. Before either the change-study or the RCT is deployed, we recommend that the study be pre-registered to increase scientific transparency and potential publishability of the results. (Two common registries are the American Economic Association (AEA) Registry 7 and the Research in Educational Effectiveness Studies). Pre-registration will entail specifying in detail the participant sample, power calculations, sample size, randomization strategy, analytic plan, and primary and secondary outcomes to be examined. Pre-registration should happen before participant enrollment begins.

Ethical Approval

If Kenya Connect is interested in publishing the results of either study, it is imperative that the randomized trial be approved through a formal, ethical review process before beginning. Many countries have local government-run ethical review boards, and every university will have one

as well. When considering potential partners for either study, KC should consider the various requirements for ethical review board approval both in Kenya and with any partner institutions.

All study participants will need to complete an informed consent procedure. Parents will need to consent to participate in the study, and children will need to provide assent (as minors, they will not be able to consent to participate). KC will need to provide participants with information about what participating in the study entails (description of procedures), the potential benefits and risks of participating in the study, right to withdraw, and procedures in place for maintaining participant confidentiality and anonymity. KC will need to determine what types of data safety and monitoring protocols are required for both studies. KC will also need to establish a data transportation and storage protocol (i.e., if paper records are collected in the field, how will records be transported to a secure location; how will paper and/or electronic data be stored, are electronic records store securely [i.e. encrypted server, 2FA], how long will data be stored for, who will have access to records).

Potential Research Partners to Consider

It is recommended that KC identify a research partner to support the evaluation efforts, who can help in finalizing the research design and execution, pilot testing and finalizing all surveys, analyzing and interpreting data, and writing up the results together with the KC team. There are several education researchers within Kenya who could potentially support this work, and we provide several suggestions of strong research institutions within Kenya that could be considered.

1. **African Population and Health Research Center**

2. **Faculty of Education, University of Nairobi**

3. **ID Insight Research Agency (IDInsight Nairobi)**

4. **Innovations for Poverty Action, Kenya Office**

Takeaways and Recommendations

To ensure the development of a sustainable evidence-building strategy for Kenya Connect, it is crucial to establish a seamless connection between funding and research plans. This entails

allocating a sufficient budget for ongoing research studies, thereby integrating the process of evidence-building into the very fabric of the organization. This includes continuous process and evaluation studies to gauge the impact of initiatives, with the insights derived from these evaluations guiding the organization's fundraising strategies towards the most impactful programs. Keeping this in mind, the Fellows have formulated strategic approaches and recommendations aimed at developing a cost-effective evidence plan. These initiatives are designed to not only strengthen the organization's commitment to evidence-based practices but also to streamline its efforts in maximizing positive impact within the communities it serves.

	The term "sandbox" draws its inspiration from a child's play area, symbolizing a controlled space for creativity, construction, and experimentation. In a research context, a sandbox serves as a testing environment for exploring innovative ideas without the risk of real-world consequences, enabling researchers to push boundaries and refine concepts within a confined and protected setting. We recommend this Sandbox from EdTech Hub to support the development of relevant resources and contextualising research methods to the Kenyan context:

These two publications are important for building on when further developing and implementing the research studies and we placed the full-texts into the online research library folder that we created for Kenya Connect.

- *Büchel, K., Crossley, C., Cullen, C., & Letsomo, T. (2023). Under the Hood of an EdTech Study in Kenya: Implementation challenges, successes, and lessons learnt [Policy Brief]. EdTech Hub. https://doi.org/10.53832/edtechhub.0175*
- *Major, L., Daltry, R., Otieno, M., Otieno, K., Zhao, A., Hinks, J., Sun, C., & Friedburg, A. (2023). Randomised Controlled Trial Protocol: Digital personalised learning to improve literacy and numeracy outcomes in Kenyan classrooms [Methodology publication]. EdTech Hub. https://doi.org/10.53832/edtechhub.0176*

Sustainable Evidence-building

To ensure the development of a sustainable evidence-building strategy for Kenya Connect, it is crucial to establish a seamless connection between funding and research plans. This entails allocating a sufficient budget for ongoing research studies, thereby integrating the process of evidence-building into the very fabric of the organization. This includes continuous evaluation studies to gauge the impact of initiatives, with the insights derived from these evaluations guiding the organization's fundraising strategies towards the most impactful programs. Keeping this in mind, the Fellows have formulated strategic approaches and recommendations aimed at developing a cost-effective evidence plan. These initiatives are designed to not only strengthen the organization's commitment to evidence-based practices but also to streamline its efforts in maximizing positive impact within the communities it serves.

