



PATHWAYS TO TRANSFORMING EDUCATION


A Toolkit for System Leaders to Co-Create
the Pathways to Collaboration






INTRODUCTION


This toolkit is a companion to the Pathways to Transforming Education: Proven Solutions from Social Entrepreneurs report published by Catalyst 2030's Education Collaboration in September 2022 (hereafter referred to as the "2022 Catalyst 2030 report" or the "the 2022 report"). It builds on the vision for education outlined in the 2022 report and shows how the report aligns with the themes from the United Nation Secretary - General's Vision for Education, "Transforming education: An urgent political imperative for our collective future."



The 2022 report detailed how stakeholders could collaboratively adopt evidence-based learning principles to enable all learners to thrive in a rapidly changing world. The report showcased effective strategies designed and tried by education innovators from local communities around the world. For example, the report recommended the following steps:



The adoption of local solutions with proven impact to ensure reach to a significant number of learners, especially the most marginalised learners.



The integration of all relevant voices (learners, parents, teachers, administrators and funders) in policy consultations to foster collective leadership.


This toolkit builds on the recommendations made in the report. It is meant to act as a conversation starter to foster flexible, sustainable collaborations in education policy and practice; it is not a rigid roadmap for implementation. It is meant to provide practical steps to support education systems worldwide in moving towards a more expanded view of education laid out in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG, particularly SDG 4, which describes what quality education should look like in this century.)¹



HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT

We acknowledge that there are multiple pathways to transforming education that are globally informed and locally rooted. System leaders can use this toolkit for personal reflection but more importantly, for team or network conversations in your jurisdictions. Catalyst 2030 was started with the recognition that connecting people and organizations across boundaries contributes to stronger foundations for systemic change in communities, nations, and regions globally.² This toolkit is meant to be a starting point for a collective journey to transform education together.

Based on interviews and focus groups with systems leaders, social entrepreneurs, and educators, and on surveys completed by social entrepreneurs and educators, this toolkit was conceptualized to offer a few of the basic conditions for co-creating pathways to transform education, such as conversation, understanding each other's strengths and challenges, working together, and building trust and relationships.



Governments and social entrepreneurs have much to learn from each other. If they are to partner, mutual learning built on mutual curiosity and mutual respect needs to be encouraged. Reflective discussion questions and action steps are included to help governments, multilateral agencies, social entrepreneurs and educators collaborate to transform education and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals together.

¹ United Nations (n.d.). SDG 4. <https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal4>

² Catalyst 2030 (2022). *Catalysing Change: Catalytic networks and catalysing collaboration towards attaining the Sustainable Development Goals*. <https://catalyst2030.net/resources/catalysing-change-2022/>

1 WHY DO YOU ENGAGE IN THIS WORK? WHAT IS YOUR VISION FOR EDUCATION?

Government leaders and social entrepreneurs interviewed for this addendum to the report observed that the most effective and helpful partners in their work are those who seem to have a purpose beyond themselves and a vision bigger than their job or organization.

In the forward to the 2022 report, the co-chairs, Dr. Urvashi Sahni, Roeland Monasch, and Olivier Brechard proposed the following concept of education:

*“Education is to be understood broadly and comprehensively, as enabling the learning of the knowledge, skills, and values needed to flourish and shape the future, with a deep sense of caring and connectedness with the planet and everyone in it. Given a rapidly changing world, the purpose of education must enable people, societies, and the planet to thrive.”*³

This statement aligns with the United Nations Secretary-General’s statement on transforming education, which was issued during the Transforming Education Summit in September 2022. Informed by an inclusive preparatory process, he issued a Vision Statement to the Member States and the global public to support the joint efforts towards a transforming education. In it, he wrote the following words:

*“A truly transformative education should build on what communities, families, parents, and children treasure most. It should respond to local, national and global needs, cultures, and capacities. It should promote the holistic development of all learners throughout their lives, supporting them to realise their aspirations and to contribute to their families, communities, and societies.”*⁴

