



Skills Builder PARTNERSHIP Global



Global Impact Report 2025

One day,
everyone will build
the essential skills
to thrive



Across the world, **1,113 Skills Builder partners** delivered more than **2,462,000 high quality opportunities** for individuals in **52 countries** to build essential skills in the past year.



Welcome



Tom Ravenscroft

Founder & Global CEO
Skills Builder Partnership

Skills Builder Partnership exists to ensure that one day, everyone builds the essential skills to succeed.

It's a mission which has resonated across the world at a time when the challenges and opportunities of change have never been starker. The growing consensus is that a complete education has to include building essential skills for every learner.

The world around us is changing rapidly, particularly with the acceleration of technological change. Our research shows that essential skills are not a relic of the past but are, in fact, critical for confident and effective use of new tools like AI. These are the human skills that enable us to adapt, collaborate, and innovate in a future defined by technology.

This ability to adapt will be vital for some of our most challenged communities who are already experiencing the impacts of conflict and climate change.

Our work at Skills Builder Partnership focuses on solving a crucial part of the problem: how to build essential skills in a way that is rigorous and measurable to drive real change for individual learners.

That is a big leap from just broadly advocating for the importance of essential skills. While important, many countries have now committed to the idea of essential skills development being a core outcome of a good education. The challenge is how to drive classroom practice

so that this translates into every learner being equipped to thrive.

At the heart of the Skills Builder approach is the Universal Framework - a shared model of essential skill development which breaks down eight skills into sixteen incremental sequential steps. These steps can be taught, practiced and assessed systematically. They allow educators to focus and for learners to understand and articulate their own skill set and development needs.

Our central team provides catalytic and capacity building support to education and NGO partners across the world to adapt and use this Universal Framework to drive essential skills development in their settings.

Over the last year, our combined efforts supported 2,462,000 individuals in 52 countries to build essential skills.

In the following pages, we profile seven of those countries where the work is being increasingly driven by local partners.

This is our first Global Impact Report and we are only getting started. I am inspired every day by the brilliant work of our partners across the globe, and the opportunity to transform how the world builds essential skills for the benefit of every educator and learner.

Thanks for joining the journey

Introducing essential skills

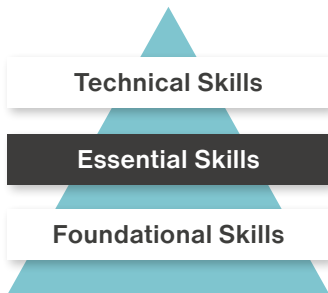
The challenges and achievements in global education resist generalisation. Some countries have made rapid progress in primary school enrolment and now focus on improving foundational literacy and numeracy skills, extending secondary education or ensuring equal educational opportunities for girls. Other countries are focusing on technical and vocational education and training, or closing gaps in educational achievement for particular groups.

Many education systems think about the purpose of education along several dimensions:

- **Knowledge:** What learners need to know and understand across broad domains
- **Skills:** What learners need to be able to do
- **Behaviours, attitudes or values:** How learners make decisions or choices

This report focuses in on skills, which we can conceptualise in three broad categories:

- **Technical Skills:** those skills which are specific to a particular subject, sector or role, sometimes drawing off a particular body of knowledge.
- **Essential Skills:** those highly transferable skills that everyone needs to do almost any job, which support the application of specialist knowledge and technical skills
- **Foundational Skills:** these are literacy and numeracy, and basic digital skills.



Essential skills are often a neglected part of this equation: foundational literacy and numeracy (FLN) are vital so prioritised at primary level. At secondary and tertiary levels of education, the focus is on technical or specialised skills and knowledge, generally measured through examinations.

Yet few would argue that essential skills are important for individuals to thrive:

Listening: Receiving, retaining and processing information

Adapting: Overcoming challenges and setbacks to achieve goals

Speaking: Transmitting information or ideas

Planning: Setting goals and designing routes to achieve them

Problem Solving: Finding solutions to challenges

Leadership: Supporting, encouraging and motivating others to achieve a shared goal.

Creativity: Using imagination and generating new ideas

Teamwork: Working cooperatively with others to achieve a shared goal

The potential of essential skills

Building essential skills is rapidly becoming an international priority, driven by compelling evidence of their profound influence on productivity, wellbeing, and learning outcomes.

Impact on individuals

For individuals, higher levels of essential skills are closely associated with significantly better life outcomes:

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- Improved educational outcomes:** Research confirms the vital role that collaborative and self-management skills play in effective learning and school readiness, establishing a clear correlation between higher essential skills and greater academic achievement.
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- Increased earnings:** Moving from the lower to the upper quartile of essential skill scores is statistically linked to a wage premium of between 8.9% and 14.6% in the UK and there is wider international evidence of earnings boosts too.
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- Higher wellbeing:** Individuals with higher essential skill levels report significantly greater job and life satisfaction, with a two-standard-deviation increase in skills predicting a rise in overall life satisfaction.
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- Employment stability:** Essential skills boost an individual's adaptability, making them more resilient to market shifts and reducing the likelihood of unemployment.

Global economic impact

The economic importance of these skills extends far beyond personal prosperity, underpinning national growth and stability:

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- Closing the skills gap:** The World Bank affirms that investing in skills development is crucial for structural transformation. Overall, addressing the gap in essential skills could unlock a potential value of £22.2 billion per year for the UK economy.
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- Societal resilience:** The OECD stresses that these skills are pivotal for building systemic resilience in the face of mega-trends like demographic shifts and climate change.

By providing a clear framework, we ensure that essential skills become a measurable investment in human capital.

Essential skills and global trends

The 21st century presents countries with a formidable array of systemic challenges. While the resources available to nations differ starkly, the need for an adaptable and resilient workforce is a common thread that needs essential skills:

Technological change and AI

The rapid advancement of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and automation stands out as a primary global disruptor. As routine tasks become automated, uniquely human skills are seeing skyrocketing demand:

- **Shifting demand:** Evidence from Skills Builder Partnership and KPMG, and NFER all indicates strong existing demand for essential skills which is set to grow meaningfully by 2035 (Skills Builder & KPMG, 2022; NFER, 2024).
- **Human counterbalance:** As AI handles basic cognitive work, research suggests that the highest value roles will require essential skills like complex problem solving, emotional intelligence, and interpersonal communication.