The Randomized Controlled Trial (RCT) stands as the pinnacle of evidence within international frameworks. While it may not always be the optimal choice due to challenges in randomizing schools or learners, and considering practical and ethical considerations, it is still deemed the most robust method for demonstrating impact. This is particularly valuable as it aligns with the expectations of funders, illustrating Kenya Connect's significant contributions to the communities it serves. However, the considerable expense associated with RCTs, often exceeding a million dollars, necessitates a strategic and sustainable approach.

Aiming for RCTs should be viewed as an integral component of a long-term strategy, gradually allocating funding to create a comprehensive portfolio of evidence. This gradual development involves initiating various studies, such as correlational studies, followed by smaller-scale experimental studies. Complementing these approaches with surveys and interviews ensures a diversified evidence portfolio. This meticulous process not only addresses financial constraints but also allows for the continuous updating of the portfolio with valuable insights. In doing so, Kenya Connect can effectively showcase its impact on communities in a cost-effective and sustainable manner over time.

Further Recommendations

The suggested methodology outlined in the EdTech Evaluation Routine (EVER), as published by Kucirkova, Brod & Gaab (2023) in *npj Science of Learning*, advocates for a nuanced approach to selecting research studies. The emphasis is on choosing studies that demonstrate various impact aspects using methods tailored to the specific questions at hand. This aligns with our recommendation to Kenya Connect, emphasizing the importance of diversifying their evidence base.

Rather than exclusively focusing on a Randomized Controlled Trial (RCT) and committing all resources to it, the advised strategy is to thoughtfully select different types of evidence based on the specific inquiry, the interests of partners, and the availability of funding. This aligns with the principles outlined in Deliverable 3, underscoring the significance of a strategic and diversified approach to evidence-building. By doing so, Kenya Connect can effectively address research questions while optimizing available resources and accommodating the diverse interests and preferences of stakeholders.

Deliverable 3

Introduction

KC is structured as a non-profit organization, in both the legal sense and operational one. It relies mainly on grant funding in order to sustain itself and grow. It does also provide some of LitMoms groups with the materials and tools needed to generate revenue (through the manufacturing of garments and other small-scale textiles), with Kenya Connect then retaining the residual income once the moms' have been paid. Periodically, Kenya Connect also engages with a local tour operator, Mbiti, to offer tours to tourists wishing to visit some of the partner schools, with the intention of generating greater awareness and direct donations.

Kenya Connect has a wish list for its future funding needs that includes:
- Books in Kiswahili
- Revision resources aligned to the Kenyan Competency-based Curriculum (CBC)
- Expanding the reach of the program
- Additional resources for LitClubs and LitMoms programs as well as for community library users.

KC has also identified its main funding needs for expansion:

ITEM	Quantity	Total Cost ($)
Books in Kiswahili	2,500	7,500
Kenyan Authored books	2,000	6,000
CBC Revision Books (100 per age group)	1,200	12,000
Vehicle to allow Library Team to bring books to more schools *(truck with cab to manage the rough bush roads)*		60,000
Tables for book check out	6	240
Lanyards and library card materials	2,400	7,200
Barcode labels	9,000	1,800
Additional Library Program Interns (for two years)	2	7,200
Computers for Research for Community Library	4	2,000

Finally, KC has also identified two "big ideas":

The Big Idea 1	The Big Idea 2
"Although we opened our Library Learning Center in 2022 which houses our community	*"On a regular basis we are asked to bring our library programs to other regions in Kenya.*

> *library, a makerspace, a recording studio, meeting space and staff offices, it is clear that we are already outgrowing the space. In 2023 we purchased adjacent land to our property and we are in the process of developing plans to create a bigger free-standing library. The current library space will be converted to a student maker space with the current maker space being used for our mother sewing program and other income generation projects for women and men."*

> *Funding will help us set-up and train community leaders to start new library programs in other regions in Kenya."*

Assessment from Kenya Connect and their Fundraising Needs

We have met with Kenya Connect several times during the design phase of this project, to discuss funding-specific aspects, ideas and thoughts. This has included an in-person meeting in New York with one of their board members, as well as a second meeting with the board member and Sharon Runge, Executive Director of Kenya Connect.

