

Completion Assessment Executive Summary

Educate!

May 2024

Investee	Educate!
Date of this report	25 April 2024
Date of contract signature(s)	7 December 2015 (Original Agreement), 30 June 2017 (Endline RCT funding)
Main implementation country	Uganda
Date concluded or exited	20 June 2023
Additional implementation countries	Rwanda, Kenya, Tanzania
Funding amount agreed	\$609,674
Funding amount disbursed	\$609,674
Co-funding	The Mastercard Foundation, Wellspring Philanthropic Fund, and Centre of Excellence for Development Impact and Learning (CEDIL), amongst others.
Expected PYI at year 10 (ex-ante)	69,120
Expected PYI at year 10 (ex-post)	95,200

Innovation

Educate! is a non-profit social enterprise that seeks to reduce unemployment and improve economic outcomes for youth in Uganda, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Kenya. Their core program in Uganda, the Educate! Experience, offers upper-secondary school students training in leadership and social entrepreneurship along with access to mentors and business clubs. Educate! aims for program graduates to achieve higher incomes and employment rates; increased rates of entrepreneurship and job creation; improved community participation; and critical life and employment skills such as creativity, grit, public speaking, self-efficacy, business planning, and financial literacy. In addition to working directly with secondary schools, Educate! advises governments on national curriculum reforms and implements livelihood bootcamps for out-of-school youth.

Goal of investment:

GIF invested in Educate! to contribute to the following outcomes over a period of three years: i) improvement in earnings and employment skills for 75,000 more students through in-school engagement and policy level interventions across countries (at a cost projected not to exceed \$125 per student, the cost per student in Uganda at the time of the proposal ; ii) growth to 260+ more schools (reaching 500+

total schools) in more than four regions in Uganda; iii) completion of an endline RCT survey to generate evidence for Educate! to pursue impact for one million students in sub-Saharan Africa; iv) provision of technical, strategic, and implementation advice to the Ugandan Government, improving national curriculum and quality of teacher training; and v) exploration of growing Educate!'s model in new territories.

Type of investment

GIF gave Educate! an unrestricted grant of USD 300,000 in 2015. In 2017, GIF gave an additional grant of USD 309,674 to fund Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA) to conduct an endline survey measuring medium-term outcomes of the Educate! Experience on participants.

Original investment rationale

While the initial investment was unrestricted, it was intended to help Educate! reach 500 schools in Uganda and develop plans for expansion to a second country. Additionally, GIF hoped to learn whether 1) the team could deliver the Educate! Experience at scale while maintaining program quality and increasing cost-effectiveness; 2) Educate! could solidify its influence on the Ugandan national curriculum; and 3) Educate!'s indirect model could generate traction in other countries.

GIF's second grant for the RCT endline was aimed at generating critical information on the effectiveness of the program to inform further scale-up of the program, GIF follow-on funding, and existing gaps in the literature.

Expected impact

At the time of investment, early evaluation results indicated that students who completed the Educate! program had significantly higher earnings and were much more likely to start and own a business. GIF's practical impact forecast relied on these results and Educate!'s ambitious expansion plans to model the impact of increased incomes for 2.5 million students across up to five countries, for a risk-adjusted PYI (person-years of income) score of 69,000.

Results

Performance against KPIs

Educate!'s long-term vision of success was to rapidly scale up both their direct (in-school) and indirect models of program delivery.

In the short term (1-3 years) success for the grant was defined as:

- Growing their presence in Uganda to 500 partner schools across four regions

- Expanding to at least one new country and preparing for entry into a second new country
- Completing the RCT
- Providing technical, strategic, and implementation advice to the Ugandan government with the aim of improving the national curriculum
- Making continuous refinements to scaling strategy, cost effectiveness, and rigorous evaluation of social outcomes

While the definitions of success for some of these KPIs were ambiguous, Educate! largely accomplished its short-term goals. By 2018, Educate! had successfully recruited 502 schools in Uganda into the program, and had operations in both Rwanda and Kenya. The RCT data collection was completed successfully, although factors beyond Educate!’s control delayed the paper’s publication until 2023. Educate! faced a challenging political landscape in Uganda which limited the adoption of new curriculum reforms.

In the long term (3+ years) Educate! aimed to secure additional funding to allow full-scale implementation in Uganda, implement Educate!’s approach in three countries, and eventually fulfil their 10-year vision to reach one million youth across sub-Saharan Africa. While Educate! has made significant progress against many of these goals (see table below), they appear to be unlikely to reach one million youth by 2025 due in part to the impact of COVID-19 school closures on expansion progress. However, they are on track to reach this goal through their work on the secondary reform in Tanzania.

