



*Celebrating 100
organisations in
our community*



Annual Report
2022-2023





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About Global Schools Forum

**GSF is a catalytic community,
an innovation accelerator,
and a partnership builder.**

Our reach extends to 100 non-state education organisations improving educational outcomes for 18 million children in over 60 countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America through over 200,000 schools and centres. Collectively, we work to systemically improve education for underserved children at scale in low- and middle-income countries so that all children can realize their full potential through safe access to quality education.



Reflections from the CEO



AASHTI ZAIDI HAI

FOUNDER AND CEO,
GLOBAL SCHOOLS FORUM

Dear Friend of GSF,

We established Global Schools Forum with a strong belief that the collective energy, innovation and impact of our vibrant community could have a systemic and transformational impact on improving safe access to quality education for all children. In 2022-23, the team and I are elated to celebrate growing this community to one hundred organisations who are transforming education outcomes for over 18 million children in over 60 countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America through over 200,000 schools and centres.

This milestone is one that the GSF team celebrates together with the organisations in our community, our generous funders, and our partners – all of whom have contributed meaningfully to shaping our strategy, providing us with generous insights and guidance, and engaging with our programmes.

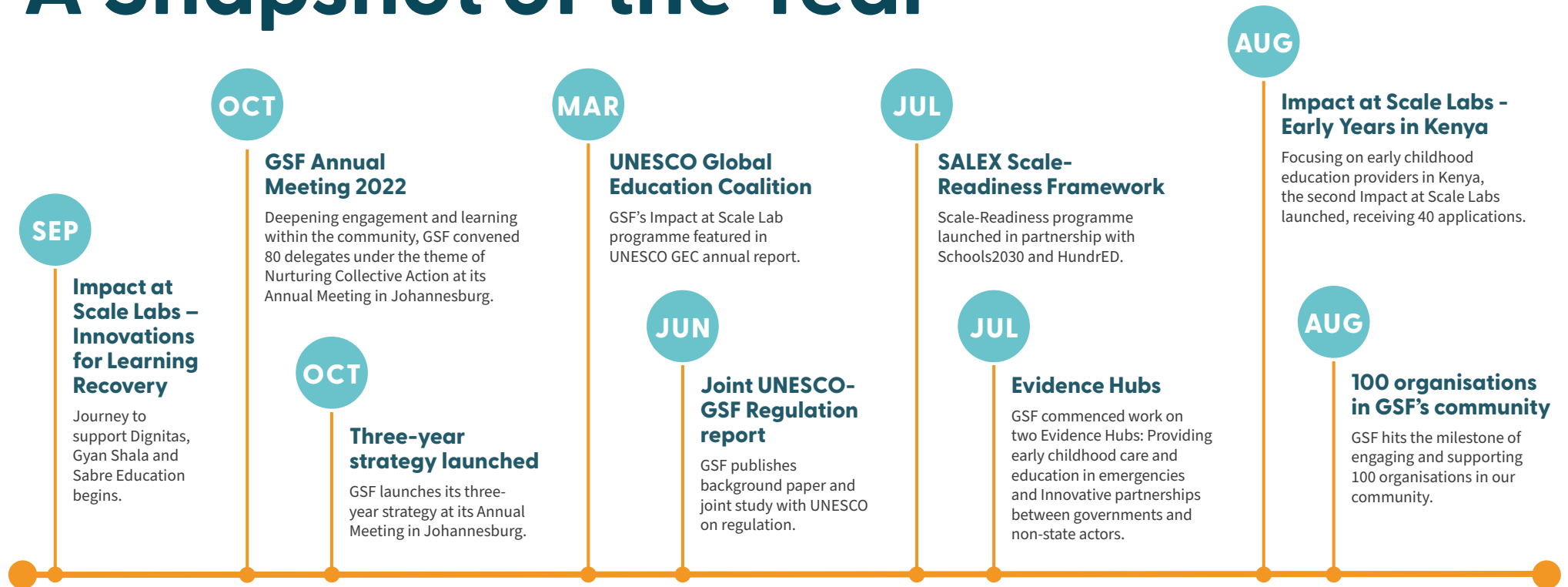
It was a momentous year for us in other ways as well: We launched and delivered on the first year of our three-year strategy, which has seen us significantly expand our team and launch new programmes. It was the first year of our Impact at Scale Labs, where we worked closely with and supported a cohort of three organisations with funding and coaching to take promising innovations to scale. We meaningfully engaged with our community through our Annual Meeting in Johannesburg and through several Communities of Practice, most notably in Foundational Learning. We partnered with UNESCO on a joint study to better understand regulation of non-state actors and launched two Evidence Hubs for practitioners – one on government partnerships with non-state actors, and another on delivering Early Childhood Education in emergency settings.

