

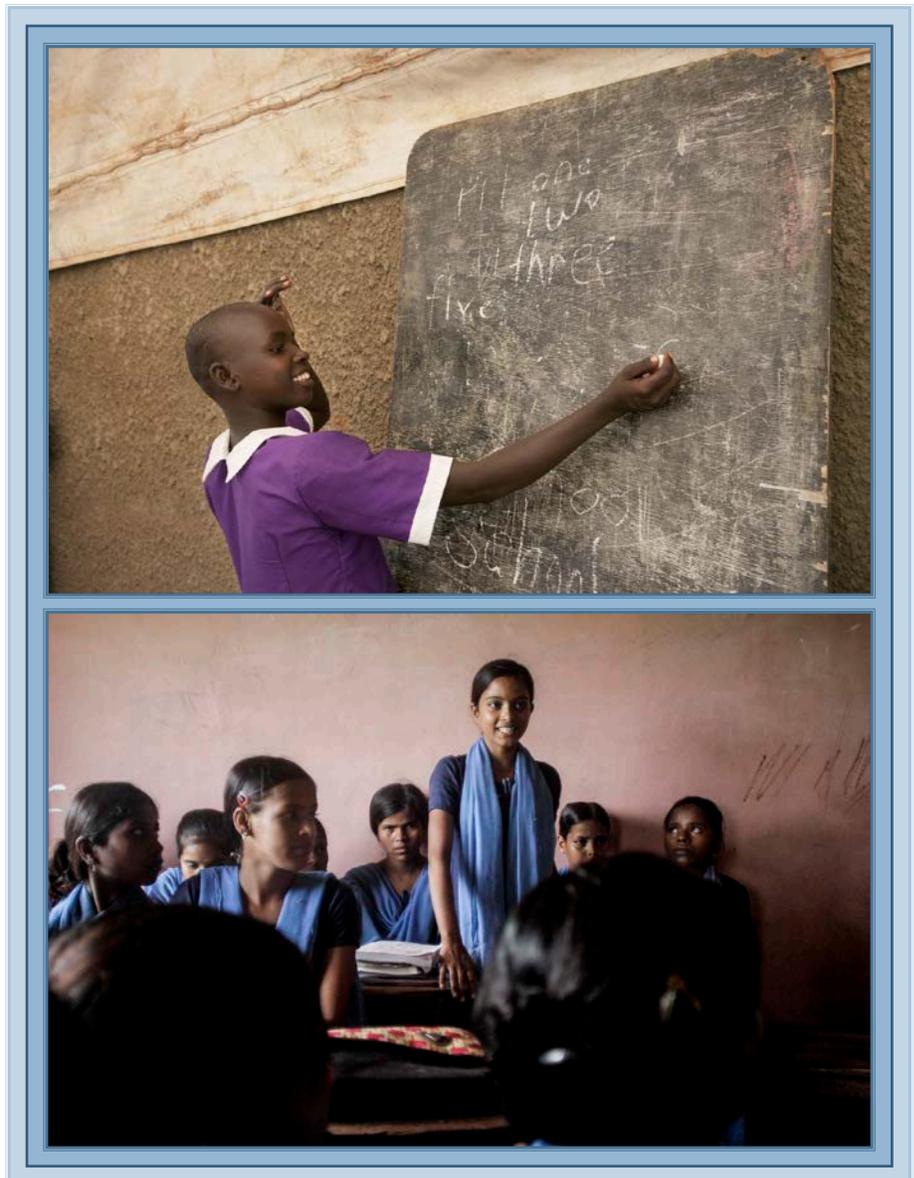
# THE PARTNERSHIP TO STRENGTHEN INNOVATION AND PRACTICE IN SECONDARY EDUCATION (PSIPSE)

