ENHANCING
EDUCATION
RESEARCH
IN AFRICA (EERA)

Intervention 7:

Supporting the use of African education research: building an AfriEd knowledge gateway

NOVEMBER 2024

This concept note is one of eight developed as part of the Enhancing Education Research in Africa project. For an overview of the project and to view the other concept notes, please visit **https://essa–africa.org/node/1831.**

> "There is a huge discrepancy that I see and it's very obvious from where I sit. What researchers do doesn't count if it doesn't get to the table where decisions are being made. This needs to be sorted out."
>
> *Principle education officer*

This concept note describes a proposed intervention to strengthen or establish communications platforms and infrastructure to support the dissemination of education research conducted by African scholars, research teams and institutions. While there is a growing and diverse body of African education research being undertaken on the continent, the knowledge and insights emerging from this work are often left obscured or invisible. Existing systems for publication and dissemination are not designed to advance African expertise and thought leadership. The purpose of this intervention is to transform the ways in which education knowledge is shared in Africa and ensure that research findings and knowledge products are accessible to those who can benefit from them.

This intervention is designed to be part of a wider system of interventions. It was identified through an intensive consultation and participative planning process with African education researchers and policy-makers[1], who highlighted the need for effective African-led communications platforms as a strategic leverage point.

To maximise effectiveness, **Intervention 7** should be implemented alongside the proposed **Intervention 8**, which seeks to enhance the use of research findings for greater impact.

Please visit the EERA project page at **bit.ly/3OOssDV.**

Why is this a crucial intervention for education research in Africa?

A mature education research field needs research communications that are dynamic, inclusive and widely accessible across different stakeholder groups, ensuring that education research is used to inform and improve education systems across Africa. This requires, amongst other things, a research communications infrastructure that is geared towards African needs. The education researchers who helped to formulate this intervention noted that they often lacked consistent access to effective systems for communicating and disseminating research. The existing academic publishing system has been criticised for bibliometric coloniality for excluding much of Southern-based research. In order to exchange and circulate knowledge more extensively on the continent, African researchers therefore need to find ways to circumvent this system, or to change it altogether.[2]

What is bibliometric coloniality?

Bibliometric coloniality refers to systemic power imbalances in the publication and organisation of knowledge. Global academic publishing is dominated by bibliometric indexes, based in the Global North, which serve as gatekeepers of academic relevance, credibility and quality.

This intervention goes beyond opening up channels for career advancement amongst education researchers through publication. It is part of a larger undertaking to ensure that education research leads to better development outcomes. The aim is to strengthen the entire field of education research in Africa (see the box below) and thereby tighten the links between academic enquiry and social impact.

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[1] This process and its outcomes, also referred to as the EERA consultations, are described in this report, by ESSA & Southern Hemisphere, 2024.

[2] For more on bibliometric coloniality, see for example Sawahel, 2024; Heleta & Mzileni, 2024; O'Grady 2022.

Enhancing the communication of African education research will have synergistic benefits for the greater education research eco-system in the following ways:

→ It will help to make visible the **knowledge base** in education that already exists, and continues to grow, on the continent. This in turn provides a basis for peer learning and collaboration amongst education researchers and others in and across countries, and further deepening of domain expertise, methodological innovations and multidisciplinary problem-solving.

⧉ See also **Intervention 6** on supporting collaborative research.

→ By showcasing education research outcomes across the continent, this intervention will contribute to a body of evidence that can be used to catalyse and target funding for further work on critical education topics, or for extending the reach of successful pilot studies.

⧉ For more information on catalysing African funding for education research, see also **Intervention 2.**

→ Improving research communications platforms and infrastructure will further help to ground African **research agendas** in local development priorities. By providing stakeholders with access to education-related information and knowledge, this intervention reduces the disconnect that often exists between academic institutions, policy makers and others. This means that relevant research can more readily be used to improve decision making and service delivery in education.

⧉ See also **Intervention 1** on developing Africa-led education research agendas.

→ This intervention contributes to a **research culture** based on inclusivity and diversity by providing platforms for under-represented researchers, including women and early career researchers, to publish their work and engage in knowledge exchange. It challenges exclusionary and exploitative publication practices and the dominance of North-based measures of research relevance and quality.