In 2023-24, we will build on this momentum to launch a second Impact at Scale Lab in Kenya where we will work with a cohort of locally-led organisations to support their work in Early Childhood Education and Development; we will begin designing a third Impact at Scale Lab; we will bring our community and partners together in Ghana for our Annual Meeting; design and lead a study tour on secondary education; we will complete the design and pilot for the Finance for Education Fund; and we will begin working with local partners to build collective engagement in education policy and programming through our All Hands on Deck toolkit and materials.

I invite you to read more about these programmes in the pages to follow - what I hope stays with you is our commitment to systems change, to evidence building and knowledge sharing, to working in partnership rather than in silos, and to responding to emerging needs from, and in lockstep with our community.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Aashti', written in a cursive style.

A Snapshot of the Year



Out and About with Global Schools Forum

“A standout moment from the past year was attending the workshop on scaling educational organisations at the Skoll World Forum. It provided us with a platform to exchange ideas, learn from experts, and explore new avenues for growth and development. Learn to Play is truly grateful for the opportunities and support we’ve received as a part of the GSF community.”

PRIYANKA HANDA RAM
FOUNDER & CHIEF ENERGY OFFICER, LEARN TO PLAY

Transforming Education Summit 

New York City, USA **Sep 22**

GSF hosts a breakfast roundtable with invited stakeholders to discuss the role of non-state actors in transforming education for the Sustainable Development Goals.

Skoll World Forum 

Oxford, UK **Apr 23**

Our Interactive workshop in Oxford on the margins of the Skoll World Forum convened education entrepreneurs and funders to discuss scaling impact in education.

PHINMA Policy Forum 


Manilla, Philippines **Jan 23**

GSF delivers keynote speech at the fifth annual PHINMA Policy Forum, stressing the importance of access to foundational education and how private and public sectors can work together.

CIES 2023 

Washington DC, USA **Mar 23**

GSF curated a panel discussion with IDP Foundation, Education Finance Network and UNESCO Global Education Monitoring Report at CIES in Washington DC on ‘Building more inclusive education systems through public-private collaboration’.

Schools2030 

Porto, Portugal **Jun 23**

GSF’s shared its approach to innovation at the Scaling Holistic Learning Innovations workshop and met GSF community and partners to discuss and share ideas on building partnerships for systems change.

UNESCO Global Education Coalition Annual Meeting 


Paris, France **Mar 23**

Building relationships with key strategic partners, GSF attended the third annual UNESCO Global Education Coalition (GEC) meeting.

Hilton Foundation Refugee Grantee Partners Convening 

Kampala, Uganda **Jul 23**

The 3-day event saw a gathering of The Foundation’s regional partners working to support refugees in Uganda and Ethiopia, especially in the areas of early childhood education and livelihoods.

USAID Catalyze EduFinance Learning Event 

Nairobi, Kenya **Apr 23**

GSF participated in a panel discussion as part of USAID CATALYZE in Nairobi, Kenya. USAID CATALYZE will mobilize \$2 billion in blended finance over eight years.

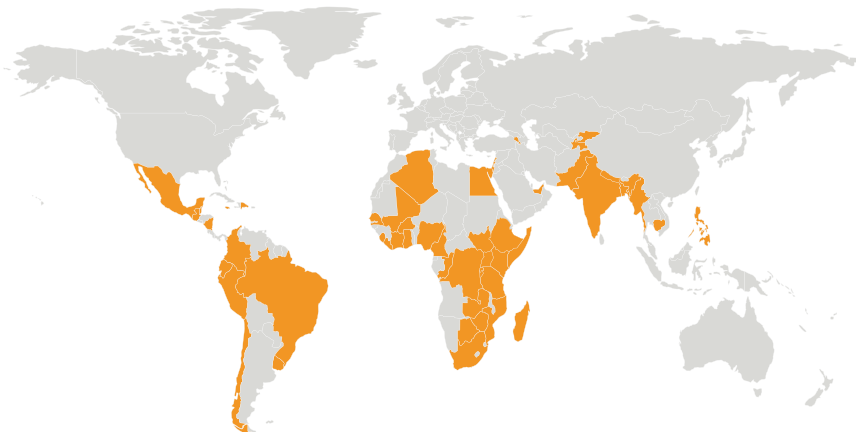
Our Community

GSF's community now extends to 100 organisations worldwide. From Colombia to Kenya, Liberia to Bangladesh, our community now reaches over 200,000 schools and centres impacting 18 million children in over 60 countries.

