The education space in Kenya is dynamic and constantly evolving. Although Kenya instituted Free Primary Education in 2003, the government still has challenges reaching all of its school-aged population, especially those in marginalized or rural communities. As such, a vibrant non-state sector is playing a significant role in Kenya, seeking to deliver, augment, or coordinate with the government to provide education services to Kenya’s youth.

CEI has profiled nearly 120 innovative programs operating in Kenya. The majority of these were launched in Kenya, while others originated elsewhere but have expanded their operations and programming to include Kenya. This Database at a Glance report will highlight some of the popular approaches and emerging models observed from the CEI database, in order to provide a glimpse into Kenya’s education landscape.
COMMON THEMES ACROSS PROGRAMS

This database at a glance highlights common approaches and characteristics across documented Kenya models.

Student Support

Almost 40 percent of the CEI-profiled programs in Kenya focus on student support. These programs are designed specifically to increase access to quality learning experiences by focusing on the specific needs of the child. Programs are providing this direct support in a variety of ways.

One Child One Light for example, provides underprivileged children with access to low-cost, safe, and durable solar powered study lights, improving their ability to complete school work at home and by extension sustaining enrollment. Another innovative program, Ace Child to Child Clubs, supports students by connecting them to other students, with the aim that they learn health and well-being lessons from peers.

Student support programs can also include financial support. The Kesho Kenya Enrichment Program provides complimentary support to children sponsored under the Kesho Scholarship Program. The program includes reading initiatives, experiential learning, workshops and resources, and aims to improve access to learning and employment opportunities for all of its students.

Delivery

More than a quarter of the Kenyan programs profiled on CEI focus their innovations on how to deliver education or training to students. This delivery can be through stand-alone centers or
chained education-providers. Not surprisingly, one apparent split between the programs that operate as stand-alone centers and the chains is that the stand-alone programs have a narrower target audience. For instance, Tushinde Day Care Center provides a day care center open 12 hours a day, 6 days a week, to provide mothers in the Mathare slum a safe, accessible option to leave their children while they work. The Model Centre for Deaf Education & Training (MoCEDET) also focuses on early childhood and early primary school aged children in Kajiado, providing them with quality education they would not otherwise receive due to a lack of specialized services.

Relatively speaking, the Chain Schools have been around longer and focus on a broader set of students. For example, Bridge International Academies is a large-scale chain of low-cost private schools using a technology-enabled approach; it has been able to replicate quickly using its Academy in a Box model. Established in Paraguay, it has expanded to 20 countries, including Kenya. The model focuses on low-income students from primarily rural areas, providing them with a quality education while relying on students to learn about and operate real businesses that generate revenue for the schools.

Programs provide school support in a variety of ways – teacher training and materials, infrastructure development, parental and community engagement, and operations and management.

School Support

Programs provide school support in a variety of ways – teacher training and materials, infrastructure development, parental and community engagement, and operations and management. Within the CEI database, many projects in Kenya offer school support, and the most common form of support they provide is teacher training.

Teacher training for Early Childhood providers is especially important as they are not a part of the formal education system. The Madrasa Early Childhood Program assists Kenya’s coastal communities to establish, manage and train preschool providers. They offer professional development and training courses to new and practicing preschool teachers as well as individualized technical support.
Similarly, the **International Child Teacher Training Institute** trains teachers without formal Early Childhood Development background to improve teaching delivery and increase the provision of high-quality, developmentally appropriate early care.

**Education Beyond Borders Teacher Training** recognizes that teachers in remote or disadvantaged areas may not easily access professional development opportunities. Despite these challenges, they believe that teachers can identify and address their own challenges by establishing a peer-training model, educate and support their colleagues to develop learner-centered teaching pedagogy.

**Skills for Work**

Youth unemployment is a critical issue in many countries and regions, including Kenya. CEI has identified 34 programs focused on providing knowledge and skills for youth to improve employment options. These programs cater primarily to secondary and post-secondary (non-tertiary) learners and are centered on developing 21st century skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, creativity, and teamwork.

Many of these programs concentrate on developing entrepreneurship and business skills. **Junior Achievement** organizes school-based enterprise clubs and pupils in Form 3. Students create a company, undertake key business processes, and then present their business concepts at regional, national and continent-wide competitions. From there, the top-judged business concepts are given support for the students to grow their enterprise outside of the classroom in the real world.

In addition to entrepreneurship, the **National Association for the Prevention of Starvation Kenya’s (NAPS) Mentorship Program** seeks to empower unemployed youth in Nairobi and Kiambu by providing vocational and emotional skills training. Information and communication technology (ICT) training is also a common trend in skills for work, **NairoBits** and **Digital Divide Data (DDD)** target underprivileged and vulnerable youth training them in ICT and multimedia to enhance their employability; DDD not only trains but later employs participants to provide business process outsourcing.
Education Technology

Programs in Kenya and around the world are increasingly focusing on technological applications to enhance educational services. While the majority utilize mobile phones or online platforms to support students, an increasing amount of programs in Kenya use e-readers, tablets, or solar technologies to help students take charge of their own learning. NAPS Kenya, referenced above, also operates the Kenya Virtual School in partnership with the Personal Learning Center International of New Windsor, Illinois, USA, to offer free math, literacy and ICT online courses. Kytabu is a textbook subscription app built to provide low-cost access to digitalized versions of all Kenyan textbooks from Standard 1 to Form 4, allowing users to rent a page, chapter or full book for time periods varying between 1 hour and 1 year.

These technologies support teachers and school management, engage parents and community members, and assist with student assessment. The Shakilize Schools Program is a startup that allows teachers to organize and share their lesson plans with one another to improve lesson delivery. Sematime for Schools enables schools to communicate with parents, teachers, and other stakeholders through customized bulk SMS services. In addition, the software can also be used to send report cards and fee balance notifications to parents via SMS message.

Another program that addresses Skills for Work (above) through Educational Technology is Shamba Shape Up, Kenya’s first educational television program. Through television

Photo courtesy of Kidogo

Programs in Kenya and around the world are increasingly focusing on technological applications to enhance educational services.

Courtesy of the World Bank Photo Collection, © Curt Carnemark, World Bank in Mali
programming, hard-copy leaflets, and SMS text messaging, Shamba informs small scale farmers on topics such as crop and pest management, irrigation, cattle rearing, and financial education.

### Girls’ Education

Approximately 25 percent of the CEI-profiled programs in Kenya are committed to improving girls’ education specifically. They target girls in a range of vulnerable conditions: from orphans and out-of-school children, to ethnic minorities such as the Maasai, to teenage mothers. The principal objective of these programs is to get girls that have never attended or have dropped out of school back into the formal education system. Some interventions, such as **Daraja Academy**, offer comprehensive support that includes food, housing, and healthcare in a secondary boarding school environment. Many programs focus on girls and their communities and the underlying reasons why they do not enroll or complete the education cycle.

**Kenya Equity in Education Project (KEEP)** and **Wasichana Wote Wasome’s (WWW) “Let All Girls Learn”** program support marginalized girls by fostering girl-friendly school environments and transforming attitudes towards girls’ education and rights. Similarly, **WISER** seeks to empower girls providing access to a free boarding school, away from much of the gender-based violence found in many Kenyan schools.
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