³ Catalyst 2030 (2022). *Pathways to Transforming Education: Proven solutions from social entrepreneurs* <https://catalyst2030.net/resources/pathways-to-transforming-education-proven-solutions-from-social-entrepreneurs/>

⁴ UN Secretary-General (2022). *Transforming education: An urgent political imperative for our collective future*. UN Transforming Education Summit 2022. https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/2022/09/sg_vision_statement_on_transforming_education.pdf



REFLECTIVE DISCUSSION 1: Collective Vision

1. In 2-3 sentences, describe your vision for education. OR sketch a picture of your vision for education below. Why do you engage in this work? What draws you?
2. Share your visions for education with each other in your groups.
3. What is your jurisdiction's vision for education? How do you know?
4. How does your collective vision for education line up with the UN Secretary-General's Vision for Education?
5. Write your key takeaway summaries from your reflections and discussions here:



2 WITH WHOM WILL YOU WORK TO ACHIEVE THESE VISIONS AND ADVANCE THE SDGS?

To advance these visions of education into action, the 2022 Pathways to Education Report included a call to collaborate. It stated:

“At Catalyst 2030, our goal for SDG4 is to catalyse enduring connections that can help 21st-century learners thrive. The principles [in this report] are grounded in.... ecosystem encompassing approaches to collaboration. The intent is to extend learning and the practices facilitating it, far beyond the conventional spheres.” ⁵

Similarly, the UN Secretary-General ends his vision statement by calling for collective leadership:

“Education transformation requires the collective commitment and action of visionary political leaders at all levels, parents, students, teachers, and the public at large.... Inclusive and participatory mechanisms to accompany and guide national transformation efforts are also critical.” ⁶

SDG 17, Partnerships for the Goals, further states that the 2030 Agenda *“requires partnerships between governments, the private sector, and civil society”*. ⁷ Researchers further note that sustainable development is a complex concept, *“dealing with different temporal and spatial scales and with multiple stakeholders. As such, it requires a pluralistic approach to deal with multiple actors and multiple levels, so as to create a common vision of the planet’s future, and to resolve potential trade-offs.”* ⁸

5 Catalyst 2030 (2022). *Pathways to Transforming Education: Proven solutions from social entrepreneurs* (p. 69). <https://catalyst2030.net/resources/pathways-to-transforming-education-proven-solutions-from-social-entrepreneurs/>

6 UN Secretary-General (2022). *Transforming education: An urgent political imperative for our collective future*. UN Transforming Education Summit 2022. https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/2022/09/sg_vision_statement_on_transforming_education.pdf

7 <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/globalpartnerships/>

8 Mariani, L., Trivellato, B., Martini, M. et al. Achieving Sustainable Development Goals Through Collaborative Innovation: Evidence from Four European Initiatives. *J Bus Ethics* 180, 1075–1095 (2022). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-022-05193-z>



REFLECTIVE DISCUSSION 2:

Cultivating Collective Leadership

1. List the government representatives, civil society partners, and private sector entities with whom you are working or speaking about advancing the SDGs or key priorities in education.
2. List those with whom you would like to work, but do not yet know.
3. Describe how your jurisdiction includes local communities, NGOs, the private sector, parents, students, educators, and other key stakeholders in their conversations about education. If they do not include local communities, what would enable their inclusion?
4. If students are included in your answers to the questions above, are they only the best performers or those who have dropped out or have been pushed out of schools and/or are otherwise most marginalised? What could your jurisdiction do to include all voices?
5. How are education leaders collaborating with other government entities, such as the ministry of finance, environment, and/or culture in your jurisdiction?
6. Write any key takeaways or notes from your discussion in the space below.