-  **100**
ORGANISATIONS
-  **18,464,989**
CHILDREN
-  **208,213**
SCHOOLS
-  **60** COUNTRIES

"GSF has recently announced their biggest milestone to date which stated that they are impacting more than 18 million children globally. With this reach of not only 18 million children but 18 million families, many lives are improving. I am so proud and impressed by what the GSF team has accomplished."

STACEY BREWER
GSF BOARD MEMBER AND FOUNDER,
SPARK SCHOOLS



OPERATING MODEL



29%
For profit

71%
Not for profit

TYPE OF ORGANISATION



51
Network of Schools or
ECD Centres

9
Standalone
schools or centres

40
Education Support
Organisations

■ **Network of schools or ECD centres and stand-alone schools** providing education directly to low-income communities. Typically, 10 to 50 schools in a regional network; the largest has 27,000.

■ **Education support organisations**, providing direct support to schools, such as school leadership training or financial tools. Education support organisations typically work with 100 to a few thousand schools.

REGION



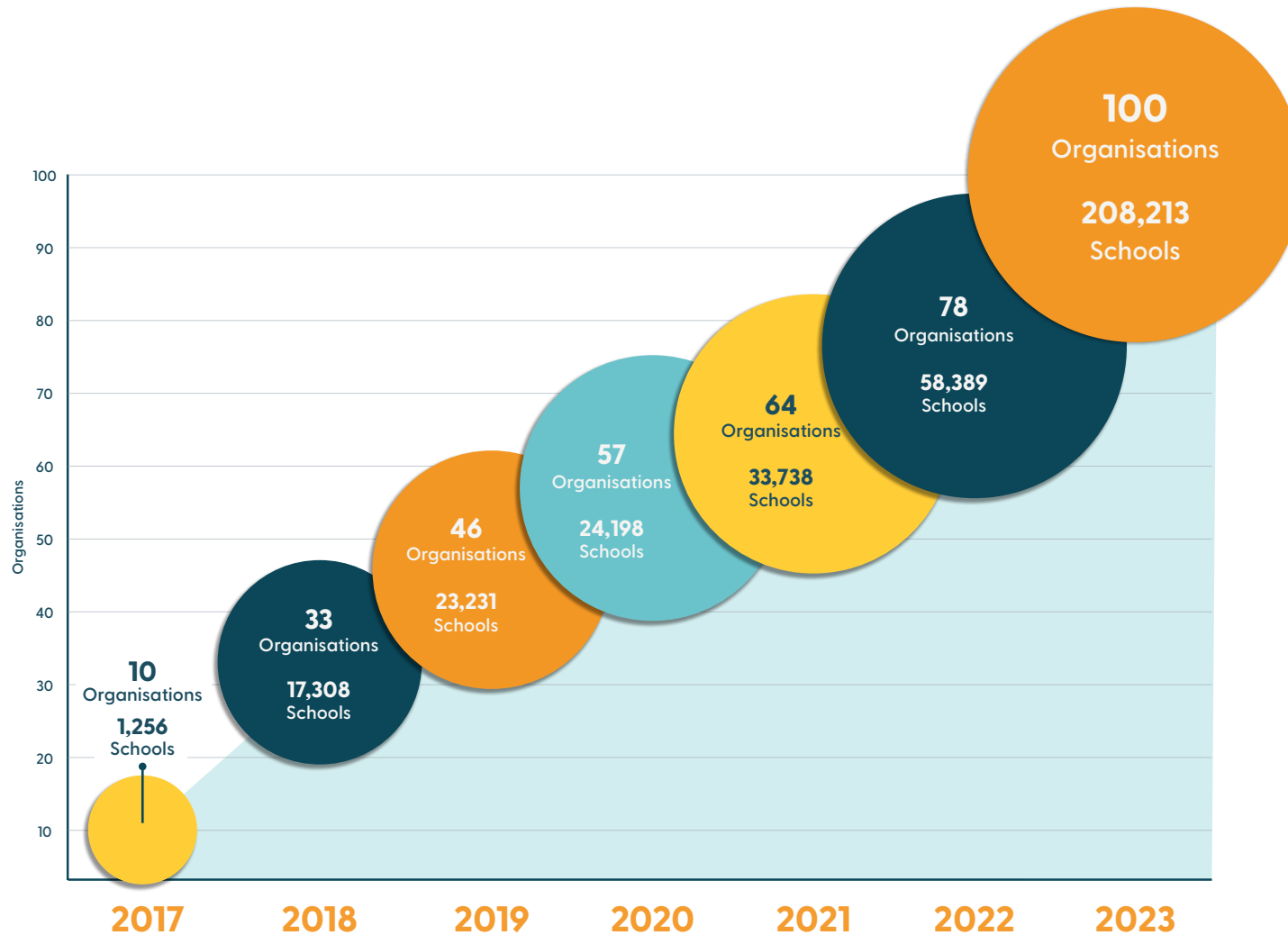
49%
Africa

9%
Latin America

25%
South and
South East Asia

17%
Multi-region

Our Community



“GSF has done an impressive job growing its membership whilst maintaining its unique sense of camaraderie. The community is more diverse than ever and PEAS has learned a lot from inspiring new members this year.”