Furthermore, essential skills are fundamental to successful AI adoption. The Essential Skills Tracker (2025) reveals that individuals with higher overall essential skill scores are significantly more likely to use AI frequently; moving from the lower to upper quartile skill score is associated with a 30% relative increase in AI usage at work.

Inequality in employment and entrepreneurship

Entrenched inequalities in access to stable employment and entrepreneurship perpetuate cycles of poverty globally. Essential skills function as a powerful mechanism for increasing equity and mobility:

- **Resilience and agility:** The World Economic Forum’s *Future of Jobs Report 2025* highlights that essential skills such as resilience, flexibility, and agility are prominent competencies that differentiate growing from declining jobs.
- **Beyond qualifications:** Increasingly, employers are looking to skills rather than qualifications as they seek to recruit individuals who can excel in roles.

Climate change and conflict

The escalating threats of climate change and conflict demand adaptability and innovative thinking across all sectors.


- **Adaptation:** The World Economic Forum notes that climate-related risks are increasingly viewed as the most impactful global hazards. The Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership (CISL) emphasises that effective adaptation requires Leadership, Communication, and complex Problem-Solving abilities (CISL, 2023).
- **Responding:** Individuals need to have higher levels of resilience and adaptability in response to the uncertainties and challenges from climate change and conflict.


Barriers to essential skills


There is a resounding, policy-level consensus that essential skills are critical for 21st-century success. The Brookings Institution found that over 75% of 152 countries surveyed identified specific ‘21st Century Skills’ in their national policy documents (Brookings, 2017). However, this high-level political commitment has not yet translated into widespread, measurable learner progress. The core problem lies in bridging the gap between national aspiration and classroom reality.


The barriers


The barriers to achieving the full potential of essential skills are systemic, multi-faceted, and consistently identified across diverse global settings. They fall into five key areas that inhibit rigorous, universal skill development:

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Aligned definitions and development steps: While many countries name the skills, only a few systems have developed clear frameworks or learning progressions that define what increasing competency looks like across different age groups. This lack of clarity leaves educators without a common language to teach and track skill acquisition consistently.
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Teachers confident to teach essential skills: Teachers often recognise the value of these skills but report feeling inadequately prepared and confident to teach them explicitly and rigorously within their existing curricula (Brookings, 2019). The emphasis on high-stakes academic testing often leaves little room - or incentive - for mastering the pedagogy required for non-routine skill development.
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A curriculum and teaching resources to build them: The traditional ‘content transmission’ model remains dominant in many education systems globally. Effective essential skill development requires active, experiential, and socially interactive learning, which demands dedicated, high-quality resources and structured curriculum integration to ensure the vital transferability across subjects (Brookings, 2025).
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Assessment models for essential skills: The non-routine nature of skills like Problem Solving makes them challenging to define and difficult to assess using traditional summative methods. Without reliable, scalable assessment tools that capture genuine progression it is impossible to hold systems accountable for learner outcomes, perpetuating the status quo (Brookings, 2019).
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Rigorous expectations at every age and stage: Without a universal progression framework, expectations are inconsistent. Clarity of age- and stage-related expectations is critical to be able to target and track learners effectively.

Skills Builder Universal Framework

The Skills Builder Universal Framework has been designed and honed over eight years to address exactly these barriers. It provides a powerful, shared language and outcomes for building and assessing essential skills, step-by-step. It has several unique attributes:

- **Data and expert-led design:** The Universal Framework was first piloted in 2017 and has since been used with over 10 million users. Its review in 2025 to produce the second version took 18 months and involved input from more than twenty countries.
- **Cross-sector design:** It was deliberately developed with educators, employers, NGOs and social enterprises and government agencies to ensure that it met the needs of all stakeholders.
- **Range of reach:** The Framework can be used in education with children from as young as 4 and then continues through primary, secondary and tertiary education and into the workplace.
- **Open source:** The Framework is deliberately open source, allowing anyone to use it with minimal restrictions around attribution and not creating derivatives, in order to maintain the integrity of the Framework.

How it works



The Universal Framework breaks down each of the eight essential skills into a sequence of 16 teachable steps. By defining what it looks like to progress in each skill, from a foundational level all the way to mastery, the Framework provides a roadmap for skills development.

For educators and trainers, we go a step further. We provide granular detail on how to teach and assess each of these individual skill steps. Our tools and resources offer a rich bank of guidance, examples, and activities, ensuring that educators can confidently embed essential skills into any curriculum or programme, whether it's through a classroom lesson, a workplace training session, or a community project.

To support partners, we offer a complete suite of training, tools, and resources. Our platforms are designed to make it simple to plan, deliver, and track progress, while our dedicated support and training sessions empower our partners to become experts in building essential skills. This comprehensive approach is what enables our partners to create high-quality, impactful opportunities at scale.

Skills Builder impact

There is good evidence that effective implementation of the Universal Framework in school and college settings can accelerate learners' progress in essential skills.

How we measure impact

We use educator assessments of learner progress as our primary means of understanding the impact of the Accelerator programme over the course of the year.

Educators complete these assessments through Skills Builder Hub, identifying the extent to which learners in their classes are able to demonstrate each step of the essential skills. This gives an overall skill score (0-16) which can be tracked over time.