## THE CHALLENGE

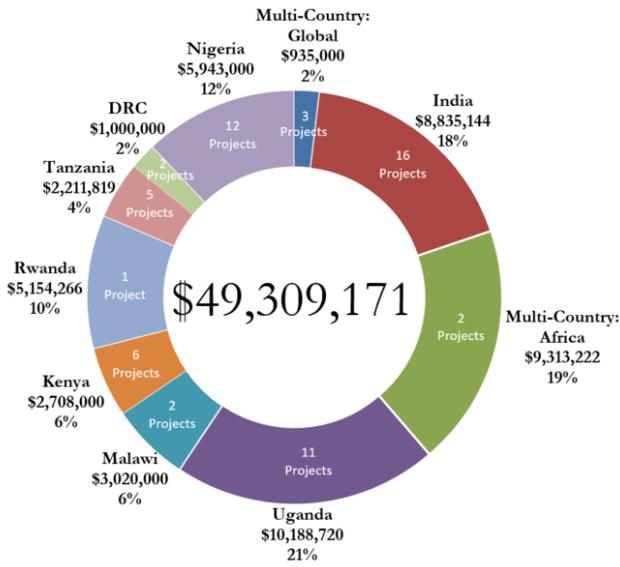
A quality secondary school education is measurably associated with positive effects on productivity, well-being, and health. However, many children in developing countries are leaving primary school without basic literacy and numeracy, and those who do make it to secondary school are often unprepared for the higher levels of learning required. While primary schools are now widespread internationally with near equal numbers of boys and girls enrolled, secondary schools remain scarce, are mostly in central towns and urban areas, and enroll fewer girls than boys and too few poor and disadvantaged children. Moreover, the nature of employment in developing countries is changing from a focus on widespread subsistence agriculture and small-scale industrial sector work to a much more complex mix of formal and informal economic activities. Many questions surrounding accessibility, quality, and relevance remain unanswered. This makes targeting and calibrating the scale-up of secondary education even more challenging. Innovation is needed to ensure more marginalized young people are able to access and complete quality, relevant, secondary education, and demonstrate learning.

## THE INITIATIVE

The Partnership to Strengthen Innovation and Practice in Secondary Education (PSIPSE) is a funder collaborative that seeks to advance quality secondary education and improve learning outcomes for marginalized populations. To fulfill this goal, the partnership supports the development and testing of innovative models for delivering quality secondary education, promotes efforts to expand the evidence base, and encourages the scale-



**Portfolio Snapshot**  
2012-2016



*Secondary education is a critical step in a young person’s journey to higher education or the workforce. This partnership is testing new ideas and scaling approaches that have the potential to transform how young people access education, while also improving the quality and relevance of what is being taught.”*

*–Reeta Roy, President and CEO  
The MasterCard Foundation*

up of effective interventions by contributing to systematic change at the national level and global level.

The PSIPSE is led by a group of private donors and donor advisors, including The MasterCard Foundation, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Echidna Giving, Dubai Cares, and an anonymous donor, with fiscal sponsorship from New Venture Fund, a 501(c)(3) public charity. Emeritus donor members have included Intel Foundation, The Human Dignity Foundation, Douglas B. Marshall, Jr. Family Foundation, and Elma Philanthropies.

The PSIPSE is putting collaboration into practice, sharing learnings about grant-making, implementation and evaluation across different organizations, including donors, grantees, and researchers. The PSIPSE has permitted individual donor members to multiply their reach by bringing more resources to bear on the issue of secondary education in target geographies, engaging policy makers to deepening the impact of country-level work, and accelerating both field knowledge building and learning among grantees.

Between 2012 and 2015, the group issued three multi-donor RFPs to solicit projects that could help inform the imminent expansion and transformation of secondary education. Based on the responses to the RFPs and subsequent grant renewals, PSIPSE has issued nearly \$50 million in grants, funding 59 projects that support better access, teaching, and learning outcomes for students at the secondary level. Project durations are one to three years, and are located across East Africa (encompassing Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Rwanda, DRC, and Malawi), India, and Nigeria. Donor partners are committed to supporting evaluation and research and to effectively sharing learnings from PSIPSE projects with the field.

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