LAURA BROWN CEO, PEAS

66%

of organisations in the GSF community strongly agreed that the GSF community embodies the values of openness, sharing and collaboration.

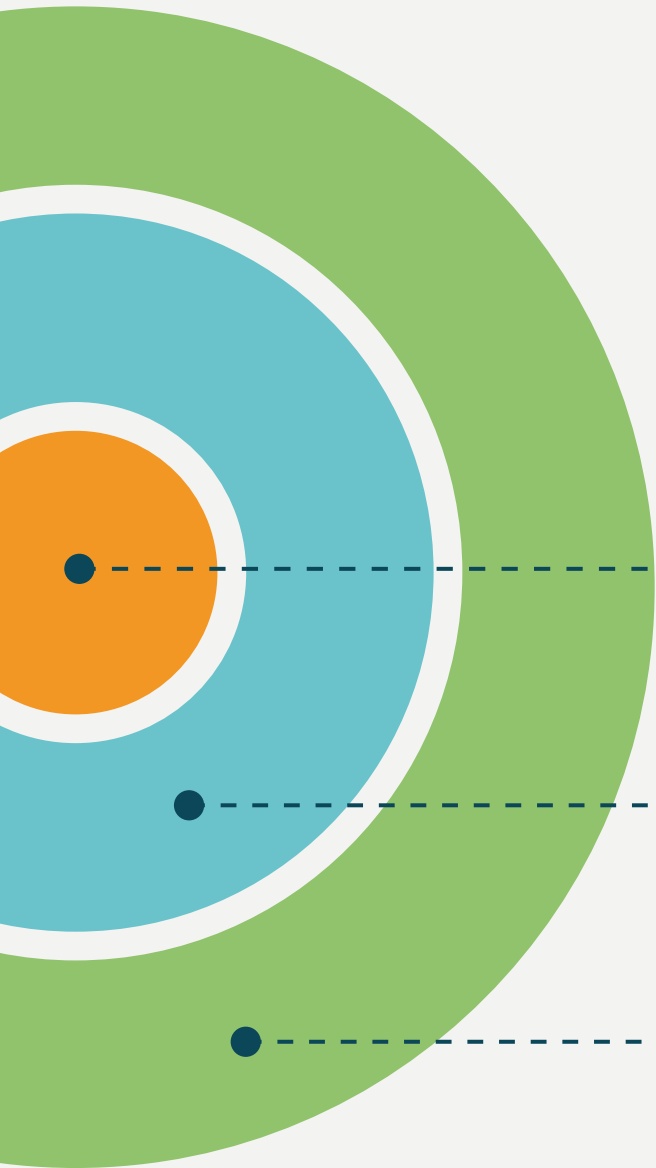
GSF COMMUNITY SURVEY
SEPT 2023

70

GSF received an overall Net Promoter Score of 70 which is considered “very good”.

GSF COMMUNITY SURVEY
SEPT 2023

*Net promoter score (NPS) is a market research metric that is based on a single survey question asking respondents to rate the likelihood that they would recommend a company, product, or a service to a friend or colleague. The score varies from -100 to +100 and generally a score of 60 and above is generally a very good NPS in any industry.



Our Work

Global Schools Forum has three Strategic Priorities:

1.

Strengthen and grow a global learning community

2.

To test promising solutions and diffuse evidence

3.

Partner strategically to shape policy and scale solutions



OUR WORK

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

To strengthen and grow a global learning community

Strengthen and grow the community

Nurture leadership, talent and diversity to strengthen our community and grow a mission-aligned and globally representative community.

Deepen engagement and learning within the community

Deepen engagement with and between the community via formal and informal connections, communities of practice and networking opportunities.