Progress against the long-term vision

Goal	As of 2022
Allow full scale implementation in Uganda (1,000+ schools)	Educate! had partnered with 850 schools in Uganda by 2020 when COVID-19 closed schools for two years, and an additional 400 schools in Rwanda.
Implement Educate! model and build influence with government education departments in three sub-Saharan territories	Educate! has advised on curriculum reforms in Uganda, Rwanda, and Kenya. In 2022, they announced a partnership with the Tanzania Institute of Education (TIE), which is responsible for designing curricula for the nation’s 1,900,000 secondary school students.
Fulfil the 10-year vision to reach one million youth annually across sub-Saharan countries.	Before the 2020 school closures due to COVID-19, Educate! reported reaching 540,000 learners across Kenya, Uganda, and Rwanda.

Performance against impact projections

Nine years after GIF’s initial investment, more information was available about the type and magnitude of the impacts of Educate!’s programs. The GIF-funded evaluation¹ found that while Educate!’s intensive

¹ (Chioda et al., 2023)

in-school model had no impact on incomes in the medium term, it was very effective at boosting secondary and tertiary educational attainment among female participants.² The program was also effective in improving several measures of gender equity. The researchers found that Educate! graduates exhibited more progressive gender views, displayed lower social acceptability of violence, and were less likely to engage in risky relationships. Female Educate! graduates were less likely to report being victims of physical or threatened violence.

A separate evaluation of Educate!'s curriculum reforms in Rwanda³ found that they led to additional investments in education among both men and women, including an increased likelihood of being enrolled in tertiary education at the time of the endline data collection three years later. These results were particularly striking considering that returns to education are quite high in sub-Saharan Africa, particularly for women and for additional years of tertiary education.⁴

Finally, Educate!'s reports revealed that they reached far fewer students than their early, ambitious projections, with the growth trajectory impacted by 1) the several years of COVID-19 school closures, and 2) government delays in the timeline for the rollout of Kenya's curriculum reforms. Educate! was projected to reach 1,800,000 annually by 2023 while operating in Uganda, Rwanda, and other countries (which now include Kenya and Tanzania). By 2019, Educate! estimated that they had managed to reach 470,000 youth annually under the education system reform work in Uganda, Kenya, and Rwanda combined. In 2022, Educate! reported measurably impacting just over 50,000 youths directly, with hundreds of thousands more students benefiting indirectly from programs such as Educate!'s curriculum advisory work and teacher training programs. Educate! is on track to meet their original ambitious projections once the Tanzania curriculum reform is rolled out to all lower secondary students in the country.

In 2024, GIF developed a revised PI model that focused on Educate!'s impact on 1) increased educational attainment and 2) increased agency for women and girls, using reported data on their reach through 2022 and revised projections for their reach in 2023-2025. GIF's revised model projects a risk-adjusted PYI (person-years of income) score of 95,200, significantly higher than initial projections.

Key learnings

- It is important to build knowledge and buy-in with education stakeholders for a new curriculum at every level of the government and school administration. Educate! was able to do this successfully in Rwanda by including government officials from the education board and school administrators in regular teacher trainings. Complex bureaucratic systems and processes make reforms challenging; different departments have different priorities and agendas. For Educate!, it was important to engage with government agencies like the Rwanda Basic Education Board and the National Examination and School Inspection Authority, as well as local education authorities and teachers, to define and agree on a central goal and determine everyone's role. This

² This was likely due at least in part to the time frame covered by the evaluation. Endline data collection took place four years after students exited the program, when many of them were still enrolled in tertiary education and thus had lower earnings.

³ (Chioda et al., 2021)

⁴ (Montenegro & Patrinos, 2014)

encouraged everyone involved to take part in a co-design process that fostered partnership and shared commitment.

- Formal partnerships such as memoranda of understanding are one key element to entrenching reforms because they demonstrate that the partner is interested and committed to the reform process. For example, in Rwanda, Educate! was able to secure a substantive MoU with the Rwanda Education Board which enabled systematic adoption and uptake of the reform.
- Moving key roles into the field, as Educate! did by shifting its program coordinator office to Northern Uganda, can help ease travel logistics, establish a more permanent presence in order to build community partnerships, and create stronger feedback loops between program design, implementation, and operations.
- To have deeper impact, it was necessary to expand Educate!'s intervention to other elements of the education system. For example, Educate! developed new programs to provide continuous professional development to teachers to improve pedagogy for soft skills.
- In addition to formal partnerships, greater engagement with leaders within ministries of education and local authorities in the districts of operation might have helped Educate! create champions for their reforms within the system and ensure greater take-up.