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## The Partnership to Strengthen Innovation and Practice in Secondary Education (PSIPSE): 2016 Monitoring Results

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**MATHEMATICA**  
Policy Research

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## **ABOUT THE PSIPSE**

The Partnership to Strengthen Innovation and Practice in Secondary Education (PSIPSE) is a collaborative between Dubai Cares, Echidna Giving, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Mastercard Foundation, and an anonymous donor. Formed in 2012, the PSIPSE engages in strategic grant-making and partnership-building to foster innovation, generate learning on problems and solutions, and facilitate systemic change in secondary education. Thus far, the PSIPSE has awarded grants and supported work in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), India, Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda.

## **ABOUT MATHEMATICA POLICY RESEARCH**

Mathematica Policy Research is a non-partisan research organization dedicated to improving public well-being. As the PSIPSE's monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) partner, Mathematica engages in a variety of research and strategic learning activities to support the initiative's mission of catalyzing change in secondary education. Thus far, Mathematica has conducted a review of literature on secondary education, assessed the secondary education context in focus countries, developed a comprehensive MEL framework for the initiative, and engaged in a portfolio-wide monitoring effort.

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## Document Orientation and Purpose

**This is a key moment in time to assess the PSIPSE's progress.**

- **Secondary education challenges are just as pressing today** as they were five years ago when the PSIPSE donors first joined forces. These challenges – which include educational access, quality, and relevance – must be addressed to meet the needs of 21<sup>st</sup> century economies and reap the potential benefits arising from working-age population growth in Sub-Saharan Africa.
- Encouragingly, more and more **governments in developing countries are beginning to take notice** and take action – making it important for the PSIPSE to pursue strategic and data-driven calibrations to its approach going forward.
- Three rounds of grant-making and five years of project implementation create a good opportunity to **take stock of progress and consider how to adjust the PSIPSE approach** – whether it is to better meet the needs of grantees or to expand the initiative's overall influence on the secondary education agenda of target countries.











**To facilitate evidence-based decision-making, the PSIPSE commissioned Mathematica to undertake an initiative-wide monitoring effort.**

This document, which summarizes results of 2016 monitoring, seeks to:

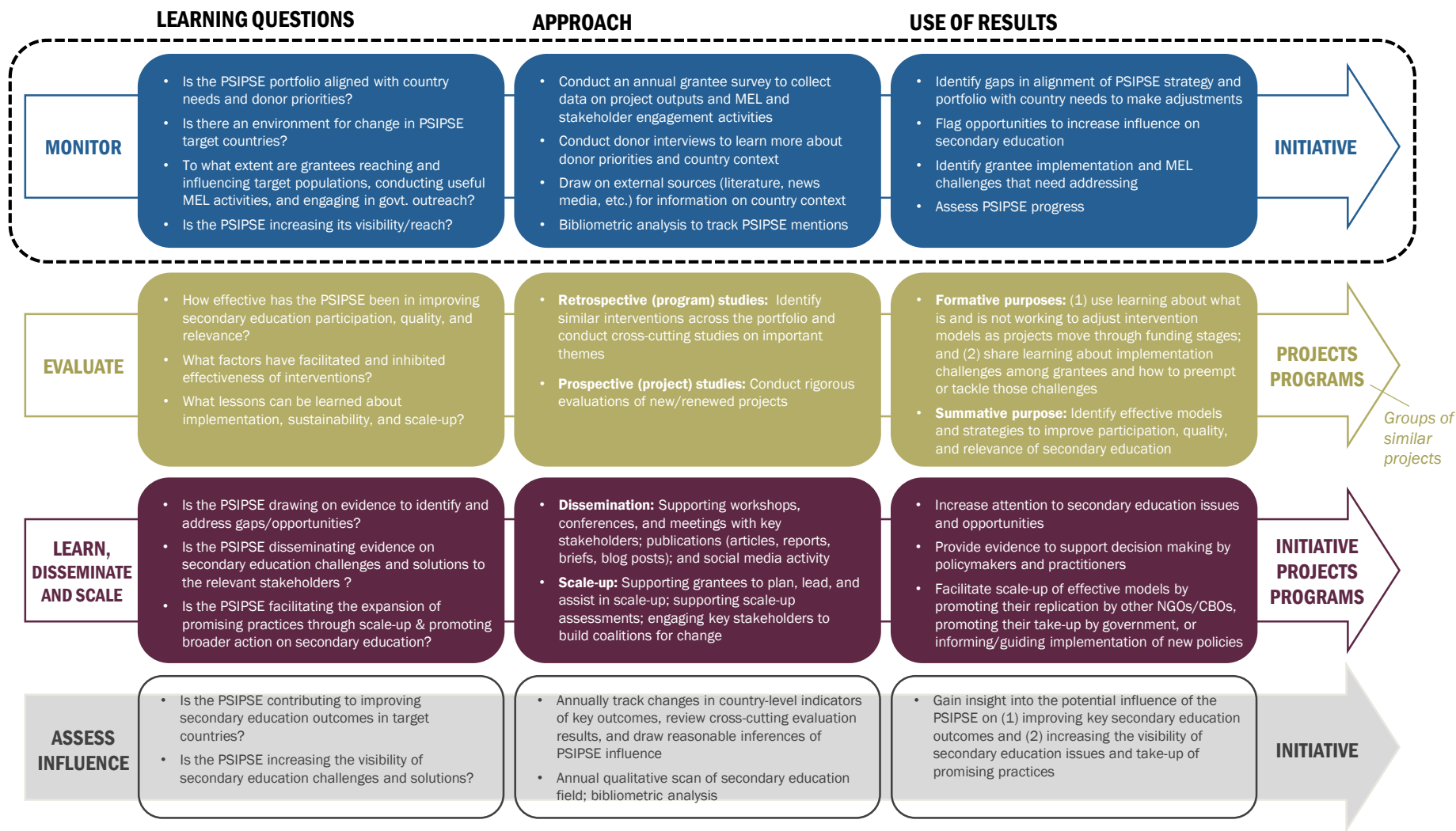
- Provide a snapshot of **current focus areas** of PSIPSE investments
- Track grantee progress on implementing interventions and **reaching target populations**
- Assess grantee **use of data and evidence** to improve programs and generate learning
- Call out key grantee **achievements** and milestones and identify common **challenges**
- Assess the initiative's overall reach and **visibility**

# Topics

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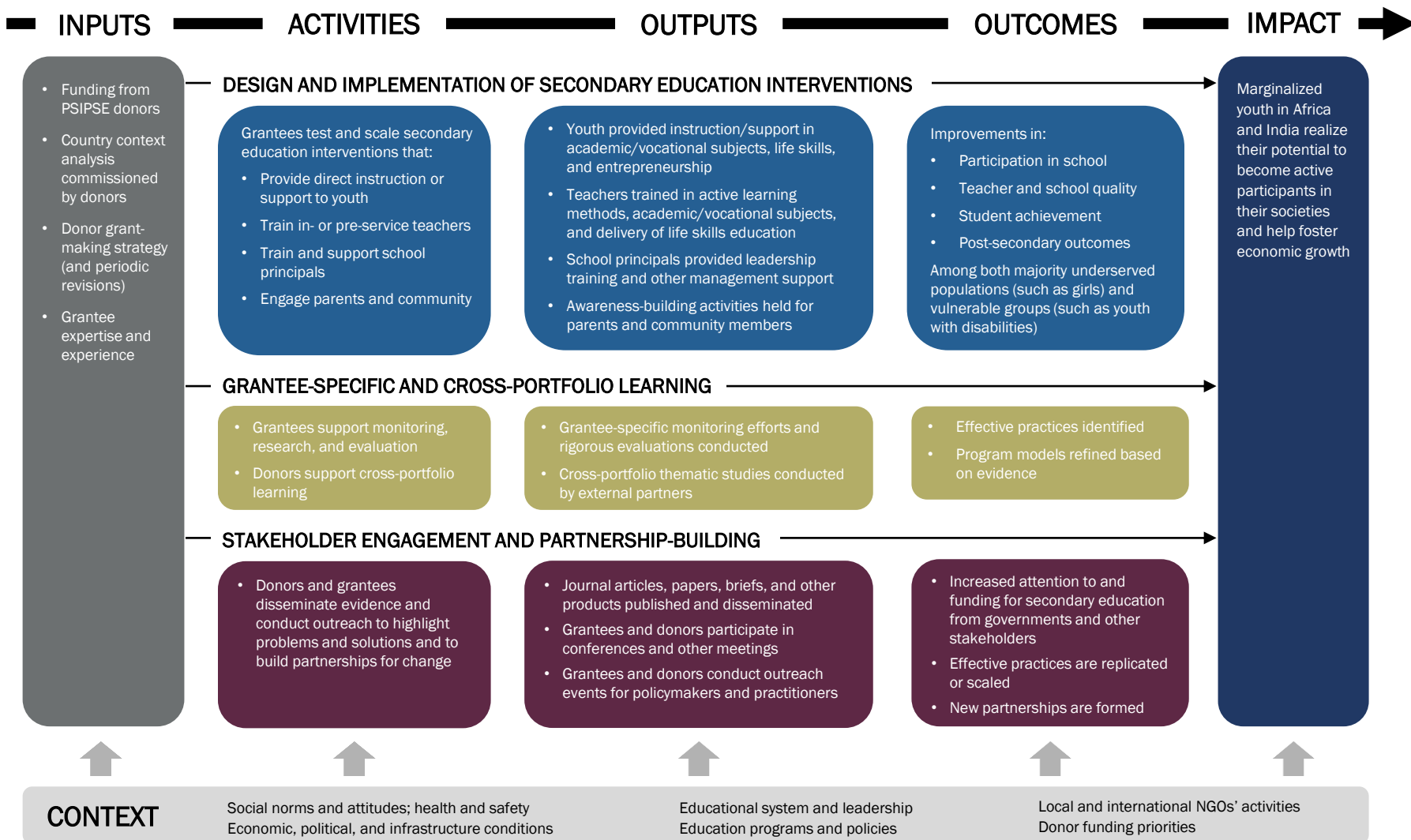
# Monitoring Approach | Overarching MEL Framework

Monitoring is a key component of the PSIPSE’s overarching monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) framework, which also includes project-specific evaluations, cross-grantee assessments to generate learning on specific aspects of secondary education, strategic dissemination of findings, and evidence-based scale-up.



# Monitoring Approach | Logic Model

The PSIPSE logic model guided data collection activities for this monitoring report. It maps the activities, outputs, and outcomes expected on the pathway to the initiative's overarching goal – helping identify domains and indicators for data collection.