Informed by our Learning Framework, GSF creates and curates a vibrant programme of activities to drive peer learning within the community through convenings, and Communities of Practice; develops and disseminates practitioner-ready playbooks and resources; supports organisations to strengthen their leadership teams; and provides opportunity to make connections within GSF’s community and to funders, researchers, technical experts, and policy makers.

Annual Meeting

A cornerstone of our learning programme is the GSF Annual Meeting, bringing together a diverse representation of GSF’s community, funders, investors, policy makers, and other stakeholders. In October 2022, the Annual Meeting was held in Johannesburg under the theme of Nurturing Collective Action. GSF’s next Annual Meeting is planned for Accra, Ghana in February 2024 and will again provide a rich opportunity for organisations in our diverse community to engage and collaborate.

[READ MORE](#)

100% of survey respondents agreed the Annual Meeting was very useful, providing opportunities to build and deepen their relationships and networks with peers, and that they were able to learn from other participants.

ANNUAL MEETING FEEDBACK SURVEY OCT 2022

“To be part of a community of people working across the education space has been an enormous support, both as a tool to network through, and a community to drive thought and discussion on how we can innovate, grow, and scale our impact. The GSF team have been incredible thought partners and connectors to other people with relevant knowledge, whenever we have asked for it!”

ROB ALHADEFF
CEO AND CO-FOUNDER, JACKFRUIT FINANCE



OUR WORK

1. 2. 3.

To strengthen and grow a global learning community

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Virtual Learning Offers

Based on needs identified by the community, and leveraging the collective expertise of the community, the GSF team delivers a number of virtual learning offers through thematic Communities of Practice (CoP) and Ask the Expert sessions. In 2022-23, 8 organisations participated in a CoP on Secondary Education, specifically focused on building skills and agency in young people to help them succeed in tertiary education or work. The collaboration yielded a powerful [practice brief](#) and a [podcast series](#).

Community of Practice on Foundational Learning

A second Community of Practice on Foundational Learning engaged close to twenty organisations to share approaches, engage collaboratively and problem-solve, and facilitate peer learning around this critical issue. Each CoP session has addressed key challenges and priority areas for implementing organisations such as: FLN in the context of multi-grade classrooms, local language content and curriculum for FLN, teacher training and resources for teachers, assessments to evaluate learning, and remediation programmes for learners.

[READ MORE](#)



74%

of participants in the Communities of Practice said they would implement learnings from the sessions in their organisations.

GSF COMMUNITY SURVEY
SEPT 2023

“Participating in the GSF CoP enabled me and other members of our team to listen to other organisations and practitioners and discuss ideas with them, as well as clarify our own explanations and thinking about what we do when it was our turn to share. Working through challenges and solutions with other people in similar contexts is a powerful way to learn and develop and has prompted a range of adjustments and inclusions into our own practice.”

MIRIAM MASON-SESAY, PHD
COUNTRY DIRECTOR, EDUCAID SIERRA LEONE

OUR WORK

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

To strengthen and grow a global learning community

Strengthen and grow the community

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Community Connection

Another integral component to strengthening our global learning community is providing formal and informal opportunities for the GSF community to connect with one another and with a wider network of partners in the education ecosystem. Member Spotlights give the community a safe space to share their work with a broader set of education practitioners and identify meaningful ways to partner and collaborate. Beyond these formal sessions, in 2022-23, the team facilitated close to 70 personalized connections and introductions and responded to nearly 50 specific requests for support, providing a rich platform to connect, grow and expand social networks.

[READ MORE](#)

“One of the best things about being a part of the GSF community is to learn about what’s happening around the world. I love how each session is centered around a particular focus area. You also get a chance to present your own work and get feedback from experts. It’s inspiring to see and learn from other edtech practitioners who are creating innovative solutions to tackle some of the biggest challenges in education. I’m extremely grateful to be a part of this community.”

SABEENA ABBASI
CHIEF DIGITAL LEARNING OFFICER,
TALEEMABAD

“GSF has helped us develop meaningful connections with a diverse & global network of practitioners, some of which have developed into beautiful collaborative relationships. Presenting our work at GSF forums & briefs has given us more clarity & conviction in presenting our work and increased the visibility of the work we do.”

LAXMI NAIR
FOUNDATIONAL LEARNING
DESIGN CONSULTANT, KIZAZI

96%

agreed that their organisation benefitted from being in the GSF community as a network of peers.

GSF COMMUNITY SURVEY
SEPT 2023

60%

of organisations in the GSF community strongly agreed that GSF enables connections and collaborations across the organisations in its community.