Kenya Connect has several attributes that are worth highlighting, and can best be shown in a SWOT (Strengthens, Weakness, Opportunities and Threat) analysis:

Strengths	Weaknesses
- Kenya Connect has an established track record of creating impact, and has been around for some time. - This has established it as a credible and worthy grant recipient, as evidenced once more by the recent funding it was awarded by FII in Riyadh. - This is an excellent asset base, and should not be underestimated: in the dynamic of growing needs, and increasing urgency to support these, KC stands as a reliable, local partner with a strong and credible track record. - Kenya Connect is also structured well: it has both a local "engine" and a US-based	Like all other NGOs, the issue of funding remains a critical one. And, the energy and time required for fundraising can be draining and disheartening. The threat is that funding sources are not diversified quickly enough, and that a small slow-down in funding has a disproportionate negative impact on a leanly-run organization.

board and fundraising arm. This too provides credibility, especially into the direct philanthropic market in the US ● Kenya Connect also has a highly engaged and skilled board, alongside passionate and skilled people. This is clear to see and accounts for much of the success to date.	
Opportunities ● While not easy, there are several fundraising diversification strategies that can be explored. KC can begin to explore these, including several that are suggested in this document. ● The opportunity to better assess impact, and create an ever stronger "narrative" for donors, again can set KC apart from others	**Threats** ● As more competition for resources develops, the role that KC plays, and its positioning as a local player with international funding networks, will stand it in good stead if its correctly managed. One important aspect is to consider continuing to invest in both the local Kenya operational team, as well as in the US team. If Sharon "gets hit by a bus", there needs to be clear take-over plans in place. This should begin now, and a direct skills transfer plan is suggested.

The summary engagement to date has shown several key points in terms of fundraising:
● KC is already doing a good job. This is not to be under-stated, given the area of fundraising and intervention KC is focused on remains a difficult one. Unlike many other "causes", KC's is not "sexy" or "trendy". Yet, it has been successful in making the argument that its intervention is necessary and valuable. It seems it has also been able to tap into many peoples' individual love of learning and books. This personal outreach has been highly effective and can "cut through" a lot of the barriers to funding and cynicism that exists in the area of grant finance.
● KC's past record in securing strong funding, developing an experienced and engaged board, responsibility implementing its programmatic rollout and securing further funding, including for some capital intensive projects, has all ensured KC has a great foundation as a reliable stewart and local partner.

Future focus areas and recommendations

● It seems the "low hanging" fruit has already been targeted. KC's CSR approach and value offering is well-honed, as has been evidenced by its current fundraising. Thus, this engagement sought to focus on areas of expansion, and also undertake mapping and analysis of areas where further learning can be obtained, and possibly future funding opportunities unlocked.

- One important future area is to better unlock the value of the KC board, in terms of fundraising and networks. This is particularly important if future diversified forms of funding are going to be targeted (eg a link with a bespoke bookseller or travel broker).
- An (i) overview and landscape analysis of how funding is generated by other comparable entities has been undertaken in the following pages. The purpose of this mapping is not to catalog all possible funding options, but rather to identify similar type entities and analyze which methods of fundraising are used. As KC may be engaging a fundraising assistant in the following months, this would form a useful baseline against which KC activities can be compared, as well as further ideas catalyzed.
- Thereafter, a (ii) mapping of possible foundations or individuals providing funding for capacity building or literacy programs has been undertaken. This forms a supplementary part to the grantee mapping, and it too will provide a basis for future fundraising outreaches. The mapping sought to focus both on local and possible international funders.
- Suggested (iii) strategies on further fundraising models and strategies. KC is doing great work around positioning itself as a viable project. Here, the deliverable will look at several more unconventional linkages, including: Rally to Read; VSLA linked with a bank; linking up with a bookseller; linking up with a travel agent.

Overview and Landscape Analysis of How Funding is Generated by Other Comparable Entities

Organization	Org Type	Country	Mission	Website	Main funding sources	Fundraising features on website	Fundraising techniques	Geographic focus on funding	Useful resources
Vaga Lume	NGO	Brazil	We start with the books, with the structure of the library, a space where it is possible to exchange and share knowledge. This space is the main tool for achieving greater and more significant changes for children and young people in the community. Vaga Lume plans to triple the number of community libraries throughout the Amazon, reaching 300 spaces where the knowledge of the people of the forest is valued, as well as their roots, cultures and ways. of life.	https://vagalume.org.br/o-que-fazemos/	Global sponsors, private sponsors, CSR	Donation portal; information on 'collaboration' options for individuals & corporate partners.	Individual donations (once-off/recurring); CSR; Cause-related marketing; Social Business & Sustainability promise	National & International	
S M Sehgal Foundation	NGO	India	As a rural development NGO, established as a public, charitable trust, Sehgal Foundation has a skilled and dedicated team that creates sustainable programs to address rural India's most pressing needs: Sehgal	https://www.smsfoundation.org/	Global sponsors; CSR	Donation portal; information on 'other ways to give' for individuals & corporate partners.	CSR Strategies, partnering for specific programs, synergies & collaboration across academia, corporate, government and nonprofits.	National & International	https://www.earlylearningresourcenetwork.org/system/files/resourcefiles/FINAL%20REPORT%20MTLL%20case%20study.pdf