How programmes accelerate impact

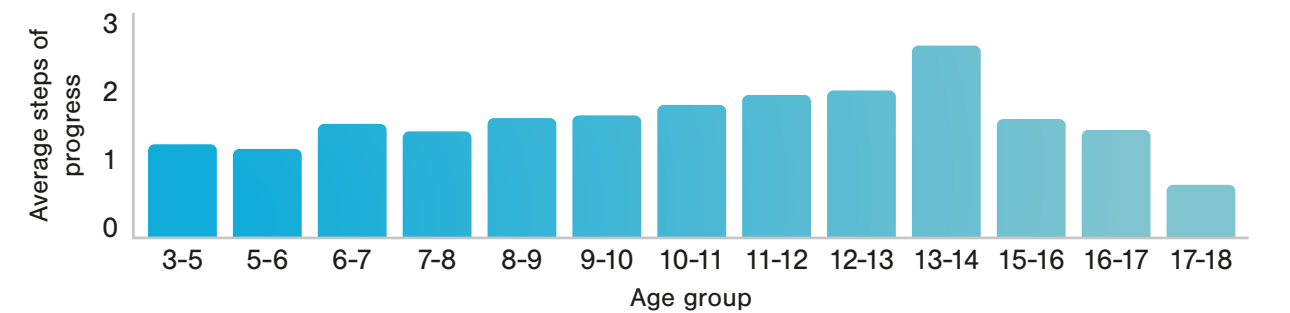
This year, we were able to demonstrate that learners made accelerated progress in their essential skills, as measured by educators, compared to individuals who had not taken part in a Skills Builder programme:



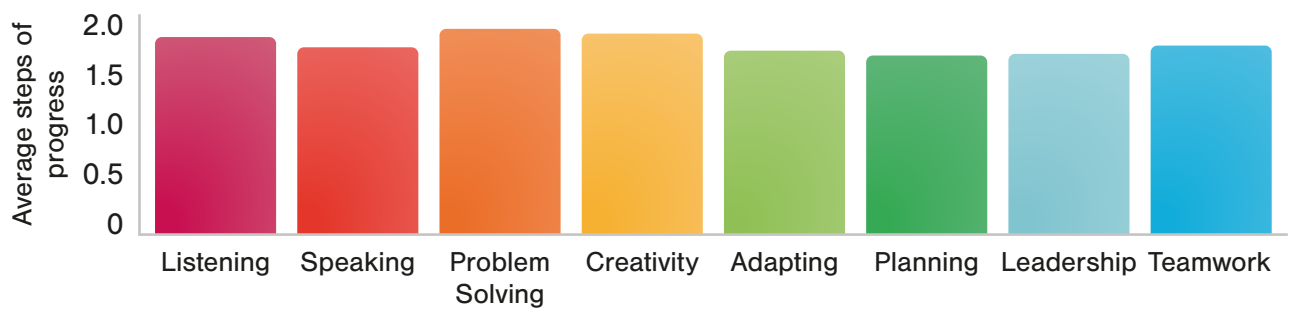
We have been tracking out impact in this way since 2020, and have seen notable consistency in the levels of progress that are made by learners who are not in Skills Builder programmes over that time. It has been good to see continued progress year-on-year in the additional progress made through Skills Builder programmes as a result of refining our training and learning resources.

We have been able to demonstrate accelerated progress across all year groups and each of the eight skills.

Progress by age - Accelerator



Progress by skill - Accelerator



Our reach in 2024-25

Across the world in 2024-25:


Number of individuals reached:
2,462,000

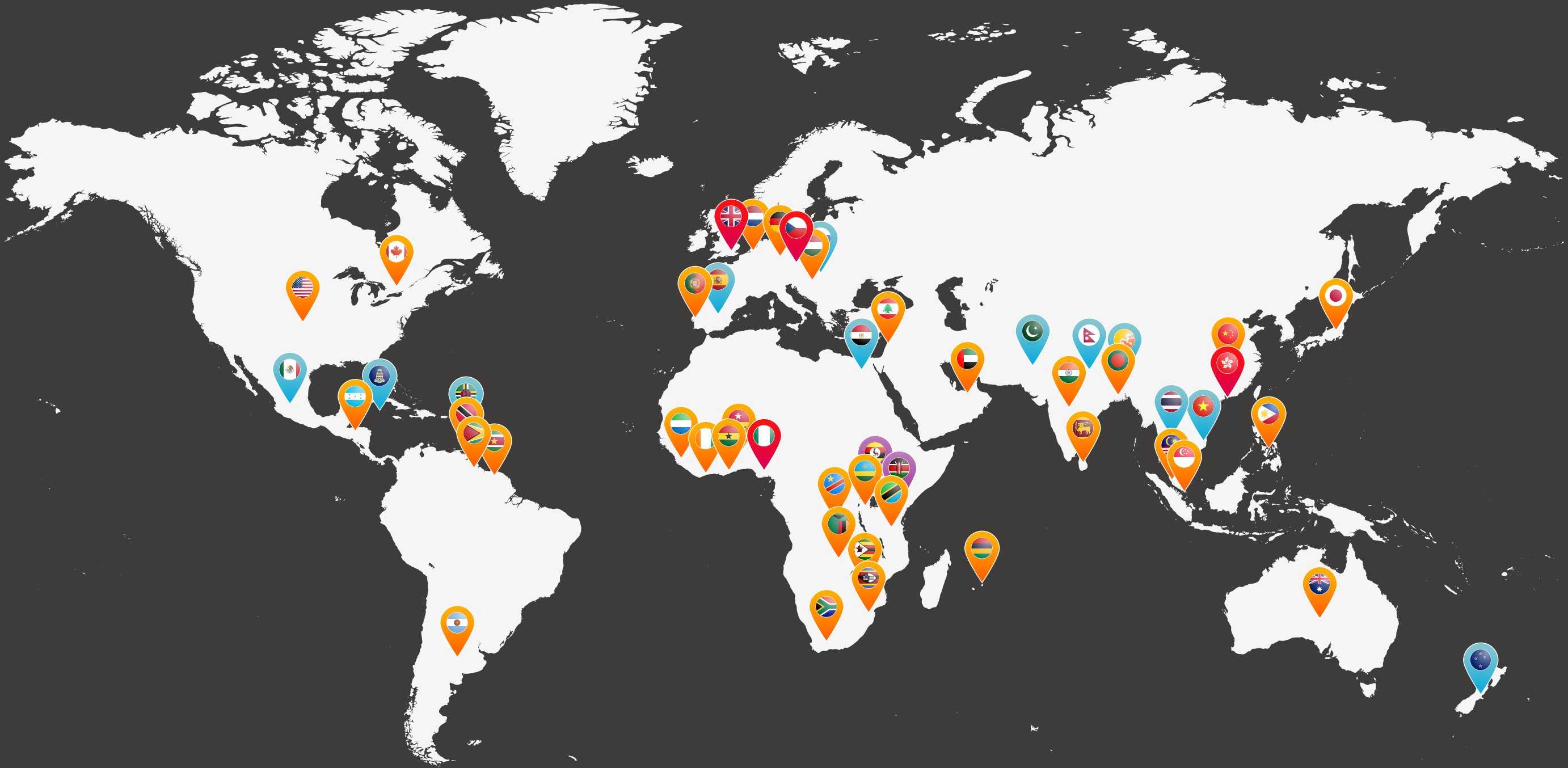
Number of education institutions demonstrating excellent practice:
907

