

Educate! Rwanda's youth

Preparing youth in **Rwanda** with the skills to succeed in today's economy

Summary

Educate! prepares youth in Africa with the skills to succeed in today's economy. Africa's youth population is surging: Nearly 50% of all Africans are younger than 18, and that number is rising. Educate! tackles youth unemployment by partnering with schools and governments to reform what schools teach and how they teach it, so that students in Africa have the skills to start businesses, get jobs and drive development in their communities. Educate!'s goal is to make this practical, skills-based model part of national education systems, creating cost-effective and sustainable impact.

The problem

As many as 90% of African youth are projected to work in the informal sector. The scarcity of formal jobs on the continent has led to dramatic rates of youth unemployment. The challenge is particularly stark in Rwanda, where 61% of the population is under age 25, and as much as 69% of youth are unemployed or underemployed. Moreover, 72% of those employed are in family firms or self-employed. This high share of self-employment demonstrates that salaried jobs are scarce, and suggests that there is a major opportunity for improving the prospects of youth through entrepreneurship.

The partner

With ten years of experience identifying and teaching the skills youth need to get jobs and create businesses, Educate! implements a proven model of practical, skills-based education directly in schools and advises governments on national education policy and curriculum reform. The organization has a successful track record and has supported governments across East Africa in integrating skills-based education nationally. This includes partnering with Uganda's government and serving as a technical advisor to both Rwanda and Kenya on national education reforms.

The philanthropic solution

Starting in 2016 Educate! designed and launched "Educate! Exchange" (a direct school support intervention intended to facilitate the uptake of the new curriculum). The intervention proposed for funding now will extend Educate!'s reach to more than 40% of secondary schools across Rwanda, including urban areas for the first time). Key components of "Educate! Exchange" include:

- **Teacher training:** trainings to entrepreneurship teachers and "Mock Days," where teachers practice lesson delivery
- **Exchange visits:** Visits to each other's classrooms give teachers the opportunity to see how their peers are putting the new curriculum into practice
- **Youth Leader for In-School Support:** Youth Leaders are Educate! Employees that provide on-the-ground support for school administration, teachers, and students and help ensure that the new curriculum is successfully adopted.

The evidence

Educate! has over ten years of experience providing skills training in leadership, entrepreneurship and workforce readiness to African youth. Two rigorous external evaluations have demonstrated that the organization has a significant, measurable impact on the lives of its students in Uganda. The Educate! program increased business ownership among participants by 44% and employment by 50%, compared to the control group. Female Educate! participants benefitted even more, with an increase in annual income of 244%, business ownership by 91% and employment by more than 113%. In Rwanda, Educate! is currently running a JPAL-supported RCT allowing it to generate critical learning about how to drive teacher pedagogical change.

The impact

The proposed intervention will impact an additional 22,500 students. The organization tracks more than 20+ key performance indicators (KPIs) for these students, analyzing results rapidly to improve its programming. These KPIs include student-run business revenue, student attendance, gender balance and more.



Photos: Educate! Scholars Shadia & Shakira

All programmatic data provided by Educate!. The UBS Optimus Foundation is a grant-making foundation that offers UBS clients a platform to use their wealth to drive positive social and environmental change. The Foundation selects programs that improve children's health, education and protection, ones that have the potential to be transformative, scalable and sustainable as well as programs tackling environmental and climate issues.

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