GSF COMMUNITY SURVEY
SEPT 2023



OUR WORK

1. **2.** 3.

To test promising solutions and diffuse evidence

Test promising solutions with potential to scale

Support the testing of promising solutions with potential to scale by providing flexible funding and expert coaching.

Generate and diffuse evidence and best practice

Distill best practices from practitioners and generate evidence on ‘what works’ in education and what makes organisations more effective.

Harnessing the innovation, agility and resilience of the Global Schools Forum community, our work in this area contributes to education systems change by supporting the scaling of impactful solutions and strengthening the evidence base on what works to improve education quality.

Impact at Scale Lab - Innovations for Learning Recovery

The Impact at Scale Labs supports promising solutions with potential to scale with expert coaching and funding. We distill best practices from practitioners and generate evidence on ‘what works’ in education. Our first Lab focuses on supporting organisations with solutions that improve learning recovery post COVID-19. The first cohort, including Dignitas, Gyan Shala and Sabre Education, are receiving a solid foundation for scale including intensive support, funding, a focus on evidence, and relationships for scale.

[READ MORE](#)

“The support received has been essential not only to the Impact at Scale Labs project but also to the wider scope of work that Dignitas engages in. Critical successes include the fact we have successfully rolled out the A/B test in two counties, and we currently have 968 school leaders being onboarded.”

CLAUDE KANDEM
GRANTS & PARTNERSHIP
MANAGER, DIGNITAS

“The experimental nature of the Lab is really useful and encourages iterative testing and continuous learning which will bring Sabre to a point where we are confident enough with our private school offering to take it to scale. The project has come at the right time for Sabre – we are in the first months of planning our scaling work with low-fee private schools.”

MICHAEL KLUTSE
SENIOR LEARNING MANAGER, SABRE
EDUCATION

83%

of the Impact at Scale Labs participants strongly agreed that the tools provided are useful to advance their scale-up strategy.

**IMPACT AT SCALE LABS
SURVEY**
Q1 AND Q2 2023

OUR WORK

1. **2.** 3.

To test promising solutions and diffuse evidence

Test promising solutions with potential to scale

Support the testing of promising solutions with potential to scale by providing flexible funding and expert coaching.

Generate and diffuse evidence and best practice

Distill best practices from practitioners and generate evidence on 'what works' in education and what makes organisations more effective.

Scale-Readiness Framework

GSF, in partnership with Schools2030 and HundrED, was selected by the School Action Learning Exchange (SALEX) to develop and test a "Scale-Readiness" framework for education. The framework is intended for use by the broader community of practitioners, implementors and facilitating organisations within and beyond the SALEX network to navigate the complex journey of scaling impact.

Early Childhood Education and Development (ECED) in Emergencies Evidence Hub

The evidence hub is building practical and contextual evidence to support grassroots organisations working in emergencies to improve their ECED services. The Hub taps into the wealth of information about innovative programmes, solutions, and partnerships that exist within the GSF community as well as in the broader ecosystem. Along with pilot-based approaches, GSF will also facilitate Communities of Practice to promote the exchange of shared learnings, practices, and resources amongst ECED practitioners and to foster connections.

[READ MORE](#)

Impact at Scale Lab - Early Years in Kenya

The second lab will support promising, locally led organisations working to improve development and learning outcomes for children aged 0-6 years in Kenya. GSF will partner with childcare and early childhood education and development (ECED) organisations in Kenya who have a bold and definitive vision for scale and are looking to build demonstrable models that can be replicated nationally and regionally. The programme received 40 applicants, and the finalists are due to receive financial support alongside intensive coaching to make their scaling action plans a reality.

[READ MORE](#)

92%

of organisations in the GSF community are developing educational innovations.

GSF COMMUNITY SURVEY SEPT 2023



OUR WORK

1. 2. **3.**

To partner strategically and scale solutions

Shape policy

Engage in, and shape, global policy processes and discussions on how non-state capacity can be harnessed to improve education outcomes equitably.

Foster partnerships for scale

Build relationships with key strategic partners, including funders and policy makers, and amongst the community to support the scaling of promising solutions.

We engage strategically with global and local policy makers and build partnerships between members and key stakeholders to contribute meaningfully to strengthened education systems. By engaging with local actors right from the outset, this area of work includes the co-creation of practitioner-ready tools and policy guidance to build more responsive, quality-focused, and accountable education systems.