Number of countries with Skills Builder partners:
52

Number of educators trained and supported:
22,729

Number of Skills Builder approved programmes:
330

-  **Skills Builder in schools:** Directly delivering essential skills programmes to 907 schools in 25 countries for direct impact and to test and hone the model for local conditions.
-  **Skills Builder through NGOs:** Enabling NGOs and local providers to use the Skills Builder model with 330 approved international programmes now available in 42 countries.
-  **Skills Builder through Lead Partners:** Working with local NGOs to lead the Skills Builder approach in their countries - currently in the UK, Czechia, Nigeria and in Hong Kong (China)
-  **Skills Builder through education systems:** Supporting adoption of the Skills Builder model in teaching, curriculum and assessment so every learner benefits – currently in UK, Kenya and Uganda



Our partnership approach:



Stage 1: Skills Builder in schools

Our school and college programme, the Accelerator, builds the capacity of teachers and institutions to teach and assess essential skills for every learner.

We build the capacity of schools and colleges by:

- Developing a comprehensive and sustainable strategy for building essential skills in their school or colleges which is ultimately owned by themselves
- Investing in a Skills Leader to implement the strategy, allowing for appropriate adaptation to the needs of the school or college
- Equipping teachers with the training, tools and teaching resources to assess and build their learners' essential skills
- Recognising excellent practice through the Skills Builder Award, which sets and maintains a high international standard

The result is that 96% of teachers on the Accelerator felt more confident building their learners' essential skills. We currently have flagship schools with Skills Builder Awards in 25 countries.



Stage 2: Skills Builder through NGOs

We scale our work further by partnering with local NGOs and training providers who build the Universal Framework and Skills Builder approach into their work, adapted for the setting.

We work with those NGOs by:

- Supporting adoption of the Universal Framework through training and guidance to increase their effectiveness in building essential skills
- Quantitatively demonstrating the impact of their programmes on essential skills development
- Facilitating learning from an international group of peer organisations
- Recognising effective practice with Impact Level accreditations, endorsing their approach and promoting it to our wider education and employer networks

The result is that 91% of NGOs partners strongly value being part of the Partnership and there are now 330 Skills Builder approved programmes available across 42 countries.



Stage 3: Skills Builder through Lead Partners

To support local adaptation, translation and refinement, we work with credible national partners to become the sole Lead Partner and champion for Skills Builder in their country.

With a chosen Lead Partner, we:

- Translate and contextualise the Universal Framework so that it resonates with educators and learners in that country and fits with the education curriculum, assessment models and educational structures
- Scale the Accelerator programme so that more schools and colleges in the country are trained and supported to embed the Skills Builder approach with training provided by local experts, in the right language and context
- Build a local ecosystem of partners so that other providers and NGOs in the country are using the same approach and learning from each other
- Building positive relationships with government so that there is local drive and leadership to build essential skills robustly in the education system

The result is that we now have Lead Partners in the UK, Czechia, Nigeria and Hong Kong (China) with materials available in three languages.



Stage 4: Skills Builder in systems

Our work with governments, school systems and other partnerships is helping to drive impact at scale towards building the essential skills of every learner.

With governments and school systems, we focus on:

- Building the Universal Framework approach into the national curriculum so that all learners can build their essential skills, step-by-step
- Implementing effective assessment of essential skills so that progress in essential skills is recognised and valued
- Training teachers at scale so that all teachers feel confident to teach and assess the essential skills of their learners
- Recognising good practice in school inspection regimes so that schools and colleges are supported and held accountable for their learners' essential skill outcomes

The result is that we have seen national adoption of the Universal Framework in several areas of policy in the UK as well as in Kenya and Uganda.

Country Profile: UK



2,370,000

learners reached

18,470

educators trained

804

institutions with Skills
Builder Awards

243

Skills Builder
approved programmes

Lead Partner:



Since 2008

Building essential skills is an urgent national priority in the UK, driven by the acceleration of technological change and the pervasive “skills trap.”

UK research shows that essential skills are critical for confident and effective use of new tools like AI, with workers high in these skills being 30% more likely to be frequent AI users. Fundamentally, addressing the persistent gap in essential skills could unlock a potential value of £22.2 billion per year for the UK economy, making our mission central to national prosperity and social mobility.

The past year, 2024-25, saw the Skills Builder Partnership in the UK achieve transformative scale. The collective of 898 UK partners - across education, employers, and impact organisations - delivered more than 2,370,000 high quality opportunities to build essential skills.

This success was deepened by important policy milestones with the Framework now included in new statutory guidance for Careers Education in England.

The change in schools supported has been profound. Learners on the Accelerator programme made an average of 1.64 steps of progress in their essential skills, demonstrating measurable growth across all age groups and all eight skills. This progress is particularly vital for those facing the greatest disadvantage. The impact is perhaps best captured by our partners, such as this quote from a Careers Leader at Brewood School, who noted: *“Skills Builder has played an important role in supporting our learners with SEND... This clear framework has helped students build confidence, improve communication, and develop teamwork at a pace that meets their needs, preparing them for future learning and independence.”*

Looking ahead, we are focused on accelerating the momentum captured by this report. Our plans include further embedding the Universal Framework 2.0 to ensure its continued relevance in the age of AI, and deepening our work with employers to use essential skills for talent attraction and retention.