			Foundation has five main program areas: Water Management, Agriculture Development, Local Participation and Sustainability, Transform Lives one school at a time, and Outreach for Development.					
Asante Africa Foundation	Non-profit	Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania	Everyone has talent and potential but not everyone has access to opportunities. We work to address this gap by partnering with rural schools and communities in East Africa to provide vulnerable and underserved youth with educational resources and support they need to succeed both in the classroom and beyond.	https://asanteafrica.org/	Global sponsors	Donational portal (one-time or recurring) with variety of donation amounts; information on strategic plan for partnerships moving forward.	Exploring consortium partnerships to access new funding streams and expand reach; cause-related marketing; vast network of implementing partners; sponsorship	National & International	https://www.smsfoundation.org/news/lives-transformed-from-under-the-trees-to-smart-classrooms/ Partner details and programs they fund: https://www.smsfoundation.org/partners/
Rally to Read	NGO	South Africa	The Rally to Read, through complementary partnerships, facilitates a literacy program fully aligned to the Department of Education's goals. It supports rural primary schools through the provision of quality resources, teacher training, support and evaluation.	https://rallytoread.org.za/	CSR and private sponsorship	Donation portal; rally registration; information on sponsorship options	Collaboration with sponsors that supports their marketing and CSR strategies	National	https://vagalume.org.br/anexos/relatorio_2022.pdf

Read to Rise	Non-profit	South Africa	Read to Rise is a non-profit organization committed to promoting youth literacy in schools in South Africa's under-resourced communities. As the name indicates, we firmly believe that children need to read in order to rise in their personal development and contribution to society.	https://www.readtorise.co.za/	CSR and Local sponsors	Donation portal; information on 'how to help' which includes a variety of support types and amounts	Individual donations (once-off/recurring); CSR; Cause-related marketing; online purchase of books where every book purchases is matched by a book donation to a child	National & International	
The Bookery	Non-profit	South Africa	Our goal is to create school libraries that are well-stocked with age-appropriate books and other resources. Each library is staffed by a paid, effectively trained and well supported librarian or library assistants. By creating dynamic libraries that are embraced by schools and communities, we can inspire a love of reading, break barriers and change lives.	https://thebookery.org.za/	Global sponsors, private sponsors, CSR	Donation portal (monetary and book donations); information on 'how to get involved' for individuals and corporate sponsors	Individual donations; CSR; various donation tiers with different cost implications; international sponsors	National & International	
FunDza Literacy Trust	Non-profit	South Africa	FunDza's mission is to improve the literacy levels of South Africa's youth by encouraging reading for pleasure, writing for meaning, and learning for life. Through our work, we aim to grow	https://www.fundza.co.za/	Global sponsors, private sponsors, CSR	Donations portal; contact information to get involved; awards and accolades listed on website	CSR strategies, in-kind partnerships, international sponsors, publication of awards won	National & International	

			generations of educated, empowered and engaged young leaders and citizens in South Africa					
Mango Tree Literacy Lab	NGO	Uganda	Mango Tree Literacy Lab is a non-profit idea incubator that promotes reading, writing, teaching, and publishing in African languages through innovative, research-based projects and enterprises in Northern Uganda.	https://www.mangotreelitlab.org/	Global sponsors	None visible	Program evaluation and evidence of impact to secure additional funding	International
Rise Literacy Zambia	Non-profit	Zambia	RISE believes that strong literacy skills build pathways for self motivated, strong, and responsible learners. RISE supports the value of literacy skills that allow for curiosity, creativity, and problem solving. RISE acknowledges the scope of literacy skills are not limited to print material, but includes reading, writing, speaking and listening. RISE believes that reading matters. The ability to read transforms individual lives and impacts communities with the potential for	https://riseliteracyzambia.org/	Unknown	Donation portal; information on how to connect	Unknown	Assuming international based on structure

			positive change. RISE is committed to the strengths of Zambian culture and the importance of Zambian leadership within the organization and on location.					
Wise Zambia	NGO	Zambia	WISE supports empowerment and economic independence for vulnerable children and women in Zambia through educational, economic, and agricultural initiatives.	https://wisezambia.org/	Unknown	Donation portal; Donate options page with 3 ways to give back	Unknown	Assuming international based on structure

During the mapping and landscaping analysis, some useful references for case studies on fundraising strategies for non-profits and those focused on literacy/education were found and can hopefully be useful:

- Room to Read, see page 14 https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/FINAL-Room-to-Read-Case-Study.pdf
- An Investigation of Funding Models that Influence the Sustainability of Selected Non-Profit Organizations in Cape Town, South Africa: https://journals.co.za/doi/epdf/10.10520/ejc-ajpa_v12_n3_a5
- The Evolving Role of 21st Century Education NGOs in South Africa. https://nascee.org.za/resources/volmink-van-der-elst-web.pdf (Some interesting strategic info from page 16 onwards)

LEAP

Mapping of Foundations or Individuals Providing Funding for Capacity Building or Literacy Programs

Name of organization	Location	What they're looking to fund / About the Org	Funding available	Website	Contact	Notes
Wilbur Niso Smith Foundation	London	Support projects improving literacy levels in young people (21 years and under) See stories and novels recognised as a valuable learning resource Provide opportunities for young people who may not otherwise be able to access them We believe development opportunities are more successful when they encourage learning through enjoyment, and consequently place the value of a storybook as equal to that of a textbook. Priority for The Literacy Fund will be given to those making a creative case for their work and those using adventure writing to achieve their aims.	Unclear	https://www.wilbur-niso-smithfoundation.org/index.php/our-work/promoting-literacy	submissions@wilbur-niso-smithfoundation.org	
Africa Publishing Innovation Fund (APIF)	Dubai	Kenya: As African publishers embrace digital content due to schools shifting online, many lack expertise in inclusive publishing practices to meet global accessibility standards. Starting in East Africa's regional publishing hub of Kenya, with plans to scale to 12 African countries, eKitabu will work with publishers to enrich the remote learning of more than nine million students and teachers with accessible digital learning materials.	At least $10k	https://www.apinnovation.fund/en/home.aspx	info@apinnovation.fund	Past project: Kenyan library restoration project Book Bunk was assigned $50,000, and Dubai Cares gave a further $10,000 one-off donation for children's books to stock the library. Book Bunk's mission is to restore the historical McMillan Memorial Library, in Nairobi, working with city authorities to encourage community engagement in libraries. After several years of researching,

		Literacy and reading promotion Indigenous publishing and library collections Publishing industry capacity building Scaling book industry research Mentoring African publishers, in particular women Library restoration and support for rural and remote libraries				planning, lobbying and implementing, the team have transformed the dilapidated buildings and their obsolete, colonial-era book collections into fresh, user-friendly incubators of knowledge, community cohesion, and cultural autonomy.
Elma	SA / Uganda / NYC	Recognizing this, The ELMA Community Grants Program provides grants, mostly in the form of general support, to child-focused community-based organizations in Southern and Eastern Africa. The services provided by grantees in The ELMA Community Grants Program provide for essential needs of children – both physiological (e.g. food, water, clothing, shelter) and safety (e.g. protection, psycho-social support, health) – especially for those in vulnerable circumstances, from children with disabilities to unaccompanied minors crossing country borders. In addition to ELMA's financial investments, certain grantees supported by The ELMA Community Grants Program receive tailored support to assist their learning and capacity in the areas of fundraising, financial management, leadership, monitoring and evaluation, and program development.	Unclear	https://www.elmaphilanthropies.org/elma/community-grants		

Draper Richards Foundation Grant	USA / Kenya / Netherlands	DRK's hope is to support outsized impact through entrepreneurs and enterprises that create a transformational paradigm shift to meaningfully address a pressing societal problem affecting people's lives. Post-pilot, pre-scale organizations. This typically means: —Your program, product or service is already in the market or in the field. —You have early indication that your model is having its intended impact. —Your organization is 3-5 years old (this is not a rule, but a guidepost). DRK Prioritizes: Evidence of focused alignment, systemic social change, data-based decision making. Leaders who are continually learning and iterating and welcome a deep working relationship with DRK for 3 years. Leaders who intimately understand the opportunity and the communities they serve. Leaders committed to advancing justice, equity, diversity, inclusion and belonging for all. Organizations who are designed to realize their impact at scale.	Up to $300,000	https://www.drkfoundation.org/	info@drkfoundation.org	We have an open application process and accept applications year round. Borrowed from our venture capital legacy we find exceptional entrepreneurs, provide them with 3 years of unrestricted capital (totaling $300,000) and provide rigorous on-going support by joining their board of directors for the 3 years and partnering with the leader to help them to build capacity in their organization and scale their impact. For for-profit organizations, we typically make program-related investments with an initial investment of $150,000 and we'll do a subsequent investment of another $150,000 depending on the achievement of certain organizational metrics and milestones. We invite you to learn more about what we fund, our selection process, and to share your idea with us through our online application.
African Capacity Building Foundation	African Union (with support from Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation)	Financing of full-fledged projects, for capacity building interventions spanning over 2-5 years Seed capital as part of the facility for Financing Innovative Capacity Development (FICAD) interventions, for capacity building initiatives to be implemented over a maximum of one year Financing events organized in partnership with ACBF	Variable	https://www.acbf-pact.org/	nairobi@acbf-pact.org (Kenya Office) root@acbf-pact.org (Head Office in Harare)	All applications are to be addressed to the Executive Secretary. ACBF receives project and program proposals from government ministries and departments, private sector and civil society organizations as well as regional institutions and universities. To be eligible for ACBF support, project and program applications must be in line with ACBF's mandate (note the strategic mandate includes