→ It directly enhances **infrastructure** for education research by expanding contributions to and synergies between knowledge repositories and existing national research and education networks (NRENs) within and amongst African countries.

A strong field for education research in Africa

Based on extensive input from African education researchers and policy makers, these five factors are critical to building a strong field for education research:

→ A robust **knowledge base**, aligned with local development goals.

→ Sustainable **resources** to enable African-led research and dissemination.

→ A dynamic **research agenda** that reflects African education research priorities.

→ A vibrant research **culture** that champions collaboration, gender equity and social inclusion.

→ Reliable **infrastructure** to support knowledge repositories, exchange and communication.

Acknowledgement: The consultation process above made use of Bridgespan's *Strong Field Framework.*

What are National Research and Education Networks?

NRENs are specialised internet service providers that support the research and education communities within a country. They provide high-speed internet connectivity and advanced networking services specifically designed to meet the data needs of universities, research institutions, and other educational organisations. They are also capable of expanding to support other services.

For more background information on why this intervention is crucial, read the situational analysis undertaken as part of the EERA process, and/or explore how this intervention responds to the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats identified by African education research stakeholders.

Aims and objectives of the intervention

The broad aims of this intervention are to strengthen the field for education research in Africa by:

→ Promoting education research not just for academic promotion but to have a meaningful impact on local education policies and practices.

→ Contributing to increased uptake and impact of African education research both in Africa and globally and addressing the disconnection between education researchers, decision-makers and other stakeholders.

→ Disrupting systemic power imbalances in global academic publishing and epistemic discourses more broadly, that serve as barriers to many African researchers and exploit those who do participate, by supporting the development of viable and inclusive African alternatives.

In order to pursue these broad aims, the specific objectives of this intervention are:

→ To support communications platforms to house African education research and make it accessible to those who need it. This would include all kinds of research outputs, ranging from scientific or academic writing to user-friendly communications, making use of various media formats. This could be in the form of one pan-African platform, or a series of platforms or a coordination of existing ones.

→ To create avenues for African education researchers to publish their work, irrespective of whether it has been accepted into an indexed peer-reviewed journal.

→ To support reliable infrastructure to connect education research institutions to existing research and education networks, and to connect to potential services offered by NRENs.

→ To integrate services that support the translation, packaging and sharing of research findings for uptake by a broad range of stakeholders, appealing to a wide audience.
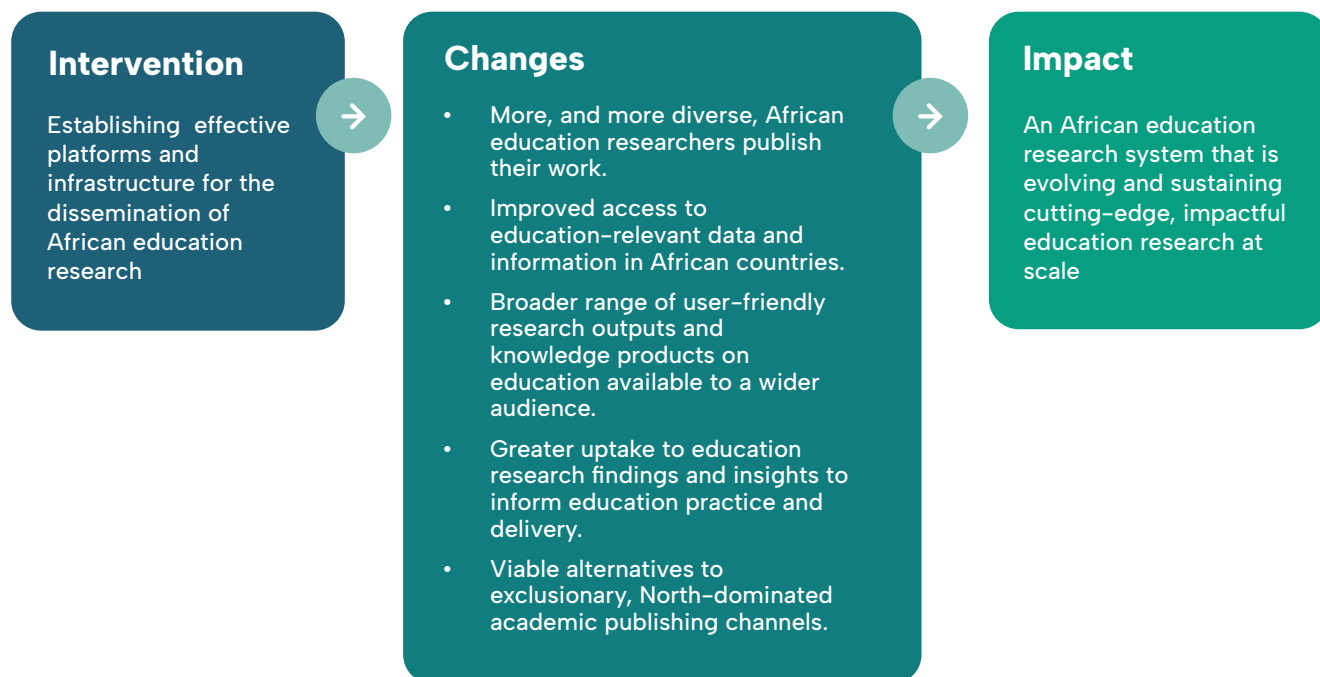
Expected outcomes