Crucially, we will expand our place-based approaches and pilot new work in the criminal justice sector, ensuring that everyone, everywhere in the UK, has the chance to build the essential skills to succeed.

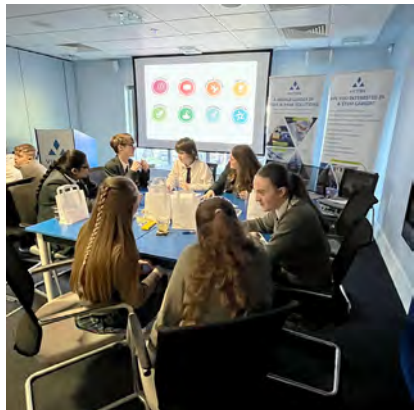
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Teaching essential skills through the Skills Builder framework has the power to transform our education system. It should be at the core of every school curriculum, as a tool to enhance the academic and social success of every individual.

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SOPHIE GAVALDA

HEADTEACHER, WILLIAM TYNDALE PRIMARY SCHOOL, UK



“

Essential skills are - the clue is in the word - essential! If young people are to flourish and be successful throughout their lives they need to acquire these as part of their formal education... The latest iteration of the Skills Builder Universal Framework is a powerful step-by-step guide to anyone wanting to embed skills in every aspect of a student’s life; its framework is one of the best-researched and rigorously tested I know anywhere in the world.”

”

PROFESSOR BILL LUCAS

DIRECTOR OF THE CENTRE FOR REAL-WORLD LEARNING,
UNIVERSITY OF WINCHESTER, UK

Country Profile: Czechia



4,479

learners reached

335

educators trained

21

institutions with Skills
Builder Awards

1

Skills Builder
approved programmes

Lead Partner:

**SCHOLA
EMPIRICA**

Since 2018

Building essential skills is now a critical priority for the Czech Republic, driven by the need to respond to rapid AI and technological change.

The country’s key strategic document for education, Strategy 2030+, highlights the importance of developing essential skills. This emphasis is now being realised through curriculum reform aimed at shifting the focus from rote learning towards a skills-based education, making the implementation of the Skills Builder Universal Framework both highly relevant and timely.

The past year has marked significant growth and policy influence for Skills Builder in Czechia, led by Schola Empirica.

In a key achievement, we organised a crucial study visit to flagship Skills Builder schools in London for influential Czech stakeholders, including representatives from the Ministry of Education, the Czech School Inspection (ČŠI), the National Pedagogical Institute, and leading educational NGOs. This engagement was a platform to subsequently introduce the measurable Skills Builder approach directly to inspectors of the ČŠI.

In the realm of teacher development, we continued our cooperation with pedagogical faculties at leading Czech universities in Brno and Prague, and successfully introduced the framework during a workshop at the summer school for the Community of Future Teacher Educators. School engagement has also expanded rapidly.

Last school year, we supported eighteen schools in the Skills Builder Accelerator Programme, engaging 262 teachers and impacting 4,053 pupils.

To provide robust evidence for this work, we are also developing and piloting a longitudinal research design to track the development of learners’ essential skills using the Skills Builder methodology, filling a gap in national research.

The impact of the Skills Builder work has already been transformative, fundamentally shifting school cultures towards intentional skill development. Supported schools have seen a significant change, particularly in teacher self-efficacy and in the way educators approach their lessons. This also translates to how students articulate their learning and progress.

Our future strategy focuses on both deep implementation and achieving national scale and curriculum reform.

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Thanks to Skills Builder, I successfully incorporate essential skills development into a large portion of my lessons. It helps me identify what I want to strengthen with an activity, and I view it as a practical ‘cookbook’ for daily use. I see the benefit not only in my professional practice but also in my own personal development and in communication with my children.

JANA JOSÍFKOVÁ
TEACHER, CZECHIA



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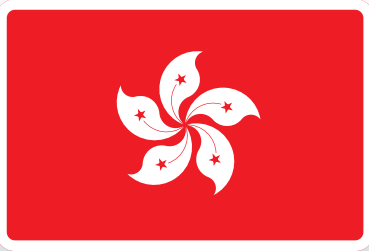
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It is an inspiring framework, easy to apply in the classroom, which helps students acknowledge and respect the opinions and values of others, fostering deeper and more respectful connections among themselves.

VANDA RYBÁNSKÁ
TEACHER, CZECHIA

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Country Profile: Hong Kong (China)



1,236

learners reached

174

educators trained

3

institutions with Skills Builder Awards

1

Skills Builder approved programmes

Lead Partner:

教育燃新
EDNOVATORS

Since 2024

In Hong Kong, building essential skills has become a strategic necessity - not simply an educational trend, but a response to deep structural shifts in our society. With the government's recent AI education policy accelerating the push for digital literacy, computational thinking, and responsible AI use, schools are confronting an urgent question: What does it truly mean to prepare our young people for an AI-enabled future?

The answer extends well beyond teaching students how to use tools. It demands that we cultivate adaptability, creativity, communication, resilience, and problem solving - the human capabilities that remain valuable no matter how technology evolves.

Over the past year, Ednovators has deepened the adoption of the Skills Builder Universal Framework across our school network. Educators tell us the Framework finally gives them a "grammar" for skills - helping them describe, track, and celebrate student growth that previously felt invisible. School leaders report clearer skill development pathways, more purposeful classroom dialogue, and higher levels of student engagement, especially among learners who may not excel under traditional exam-centric measures.

We also see the beginnings of a meaningful cultural shift. As schools embed the Framework into whole-school planning, more leaders recognise the need to broaden Hong Kong's long-standing definition of "success." Increasingly, essential skills are valued alongside academic achievement - not as extras, but as essential components of a holistic, future-ready education.

Looking forward, our priority is to grow this movement with intention and evidence. We plan to expand the number of engaged schools, strengthen our professional learning pathways for teachers, and deepen documentation of local case studies that illustrate what skills-based transformation looks like in practice. We will continue to support school leaders in aligning essential skills with curriculum design, assessment practices, and student support structures.