						"leveraging knowledge and learning to increase development effectiveness" as a pillar) and its strategic priorities. Eligible projects and programs go through a rigorous assessment process by a Project Review Committee within the Secretariat before review and approval by the Executive Board of ACBF.

Recommendations on Further Fundraising Models and Strategies

Strategy	Notes	Contact details and next steps
Rally to Read	R2R is a South African initiative, corporate CSR program, started over 20 years ago focused on delivering books to rural and remote South African schools. The operating model is the securing of grant funding from large corporates, whereby each corporate "buys" the right to one geographic rally. 4x4s are then used by private individuals (staff, partners, clients) etc to visit each of the schools, in a curated and safe manner. The key value to each of the participants is the opportunity to go on a "4X4 safari" with other like-minded people, in a safe way that ordinarily would be beyond the reach of those traveling alone or in short convoys. In 2023 the aimed-for fundraising will be R15 m. Logistically, there is much work needed but the long duration of the events and entity bears testimony to its corporate popularity, as well as to the personal value with many returning year on year.	The current operator of the program, Pam Richardson, may be open to discuss a southern african rally from SA to Kenya (or part way). She will be retiring soon, which might also open up an opportunity to explore this. An aside point, for many years she was also a consultant to the Singita Group on their CSR strategies. pamrichardsonconsult@gmail.com
VSLA-linked	In many rural communities, it's only the Village Savings and	

approach	Loan Associations (VSLAs) that provide low cost loans to community members. These are important financial providers of any community, and operate as a monthly savings vehicle for most, while several can loan small amounts of funding from these VSLAs for emergency purposes. These VSLAs are increasingly seen by banks and micro lenders as pools of well-vetted customers; those that have already a track record of borrowing (albeit informally), and present future client opportunities for further microfinance products (small loans, micro insurance, etc). To the extent that KC can aggregate these small scale borrowers (through its partner schools, Lit Mom groups etc), it becomes a valuable partner to lending entities. And, provided the cost of lending is not done in a predatory manner, it plays an important access to finance role for the community. The potential overlap could be significant: KCs interventions likely bring about better financial knowledge and behavior, as well as additional sources of income for its members, and an ability to showcase good debtor behavior and a credit track record. This is valuable to lenders as it saves them the costs to do the very same, and could be a valuable funding-offering to them.	

I. Possible linking with bookstores

Name of Bookstore	Location	Website	Contact Info	Why this store?
McNally Jackson	New York	https://www.mcnallyjackson.com/	info@mcnallyjackson.com	Wide reach in NYC and regularly have partnerships with other organizations (note the McNally Jackson and n+1 collaboration)
Politics and Prose	Washington DC	https://www.politics-prose.com/	marketing@politics-prose.com	Similar to McNally Jackson, P&P is very much a bookstore for the "who's who" of Washington. P&P more so than just about any other store on this list is a place to "see and be seen" especially with their A-lister booksignings etc.. They also put a big emphasis on the "common good" so there seems a good potential for collaboration.
Strand	New York	https://www.strandbo	web@strandbooks.com	Strand is (probably) the largest independent bookstore in NYC with a big presence

		oks.com/		online. Lots of events.
Powells	Portland, Oregon	https://www.powells.com/	partners@powells.com / marketing@powells.com	Largest independent bookstore in the US. Also a big cultural hub for Portland, which is famously social justice minded
Seminary Co-op	Chicago	https://www.semcoop.com/	fiftysev@semcoop.com	Seminary, kind of like Atticus and Literati, is tied to a big name school (the University of Chicago) where collaborations like this would get a lot of exposure. Also a big online presence.
City Lights	San Francisco	https://citylights.com/	staff@citylights.com	Very famous bookstore in SF with a long history of supporting community organizations.
Literati	Ann Arbor, Michigan	https://www.literatibookstore.com/	https://www.literatibookstore.com/contact	Tied to the University of Michigan, social justice minded, lower national profile than some of the other bookstores listed here.
Atticus	New Haven, Connecticut	https://atticusnhv.com/	info@atticusnhv.com	Tied to Yale University, big name exposure, lots of events, seems to be partnership-friendly
Kramers	Washington DC	https://www.kramers.com/	https://www.kramers.com/contact/	Also a big name in DC, very much like Strand. Exposure, partnerships.
Elliott Bay Book Company	Seattle	https://www.elliottbaybook.com/	orders@elliottbaybook.com	Largest bookstore in Seattle, lots of community work.
Women and Children First	Chicago	https://www.womenandchildrenfirst.com/	wcfbooks@gmail.com	This is the most explicitly social-justice oriented bookstore on the list.