# Monitoring Approach

## Data Sources

Mathematica sought to develop a streamlined approach for initiative-wide monitoring that can be easily replicated by PSIPSE staff on an annual basis.

### Key Data Source: GRANTEE SURVEY\*

Survey domains mapped to the logic model and included:

#### Project focus areas

Project goals, intervention approaches, and target populations

#### Project reach

Number of youth provided instruction/support; number of teachers and head teachers trained; intensity of teacher training

#### MEL

Evidence generation, dissemination, and use; grantee MEL capacity

#### Partnership-building

Examples of collaborations, and government or other outreach

#### Successes, challenges, and lessons

Achievements, constraints, and learnings related to designing, implementing, improving, and scaling programs

#### Risks and opportunities

Contextual or project-specific issues to address/leverage in the coming year

The grantee survey, through which we collected both quantitative and qualitative information in these domains, was administered in February/March 2017.

The grantee survey yielded responses from **48 out of 52 active grantees** in 2016 (a 92 percent response rate).\*



### OTHER DATA SOURCES

**Interviews with PSIPSE donors**, focusing on:

- Their vision for the PSIPSE going forward
- Their grant-making priorities and plans
- Their efforts to expand the donor collaborative and raise the initiative's visibility in the past year
- Recent contextual changes in PSIPSE focus countries

**Program documents**, including proposals and reports

**External documents and information**, including scholarly and grey literature, news articles, social media, government documents, and web statistics

\*Throughout this document, this survey is referenced as Grantee survey (2016).

# Monitoring Approach | Key Limitations

Putting “guardrails” around the selection of domains and indicators for this effort helped:

Ensure they were applicable across a diverse portfolio of work

The 50 grantees with active projects in 2016 vary greatly in their goals, intervention approaches, target populations, and implementation contexts. Indicators presented here were developed intentionally to apply to as many grantees as possible, without being too high level to provide useful information. Note, however, that this was a reason for eliminating some interesting but highly specific indicators, such as the number of teachers receiving training on gender-responsive pedagogy.

Ensure we requested data that grantees had available

Many grantees prioritize collecting data on outputs rather than outcomes. Recognizing this, we asked grantees to report on intervention reach (e.g. # of teachers trained) and basic MEL activities, leaving information on achievements, challenges, and lessons to be provided in response to open-ended questions.

#### Challenges in collecting outcomes data

We did include some basic outcome indicators in our survey, but very few were able to provide these data. Outcomes included:

- School re-entry and completion
- Enrollment in technical/vocational training
- Post-secondary employment
- Entrepreneurship/starting a business

Minimize grantee burden

Even when data are available, they can be difficult to locate and synthesize. We limited the number and types of indicators for data collection both to reduce the burden on grantees and to increase the response rate.

Meet the needs of multiple donors

PSIPSE donors have diverse interests. We prioritized indicators that met the informational needs of a critical mass of donors.



# Topics



1. Monitoring approach



**2. Snapshot of PSIPSE focus areas**



3. Grantee progress on reaching and influencing target populations



4. MEL: Evidence generation, dissemination, and use



5. Scale-up and government outreach



6. Common lessons learned by grantees



7. Upcoming risks and opportunities

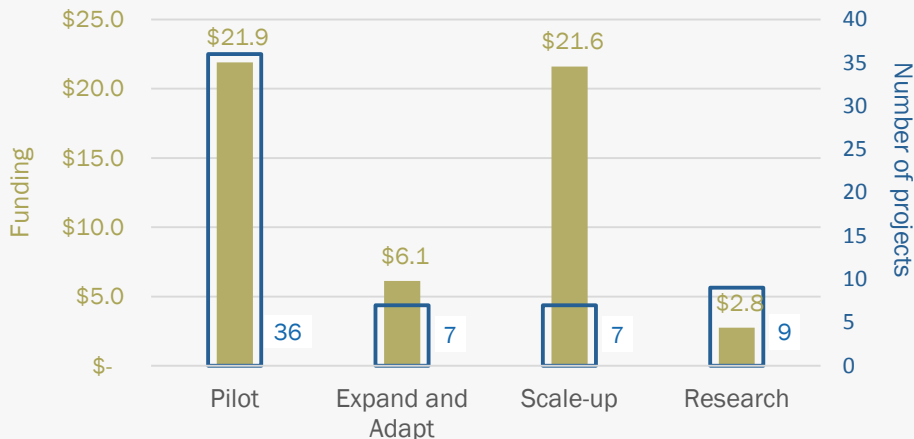


8. Selected implications

# Portfolio Snapshot | Project Types and Implementation Stages

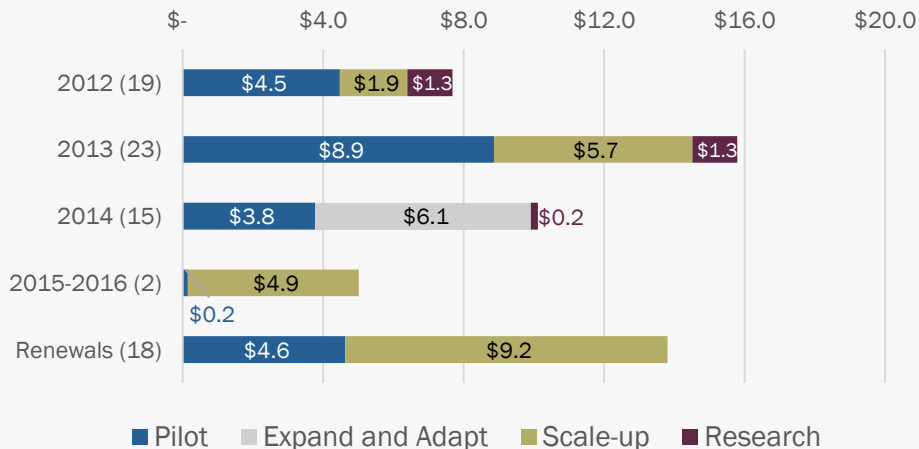
Since its inception, the PSIPSE has invested over **\$52 million dollars in 59 projects** that (1) pilot, expand, adapt, or scale promising secondary education interventions, or (2) conduct research on secondary education.

**Funding and number of projects, by project type**



- **The portfolio prioritizes implementation projects – namely, pilot, expand, adapt, or scale-up projects.** They receive 95 percent of PSIPSE funding.
- **The large majority of PSIPSE projects (36 of 59) are at the pilot stage, but they receive only 40 percent of the funding.** By contrast, scale-up projects comprise just above 10 percent of the portfolio, but receive about the same amount of funding as pilots. This is not surprising given that scale-up projects are more resource-intensive. However, it also indicates a strategic choice by the PSIPSE – to channel a substantial portion of its portfolio into a handful of projects with potential for large-scale impact. As pilots yield promising solutions, the share of funding devoted to scale-up efforts may increase over time.

**Yearly investments and renewals, by project type**

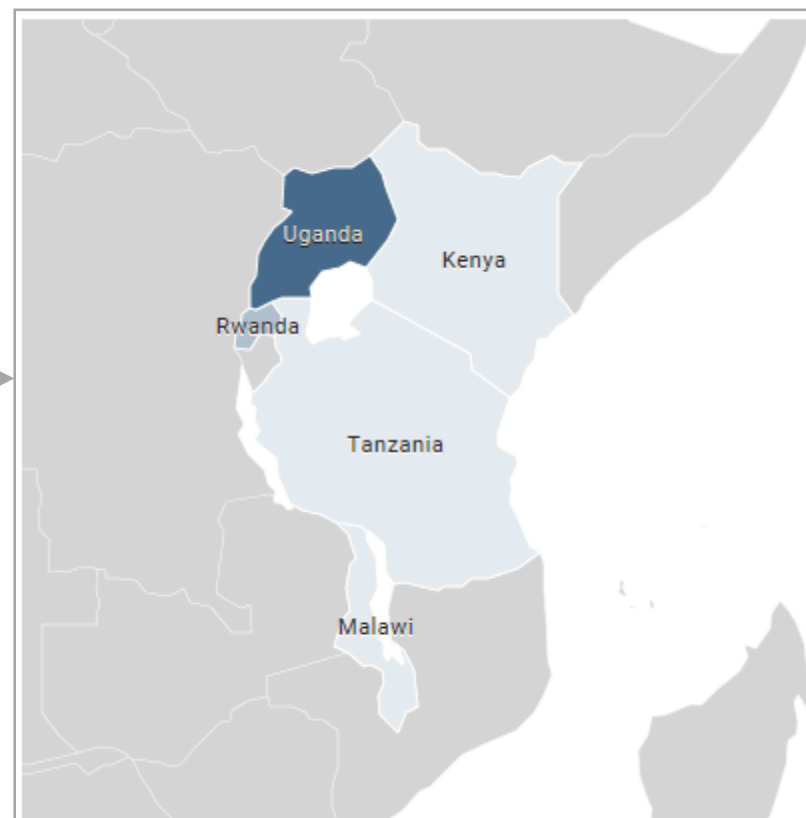
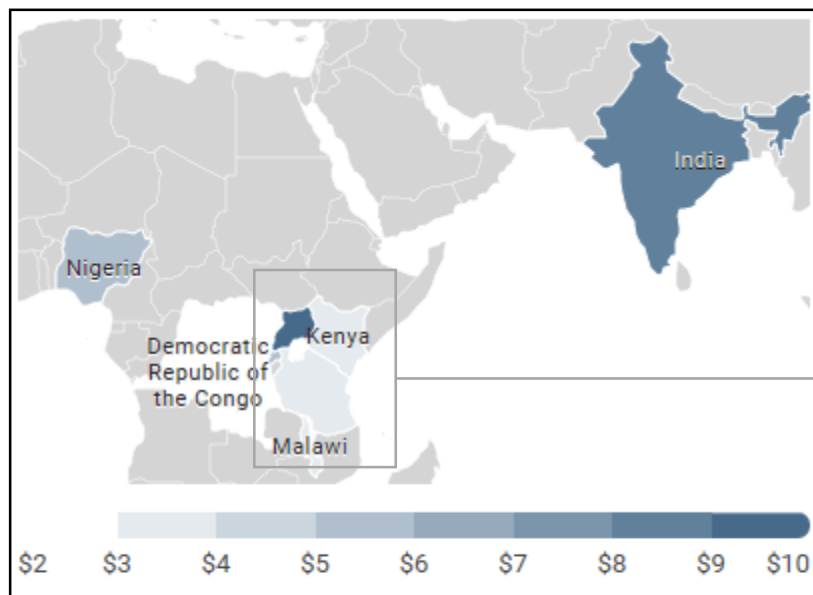


- **The PSIPSE portfolio has grown from 19 projects receiving \$7.7 million in 2012, to 52 projects active in 2016 receiving total awards worth \$49.7 million.**
- **After an initial increase in new projects and funding, both decreased over time.** This is likely driven by funding devoted to renewals (nearly \$14 million), a decrease in the number of PSIPSE donors, and challenges reported by donors in identifying new projects to support.
- **Scale-up has become a growing priority,** going from about \$2 million in 2012 to \$14 million in 2015-2016 (including recent renewals).
- **Research projects received less funding and are no longer supported in the portfolio.**

Source: PSIPSE grant management database. Note: These figures cover the entire PSIPSE portfolio from 2012 to the present (including both active and inactive grants).