Ultimately, our goal remains unchanged: to ensure every young person in Hong Kong can build the essential skills to thrive in learning, work, and life - with confidence, purpose, and agency in an ever-changing world.

“

The Skills Builder Universal Framework provides a clearly structured framework for teaching students essential skills in a step-by-step manner. It provides staff with a clear starting point and a well-defined sequence of teaching so that progress can be checked and evidenced.

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SALESIANS OF DON BOSCO NG SUI MUI
SECONDARY SCHOOL
HONG KONG (CHINA)



“

This programme has enhanced our school's development, our teachers and therapists have been motivated by the importance of essential skills in the future, especially with AI's introduction. We have found that our curriculum, before partnering with Skills Builder, focused on knowledge teaching. Now essential skills provide skill based teaching for our students alongside our curriculum.

”

HHCKLA BUDDHIST PO KWONG SCHOOL
HONG KONG (CHINA)

Country Profile: Nigeria



1,283

learners reached

118

educators trained

6

institutions with Skills Builder Awards

11

Skills Builder approved programmes

Lead Partner:
concinny
Enduring value. Delivered.
Since 2025

As Nigeria transitions to a modern economy, graduates’ essential skills increasingly fall short of employers’ expectations. Policymakers, educators and employers now recognise that informal acquisition is insufficient.

To close this gap, the 2025 Federal Ministry of Education’s National Policy on Skills Development mandates the teaching of essential skills at all levels of education. The major policy shift ensures young people are better prepared for workplace demands and national development.

In the past year, Concinny has strengthened its readiness as Lead Partner for Skills Builder in Nigeria and established the groundwork for national coordination and local ownership.

We also aligned key education and government stakeholders on a shared vision for essential skills. A key achievement was Concinny’s advisory contribution to the 2025 National Policy on Skills Development mandating the teaching of soft skills across all levels of education.

The Universal Framework, implemented in six schools and ten impact organisations, has proven effective in Nigeria.

The Global Accelerator programme was implemented in ten schools, reaching over 300 students. The teachers report greater confidence teaching essential skills alongside academic subjects, while students show improved ability to articulate and apply these skills in practical contexts. In recognition of their progress and commitment of the Universal Framework, five schools earned Bronze Awards and one Silver.

The Global Impact Fellowship has also equipped hundreds of learners with essential skills, enabling their application across diverse contexts. These initiatives earned multiple Impact Awards across Levels 1 to 4.

Looking ahead, we plan to scale up nationwide adoption of the Universal Framework. This year, we added ten more schools, including our first polytechnic, and expanded Skills Builder’s geographical reach into three additional states and Abuja.

Our strategy prioritises engagement with federal and state government authorities, and private school organisations to support rollout of the 2025 National Policy on Skills Development. We will also develop regional partners to support effective nationwide implementation. To strengthen Skills Builder’s evidence-based approach, Concinny will establish a robust system to monitor programme implementation and conduct broader research on essential skills in Nigeria.

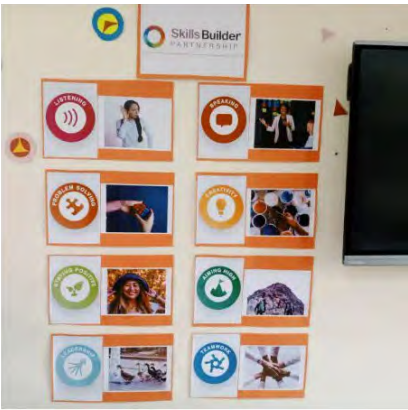
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Every member of our school community now understands the importance of these essential skills and is committed to fostering their development throughout our school environment

AKINTOBI TALABI

(ACADEMY LEAD) PEACEVILLE INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY, NIGERIA

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“

I find the Skills Builder Universal Framework to be a well-structured and adaptable tool. Its step-based approach aligns with competency-based curriculum expectations. The accompanying resources are practical and easy for teachers to integrate across different learning levels

DR OLUBUKOLA DOSUMU

SECRETARY, SECTOR SKILLS COUNCIL FOR EDUCATION AND CARE TRAINING

”

Country Profile: Lebanon



15,903

learners reached

1,422

educators trained

10

institutions with Skills Builder Awards

3

Skills Builder approved programmes

Lead Partner:



Since 2022

Lebanon is experiencing a significant phase of educational transformation, making the development of essential skills a national priority. Rapid advancements in artificial intelligence, technological change, and shifting labour market demands are reshaping the competencies required of today’s learners. Workforce reports in Lebanon highlight a growing emphasis on essential skills such as communication, teamwork, problem-solving, and creativity. At the same time, the new Lebanese curriculum has, for the first time, clearly integrated essential skills - creating a real need for practical frameworks that help teachers embed these skills in measurable and meaningful ways.

Over the past year, Al-Mabarrat Association has made notable progress, both as a leading national educational institution and as the national partner for Skills Builder in Lebanon. The Association contributed through eleven representatives to the national curriculum development committees, where its accumulated experience with Skills Builder supported the teams in developing a clearer understanding of skill pathways and how these competencies can be incorporated systematically into the new curriculum.

In parallel, the implementation of Skills Builder expanded within Al-Mabarrat schools, and a new international partnership was launched between one of our schools and a school in India.

The impact observed has been tangible. Teachers reported a deeper understanding of how skills develop progressively and began integrating them more intentionally into lesson planning. Students demonstrated increased confidence, active participation, and a stronger sense of responsibility for their learning, particularly in collaborative activities.

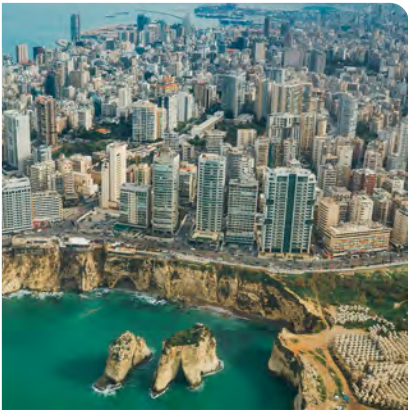
Looking ahead, Al-Mabarrat aims to broaden the use of Skills Builder across additional schools, strengthen collaboration with national educational institutions, and support the full Arabic translation of the program. The goal is for Skills Builder to serve as a key tool in implementing the new curriculum and preparing learners for a rapidly evolving and increasingly complex world.