All Hands-on Deck initiative

The All Hands-on Deck initiative calls for affirmative action from all education stakeholders so that governments can benefit from the experiences and expertise of the affordable non state sector, through their voice in policy development, implementation, and monitoring. After mapping initiatives globally that have worked to foster systemic change through improved engagement and collaboration, a set of practitioner-ready tools have been developed including an Action Toolkit, Case Studies and Workshop materials to provide an invaluable resource to support better collaboration between the affordable non-state sector and governments globally.

[READ MORE](#)

“The Global Schools Forum has emerged as a leading player in the global conversation about quality education for all, shedding light on the pivotal role that all non-state actors play in this endeavor. Furthermore, GSF has evolved into a complete ecosystem where organizations from all five continents can connect, collaborate, innovate, and learn from one another, promoting collective learning and expediting impactful innovations on a large scale.

PABLO JARAMILLO QUINTERO
GSF BOARD MEMBER AND CEO, ALIANZA EDUCATIVA

64%

agreed or strongly agreed that GSF helped their organisations to establish new partnerships.

GSF COMMUNITY SURVEY
SEPT 2023



OUR WORK

1. 2. **3.**

To partner strategically and scale solutions

Shape policy

Engage in, and shape, global policy processes and discussions on how non-state capacity can be harnessed to improve education outcomes equitably.

Foster partnerships for scale

Build relationships with key strategic partners, including funders and policy makers, and amongst the community to support the scaling of promising solutions.

Private School Associations

A precursor to the All Hands on Deck initiative, GSF conducted a pilot programme with Private School Associations (PSAs) as a means of engaging with local affordable non-state actors. Affordable non-state schools represent a significant segment of non-state education provision in low- and middle-income countries and can play a key role in providing education to underserved children. To find out more about these organisations and how to engage them, we conducted a landscape analysis of sixty PSAs across nineteen countries. Overall, this engagement with PSAs highlights, as in so many other settings, the importance and value of engaging local actors: they allow for better-informed work at both a country and international level.

[READ MORE](#)

Finance For Education

In partnership with Kaizenvest, IDP Foundation, and Varthana, GSF is designing a blended finance fund – the Global Finance for Education Fund. This \$65M facility, comprised of a \$50M investment fund and a \$15M technical assistance fund will focus on: securing flexible and affordable capital for financial institutions targeting underserved education providers; using innovative financing tools such as impact-linked loans issued by financial institutions to drive impact on learning outcomes for the most marginalized families; building evidence and lesson sharing across its portfolio; and animating a community of practice on what works to increase financial inclusion and impact for low-fee education providers.

40%

of organisations in the GSF community strongly agreed GSF has increased the visibility of non-state education providers in the global education policy and planning frameworks.

GSF COMMUNITY SURVEY
SEPT 2023



OUR WORK

1. 2. **3.**

To partner strategically and scale solutions

Shape policy

Engage in, and shape, global policy processes and discussions on how non-state capacity can be harnessed to improve education outcomes equitably.

Foster partnerships for scale

Build relationships with key strategic partners, including funders and policy makers, and amongst the community to support the scaling of promising solutions.

Government – Non-State Partnerships Evidence Hub

The hub will develop and amplify engaging multi-media materials, tools and resources to equip policymakers and non-state education providers to understand the breadth of possible partnership models, with the aim of ultimately seeding more innovative and impactful partnerships. By disseminating the toolkits and resources through a diverse range of channels such as roundtables, workshops, conferences, social media - GSF seeks to identify areas for continued collaboration that can be incorporated within existing government structures and policies.