# Portfolio Snapshot

## PSIPSE Focus Countries



Region/Country (projects)	Funding (millions)	Funding (percentage)
East Africa (26)	\$34.4	66%
Kenya (6)	\$3.6	7%
Malawi (2)	\$3.0	6%
Rwanda (1)	\$5.2	10%
Tanzania (5)	\$3.2	6%
Uganda (10)	\$10.8	21%
Multi-country (2)	\$8.6	16%
Central Africa – DRC (2)	\$1.6	3%
West Africa – Nigeria (11)	\$5.9	11%
South Asia – India (16)	\$8.8	17%
Cross-regional (4)	\$1.6	3%

**Since the PSIPSE's inception, almost two-thirds of the initiative's funding has been devoted to grants in East Africa.** Within East Africa (and across the initiative), Uganda received the most funding (just over a fifth of the overall portfolio).

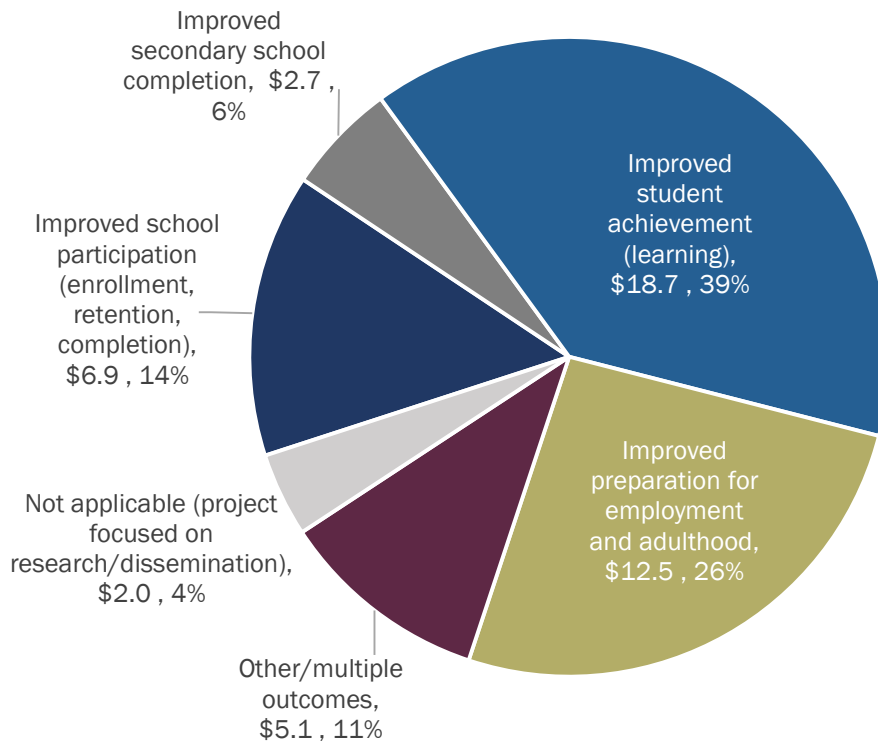
**India also received a substantial portion of the portfolio** (about 9 million dollars or 17 percent of total funding).

Source: PSIPSE grant management database.  
 Note: These figures cover the entire PSIPSE portfolio from 2012 to the present (including both active and inactive grants).

# Portfolio Snapshot | Project Goals

Survey respondents were asked to name the “main goal” of their project. Responses indicate that, at present, the **majority of PSIPSE funding supports efforts to improve student achievement and prepare youth for life after secondary school.**

At present, nearly 40 percent of PSIPSE funding is devoted to efforts to improve student learning, and about a quarter of total funding supports efforts to prepare youth for employment and adulthood following secondary education.



***“This new project provides a robust last mile for sustainable application of technology in secondary schools by improving content, capacity, and support for computer-based teaching to excite students about their learning and ultimately enhance their performance.”***

- Co-Creation Hub (Nigeria)



***“In secondary schooling levels (age 12-16 in India) the general impetus of the system is on being highly competitive – getting good grades that qualify you to get into a good college. We believe that good education is holistic, and regardless of the pressure to get marks/ grades, it is equally important to keep developing critical life skills that enable young minds to make key decisions for themselves.”***

- Paragon Charitable Trust / Muktangan (India)

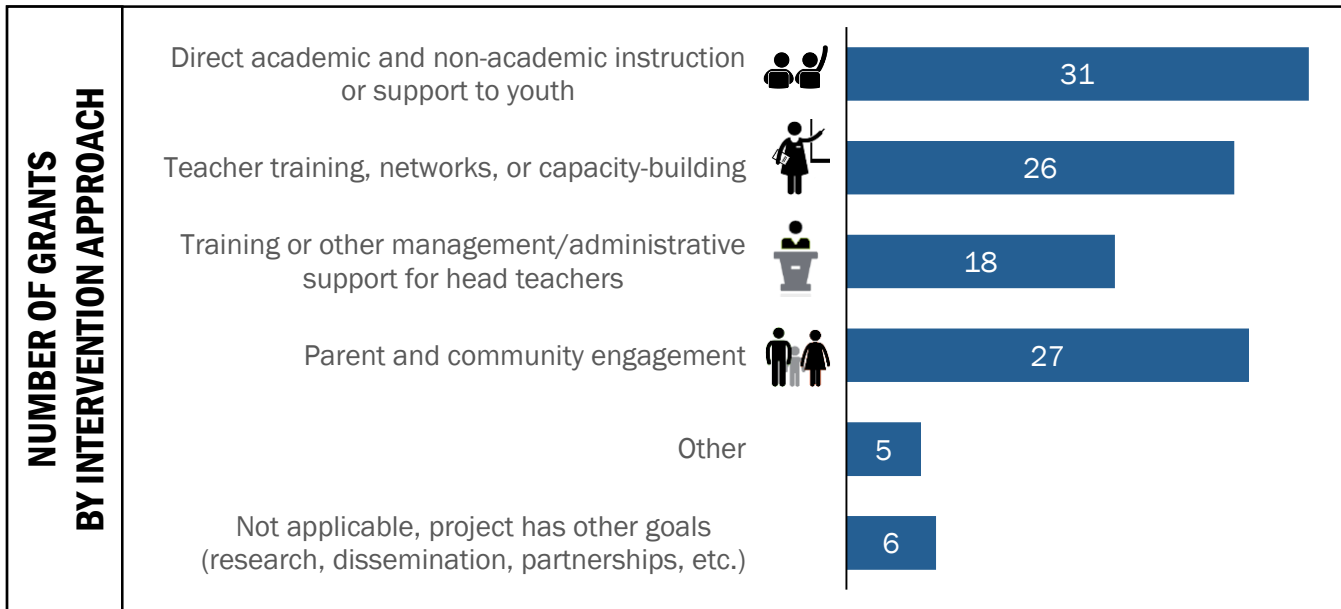
Investment=\$47,975,122

Source: Grantee survey (2016).

Note: This figure covers only grants active in 2016.

# Portfolio Snapshot

## Key Intervention Approaches



Source (both graphs on this slide): Grantee survey (2016).

Notes: N=48 grants active in 2016. Numbers are not mutually exclusive except for the “not applicable” category.

**Around two-thirds of the grants active in 2016 provide support directly to youth.** This includes academic support (such as coaching in academic subjects) or non-academic support (such as entrepreneurship training, life/soft skills training, or technical and vocational training).

**Over half train and develop teachers and around a third support head teachers.**

Over half of the grants report conducting parent and community engagement activities, but the majority of these have the relatively narrow scope of building parental/community support for student-level interventions.

**Most grantees combined multiple intervention approaches to achieve their goals.** The most common combination of interventions included (1) non-academic support for youth and (2) parent and community engagement.

29 projects are implementing three or more approaches

4 projects are implementing two approaches

9 projects are implementing one approach

# Topics



1. Monitoring approach



2. Snapshot of PSIPSE focus areas



**3. Grantee progress on reaching and influencing target populations**



4. MEL: Evidence generation, dissemination, and use



5. Scale-up and government outreach



6. Common lessons learned by grantees



7. Upcoming risks and opportunities

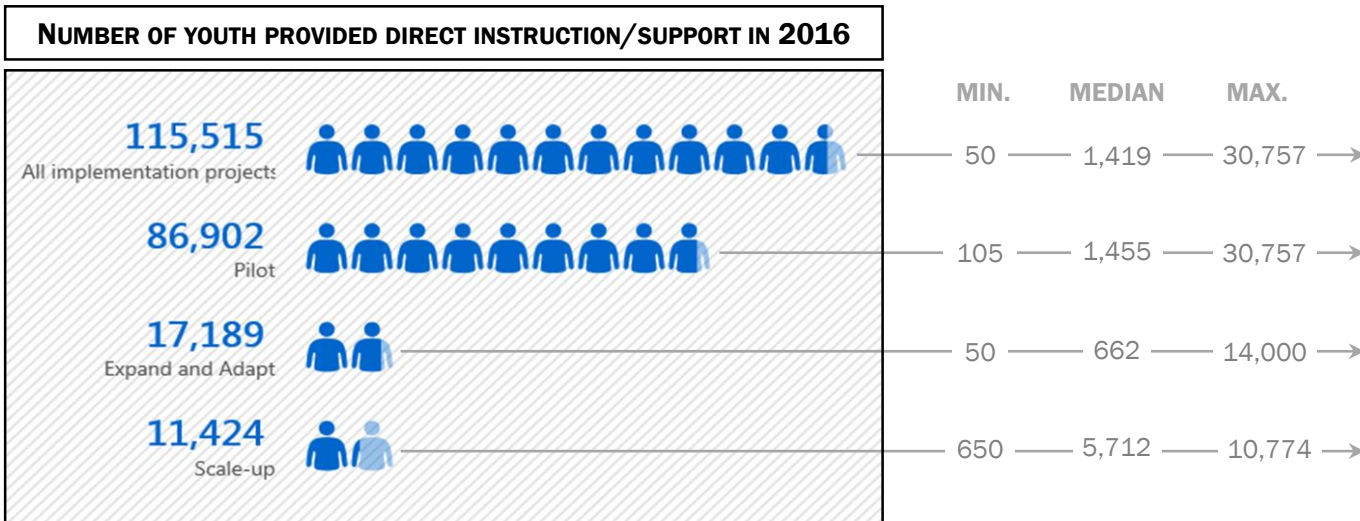


8. Selected implications

# Grantee Progress

## Providing Direct Support to Youth

PSIPSE projects provided **direct instruction or support to 115,515 youth in 2016.\***



Source: Grantee survey (2016). Notes: N=32 projects, including 24 pilot, 6 expand/adapt, and 2 scale-up projects, active in 2016 and providing direct support to youth (see slide 13).