II. Possible linking with travel agents

Name of Agency	Website	Contact Information	Why this agency?
Safari Collection	https://www.thesafaricollection.com/	info@thesafaricollection.com	High price point, headquartered in Kenya, "footprint" focused, broadly international audience
And Beyond	https://www.andbeyond.com/destinations/africa/kenya/	media@andbeyond.com / trade.enquiry@andbeyond.com	Presence in Kenya and several other countries, began in SA (head office in Joburg), sales offices around the world, uses an "impact model"
Luxury Safari Co.	https://www.theluxurysafaricompany.com/kenya/kenya-safaris	info@theluxurysafaricompany.com	"Committed to responsible tourism", primarily UK clientele

Abercrombie & Kent	https://www.abercrombiekent.com/travel-destinations/africa-safari/kenya / https://www.akphilanthropy.org/	https://www.akphilanthropy.org/contact/	Presence in Kenya, huge press operation (CNN feature, e.g.), and a robust in-house philanthropy outfit
Finch Hattons	https://finchhattons.com/	info@finchhattons.com	Interestingly there is an East African rate and an International rate, featured in Travel & Leisure
Loisaba Conservancy	https://loisaba.com/	enquiries@loisaba.com	Conservation and social justice minded (on paper)
Ol Jogi	https://oljogi.org/#/home	https://oljogi.org/contact/	Very Kenya conservation focused, has relationships with local communities

Takeaways and Recommendations

- KC has successfully established itself as a credible on the ground partner for literacy development in Kenya. Its US and local boards showcase both its local leadership, as well as give comfort to international donors. Through excellent leadership the entity can now begin to expand its fundraising thinking to move beyond its core, base fundraising initiatives and strategies. To this end, the mapping and analysis of similar entities, in combination with the landscaping of possible donors focused on capacity building and literacy training, will hopefully provide the KC team with source data for their next fundraising engagement. It is highly recommended that a fundraising assistant be brought on to help KC leadership in this regard.

- Furthermore, expanding the funding net to include long term strategic partnerships will also help diversify funding avenues, and potentially bring about a further predictable source of funding. The proposals around a link to a Safari company, as well as to a book retailer could open up not only a new audience for exposure, but ideally another channel for long term donations and grant funding.

- Finally, donor funding, whether individual or corporate, is evolving at a fast pace with renewed focus on "bang for buck". Prospective donors are increasingly looking for grant projects that have some form of self-sustaining revenue generation (it need not cover 100% of grants raised), as well as long term sustainability plans. A key parallel aspect (and perhaps one that can outweigh a purely grant receiving entity in the absence of any logicalta revenue generation) is the emerging sophistication of donor requirements around impact and measurement. There are continuing trends that seek to move away from an input and even output based Monitoring and Evaluation lens, gradually focusing more on impact and outcomes modalities. Here KCs engagement with LEAP to identify a robust impact evaluation methodology and evidence base is critical. Apart from internal assessment and review, it provides an important component to the impact narrative for further fundraising and partnership building. At the very least a robust and objective illustration of direct and causal impact on kids' learning abilities and agency (for example) answers directly the donor question of "what did my money achieve". Furthermore, if there are further linkages to be explored in the future, for example with VSLA and micro-finance entities, whereby the outcomes of the KC interventions are used to showcase and bolster debtor outcomes, the evidence base will be used as a measure of KC value in the lending partnership and provide the basis against which KC could be funded/remunerated.

