



ANNUAL REPORT 2025



Dear friends,

For anyone who has followed the mc2h foundation's journey so far, you will know that our partners and communities have helped shape who we are today.

2025 has been no different. Our partners shared their challenges, not only with regards literacy, but also on the role that philanthropy plays in creating lasting change. We heard clearly that short-term, top-down approaches often limit the very progress they seek to support, and that unless change is set and led by communities, it does not last past the grant cycle.

Armed with this knowledge, 2025 saw us make important strides towards modelling the type of philanthropy we hope to promote: We deepened our commitment to shifting power towards local leadership and locally-rooted organisations; we shifted our decision-making and governance to West Africa; and we inaugurated our longer-term, cohort-centred grant-making strategy.

Our investment in the Ghana Community-Led Development Collaborative also reflects where we believe the future lies: in collective learning, trust, and communities having greater ownership over the change they want to see.

We are still learning – and unlearning! – but one thing feels increasingly clear: communities already hold the knowledge, resilience, and leadership needed to create lasting change. Our role is to help resource and support that potential to thrive. And to nudge others to do the same.

Watch this space; with gratitude.

TARA WONDRAKZEK
Chair of the board, mc2h



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2025 AT A GLANCE

1.6M FUNDS DISTRIBUTED
USD IN 2025

4.69M CUMULATIVE FUNDS
USD DISTRIBUTED SINCE 2021

3 DONOR ORGANISATIONS

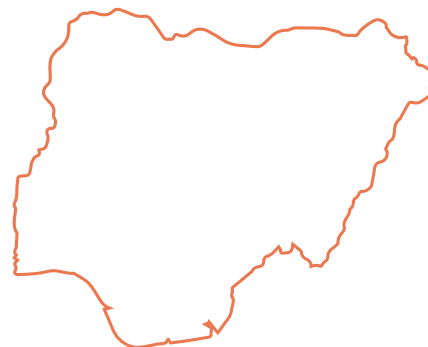
9 PARTNER ORGANISATIONS

2 COUNTRIES OF OPERATION



8 PARTNERS IN
GHANA

3 PARTNERS
IN NIGERIA



OUR PARTNERS ARE OUR EXPERTS

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Our partners and their communities continue to be our greatest teachers. Their work, leadership, and commitment constantly challenge us to think differently about what meaningful and lasting change really looks like. They are the experts, and we are grateful to be on this journey alongside them.

LIVELY MINDS



In 2025, Lively Minds has reached a milestone that many organisations dream of. After much efforts in advocating for the Power of Parents and their mother-run play schemes, they achieved a partnership with the Ghanaian government to make parental activism a cornerstone of its national strategy and to scale this approach to over 3,500 rural schools across the country.



THE LUMINOS FUND

This year, beyond their regular operations, Luminos co-developed a new national accelerated learning curriculum with the Ghanaian government, expanding quality learning opportunities for out-of-school children. On top of making the curriculum more relevant, they increased its accessibility by translating it in four local languages: Asante Twi, Ewe, Dagaare, and Dagbani. This great piece of work - 3,844 pages - has now the potential to reach 30,000 out-of-school children each year.

RADIO SCHOOLS PROGRAMME



In 2025, the Radio School Programme expanded its reach from 30,140 learners in 2024 to 40,679 learners across underserved communities, bringing cumulative reach to more than 120,000 learners. On top of these great statistics, they worked closely with the ministry of education in Nigeria, increasing the long-term sustainability of the project.

AFRIKIDS



One of the main highlights for AfriKids in 2025, was their strategic rethinking to further embed Community-Led Development in their work. Thanks to our seed funding, and a new funding partnership with the People's Postcode Lottery (PPL), they had the resources to invest in their new project *Rise-up*. This two-year research initiative will collect data from both implementation communities and control communities. By generating evidence on what works, AfriKids aims to scale a model that helps ensure every child has the chance to learn, thrive and shape their own future.



SAIDE - AFRICAN STORYBOOK (ASB)

In 2025, African Storybook took a step forward towards community-led development. They took the time to reflect and refine their objectives by updating their Theory of Change and committing to engage communities, including children, throughout their processes. On top of this, they continued tirelessly with their work, completing 100 translations, finishing 30+ child-created books and 20+ champion-created books. We are sure that this impact will multiply in the years ahead as they continue to embed community-led development in their work.



AFRICAN COLLABORATIVE

**AFRICAN
COLLABORATIVE**

Our partnership with African Collaborative is rooted in a shared belief that lasting change is strongest when communities lead. In 2025, we were proud to support African Collaborative as it continued to champion locally led development across the continent, helping shift power and resources closer to African organisations and communities. This aligns closely with mc2h's commitment to community-led approaches and long-term, sustainable change.