There is wide variation in project scope – grantees can reach as few as 50 and as many as over 30,000 youth. Some of this variation is rooted in the way these numbers are calculated (see below), but the wide range of “reach” estimates may also be indicative of the PSIPSE’s dual emphasis on breadth and depth, or on maximizing reach and improving equity. For example:

- **Kentalis International** reports reaching about 100 deaf students in Western Tanzania.
- **South Saharan Social Development Organization (SSDO)** estimates that it is reaching about 30,000 students – the Enugu State Ministry of Education has mandated that SSDO’s “radio school” be added to the regular school time table for students in JSS2 (the equivalent of 8th grade) across all public schools in the state.
- **Going to School** reports reaching 10,000 youth. This grantee is rolling out an entrepreneurship curriculum across an increasing number of schools in partnership with the government of the state of Bihar in India.

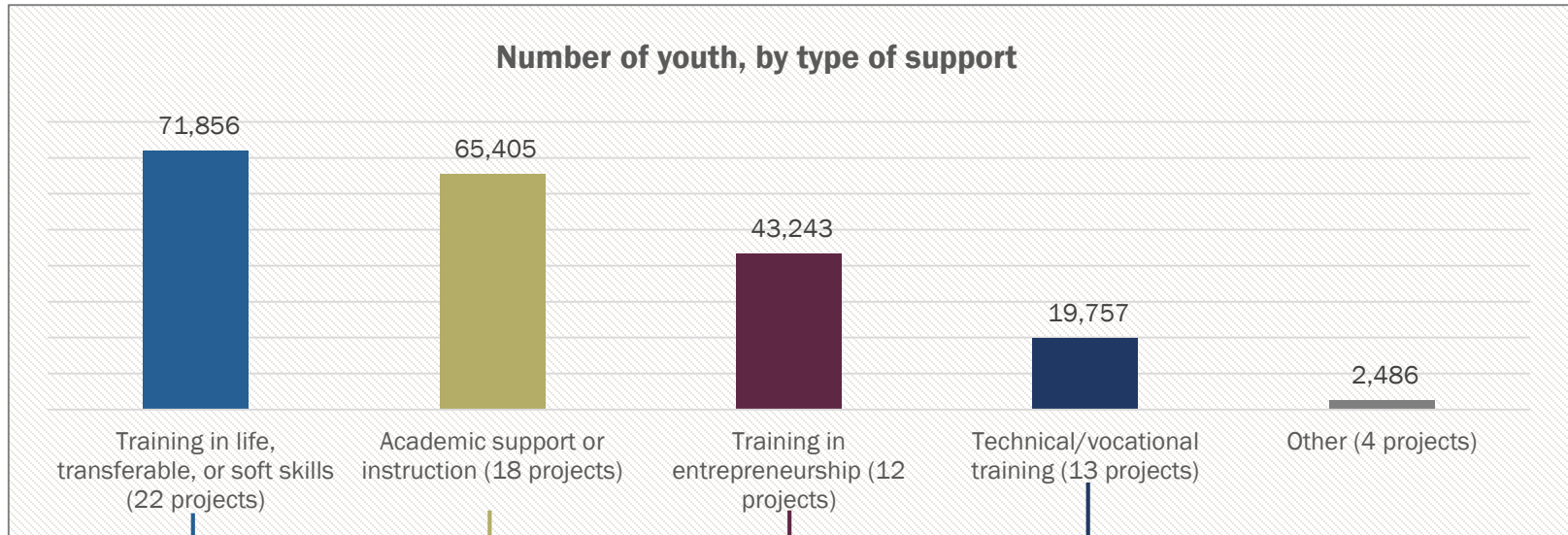
**Pilot projects can reach large numbers of youth when innovative models are scaled.**

\* Note that grantees may not define “direct instruction or support” the same way and may be calculating this measure in different ways; this number and all measures of program “reach” should be considered rough estimates.

# Grantee Progress

## Providing Direct Support to Youth

Just above 60 percent of the 115,515 youth reached were provided training in life, transferable, or soft skills, and just below 60 percent were provided academic support or instruction.



Key supports include...

- Training in soft or “21<sup>st</sup> century” skills, such as leadership, teamwork, communication, critical thinking, problem solving, and civic engagement
- Training in ICT
- Training and support in safe spaces for girls

- After-school lessons and tutoring
- Academic clubs, such as science clubs
- Radio-based instruction
- Modified instruction for marginalized groups, such as children with disabilities

- Entrepreneurship training through skill labs and business clubs
- Behavior change programming to convince girls they are “worthy” and able to start their own businesses
- Access to financial products and services

- Training on vocational trades, such as baking, hairdressing, tailoring, and machine repairs
- Offering in-school, hands-on experience with certain trades, such as organic gardening
- Developing career guidance manuals

Source: Grantee survey (2016).

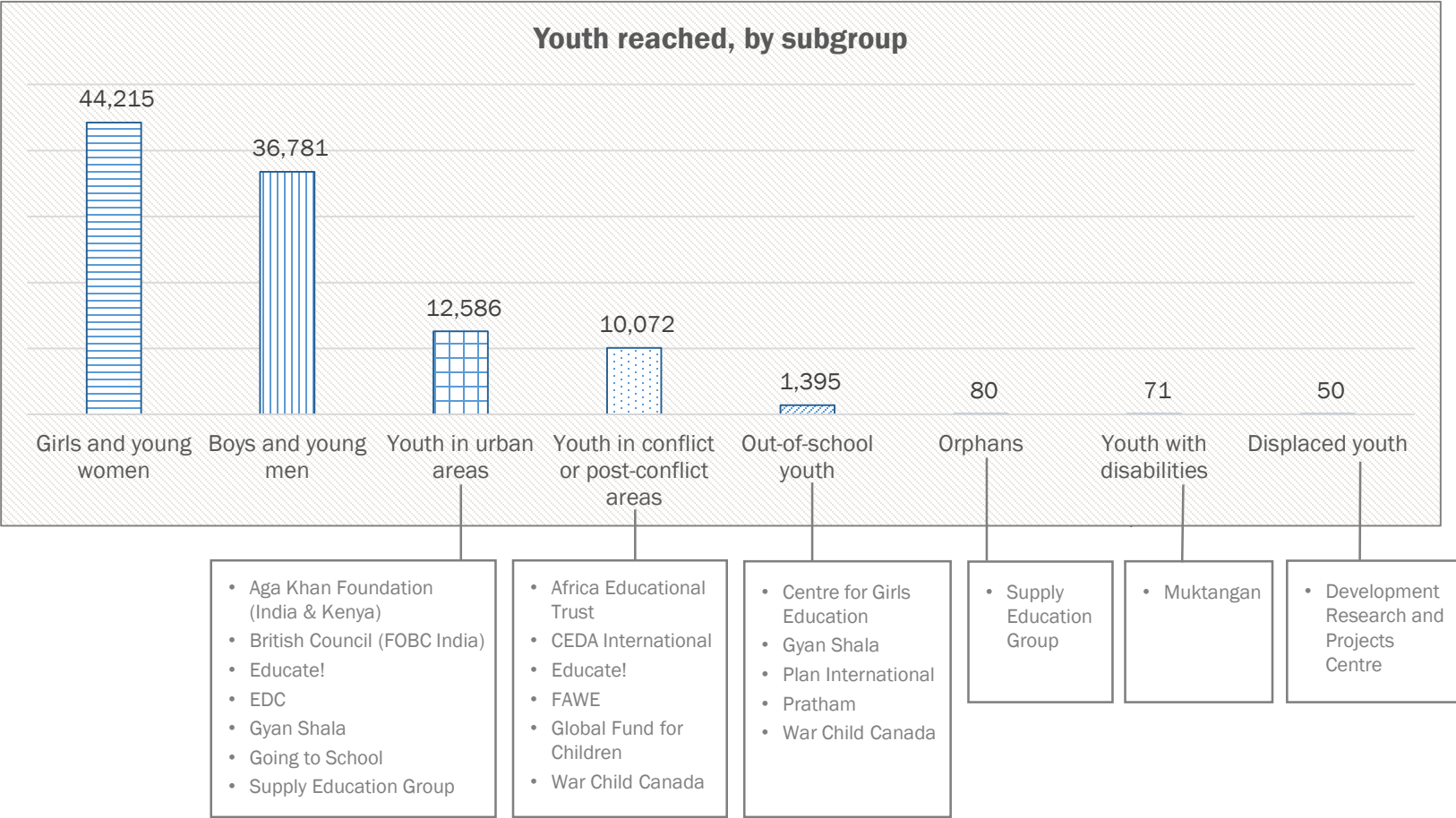
Notes: Numbers are not mutually exclusive. This figure covers only grants active in 2016.



# Grantee Progress

## Providing Direct Support to Youth

Grantees support a diversity of youth in 2016, reaching a large number of girls and young women (almost 45,000), as well as smaller groups of vulnerable youth.



Source: Grantee survey (2016). Notes: Numbers are not mutually exclusive. This figure covers only grants active in 2016.