Joint UNESCO-GSF Regulation Report

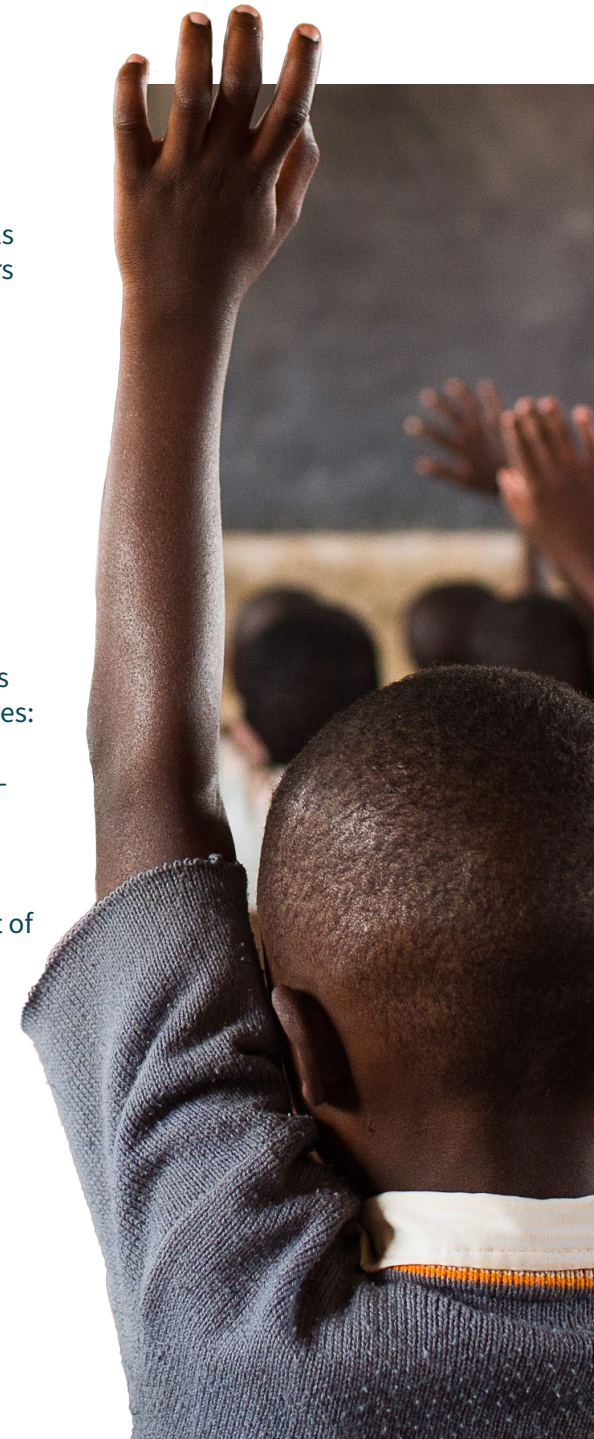
GSF's Regulating non-state education report explored the perspectives of non-state actors who serve low-income students across five countries: Colombia, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, and Uganda. They include low-fee private schools, school networks, and schools operating within public-private partnerships. This study constitutes a background paper for a wider collaboration between GSF and UNESCO's Education Policy Section. In this wider project, insights from school operators are combined with government official perspectives to produce a joint set of findings and implications.

[READ MORE](#)

"This is an important study and we in Lagos State plan to study the recommendations and develop appropriate strategies to engage with our large number of non-state education providers."

FOLASADE ADEFISAYO

HONOURABLE COMMISSIONER FOR EDUCATION (FORMER), LAGOS STATE, NIGERIA, ON GSF'S BACKGROUND PAPER TO THE JOINT UNESCO REPORT.



Our supporters

GSF's work is supported by mission aligned funders and philanthropic institutions. This ongoing support enables the organization to deliver programmes that contribute to improved education outcomes for marginalised children in low-and-middle-income countries around the world.

If you share our vision and would like to support our future work, we would be delighted to speak with you. Please email aashti.zaidi@globalschoolsforum.org

"Right from its founding, we have been a proud supporter of Global School Forum's work to improve education outcomes at scale for children in low-and middle-income countries. The challenges facing us in global education are complex and wide-ranging and we know that dynamic and vibrant communities like GSF provide a vital space for learning, testing and scaling new ideas, building evidence of what works, and engaging with multiple stakeholders so we can work collectively and collaboratively towards sustainable systems change. We look forward to seeing what the next chapter brings, but till then congratulations to the GSF team for this important milestone!"

MAYA ZISWILER CEO, UBS OPTIMUS FOUNDATION

"As a longstanding supporter of Global Schools Forum, we are delighted to congratulate you on the milestone of reaching 100 organisations – many of whom are providing safe access to quality education for some of the world's most vulnerable populations. At Vitol Foundation we stand behind GSF's efforts to build a truly catalytic and collaborative community, based on shared learning, partnership and respect for the importance of local leadership and effective solutions. We have been able to witness at close quarters how GSF's dynamic network can make a real contribution to achieving the SDGs and enable all children to reach their full potential through education, wherever they live and whatever their circumstances."

TITISE KODE HEAD OF EDUCATION, VITOL FOUNDATION

BHP | **Foundation**

CONRAD N.
Hilton
FOUNDATION

 **IDP Foundation, Inc.**
INNOVATION · DEVELOPMENT · PROGRESS

 **JACOBS**
FOUNDATION
Our Promise to Youth

SDG Impact >>>
SDG Finance >>
SDG Initiative >

UBS Optimus
Foundation |  **UBS**

 **Vitol** Foundation




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