EDUSPOTS

2025 marked EduSpots' 10th year anniversary. As part of their celebrations, they developed a sustainability plan to ensure that each spot survives far beyond EduSpots' funding; and they launched their next phase, expanding from 50 to 75 spots through a process co-created with local leaders, ensuring the model remains rooted in community needs and ownership. On top of their strategic work, an independent study in 2025 highlighted how EduSpots has successfully fostered community-led development in the communities they serve, improving long-term sustainability.



SABRE EDUCATION



In 2025, Sabre Education was recognised by the Ghanaian government as a key contributor to the early childhood education space. As a result, they have been chosen for a partnership with the government to train other actors on learning through play. This achievement comes to show their expertise and excellency in the work they do across the board, with teacher training institutions, schools, government agencies and other like-minded civil society organisations.



SCHOOL FOR LIFE

2025 was an important year for School for Life as it marked its 30th anniversary. To celebrate this milestone, they conducted extensive consultations with communities, staff, board members and other actors to develop their new 5 year strategy. The result reflects School for Life's continued journey towards community-led development, placing communities at the centre of its work and decision-making.



FEEDBACK FROM PARTNERS



'Your commitment to unrestricted, trust-based philanthropy is especially powerful. It signals belief in our mission, confidence in our integrity, and trust in our expertise as practitioners.'

We are sharing our partners' feedback openly as we are aiming to be transparent about the feedback we receive - both good and bad. We believe this **sets the bar for the equitable, transparent relationships we strive to build**. We also hope sharing this feedback will be helpful for other funders as they reflect on their own practices.

In our anonymous annual survey, partners have shared that we have a **strong and trusting partnership**. At the same time, important themes emerged where we can do better.

We see these findings as guidance for how we can serve them and their communities better and deepen our shared commitment.

OUR STRENGTHS



Flexible multi-year funding



Transparency



Peer learning



Community-led development approach

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT



Advance planning and communication



Clarity around long-term funding trajectories



Inclusion of wider partner teams



Attention to power dynamics within our relationships

STORIES FROM PARTNERS



Among our longest-standing partners, EduSpots and African Storybook continue to exemplify the leadership, innovation and community ownership that underpin lasting educational change, and we are pleased to highlight their work in the pages that follow.

AFRICAN STORYBOOK

African Storybook shared with us that **reading is extending beyond Champion-led sessions into homes, schools, libraries, churches, and neighbourhood spaces.** The project was increasingly owned by both communities and children, resulting in **children moving from passive readers to active creators,** supported by their communities.



COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP

Communities showed signs of ownership and shared responsibility of literacy efforts. For example:

- In Amahi Community (Ghana), as reported by Evans, the initiative evolved into what he described as a **“Household Library,”** where families independently downloaded the Reader App for home use. **Even adults who were not literate began engaging by asking their children to read aloud and explain stories to them.**



CHILDREN’S OWNERSHIP

Children showed growing confidence, agency, and joy in reading. For example:

- Prince, from Ghana, shared that a previously reluctant learner stood before his peers to read and narrate a story;
- Dr. Joyce, from Nigeria, reported that a child who was initially unable to read began reading independently after participating in the neighbourhood reading sessions.
- Sharon, from Nigeria, shared that children started to independently exploring the project’s apps, selecting storybooks, and illustrating their own stories.



EDUSPOTS

During one of our learning visits to EduSpots, we had the pleasure of meeting Hubu Abdul-Rahaman, a Catalyst at the Zangbalun Spot. Hubu is a volunteer teacher who joined EduSpots in 2021 and has been actively supporting learners ever since.

Reflecting on his experience, Hubu shared that volunteering with EduSpots has been a valuable opportunity for personal and professional growth. Beyond his own development, he spoke passionately about the impact he has witnessed among learners, noting how **their confidence and academic performance continue to improve each day.**

*"During a learning visit to Akumadan, I observed two young children, around ages 7 and 8, who came into the Spot immediately after school, not for a scheduled club session, but simply because the space was open. They were visibly excited, ran to pick up picture storybooks, and began reading on their own. This moment stood out as a strong indication of a **growing love for reading and learning**, something we are especially keen to nurture. It suggests that **learners are not only improving their literacy skills but are also developing intrinsic motivation and a sense of ownership over their learning.**"*



SHIFTING POWER



We have spent the past few years **listening to our partners and learning from them** about their strengths, challenges, and the problems of aid and development in West Africa. What was most surprising – and saddening – for us, was hearing some hard-hitting facts about donors’ roles in this space. We learnt how, **unwittingly, donors often undermine the cause areas, communities and NGOs they seek to serve**. Here are some of the themes that often came up:

FLEXIBLE FUNDING IS NEEDED FOR SUSTAINABLE CHANGE

Most of our grantees survive on restricted funds and short-term grant cycles (1-3 years). And yet **long-term, flexible funding is critical to support lasting, deep-rooted change**, which takes time and needs trust.