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For the first time, we have a practical framework that translates skills into teachable steps - this has changed how we plan lessons.

SKILLS LEADER, LEBANON

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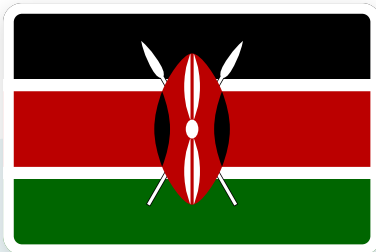
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Skills Builder made essential skills visible and meaningful for our learners, not just concepts written in the curriculum.

TEACHER, LEBANON

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Country Profile: Kenya



1,077

learners reached

42

educators trained

4

institutions with Skills Builder Awards

3

Skills Builder approved programmes

Lead Partner:



THE KENYA NATIONAL EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL

Since 2021

The collaboration between the Kenya National Examinations Council ((KNEC), British Council and Skills Builder Partnership is a strategic effort to integrate the teaching and assessment of essential skills into the core of Kenya’s education system. This work is fundamentally driven by the introduction of the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC), which began its rollout in 2017.

The CBC was established to address the shortcomings of the previous curriculum, which was heavily focused on rote memorization and high-stakes examinations, and to instead prepare students with the practical skills needed to meet the demands of the 21st-century economy and Kenya’s Vision 2030 development blueprint.

Skills Builder Partnership, working closely with KNEC and the British Council since 2021, has provided expertise to align Kenya’s national Competency-Based Assessment Framework (CBAF) with the rigorous, measurable structure of the Skills Builder Universal Framework.

Over the past year, the resulting new models for teaching and assessing these skills have been successfully piloted with 18 primary schools across three Kenyan counties. A key output of this multi-year partnership is the creation of comprehensive, contextualized training and instructional materials for teachers, including guides for both lower and upper primary school, a trainer manual, and accompanying trainer materials.

KNEC is leveraging these resources to roll out extensive teacher training programmes across the country. The wider work of Skills Builder in Kenya includes working with schools and approved youth and entrepreneurship programmes.

Beyond the work with KNEC, Skills Builder has worked with a set of flagship schools and NGO programmes to model how the Skills Builder approach can be put into practice. This combination of government-led policy work and grassroots implementation is a powerful one, demonstrating that it is possible for children and young people across Kenya to develop the essential skills to thrive.

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We appreciate the valuable contribution of Skills Builder Partnership from the United Kingdom in providing expertise and varied contexts for adoption to help produce a guide on core competencies development and assessment at primary and secondary school levels.

PROF. JULIUS O. NYABUNDI

OGW, COUNCIL CHAIRMAN, KENYA NATIONAL EXAMINATION COUNCIL

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The program has really been great for teachers and staff and we have made use of the Skills Builder approach across our entire school. Our staff have really embraced the approach and are ready to continue using it as they now have an idea of how it can be done effectively. The programme has also contributed to the overall performance of the school internally and in the national exams. Some of the skills learnt have been more evident amongst our learners, for example with problem solving where our learners are now able to solve problems on their own. Staying positive has also been seen amongst our learners boosting their self-efficacy, self esteem and ability to express themselves well.

KANJERU PRIMARY SCHOOL, KENYA

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Country Profile: India



108,106

learners reached

1,318

educators trained

23

institutions with Skills Builder Awards

12

Skills Builder approved programmes

With one of the world’s youngest populations, India must equip its massive workforce with skills that are relevant to the digital economy. The rapid advancement of AI and automation is transforming nearly 70% of job roles, increasing the demand for uniquely human, transferable skills like complex Problem Solving, Creativity, Communication, and Adaptability.

This shift is explicitly recognized by the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, which aims to move the education system away from rote memorization toward holistic, skill-based learning and critical thinking. Employers across India consistently prioritize these essential skills, viewing them as the ‘invisible edge’ that turns academic potential into real-world employability.

The past year has seen Skills Builder Partnership expand its reach in India, demonstrating significant achievements and impact. In 2024–25, our partners delivered high-quality essential skills opportunities to 108,106 learners in the country. This far-reaching work was supported by 1,318 educators who have been trained and are embedding the Universal Framework into their practice.

A key achievement is the growth of accredited programs, with 12 Skills Builder approved programmes now available, alongside 23 institutions that have achieved Skills Builder Awards for demonstrating excellent practice.

The growth in India is rapid, and we are committed to scaling our work to meet the national demand for essential skills development. The current pace of expansion, particularly through our network of NGO partners and schools, requires a localized and dedicated leadership structure.

Our plan for the coming years is to find and establish multiple Lead Partners across different Indian states. This regional approach will be crucial for translating and adapting the Universal Framework to resonate with diverse local curricula and education structures, significantly accelerating our ability to embed the Skills Builder approach across the country and further align with the vision of the NEP 2020.

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The Skills Builder Accelerator program has brought a transformative shift in preparing learners with the essential life skills needed to thrive in today’s dynamic world. The impact is clearly visible in the remarkable rise in students’ confidence, active participation, and willingness to collaborate. Learners once hesitant to speak are now eager to express themselves, fostering a vibrant classroom culture built on teamwork and communication. By embedding skills seamlessly into the curriculum, GGHS emphasizes that true education goes beyond academic attainment. The structured yet flexible Skills Builder framework offers engaging stories, practical activities, and an easy-to-use model that both students and teachers find enriching.

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GURUGRAM GLOBAL HEIGHTS SCHOOL, INDIA



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We strongly believe that skills building fosters adaptability and resilience in students, enabling them to navigate through an ever-changing landscape with confidence. By honing skills such as problem solving, leadership and collaboration, students are better equipped to confront challenges and seize opportunities in an increasingly unpredictable environment. By incorporating the Skills Builder Program, we are not only preparing students for the challenges of today but also equip them with the resilience, adaptability, and creativity needed to thrive in the world of tomorrow.