# Grantee Progress

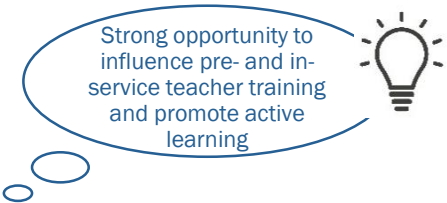
## Training and Developing Teachers

PSIPSE grantees reported training a **total of 10,882 teachers.**



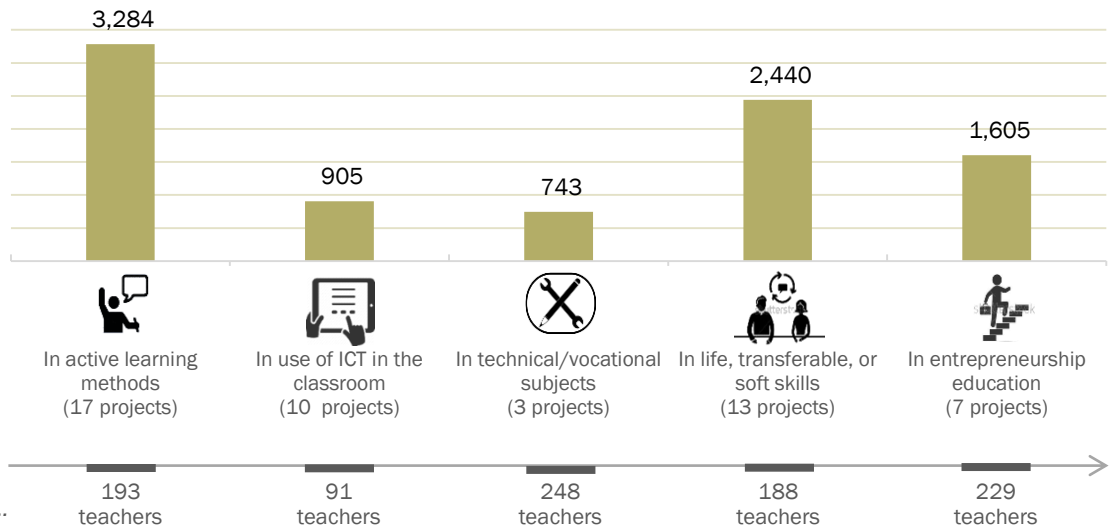
**On average, projects reached almost twice as many male teachers as female teachers.**

**About a third of teachers are new to teaching.**  
28 percent of teachers trained had less than 3 years of experience.



Around a third of teachers received training in active learning methods, and just over a fifth received training in how to develop life, transferable, or soft skills.

Number of teachers trained, by type of training



Grantees frequently combined different types of training for teachers. The most common combination was training in (1) active learning methods and (2) life/transferable/soft skills.

On average, projects are able to reach similar numbers of teachers for training in most topics. The exception is use of ICT in the classroom, which is delivered to far fewer teachers likely because it requires hardware and software that may be costly, basic computer skills, and minimum infrastructure that may not always be available.

Source: Grantee survey (2016).  
Notes: Estimates are not mutually exclusive and are based on grants active in 2016.

# Grantee Progress

## Training and Developing Teachers

### Intensity of training varied greatly across grantees

- Grantees conducted an average of **65 hours of training per teacher** (with a median of 48 hours).
- Some provided as little as **3 hours of training per teacher**.
- Other provided as many as **195 hours per teacher**.

VSO distilled teacher training down to 4 concepts – thinking, questioning, targeting, and engaging. Its intervention also worked directly with students and with parents and head teachers, so teacher training may not have been the main focus.

Muktangan/Paragon Charitable Trust, which works with a handful of municipal schools in India, provides:

- Weekly professional curriculum understanding and design sessions (facilitated by a team of teacher educators) for about 2.5 hours each week for 36 weeks in a year (90 hours per academic year)
- Intensive professional development training during vacations – for 7 hours a day and 15 days in total; these sessions cover:
  - Pedagogy and facilitation
  - Aspects of organizational development such as visioning, goal setting, classroom behavior management, general management, and soft skills

### Classroom observations were relatively light-touch

- About two-thirds of the grantees providing teacher training (17 out of 26) conducted teacher observations.
- Of those, 15 grantees conducted between 1 and 12 hours of observations per teacher, or an average of 3.4 hours of classroom observations per teacher.

### 2 grantees also provided support through teacher networks

**STIR Education** reports supporting almost 7,000 teachers through its teacher networks in 2016. STIR builds “intrinsic motivation” by establishing local, ongoing communities of practice. Its model includes:

- Intensive support in the initial two years, when teachers gain exposure to key teaching principles and are supported to make tangible change in their classrooms through Learning Improvement Cycles. Each cycle lasts 3 to 4 months and consists of three meetings, during which teachers (1) identify a problem and develop a solution, (2) reflect on and adapt the solution, and (3) evaluate the solution.
- Lighter-touch support in the latter three years for teachers to improve in other thematic areas (e.g. 21<sup>st</sup> century skills)

**Aga Khan Academy, Mombasa** established professional development networks for science teachers (but did not provide detailed information on how these networks operate).

# Grantee Progress

## Training and Developing Teachers

**Grantees report that teachers are using methods they are trained on, and sharing their new skills and knowledge with colleagues.**

- **VSO:** VSO conducted observations to assess teacher quality based on four metrics – thinking, questioning, targeting, and engaging. They measured and reported increases in observation scores from baseline to late 2016.
- **Friends of the British Council, Nigeria:** “Teachers have actually used the prescribed methodologies/activities in their classrooms and recommended that several other colleagues join the training as well. Some teachers have shown initiative by cascading the information down to their colleagues who were not part of the cohort. As a result of these actions, we have been inundated with requests to have additional teachers join our training sessions.”

*The above are responses to this open-ended question: “Please describe what you consider to be the one or two most significant achievements of your project in 2016.” 7 of 26 grantees offering teacher training highlighted adoption of new skills or knowledge. As the PSIPSE sharpens its focus on teacher training, donors may want to consider requesting grantees to systematically collect data on use of new pedagogical methods as this is a critical link in the interventions’ logic chain.*



# Grantee Progress

## Training Head Teachers Engaging Parents and the Community



### Training Head Teachers

- Training head teachers is not a strong focus of the PSIPSE portfolio, with only a third of the grants working with head teachers as one of multiple strategies adopted.
- PSIPSE grants trained **a total of 1,016 head teachers** in 2016.
- Grantees trained between 7 and 350 head teachers.

Gyan Shala is working in a relatively small catchment area. In addition, its primary focus is on curriculum development and teacher training.

Akanksha's Indian School Leadership Institute (ISLI), which runs a fellowship program for school leaders, reached the highest number of head teachers.

### Engaging Parents/Community



- We attempted to gather data to measure the reach of parent and community engagement activities, but received few responses from grantees.
- In their responses to open-ended questions, **several grantees report the success of their holistic models that integrated community engagement as one of several intervention approaches.**
- Only a few grantees had a strong focus on community engagement. One of those is Firelight, which supports community-based organizations in Malawi to design, test, and implement community action models. They note:

*We are deeply excited about the level of community engagement that our initiative has created in the communities surrounding the 15 community day secondary schools in which our partners are working. We have seen communities come together to save considerable amounts of money for their girls' secondary education, communities building much-needed teachers' houses, communities working together with school officials to support vulnerable girls at unprecedented levels.*



# Grantee Progress

## Improved Enrollment and Learning

Grantees report improving enrollment:

**CRECCOM**'s holistic model combines mentorship and life skills training for girls, community mobilization, and teacher training in Malawi. It reports that its baseline report found that "through the implementation of this model, the project has witnessed increase of readmission of girls by six-fold during the 2016/2017 academic year in a context where 45% of girls drop out of school due to child marriage and 29% drop out due to pregnancy."

**American India Foundation** reported an "increase in the transition rate of girls from elementary (grade 8) to secondary (grade 9) - from 54% in 2014 to 81% in 2016 in the project villages. The overall transition rate (girls and boys) increased from 71% to 87% in the same period. This was done through a combination of community engagement activities, a secondary enrollment drive, and a focus on engaging girls through formation of girls' groups and specific events."

Through girls' empowerment and community engagement activities

Through media-based demand creation

**Center for Community Change and Development** created a film to promote delayed marriage and secondary enrollment for girls in Nigeria (*Zabi Na* or "My Choice"). They tell us:

"A traditional ruler in Kaduna state told us that adolescent girls in his domain were openly asking their parents to stop making them go out for street hawking and instead enroll them in school, because they wanted to be like Zuweira in the film, who came from a poor family but because she went to school was able to rise to the level of Senator in the Federal Republic of Nigeria."

We do not know how parents responded, but this is nonetheless an important accomplishment.



Only one grantee provided information on improvements in learning - **War Child Canada** - which provides interactive radio instruction for conflict-affected, out-of-school girls in the DRC. Their midterm evaluation "provided evidence of improved access to secondary education for out-of-school girls, encouraging learning outcomes, and increased mobilization of community support for girls' education. These results were reinforced by a second exam sat by students in July 2016, which saw an increase in average test scores by 13% and a 93% pass rate."



# Grantee Progress

## Improved Preparation for Life After Secondary School

Grantees report:

### Completion of technical/vocational education

**FAWE** works to improve secondary education and post-secondary outcomes for girls who have returned from LRA captivity in northern Uganda. It notes that “one of the key achievements is that a total of 47 girls were able to complete their vocation training by sitting for the Directorate of Industrial Training, a body charged with the mandate of assessing and awarding all technical and vocational education in Uganda. Three of those who completed in 2016 already have acquired jobs in the northern region of Uganda.”

### Improved financial literacy

**Mercy Corps Nigeria’s** GOAL project has increased girls’ financial capacity through savings groups and access to financial products and services. “The analysis of pre- and post-test learning outcomes data of girls who attended the learning spaces indicated that more girls know how to join a savings group (62.0% before vs. 70% after), know how to interact with a bank (41% before vs. 52% after), and know how to budget for expenses/goals (78% before vs. 93% after).”

