

## EDITORIAL

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### *Dear friends,*

The year 2022 is here, the year when our hopes and dreams may be restored. The world is making every attempt to recover from the substantial social and economic losses brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic.

A [report](#) by UNESCO, UNICEF and World Bank states that in low and middle income countries, the percentage of children living in learning poverty will rise sharply, up to 70% from 53% before the pandemic.

This is largely due to the unprecedented school closures and the varying quality and effectiveness of remote learning. These statistics are corroborated by the recently launched [Uwezo report 2021](#), where only 40% of Grade 4 learners are at least meeting expectations in reading a Grade 3-appropriate English story.



In Kenya, the education system has not been spared from the global effects of the pandemic. The Education calendar is stretched, with 5 national examinations and 4 academic terms. Towards the end of 2021, several schools experienced arson. Stakeholders cited the cause to be mounted academic pressure on the students and mental health issues among adolescents.

Besides this, there is need for school re-entry for 40% of teenage girls who became mothers and did not return to school and for learners who dropped out during the prolonged school closures. 2022 is also an election year and from past experience, learning disruptions have characterized the election period.

Zizi Afrique Foundation is in its second year of implementing [Strategy 2025](#). A lot of plans have been put in place to recover from learning losses, especially for the children furthest behind.

In this first edition of the *Zizi Quarterly*, we share how we are using evidence to inform policy and practice and how we have joined forces with other stakeholders to reach all children and youth.

## Evidence Generation and Learning

Producing and using evidence



***Without data you are just another person with an opinion.***

Edwards Deming



On 21st February, we celebrated the culmination of a year-long journey of developing contextualized tools to assess values and life skills. The Kenyan technical panel was joined by leaders from Uganda and Tanzania in a [graduation ceremony](#) where certificates were awarded. [Prof. Esther Care](#) was the guest of honor.

The Assessment of Life Skills and Values in East Africa's (ALiVE) large scale, household-based assessment is set to take place in 20 counties beginning 1st April. To prepare for this, a dry run was conducted in 20 enumeration areas in Tharaka Nithi County, reaching 350 adolescents. Furthermore, ALiVE hosted an academy for analysis of assessment data with 12 statisticians from East Africa, targeting the capacity readiness for regional analysis. The academy was facilitated by Prof. Care and it involved analysts from the ALiVE Secretariat, universities, and the national bureaus of statistics from Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda.



We conducted a household baseline survey in Mombasa County from 15th to 24th March under the Schools2030 project. This evidence project seeks to understand how schools can be empowered to design and implement locally-rooted solutions to improve holistic learning outcomes. The study explored the relationship between academic learning outcomes and non-academic skills for children aged 10-15 years.

A comparative study on the community digital program was conducted in Bungoma County to find out the progress of the learners in digital learning. The study sought to establish the functionality of peer learning groups, to check the level of comprehension of the learners and the levels of parental engagement and support towards learning.





## Accessing the global stage —using evidence

We brought together different TVET stakeholders from the Ministry of Education for a one-week workshop to map out TVET data. The mapping is a starting point to understanding the ecosystem of education and to training on microdata in Sub-Saharan Africa: its actors, and its gaps. This process is part of the Unlocking Data Initiative co-created by Zizi Afrique, ESSA, eBASE Africa, EdTechHub, Open Burkina and Esme University of Malawi.



Walter in Swakopmund, Namibia

Two papers were presented in the [WorldSkills Africa Swakopmund 2022 TVET Conference](#), held from 29th to 31st March. The theme of the conference was, *Promoting Skills Development in the 21st Century for Sustainable Economic Growth and African Ownership*. Two [papers](#) were published in the 7th volume of the African Journal of TVET themed, *Embracing Change and Building Resilience in TVET in Times of Uncertainty*. The papers were presented during the 9th Rift Valley Technical Training Institute Conference held from 30th June to 1st July 2021.

Zizi Afrique also contributed two chapters to the recently published [book](#) titled, *Learning, Marginalization, and Improving the Quality of Education*

### Learning, Marginalization, and Improving the Quality of Education in Low-income Countries

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Second volume in the series  
*Learning at the Bottom of the Pyramid*

*in Low-income Countries*. Five papers are set to be presented during the Comparative and International Education Society (CIES) to be held from 18th – 22nd April in Minneapolis.

We joined a webinar hosted by the Economic Policy Research Institute and shared evidence and experience on supporting access to social protection for persons with disabilities.

We also participated in a webinar hosted by The Education Partnership (TEP) Centre (Nigeria) on solving learning issues using low-cost tech solutions.



# Advocacy for policy change and implementation

Learning together, moving together, growing together



***Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.***

Helen Keller



We partnered with the Education Development Trust (EDT), Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA) and other members of the Education Evidence for Action (EE4A) platform to explore the establishment of the Education Evidence Hub (EEH). Led by the Ministry, the vision for the EEH is to sustain a multi-stakeholder platform for institutionalizing evidence-based policymaking. The initial meeting was held on 16th and 17th February.

The Regional Education Learning Initiative (RELI) held its first quarterly learning event on 31st March. The aim of the event was to bring members together to jointly learn from and with each other. During the meeting, emerging education evidence was shared by the members. Together with members of RELI, we held a press briefing on the [2021 KCPE results](#) and the status of primary education in Kenya. 17 journalists attended the press conference and provided a [broadcast](#) and [print coverage](#).

We held a virtual meeting with representatives from RELI Uganda and Tanzania to discuss the structure of the Curriculum Equity Project (CEP) Phase 2. The meeting aimed to establish a transformational approach to parental engagement in the region.

We held a Community of Practice (CoP) [meeting](#) with TVET institutions under the Safaricom Foundation Scholarship on 15th February. The CoP is strategic for engaging with policy makers and institutions.