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BAL BHARATI PUBLIC SCHOOL, INDIA

Country Profile: Uganda



31,448

learners reached

5

educators trained

3

institutions with Skills Builder Awards

6

Skills Builder approved programmes

Building essential skills is an urgent priority in Uganda, driven by the country’s unique demographic and economic landscape. With one of the youngest and most rapidly growing populations in the world, equipping youth with transferable skills is critical to navigating a challenging job market.

Despite high primary school enrolment, low learning outcomes persist, and the economy creates few quality jobs, leading to pervasive underemployment and a skills mismatch where employers cite graduates lacking key competencies.

In 2024-25, Skills Builder partners demonstrated significant achievements and a growing impact across Uganda, driven by a two-pronged strategy of on-the-ground programme delivery and systemic policy work. Our partners successfully delivered high-quality essential skills opportunities to 31,448 learners in the country, with 6 approved programmes available for NGOs and youth organisations, and 3 institutions achieving a Skills Builder Award for excellent practice.

Qualitatively, the model is transforming practice, as demonstrated by the journey of organisations like Happy Times Junior School, which has adopted the approach to integrate essential skills into its curriculum. The school’s experience reflects the consistent impact seen globally, where implementing the Universal Framework provides educators with the clear steps and resources needed to drive measurable change in learner progress.

The most transformative achievement in Uganda is the partnership’s work to embed the Universal Framework at a national policy level. Since early 2022, Skills Builder has been working closely with the British Council and the Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEb).

This collaboration focuses on integrating the approach to support Ugandan teachers in the assessment and systematic building of essential skills within the education system. By building the Universal Framework into the national curriculum and assessment models, we believe this policy-level work can open up the benefit of rigorous, measurable essential skills development to all children and young people across Uganda in the future.

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Skills Builder’s Accelerator programme has a clear framework for all these skills, and ways of handling and assessing the learners’ progress. Overall impact: children have gained confidence; respect for one another has improved due to various group work tasks; there’s been a change in their listening skills during lessons, leading to improvements in performance; teachers have also improved their methods of teaching, from teacher-centred to learner-centred methods; teacher- pupil-parent relationships have improved; we are also proud that our parents and visitors have realised how their children have become so polite.

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HAPPY TIMES JUNIOR SCHOOL, UGANDA



Collective Impact: Thanks

As a not-for-profit organisation, we are dependent on the generosity of our funders. The launch of our global work has been enabled by support from our Founding Partners:

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Over the last three years, the LSEG Foundation has supported Skills Builder to scale its approach beyond the UK. The LSEG Foundation helps people from underserved communities access economic opportunities and build a secure future with financial independence. The work Skills Builder Global does aligns strongly with our mission and will unleash the potential of millions of individuals across the world.

LUKE MANNING
HEAD OF LSEG FOUNDATION



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UBS has been proud to support Skills Builder Partnership from their earliest days, when their work began in a single classroom. What started small has grown into an organisation delivering measurable impact at scale. Our partnership is rooted in a shared commitment to improving opportunities for young people, and we look forward to supporting the next phase of their global expansion. Their continued growth demonstrates what sustained collaboration can achieve.

SARAH CRANER
HEAD OF PROGRAMS, EMEA, UBS



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At KPMG International, we recognize the transformative power of education and the importance of equipping young people with essential skills. We are deeply committed to ensuring that critical skills such as creativity, problem-solving, and teamwork are front and centre in an AI empowered world. As a founding business supporter of Skills Builder Global, we are pleased to be part of this important movement to empower young people, especially those from less advantaged backgrounds, to help prepare them for the future world of work.

ROISIN MURPHY
HEAD OF GLOBAL SUSTAINABILITY, KPMG INTERNATIONAL



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We are grateful to our Board who give their time and expertise generously and voluntarily:

- Sir Ian Davis
- Samantha Butters
- Alex Shapland-Howes
- Professor Bill Lucas
- Susan Douglas CBE

Where next: our vision for 2030

As we embark on the next phase of this work, our mission remains constant: to ensure that one day, everyone builds the essential skills to thrive.

Thanks to our founding partners, including LSEG Foundation, KPMG International, UBS and Salesforce, we have been able to demonstrate that the Skills Builder and Universal Framework has the potential to transform how the world builds essential skills.

The challenge facing children and young people is intensifying. They are in classrooms today facing growing threats: accelerating technological and AI changes mean knowledge and technical skills go out of date faster, while entrenched inequalities persist. Essential skills are the durable human competencies that enable learners to adapt and thrive. They must become a normal part of a good education for everyone.

We can only meet this challenge by meeting it together. Partnership with local and national organisations who know the context of their learners is fundamental.

Our strategy over the next five years is focused on building robust foundations:



Scaling high-quality programmes: We will scale our direct work with schools and NGOs, ensuring we have relevant examples of best practice in every region of the world by 2030.



Building the Lead Partner network: Our target is to have 10 established Lead Partners by 2030 who effectively deliver the Skills Builder approach across their countries. This is crucial for ensuring quality and sustainability everywhere we work.



Internationalising our products: To support this scale, our digital platforms - Hub and Benchmark - must be universally accessible. We aim to reach at least 1,000,000 individuals a year by 2030 through these online tools, supported by content translated by our Lead Partners.



Driving systemic change: We are proactively cultivating relationships with key global organisations. Our ambition is to work with our Lead Partners to support strengthening systems in at least three countries by 2030, embedding the Universal Framework into curriculum and assessment frameworks at scale.



Responding to technological change: We will ensure that our programmes and approach both incorporate the use of AI tools, but also focus on equipping learners to thrive with and alongside these new technologies.

This report marks an important moment. I am incredibly excited to lead our talented, lean, and high-impact international team, working with our partners to ensure that every learner is equipped with the essential skills to thrive.

Thank you.