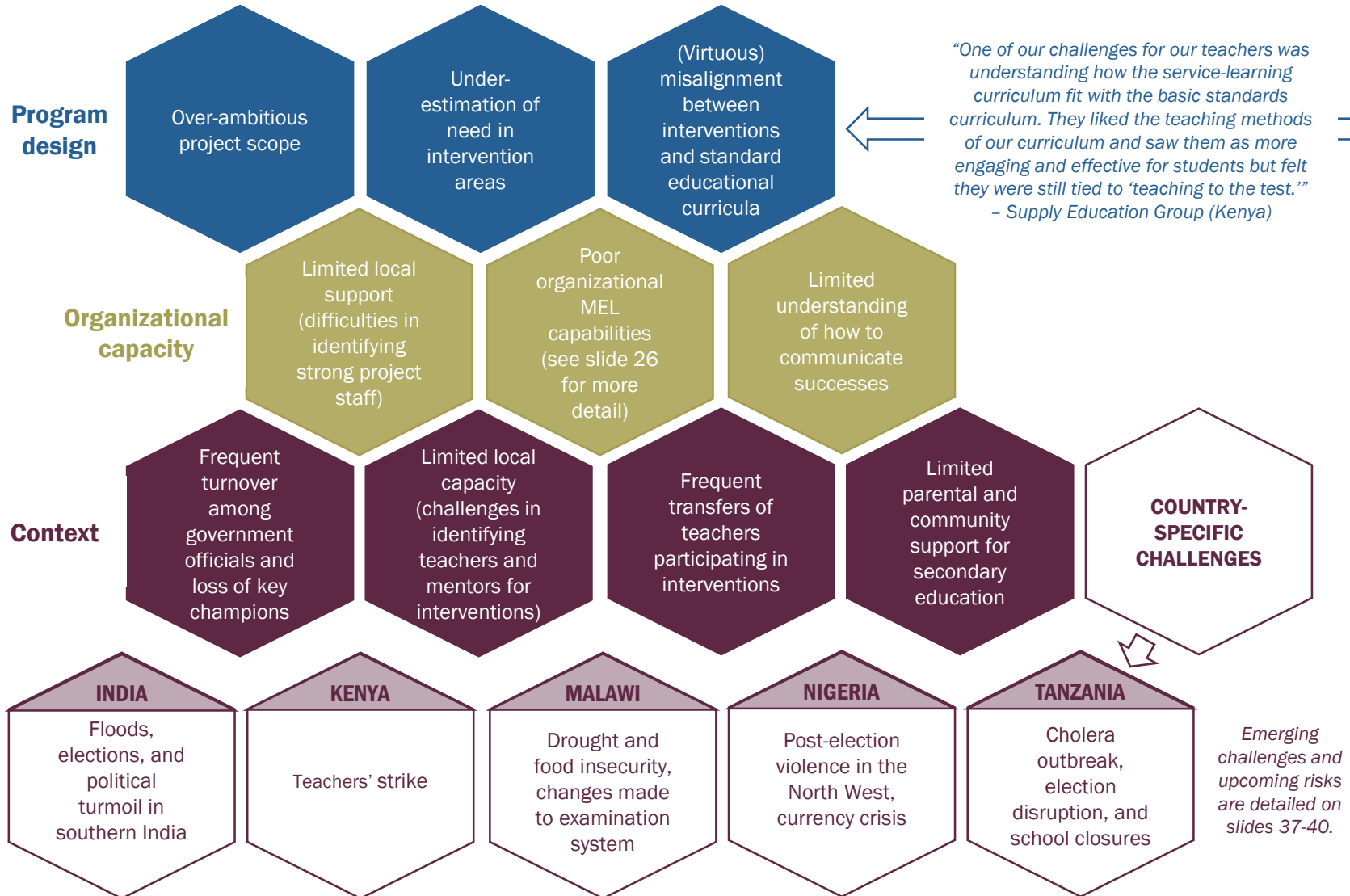
### Greater propensity for civic engagement

**The Supply Education Group**, which is implementing a service learning curriculum in its network of affordable schools in urban slums in Kenya, notes, “Our internal studies are showing significant gains in civic engagement amongst slum youth, particularly in participation in and understanding of value of community service and political participation.”



# Grantee Progress

## Common Challenges Faced by Grantees





# Topics



1. Monitoring approach



2. Snapshot of PSIPSE focus areas



3. Grantee progress on reaching and influencing target populations



**4. MEL: Evidence generation, dissemination, and use**



5. Scale-up and government outreach



6. Common lessons learned by grantees



7. Upcoming risks and opportunities



8. Selected implications

**Many grantees report collecting data and conducting assessments to measure their progress, but few are engaged in rigorous impact evaluations.**

**92 percent** of grantees are conducting needs assessments or situational analyses.

**95 percent** are conducting focus groups or key informant interviews with stakeholders

**93 percent** of grantees are measuring participant progress by collecting both baseline and endline data from participants.



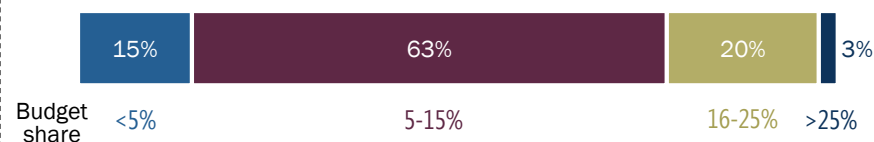
**5 grantees** are pursuing rigorous evaluations that include a comparison group, pre-intervention baseline data, and follow-up data collection.

67 percent of grantees are working with an **in-house** MEL person or team.

79 percent of grantees are working with **external evaluators.**

Despite this →

**Percent of grantees by budget share assigned to MEL activities**



**Two-thirds of grantees assigned between 5 and 15 percent of their budgets to MEL.** This share did not vary significantly by the type of project (across pilot, expand/adapt, scale up).

**Grantees often feel that their MEL budget is not adequate.** Of the 12 grantees who said their MEL budget share was not adequate, 9 had assigned 15 percent or less to MEL.

↓  
**Survey results and meetings with grantees in Dar es Salaam\* suggest grantees need support with:**

- Developing theories of change and logic models
- Building monitoring plans
- Pre-planning for evaluations (so that rigorous designs are possible)
- Leveraging existing data (such as application data or monitoring data) to strengthen analyses
- Disseminating evidence

Source: Grantee survey (2016). Notes: N for above figures=37-40. \*2016 PSIPSE East Africa Grantee Convening. These figures cover only grants active in 2016.

Grantees are using the data they gather and evidence they generate to:

### Understand the context and adapt program design

**DRPC** reports adapting its programming using feedback from participants. It now integrates soft skills development into play, reading, and small business development activities during its after-school clubs in Nigeria.

**PLAN International** drew on market assessment findings to modify the curriculum of its training for Nigerian youth on life and employment-relevant skills. The curriculum now focuses more on work preparedness, with an emphasis on communication, self-confidence and assertiveness.”

**Supply Education Group**, which works with Kenyan youth, discovered that its “service-learning curriculum [had had] spillover effects into performance on [national] exams in history and government but no effect on STEM.” It is now incorporating more STEM elements into the curriculum.

**FAWE-U** learned that its target population (LRA returnees) could not afford school fees, which limited participation in secondary/vocational education. To address this, they redesigned the project to include a school fees component.

### Learn what works or does not work on the ground and tweak implementation

**War Child Canada**, which provides radio instruction for out-of-school girls in the DRC, notes that through constant monitoring, “they have been able to track students who are at risk of discontinuing the program and work to reintegrate them quickly.”

**Aga Khan Academy Mombasa**, which seeks to improve girls’ participation and performance in STEM subjects, made several MEL-based adjustments. It changed the number of girls per school and responded to an observed need by providing supplementary training to teachers and students on how to conduct community science projects. Program staff also realized that digital literacy was important in STEM, so they provided tablets to participating schools.

**GESCI** is training teachers on use of ICT to facilitate active learning. It used results from its baseline study “to build more flexibility and also contingency planning (Plan B/C) into activities to cater for individual county and school conditions, especially in remote and small schools.”

**Action Aid**, which seeks to improve life skills, teacher training, and school management in Nigeria, reported that evidence from their baseline indicated that girls’ enrollment was low. This led to them to conduct a house-to-house enrollment campaign.



**Since its inception in 2012, the PSIPSE has generated dialogue around secondary education on diverse platforms, but its reach/visibility is still limited.**

### Posts in 12 blogs, including:

- Global Partnership for Education website (by Africa Educational Trust)
- Everyday Africa (by Aga Khan Academy, Mombasa)

### 16 mentions in the news, such as:

- Daily Trust Nigeria, The Guardian Lagos, and Gulf News (6 consisted of the 2016 RFP being disseminated through newswires, and 2 were press releases about projects being launched.)

### One project profiled in local news:

- LSTT project\* profiled on SIMU.tv in Tanzania

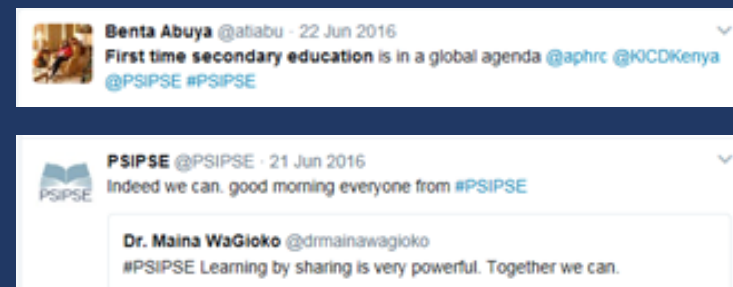
### 1 inclusion in a documentary series:

- Educate!, which provides mentorship to students on entrepreneurship and 21<sup>st</sup> century skills, was profiled in Al Jazeera's "Rebel Education" series.



### 277 followers on Twitter

There has been moderate Twitter activity since September 2015 (when the PSIPSE account was opened), with spikes in activity during key meetings, such as the East Africa Grantee Convening in 2016.



### PSIPSE drew a total of 5,189 unique visitors to its website in 2016.

- The number of unique visitors was particularly high in November 2016, when the most recent RFP was released.
- The majority (74 percent) of those visiting the website used a direct link to the site, and another 20 percent reached the site through a Google search query.

\* The Language Supportive Teaching and Textbook (LSTT) project is implemented by the University of Bristol, the University of Dodoma, and St. John's University.

# Topics



1. Monitoring approach



2. Snapshot of PSIPSE focus areas



3. Grantee progress on reaching and influencing target populations



4. MEL: Evidence generation, dissemination, and use



**5. Scale-up and government outreach**



6. Common lessons learned by grantees



7. Upcoming risks and opportunities



8. Selected implications

# Scale-up and Government Outreach

## Many pilot grantees that are not scaling up see the potential to do so.

- **Supply Education Group, Kenya:** “Yes, we do believe there are huge opportunities for scaling service-learning in slums all across east Africa. In addition, we believe an adapted version can also be useful for public/government schools as well.”
- **Kenya Community Development Foundation:** “Rural schools, which face particular challenges in improving learning outcomes, could benefit from our intervention.”

## PSIPSE grantees that are scaling up are using a variety of strategies.

- Expanding geographically or intensifying activities within their existing service area
- Collaborating or partnering with government stakeholders or NGOs to scale the model
- Creating models or practices that are easily replicated by other organizations (and promoting or supporting that replication)

### But they foresee several barriers to scale-up:

- Lack of evidence
- High cost of implementing the model
- Lack of funding for scale-up
- Intensity of support from program staff needed to make program effective (which may not be available at scale)

### EXPANSION

#### Gyan Shala

“ The size of the program in terms of number of students with approximately double in the coming year.