The expected outcomes of this intervention, informed by research[3] and the EERA consultations, are as follows:

→ **Outcome 1**: **Education stakeholders, both in Africa and elsewhere, have increased awareness of, trust in, and access to African education research information and knowledge products**. The growing interest in education research on the continent, together with the emergence of various networks and knowledge repositories (see the next section), indicates the scope that currently exists to heighten the profile of education research in Africa.

→ **Outcome 2**: **There is increased uptake of African education research both in Africa and elsewhere**. The education researchers consulted in the EERA process highlighted the need to make education research more available and actionable, by exploring and using diverse dissemination channels. They saw this as a unique opportunity, that would cater to the growing appetite for evidence amongst policy makers and other stakeholders.

→ **Outcome 3**: **More opportunities exist for African education researchers to publish and otherwise share their work, including more women researchers, other marginalised groups and early career researchers**. Several commentators have decried the under-representation of African scholars in global education research publishing, which reinforces a distorted picture of the knowledge base. A 2019 analysis of ISI-indexed journal articles in the field of education revealed that African authors made up only 2.13% of the total. In order to increase visibility and influence, African researchers are encouraged to embrace open access and Africa-led dissemination routes.

[3] Sources consulted for this section include ESSA & Southern Hemisphere, 2024; Wolhuter, 2019;

These outcomes are seen to contribute to the following impact pathway:

Intervention

Establishing effective platforms and infrastructure for the dissemination of African education research

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Changes

- More, and more diverse, African education researchers publish their work.
- Improved access to education-relevant data and information in African countries.
- Broader range of user-friendly research outputs and knowledge products on education available to a wider audience.
- Greater uptake to education research findings and insights to inform education practice and delivery.
- Viable alternatives to exclusionary, North-dominated academic publishing channels.

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Impact

An African education research system that is evolving and sustaining cutting-edge, impactful education research at scale
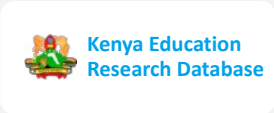
Relevant examples of communications platforms for research

A number of data-sharing platforms exist or have been operational on the continent, as well as various knowledge repositories and NRENs in several countries. Select examples most relevant to this intervention, are summarised below. As the intention is for this intervention to build on and augment what already exists, these examples are included here as a basis for learning from existing African experience and for possible collaboration with other actors in the research eco-system.