The theme of the meeting was, Recognition of prior learning policy. The key speaker of the session was Dr. Alice Kande, Deputy Director and Head of department— Policy and Planning, at the Kenya National Qualifications Authority. We have partnered with 20 community-based organizations which will lead in the data collection of the 800 sampled enumeration areas of ALiVE. Training for these grassroots organizations was held on 15th and 16th March.

On 24th January, we led other RELI partners in celebrating International Day of Education. This year's theme was, Changing Course, Transforming Education. A one hour "tweetathon" was held, receiving overwhelming engagement. One of the tweets shared was:





## Innovation for Improved Practice



***Every student can learn, just not on the same day or in the same way.***

George Evans



In February, we engaged with principals of 3 Teacher Training Colleges (TTC) with an aim of reinforcing Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) instruction. Through week-long experiential sessions at Egoji with 13 tutors and 3 principals, the team was persuaded to adopt schools within the college's vicinity after reflecting on assessment data. Egoji pledged to adopt and mentor 3 primary schools to improve learning outcomes, as they explore ways of integrating child-focused pedagogies to teacher training on literacy instruction.

School-based camps were implemented in 85 primary schools in Bungoma, Tana River and Turkana counties, benefitting ;

4315 learners. 1,109 in English, 1,238 in Kiswahili, 1,968 in numeracy The digital learning intervention continued for 1200 learners supported by 206 parent champions.

We had an immersion exercise in Bungoma from 6th to 8th March with members of the ALP national advisory group. During the immersion, the group had a chance to experience learning camps taking place in the schools and also the digital learning at home spearheaded by parents.

It also presented an opportunity to reflect on and review progress made on the Accelerated Learning Program, as well as an opportunity to explore sustainability mechanisms within the Government. At the beginning of the year, the Zizi family and friends continued their commitment of supporting the Tenda Wema project. The project is paying school fees and schooling-associated costs for children who are furthest left behind.

So far, 62 learners in primary, secondary and college are beneficiaries of the project, among them "The forest children of Lamu."

A total of 207 youth facing extreme adversities were enrolled in the Safaricom Foundation Scholarship Program, while 299 trainees from the previous cohorts were placed on industrial attachment. Through a partnership with the Kenya Institute of Special Education (KISE), the Disability Enterprise Support Centre (DESC) was inaugurated, seeking to unlock the constitutional promise to persons and youth with disabilities of engaging in the AGPO arrangement of preferential treating in government procurement. A pilot class of 15 persons with disabilities (some of them street beggars) is seeking empowerment for them to take advantage and change their livelihoods through government procurement.

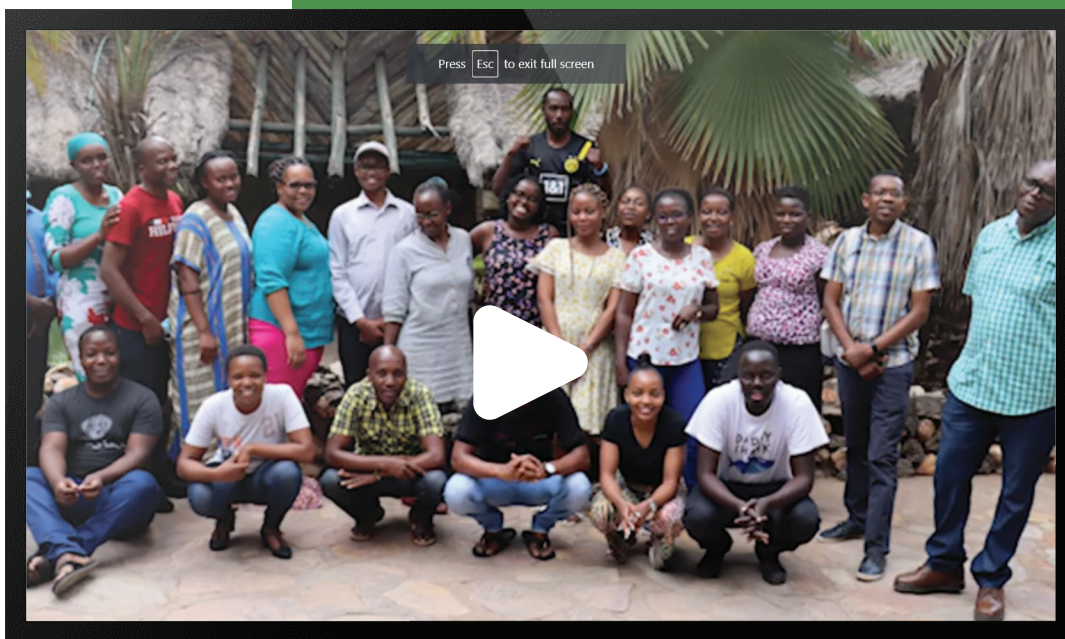
The Safaricom Foundation Scholarship program is expanding. AMREF has come on board to sponsor 33 young mothers to undergo training in food and beverage, electrical, welding and plumbing at the Waithaka Vocational Training Center. UNICEF sponsored 10 young mothers in the four trade areas at the Kisumu Institute of Community Development and Training. We hosted two youth mentorship hangouts on preparing for interviews and character building for maintaining a job, reaching 565 youth.

# WITHIN THE ZIZI WALLS



- ➔ We are now a grantee of the LEGO Foundation which will be supporting the expansion of the ALIVE initiative.
- ➔ Three new staff members and seven interns joined the Zizi team.
- ➔ We celebrated Valentine's Day and International Women's Day in a special way.

Watch this video to see our experience of the Immersion Exercise in Isiolo, and our encounter with those left furthest behind.



The Zizi  
**IMPACT**