3 WHAT WILL YOU DO TOGETHER?

To highlight the shared themes across the 2022 Catalyst 2030 report and the UN Secretary-General's Vision Statement on Transforming Education, we summarise the following set of recommendations from the 2022 Catalyst Transforming Pathways to Education report. Based on the experiences of education social entrepreneurs and innovators around the world, the recommendations call for collaborations: ⁹

1. For governments to adopt a participatory approach to policy-making and a partnership approach to policy implementation for education. This can mean:

- *Organising periodic consultations with a wide group of stakeholders to reinforce a shared purpose for education.*
- *Fostering collective leadership within local learning ecosystems.*

2. For funders to create creative funding models to enable local grassroots educator innovators to work together towards achieving sustainable development goals. This can mean:

- *Investing in local leaders who are familiar with the local context, problems, and solutions.*
- *Balancing short-term project funding with unrestricted, long-term capacity-building efforts that sustain efforts across political cycles to give innovations time to be implemented.*

3. For social entrepreneurs and civil society to explore collaborations to address learner needs. This can mean:

- *Collaborating to expand access to the identified breadth of skills for learners.*
- *Joining together to move from an organisational way of thinking to a sectoral way of thinking that enables systems to change.*

⁹ The section was adapted from: Catalyst 2030 (2022). Pathways to Transforming Education: Proven solutions from social entrepreneurs.
<https://catalyst2030.net/resources/pathways-to-transforming-education-proven-solutions-from-social-entrepreneurs/>



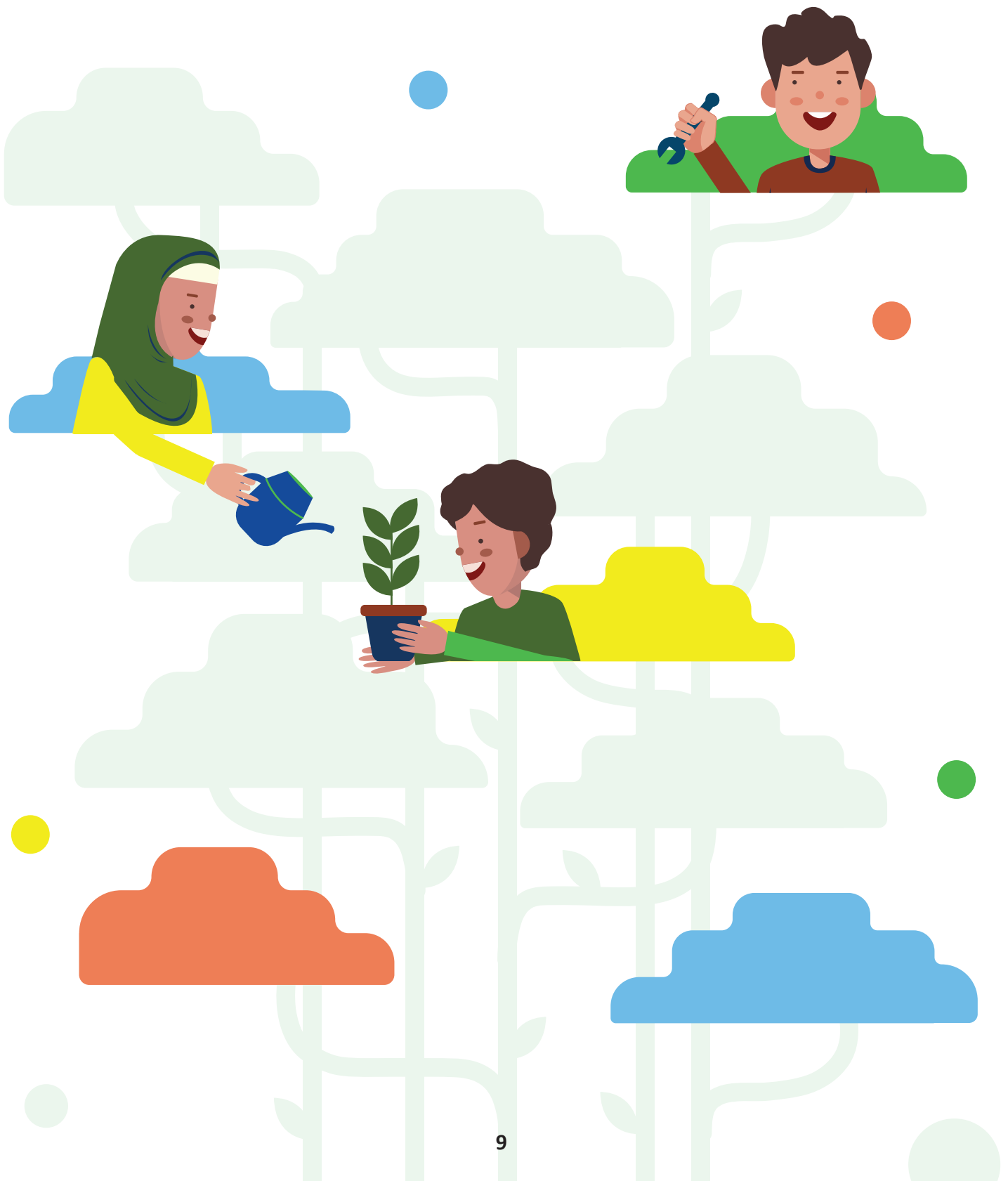
REFLECTIVE DISCUSSION 3:

Acting Together

1. What strengths or gifts do you and/or your organisation bring to your partners, current or future?
2. What strengths or gifts do or would you want to receive from your partners, current or future?
3. What are you already doing together with partners to advance education for all learners and/or advance the SDGs?
4. What do you want to do together with partners to advance education for all learners and/or advance the SDGs?
5. What recommendations do you have to others in your jurisdiction about partnering and acting together?
6. Write your summary and/or takeaway notes below.



Catalyst 2030 recognises that making recommendations is just one step in the movement toward co-creating pathways to transforming education. Thus it is offering this toolkit for systems leaders on how to co-create the pathways to the kind of transformative education that the Catalyst 2030 Pathways to Transforming Education Report from 2022 and the UN Secretary-General's Vision Statement both espouse.



APPENDIX:

Action Steps to Take toward Working Together:

1. Identify the relevant government agency, private sector, or civil society partners.

- *Research the government structure and the local jurisdiction to identify the business, the organization, the department, or the agency with the relevant authority or expertise for the issue you want to collaborate on.*
- *Social entrepreneurs want to work with the government, for example, to scale their best practices. Governments can be curious about the experience, expertise and breadth of knowledge that people from civil society might have.*
- *Research can involve reaching out to your social network, including other organizations who already have relationships with or are already working with your potential partners.*
- *Brokered introductions are helpful, including government-to-government introductions or civil society organisation to civil society organisation.*
- *Governments and civil sector organisations such as funders can hold periodic open meetings which those who are interested can attend, to build their networks.*
- *Ensure local partners are engaged, including supporting them to find funding.*

2. Build relationships with those you consider potential partners.

- *Set up a 1:1 meeting or attend meetings or events where potential partners will be present.*
- *Before and during the meeting or event, seek to understand their priorities and needs. Listen to their objectives and goals, including any gaps and challenges.*

- *Show them what your organization offers, including ready-made plans and proofs of concept. On-site visits are particularly helpful in introducing civil society organisations and governments to each other.*
- *Identify shared goals and objectives and work in a way that builds trust over years and over changing political administrations.*
- *Consider the linguistic, socio-economic, and other cultural contexts from which your partners come and support participation from everyone by co-constructing an inclusive environment for collaboration. Even from within your jurisdiction there may be many cultures and languages present.*

3. Implement the collaboration, including co-developing plans to monitor and evaluate.

- *Develop and use measurement frameworks that are learner-centred and use them to serve as guidance documents for continual learning, engagement and intentional conversations with partners about improvement and growth.*
- *Avoid duplication of effort and streamline toward systems change by adopting joint reporting and/or consider using standard reporting tools that can be shared with and across multiple organizations.*
- *Use technology to ensure accessibility and equitable access.*
- *Plan for longevity by co-developing 1-, 3-, 5-, 10- and 15-year strategic plans with partners, including funders.*
- *Support the collaboration necessary for effective implementation by building the infrastructure for sustained engagement. This could include building a backbone organisation and roles within respective government agencies and other organisations for continued co-ordination and communication.*



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