POWER IS EMBEDDED IN MOST FUNDER PRACTICES

All partners talked about inherent power dynamics in their funding relationships. Be it **lack of visibility** of next funding cycles, **lack of transparency** in how decisions are made, or **lack of ownership** of KPIs set.

COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANISATIONS ARE UNDERFUNDED

Perceived as higher risk, and with limited visibility or fundraising capacity, community-based organisations are often overlooked, with some research citing **as little as 2% of funding reaching local organisations!***

COMMUNITY-LED DEVELOPMENT TAKES TIME THAT NGOs ARE OFTEN NOT GIVEN

When asked about community-driven change, all partners said they didn’t feel they could deliver this fully due to **grant cycles and short-term metrics**.

Taking on board these conclusions, we have started our repositioning as a foundation that focuses on community-led development, and champions progressive philanthropic practices.

REIMAGINING DEVELOPMENT

Our reimagining of development focuses on three pillars that aim to achieve deep-rooted, systemic change. They focus on *what* we fund, *how* we fund it, and how we support the ecosystem around it.

FUND EARLY YEARS EDUCATION

Primary education is the single most effective tool we can invest in to help communities rise up, sustainably. Through long-term, flexible funding and support, we help local organisations to drive more relevant, inclusive and sustainable education solutions in their communities.

CHAMPION COMMUNITY-LED DEVELOPMENT

Lasting change can only be achieved when driven by the communities themselves. As such, we are committed to community-led development (CLD), ensuring that those closest to the challenges have the power, voice and resources to shape their own solutions.

CHALLENGE PHILANTHROPY

We are committed to a power-shifting, trust-based approach to philanthropy, ensuring our resources strengthen community solutions instead of dictating them. Beyond our own practice, we advocate for progressive philanthropy across the sector.

AN APPROACH TO REDUCE DEPENDENCY

By funding community-driven efforts in literacy and challenging current top-down, rigid funding practices, we aim to show that community-driven solutions deliver deep-rooted, long-term, equitable change that reduces reliance on international aid.



PROMOTING PROGRESSIVE PHILANTHROPY



Guided by what partners and communities told us they need to create lasting change, we are moving away from short-term funding towards relationships grounded in trust, flexibility, and shared ownership. This means investing in locally-rooted organisations over the long term, creating more equitable and participatory decision-making processes, and fostering collaboration and peer learning across partners. **We see this not simply as a change in how we fund, but in how we understand our role as a partner.**

We are proud to share here the 6 principles that guide our **new grant-making approach**:

-  **01.** Establish **10-year grant partnerships** to foster security, stability, and trust between funder and NGO.
-  **02.** Transition out larger NGOs and **engage smaller, younger education CBOs** aligned with CLD.
-  **03.** Our siloed funding will transform into **cohort-based support**.
-  **04.** Introduce an **equitable partner selection process**, with CBOs chosen by a local advisory board and free to opt in or out at key stages.
-  **05.** **Prioritise peer learning** through collaboration among partners, rather than one-way exchanges with us as funder.
-  **06.** **Document and share our process openly**, ensuring transparency, mutual accountability, and clear exit plans.

THE GHANA COMMUNITY-LED DEVELOPMENT COLLABORATIVE



As we embarked on this journey of transformation towards community-led development, it was clear that **collaboration** needed to be at the forefront of our work.

It was from this conviction that the Ghana Community-Led Development Collaborative was born.

THE GHANA COMMUNITY-LED DEVELOPMENT COLLABORATIVE

In November 2025, a group of Ghanaian changemakers, activists, and believers came together to **build a collective voice around community-led development, ensuring it is more visible, trusted and funded.** The aims are to:

- **Promote community-driven approaches** that place communities at the centre of education solutions.
- **Strengthen the capacity of local actors** to design, lead, advocate for, and sustain initiatives that empower communities to actively address and support children's educational needs.
- **Foster cross-learning** among local organisations to deepen understanding and implementation of effective community-driven strategies.
- **Advocate for policy and practice change** that recognizes and invests in communities as central to sustaining equitable and quality education for all.
- **Document, analyse, and share lessons learned** from community-led initiatives to inspire replication, adaptation, and scaling of successful approaches elsewhere.

GROWING THE TEAM



Just a year ago, mc2h was driven by a single individual; today, it has grown into a small team working together to advance community-led development. This shift is not just about added capacity; it is about building collective strength. With new energy, critical perspectives, and diverse expertise, we challenge each other, think more boldly, and stay grounded in the belief that change must be driven by communities. Together, we are stronger, more intentional, and better equipped to advance the change we seek.