Deliverable 4

Introduction

Kenya Connect has, over the years, built robust connections with teachers, schools, parents, while also gradually increasing their range of activities. At this time, it is crucial for them to maintain a strategic focus on demonstrated evidence of impact. This ensures that the most effective programs are expanded, and the relationships between programs and their impacts take center stage in scaling decisions. Consequently, both donors and stakeholders (beneficiaries) should be integral to this strategy.
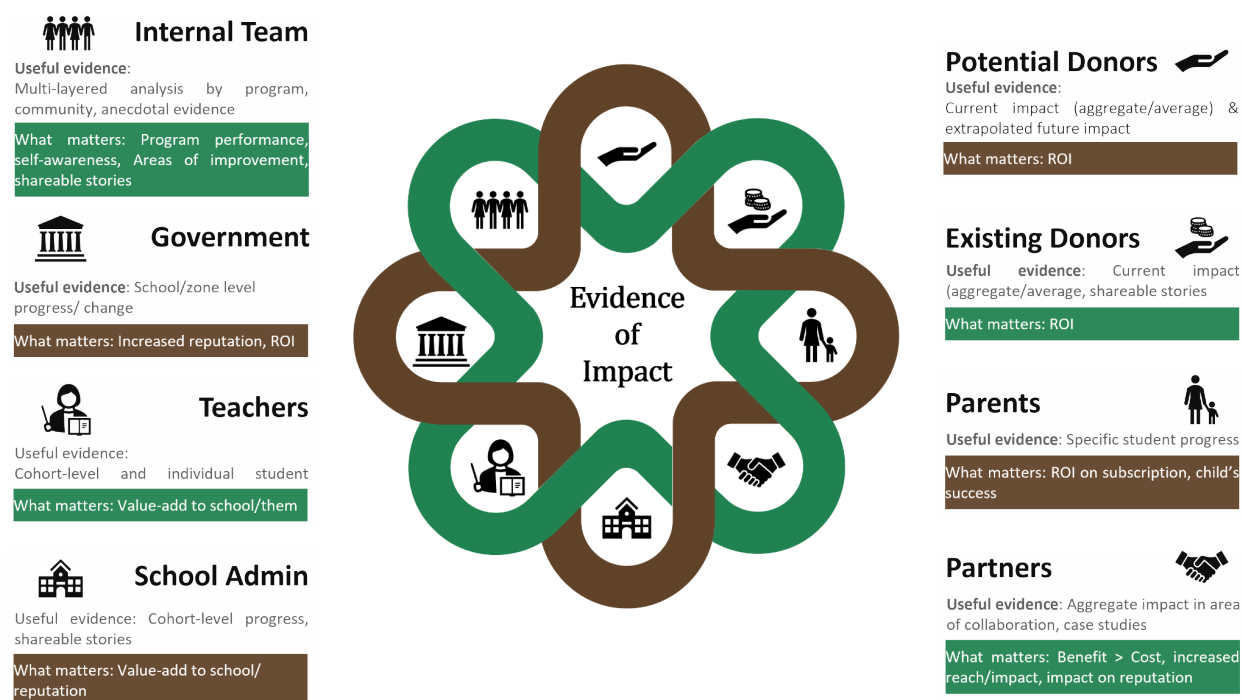
Making the evidence work

Internal Team
Useful evidence: Multi-layered analysis by program, community, anecdotal evidence
What matters: Program performance, self-awareness, Areas of improvement, shareable stories

Government
Useful evidence: School/zone level progress/ change
What matters: Increased reputation, ROI

Teachers
Useful evidence: Cohort-level and individual student
What matters: Value-add to school/them

School Admin
Useful evidence: Cohort-level progress, shareable stories
What matters: Value-add to school/ reputation

Potential Donors
Useful evidence: Current impact (aggregate/average) & extrapolated future impact
What matters: ROI

Existing Donors
Useful evidence: Current impact (aggregate/average, shareable stories
What matters: ROI

Parents
Useful evidence: Specific student progress
What matters: ROI on subscription, child's success

Partners
Useful evidence: Aggregate impact in area of collaboration, case studies
What matters: Benefit > Cost, increased reach/impact, impact on reputation

Figure 4. Representation of how and what impact data can be useful for Kenya Connect's current & future stakeholders.

Figure 4 outlines the various stakeholders who would benefit from the evidence generated and proposed in this report. We envision that having a strong evidence base to understand and explain the work of the various KC programs would be communicated in different ways to a

wide range of stakeholders. For example, having evidence of the causal impacts of the programs and their potential return on investment (ROI) would be very useful in fundraising efforts and to inform investments in similar programs

Being able to share back with program participants – including parents, teachers, partners and school administrators – would allow for buy-in of the KC programs when expanding to new communities and deepening partnerships in existing communities. Sharing evidence with government bodies can increase the reputation of KC and potentially support policy-practice partnerships in future efforts to scale up programs in new communities. And finally, the process of data and evidence generation can be used to increase the effectiveness and inform quality improvement efforts for KC's internal teams, leading to increased self-awareness of program benefits, but also shed light on areas in need of improvement that can inform continual refinement and development of the program.

Acknowledgments