Initiative	Detail
The Africa Portal 	The Africa Portal, which was active from 2015 to 2022, was a Pan-African research repository and expert analysis hub on African affairs. It promoted access to research conducted by over 52 African research policy institutes and housed over 10,000 books, journals and digital documents on African policy issues related to African governance and diplomacy. The site included a search-able, open access digital library, but also hosted blogs, offered knowledge translation of materials in the library, and provided thought leadership on key topics. It was hosted by the South Arican Institute for International Affairs (SAIIA) and played an important role in building the field of African foreign policy. While the portal was discontinued in 2022 due to lack of funding, access to its materials is still available on the website. **Type: Pan-African platform, single portal – dissemination only**

Initiative	Detail
Datadent.org 	DataDENT is an initiative and information portal that works globally, and with dedicated programmes in Nigeria, India and Ethiopia, to advance the availability and use of nutrition data by addressing gaps in nutrition measurement and advocating for stronger nutrition data systems. It is implemented by three institutions, the Institute for International Programs at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health (JHU), the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) and the Results for Development Institute (R4D). JHU manages day-to-day operations of DataDENT, and it is funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The DataDENT website shares research, hosts a blog and events, and also supports a community of practice called Data for Nutrition (for more on capacity-building for researchers around community engagement, see **Intervention 8**). **Type: Supports a multi-country research partnership, with dissemination and community engagement**
African Education Research Database (AERD) 	The African Education Research Database was developed by the Research for Equitable Access and Learning (REAL) Centre, Faculty of Education, University of Cambridge, in partnership with Education Sub Saharan Africa (ESSA). The AERD is a curated collection of research undertaken in the past decade by scholars based in sub-Saharan Africa. The database includes social science research with implications for educational policy and practice. The database aims to raise the visibility of African research, consolidate the evidence base for policy and practice, and inform future research priorities and partnerships. **Type: Pan-African, dissemination only.**
African Population & Health Research Center (APHRC) Microdata portal 	The APHRC is an Africa-led institution, with headquarters in Nairobi, which seeks to strengthen the research-to-policy connection in the development eco-system. Its Microdata Portal has been operational since 2001, providing access to metadata, documentation, and shared qualitative and quantitative datasets from its research studies. The datasets are freely available to all partners, researchers, academicians, and post-graduate students in widely used and easily convertible formats such as Stata and SPSS. Users can go through the platform, review the studies and decide to request datasets. APHRC also publishes policy briefs and hosts a number of other project websites and platforms, including CARTA and an e-learning site, the APHRC Virtual Academy. **Type: Pan-African data portal, dissemination only**

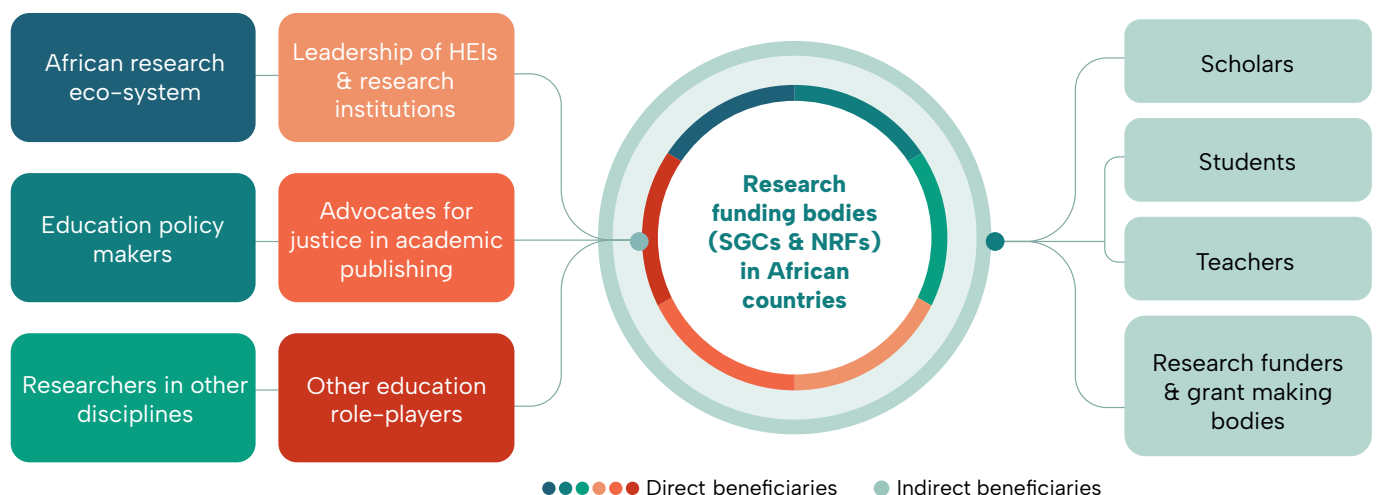| Initiative	Detail
SUMMA	SUMMA is an organisation that works with multiple partners to promote education in Latin America. In terms of research communications, it shares innovations from around the world, through an innovation map, sharing of tools and resources to strengthen education. It conducts mapping and syntheses to identify effective policies, programs and practices and draws attention to evidence-informed initiatives that enhance the right to education in its member countries. **Type: Multi-country, multi-partnership platform, dissemination, knowledge translation, and synthesis**
Kenyan Education Research Database (KERD)	KERD is an open access, interactive, updatable bibliographical database concentrating on basic education research in Kenya. It is searchable by education levels, including early childhood development, primary education and secondary education. Access is provided under Creative Commons Licence. The database has unfortunately not been updated since 2019. **Type: Single country, dissemination only**
Open Alex	OpenAlex has been active since 2021, with the primary goal of making the global research system available to everyone, everywhere. It is a free, open-source database of over 250 million scholarly works from 250,000 sources, with extra coverage of humanities, non-English languages and the Global South. OpenAlex offers an open and accessible alternative to industry-standard scientific knowledge bases like Elsevier's Scopus and Clarivate's Web of Science, which have paywalls. **Type: Multiple country, dissemination only**
UbuntuNet Alliance	The UbuntuNet Alliance connects Eastern and South African NRENs to support a vibrant research and education community. It provides high-speed internet and services to research and education institutions and fosters collaboration, infrastructure development and global partnerships to enhance African research and education. **Type: Internet provision and services**
WACREN	WACREN is the West and Central African Research and Education Network which aims to provide a World-class infrastructure and services for the West and Central African Research and Education community for development.