#### Sazani

“ Over the next four years we will add another 17 schools to the project.

### COLLABORATION

#### Bixby/Centre for Girls' Education

“ The scale-up involves us training, supporting, and supervising several local NGOs as they implement the program in their states.

#### Lend-A-Hand India

“ One team member has been deployed full time as part of the state department of education to work on scaling up.

### REPLICATION

#### Pratham

“ We have created modules and packages that we are willing to share and provide hand holding to help others take them forward.

#### Firelight

“ These programs are monitored, documented and communicated in ways that will allow for lateral replication by communities themselves with minimal support.

# Scale-up and Government Outreach

**Grantees indicate that governments are recognizing the contributions of their projects and committing to scaling promising practices and programs.** They conducted outreach at the district, state, and national levels to facilitate government adoption of their intervention models or practices.

Stichting Cordaid DRC	Cordaid reports that engagement with district-level education authorities strongly contributed to support at the national level from the technical unit on education, which is exploring the possibility of scaling up and replicating Cordaid's results-based financing approach in other regions in the DRC.	CENTRAL/EAST AFRICA
Aga Khan Academy, Mombasa	Aga Khan Academy Mombasa, which seeks to improve girls' participation and performance in STEM subjects, reports that it engaged with the Kenyan Center for Mathematics, Science, and Technology Education in Africa (CEMASTE), which is in charge of in-service training for secondary school science teachers. CEMASTE has adopted ideas from the project – such as having students identify a community-level problem and develop a scientific solution.	CENTRAL/EAST AFRICA
Friends of the British Council Nigeria	FOBC Nigeria reports influencing the government's approach to teacher training – “In Cross River state, in recognition of the value of the training content and its effect on the teachers' manner of engagement in the classrooms, the secondary schools board is reviewing a more structured method of cascading the training down to non-selected segments of teachers.”	NIGERIA
SSDO	SSSDO, which has developed a “radio school” model in Nigeria, reports that it has engaged in “massive advocacy to the government on taking action on...the issue of lack of qualified teachers in secondary schools. This has resulted in buy-in for the project from key government stakeholders in the education sector in both states (Adamawa and Enugu).” One state (Enugu) has added radio school to the regular school timetable.	NIGERIA
Lend a Hand	The government of the state of Gujarat in India has committed to scaling Lend-A-Hand India's vocational education programming and integrating it into the state secondary education curriculum.	INDIA
STIR Education	STIR is collaborating with government stakeholders to embed its model into how governments motivate and support teachers. It reports signing MOUs with the government in 3 states in India, Delhi, Utter Pradesh, and Karnataka, and with the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) in Uganda. STIR has also formed a unique partnership, supported by an MOU, with UNATU - the Ugandan National Teachers Union.	INDIA



# Scale-up and Government Outreach

Through advocacy and strategic engagement with influential stakeholders, PSIPSE projects report having motivated government action on secondary education.

## KENYA

**Population Council** has undertaken an interactive media campaign and policy dialogues to accelerate implementation of Kenya's school re-entry policy for teenage mothers. It reports "playing a role in having a Member of Parliament set up a bursary scheme specifically for teenage mothers who would like to return to school."

## TANZANIA

**VSO**, which works to strengthen teacher quality and student career development in mainland Tanzania, reports that the government of Zanzibar has been very receptive to their project, especially following the 2016 PSIPSE grantee meeting (which the Zanzibar Deputy Permanent Secretary attended). The government has granted VSO "full support for a similar project to be implemented in Zanzibar" and also an opportunity for a professional volunteer to be embedded in the education ministry to act as a link with the project. This volunteer would also help the ministry by working closely with the inspectorate department.

## DRC

**War Child Canada:** The Congolese Ministry of Primary, Secondary, and Vocational Education has committed to issuing an official government transcript for Standards 1 and 2 to students who complete War Child Canada's interactive radio instruction (IRI) program.

## NIGERIA

- **ActionAid** drew on its baseline data to convince the state government of Sokoto state that a school was needed in Gudu Local Government Area. Funding for this school has been raised.
- **ActionAid** notes that the establishment of a new agency of girls' education (with an executive secretary to liaise with development partners) can be attributed to an advocacy initiative by the project.
- **DRPC** is focused on working with the Nigerian government to roll out the new secondary school curriculum, which prioritizes functional trades and entrepreneurship. It found, however, that entrepreneurship was almost entirely missing from the curriculum, and brought this to the attention of the Executive Secretary of the National Education Research Development Centre (NERDC), who has started reviewing the trade curriculum to incorporate entrepreneurship.
- **Mercy Corps Nigeria** is seeking to improve guidance counseling at schools, as part of its effort to support successful transition from school to work. To this end, it disseminated its Training Needs Assessment (TNA) report for guidance counselors during a senior management meeting of the Ministry of Education (MoE). The report was positively received and resulted in a "strong pledge of commitment" from the MoE to improve school counseling. In addition, Mercy Corps reports that the Kano State Senior Secondary Schools Management Board (KSSSMB) recruited a new trained professional counselor to work with them to strengthen school counselor capacity.

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**6. Common lessons learned by grantees**



7. Upcoming risks and opportunities



8. Selected implications

# Lessons Learned by Grantees

## Increasing Participation

- It is important to understand and address both supply and demand sides of barriers to educational access.
- To shift community attitudes related to girls' education, it is vital to work with men as well as women.
- It is imperative to not only build overarching demand for secondary education among girls but directly tackle key barriers to access, such as early (or repeat) pregnancies.

***“Within the minority communities that the project worked with, it is important to understand the reasons behind not accessing higher education or better employment. If the reason lies in deep-seated conservative beliefs and attitudes, then the project’s primary focus should be on attitude change, instead of on institution building.”*** - Aga Khan Foundation

## Improving Quality

- Training teachers to develop lessons for mixed-ability classrooms is “difficult to achieve in the best of circumstances,” but doubly hard when classes are large, materials are scarce, and teacher capacity is low.
- Heavy workloads minimize the time teachers have available for in-person training. Opting for alternative/blended training models may help address this challenge, especially if building in strategies to address technological obstacles that ICT-based trainings face in low-resource settings.

## Enhancing Relevance

- Life skills training needs to be paired with more formal entrepreneurship or workforce development training to support transitions into “decent work” following secondary school.
- There is a strong need for entrepreneurship training in post-conflict areas.

## Designing Sustainable Programs

- Build ownership among local stakeholders as it is key to sustainability and scale-up.
- Share evidence of program effectiveness to get local government officials and community leaders on board and ensure program sustainability.
- Develop strategic messaging for governments - on issues aligned with their priorities - using tailored communications strategies.

***“Involve local stakeholders right from the beginning, at all levels...Only then people feel committed and successes are (rightly) regarded as their own. The latter builds support for the project approach as a method that could be up-scaled and/or replicated within the country.”***  
- Stichting Cordaid

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**7. Upcoming risks and opportunities**



8. Selected implications

We asked grantees and donors about the risks and opportunities they foresee for their work. The following slides provide a summary of their answers, drawing on external data to provide more details as needed.

The slides do not provide a comprehensive list of risks and opportunities, but rather are intended to provide on-the-ground perspectives to complement the African Institute for Development Policy reports.

Note that this section of the report is focused on East Africa, given the current PSIPSE focus on this region.

# Upcoming Risks and Opportunities | Kenya

## RISKS

- Elections in Kenya are scheduled for August 2017. Many grantees are concerned there may be protracted **political unrest**, which could delay class sessions and affect other implementation processes. One grantee expressed concern about the specific risk to students who may choose to participate in demonstrations.
- Political risk forecasts note that **security risks** will be a continued challenge in Kenya (with the main threat coming from the Somalian militant group al-Shabab and locally recruited radicals). No grantees mentioned this as a risk, however.
- The government's **crackdown on civil society** has been intensifying.
  - The NGO coordination board has been threatening to de-register several NGOs (especially human rights and humanitarian NGOs).
  - The government has been pushing to institute a 15 percent cap on foreign funding in NGO budgets.
  - The government has repeatedly delayed implementation of the Public Benefit Organizations Act, which follows international best practices for regulating civil society. It has also sought to introduce amendments to restrict the work of NGOs in the country.

## OPPORTUNITIES

- Kenya has adopted a **new curriculum**, which grantees note has a strong focus on student-centered, inquiry-based approaches, on life skills and leadership, and on the “holistic development of the girl child.” Grantees feel this legitimizes their work and provides an enabling environment for stronger take-up of their interventions.
  - Donors worry that implementation of the curriculum may be slow/flawed/inconsistent, but this might be an opportunity for PSIPSE grantees to partner with government to strengthen implementation.
- The government has shown a **commitment to working with children with disabilities** and is “willing to put funds if given ideas about solutions.”
- A **proposed bill to keep pregnant/parenting girls in school** presents a big opportunity to address pregnancy prevention (and resulting drop-out) among school girls.
- Supply Education Group notes that there has been “**continuous legislative reform in regards to low-cost private schools**” and that this could mean more resources become available for these schools.

### Interest in partnerships:

Kenya Community Development Foundation is interested in engaging and collaborating with organizations such as Africa Educational Trust that have similar objectives (including increasing enrollment in secondary schools and strengthening the relevance of secondary education).

# Upcoming Risks and Opportunities | Uganda

## RISKS

- Donors discussed the poor management and oversight of the education sector. They point out that there **is limited coordination between different actors** – “there’s overlap, there’s duplication, everybody is doing their own thing very fast.” In general, they note, there is very little thought given to how public sector funds are spent on education.
- Donors note that there is an **overreliance on external funding**, which if withdrawn could have serious implications for educational quality and for the pipeline from primary to secondary school.

## OPPORTUNITIES

- Grantees note a **strong emphasis on the sciences in the new curriculum**, which is due to be launched soon. This may strengthen the enabling environment for STEM grantees and be an opportunity for the PSIPSE to expand its focus on STEM in Uganda.
- A **policy is being developed on school re-entry and retention of pregnant girls and young mothers**, which presents an opportunity for grantees to expand activities or advocacy focused on this population.
- Uganda is nearing the end of its Strategic Plan for Universal Secondary Education in Uganda (2009 – 2018). There may be **emerging opportunities to influence the next strategic plan** for secondary education.
- In 2016, the government of **Belgium committed over \$8 million to improving training for secondary school teachers**, technical/vocational training instructors, and health tutors. The secondary education component of the initiative entails working with teachers’ colleges to improve their management capacity and strengthen their focus on active teaching and learning. The PSIPSE may want to consider leveraging synergies between this initiative and its own teacher training projects in Uganda.
- STIR Education notes that “in both Uganda and India a **national debate is starting to emerge that places issues of teacher motivation and professionalism at the core**. We are keen on playing a key role in this debate by developing a ‘business case’ around teacher empowerment, motivation, and professionalism that is compelling to education and finance ministries and bilateral/multilateral donors. It should make for compelling economics: 80 to 90% of an education budget is typically spent on teacher salaries. For a tiny marginal cost (0.1%-1% extra), our approach can make that 80% to 90% a worthwhile investment.”