Here's a glance into the two new members of the team:



Carolyn Ng'eny
Regional Director

Carolyn has over 20 years of experience in managing interventions for social justice for underserved populations. Her experience spans project and programme management, capacity and organizational development for community-based and civil society organizations.



Elena Diana
Admin and Comms Officer

Elena is a professional with experience across the social impact sector. With a background in consultancy and grassroots organising, she brings both strategic insight and a hands-on approach to mc2h. Elena supports the team to function smoothly, sustainably, and with care.

INVESTING IN WEST AFRICAN LEADERSHIP



As the cherry on top, the end of 2025 brought us 3 new board members. We are extremely honoured that Wedad Sayibu, Avril Abena Kudzi and Amé Atsu David have joined us as our new West African board members, joining Tara and Jo.

By bringing this level of **local expertise into the heart and leadership of the foundation**, we not only learn from their lived-experience on education and philanthropy in West Africa, but we also ensure we have leadership to hold us true on our journey towards a power-shifting, equitable and community-centred approach.



Wedad Sayibu

Wedad has over 17 years of experience in development, working with international and local organisations, where she has led the design, implementation and management of small scale and large scale programs across the education field. She is currently the Director of School for Life, which promotes equitable access to quality basic education in Ghana, focusing on Out of School Children and low performing public basic schools.



Avril Aben Kudzi

Avril is a seasoned sustainable development professional with over 14 years of leadership experience in education, youth empowerment, governance and community development across West Africa. Her expertise includes strengthening education systems, foundational and accelerated learning, policy engagement, grants and financial management and building effective public-private partnerships.



Amé Atsu David

Amé is a Pan-Africanist and an advocate for human rights, gender justice, and adolescent and youth sexual and reproductive health and rights. She currently serves as the Regional Co-Director for Africa at Global Fund for Children (GFC), supporting community-based organizations across the continent to advance the rights and wellbeing of children, adolescents, and youth, particularly girls and young people from marginalized communities.

It is with both sadness and deep gratitude that we said goodbye to Patsy Shannon from the mc2h board this year.

A founding member of the foundation, Patsy's thoughtful counsel and unwavering commitment helped mc2h become what it is today. She was the quiet backbone of the organisation for many years, bringing rigour, structure and professionalism to the foundation.

We are hugely grateful for her years of service, and wish her every success and happiness in the years ahead!



THANK YOU, PATSY

LOOKING AHEAD



2025 has been an incredible year, filled with learnings and transformations. This is, however, only the start of a long and exciting journey in the community-led development space. As the year has come to a close, we are already looking forward to what's to come.

The key projects in the pipelines for the year ahead are:



THE LAUNCH OF OUR FIRST PARTNER COHORT

As we fully embark in the new grant-making approach, we are looking forward to **onboard three new partners** as part of our first cohort in January. We have a lot to learn still, and we are excited to do so along these new partners.



THE GHANA COMMUNITY-LED DEVELOPMENT COLLABORATIVE

Following the co-creation workshop, the new year ahead will see the collaborative **learning together about community-led development and starting implementation across 12 different communities**.

Community-led development is the only solution, and we are looking forward to creating more evidence to support this!



WIDEN OUR FOCUS TO CHILDREN'S EDUCATION

The more we exist in this space, the more we see how sustainable literacy outcomes cannot be achieved through literacy interventions alone. By taking a broader education lens, we can better support community-based organisations to address the **interconnected challenges that shape children's learning and long-term opportunities**.



INTRODUCING ORGANISATIONAL STRENGTHENING SUPPORT

Following internal discussions and conversations with partners, we will develop a **strategy to offer organisational strengthening support to our partners**, on top of our funding. This will give them the chance to ask for any kind of support they might need to improve their work.

WITH GRATITUDE



A special thank you goes to everyone who has made this possible.

FUNDERS

To all of our donors - thank you for trusting us to distribute your funding in support of community-led development in education across Africa. Your belief in our mission, and in the power of local leadership, enables communities to turn their ideas and ambitions into lasting impact.

On behalf of the mc2h foundation, our partner organisations, and the communities they serve, thank you for standing with us and making this work possible.



**Fondation
Les Pâquerettes**

PARTNER ORGANISATIONS

To our partner organisations - thank you for being on this journey with us, and for sharing both challenges and successes. You, along with the communities you serve, are at the core of all of our work.



**AFRICAN
COLLABORATIVE**



**‘A PERSON WHO
DOES NOT KNOW
WHERE THEY ARE
GOING WILL NEVER
KNOW WHEN THEY
ARRIVE’**

- African proverb -