# Upcoming Risks and Opportunities | Malawi

## RISKS

- The country experienced **severe drought** in 2016. The World Food Program (WFP) notes that around 6.7 million people are in urgent need of food or cash support.
- **Educational spending has reduced** – in 2016, the ruling party in the parliament announced cuts to the education budget and reallocated the funds elsewhere.
- **School fees may be hiked**, which may increase available resources, but would also place downward pressure on secondary school participation. In September 2015, the government approved new [and higher] secondary school fees. However, that motion has since been put on hold until Malawi's economic situation improves.
- There have been **changes made to the examination system**. (The Malawi School Certificate of Education exams, which are taken at the end of secondary school, originally covered the last two years of secondary school, but will now test students on material covered in all four years. Students will no longer take Junior Certificate of Education exams following two years of secondary school.) These changes may have implications for the approaches grantees select to improve learning.

## OPPORTUNITIES

- The recently passed **Marriage Age Bill**, which sets 18 as the minimum age at marriage for girls, strengthens the enabling environment for grantees focused on improving girls' enrollment.
- Malawi's **next educational sector plan is under development** (and Firelight indicates that it is already supporting its grantee partners to engage in the policy process).



# Upcoming Risks and Opportunities | Tanzania

## RISKS

- Students receive a **weak foundation in primary school and have limited English proficiency** – a critical challenge because examinations are administered in English. (The LSTT\* project is working to address this challenge, but they note that there is “always some contention and resistance around language innovations based on strongly held subjective views, which stand in contradiction to a large body of international evidence”.)
- The government has adopted a **restrictive stance toward dissemination of development statistics**. A 2015 bill penalizes publication of statistics that have not been endorsed by the National Bureau of Statistics. This might constrain dissemination by PSIPSE grantees – particularly of negative or alarming findings on secondary education.
- There is a **new president in Tanzania as of late 2015**. Known as the “bulldozer,” he has undertaken sweeping reforms to fight corruption and improve government effectiveness and efficiency. That said, he has also clamped down on dissent and any opposition to his policies.

His government made **junior secondary education free** in late 2015 and also abolished “contributions” (additional fees levied by schools to defray operational costs). This has the potential to greatly boost enrollment, but may also have implications for school operations. For instance, gaps in school budgets resulting from the school fee crackdown have not yet been addressed and head teachers are hard pressed to meet infrastructure, equipment, and hiring needs.

- There are continued **tensions between mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar** over elections that took place in 2015 and 2016. This has affected external aid and may impact service delivery.

\* The Language Supportive Teaching and Textbook (LSTT) project is implemented by the University of Bristol, the University of Dodoma, and St. John’s University.

## OPPORTUNITIES

- The Tanzanian government is **prioritizing educational quality**. Under its “Big Results Now” initiative, activities focused on improving educational quality include results-based financing, teacher incentives, assistance for lagging students, and more.
- Despite political tensions between mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar, VSO staff note, as mentioned earlier, that **the government of Zanzibar has been very supportive** (VSO received the opportunity to embed a volunteer within the education ministry to help with institutional reform).



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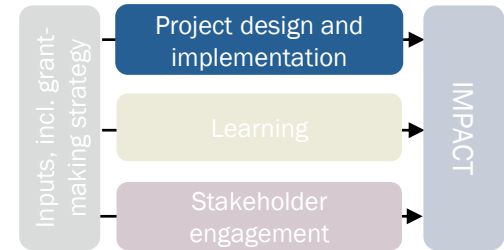
7. Upcoming risks and opportunities



**8. Selected implications**

# Selected implications

## For project design and implementation



### ❖ Opportunities

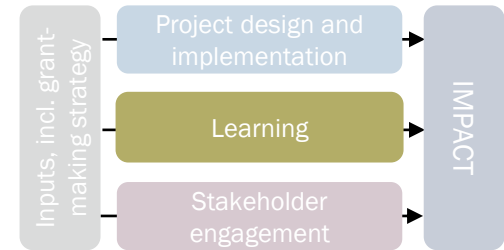
- **Teacher training projects have an opportunity to focus on gender-responsive pedagogies.** Teacher training interventions are reaching twice as many male as female teachers, likely given widespread shortages of female teachers in the target countries (also reported by grantees). This reinforces the need to train the teaching force on gender-sensitive pedagogical methods.
- **Grantees provided these suggestions:**
  - Integrating strategies focused on boys and young men into interventions focused on improving outcomes for girls
  - Devising approaches to tackle challenges of early marriage and early pregnancy (which lead to drop-out) in interventions to improve girls' enrollment in secondary education
  - Pairing life skills training with targeted entrepreneurship or workforce development programs to ensure a successful transition to employment after secondary school

### ❖ Risks

- **Projects that employ multiple intervention strategies risk diffusing their impact.** 29 out of the 52 active grants are implementing three or more intervention approaches (slide 13). This works well when activities are integrated and focused on common outcomes. However, projects that implement a range of interventions targeting diverse outcomes with limited capacity and resources risk spreading themselves too thin.
- **To assess uptake of new pedagogical strategies, teacher training projects may need to conduct more extensive classroom observations.** Some teacher training projects do not conduct observations at all; those that do, conduct between 1 and 12 hours of observation per teacher (slide 19).
- **Grantees may need to engage in contingency planning for potential contextual challenges, including political shifts and teacher shortages and transfers.** These were the most frequently cited challenges faced by grantees.

# Selected implications

## For learning and dissemination



### ❖ Evidence generation for implementation

- PSIPSE **grantees are conducting MEL activities in support of their implementation** activities.
- Nearly all grantees are conducting needs assessments, monitoring participant progress, and obtaining qualitative feedback. This bodes well for encouraging a culture of learning and monitoring progress to adjust implementation.

### ❖ Evidence generation for scale-up and broad dissemination

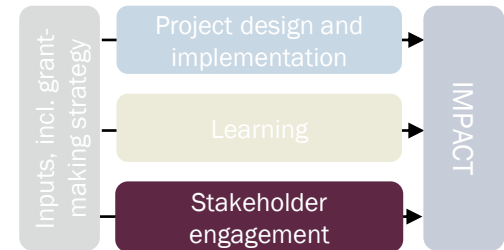
- One of the PSIPSE's key goals is strengthening the evidence base on secondary education and catalyzing broader change by disseminating that evidence. This goal aligns with findings from Mathematica's literature review, which revealed large gaps in knowledge and a dearth of long-term follow-ups, cost-effectiveness analyses, and adaptation and replication studies using rigorous designs.
- Findings included in this report show that **support for grantee-led MEL activities is limited**; research projects have only received 5% of overall funding since 2012 and nearly 80% of grantees assign low shares of their funding to MEL – 15% or less – which they find to be inadequate (slide 26).
- Grantees worry that **lack of evidence may be a barrier to achieving scale** (slide 31).
- The PSIPSE may want to consider increasing attention to MEL activities that yield actionable and persuasive evidence, which may be done in different ways (such as through funding, by giving greater weight to MEL plans in proposal decisions, or by providing technical assistance to projects in the design phase).

### ❖ PSIPSE visibility

- Requiring that projects acknowledge support from the PSIPSE in dissemination activities and suggesting that the PSIPSE be named in social media exchanges will help to increase the PSIPSE's visibility.

# Selected implications

## For scale-up and stakeholder engagement



### ❖ Assessing grantee needs associated with scale-up

— As the PSIPSE increases its support for scale-up efforts, it might be helpful to conduct a cross-grantee assessment of the common challenges grantees face during scale-up and the types of support they need.

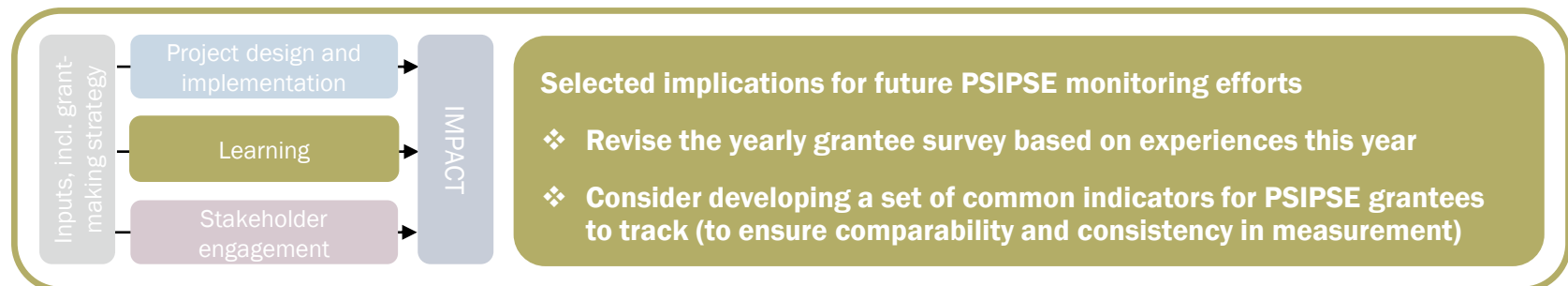
### ❖ Supporting grantees seeking to scale-up their interventions

— Grantees could benefit from more regular exchanges of common challenges they face – and share on-the-ground learning among peers – in preparation for and during scale-up. Building on the above needs assessment, this may take the form of working group meetings or pairings of grantees engaged in similar efforts.

### ❖ Supporting intensive government outreach in countries with large investments or of strategic interest

— The PSIPSE has devoted over 20 percent of its overall funding to 10 projects in Uganda and is focusing attention to East Africa, which has received nearly 70% of PSIPSE funding.

— Given this relatively large presence in Uganda in particular and East Africa in general, the PSIPSE has an opportunity to leverage its grantees and learning and communications partners to promote attention to secondary education issues in the region.



## Appendices [disseminated separately]

**Appendix A:** List of grantee publications

**Appendix B:** List of government officials that grantees engaged with in 2016

**Appendix C:** Specifications for conducting yearly monitoring

## Acknowledgments

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