The examples above present various models, tools and functionalities that could be relevant to the further development of this intervention (see section to follow on design considerations). The question of the sustainability of communications platforms is clearly key, as many initiatives achieved great progress in building partnerships and enabling access to large volumes of information, only to be constrained or discontinued by lack of funding.

Who will benefit most from this intervention?

Developing Africa-led education research agendas will benefit the following actors in the education eco-system:

→ African education researchers (individuals and teams) who would have viable channels and opportunities to publish their work and otherwise communicate with other education stakeholders about the content and implications of their research.

→ Role-players involved in the education sector globally, including the broader education research community, who would be able to access more, and more diverse, research about African education topics, produced by African scholars and research institutions.

→ Researchers in other fields, especially those with multidisciplinary interests, who would have the advantage of relevant education-related data and perspectives to support greater inter-sectoral understanding of development challenges and complex problem-solving.

⧉ See also **Intervention 6**, on supporting collaborative research.

→ Education policy-makers and practitioners in African countries, who would have much more dynamic access to a broad base of African research outputs to inform their decision-making, policy planning and service delivery affecting education.

→ Leadership of higher education institutions (HEIs), such as senates and Vice Chancellors, who would be associated with increases in academic publishing and for supporting greater bibliometric justice through the dissemination of African-led, education research that is accessible and open-sourced.

→ Funders, national science granting councils, research funds or other grant-making agencies, who would have a more comprehensive picture of education research on the continent, including important gaps in need of attention and funding.

⧉ For more on African funding for education research, see **Intervention 2.**

→ Ultimately teachers, students and scholars, who would experience the benefits of improved policies and education practice, informed by robust, African-led, implementation-oriented research.

The chart below depicts the direct and indirect beneficiaries of this intervention.

African research eco-system	Leadership of HEIs & research institutions
Education policy makers	Advocates for justice in academic publishing
Researchers in other disciplines	Other education role-players

Research funding bodies (SGCs & NRFs) in African countries

Scholars
Students
Teachers
Research funders & grant making bodies

●●●●●●● Direct beneficiaries　● Indirect beneficiaries

Designing this intervention: Important considerations

This section explores the design features to be taken into consideration when initiating this intervention. It is based on research into similar initiatives that provide platforms for research dissemination (as outlined in the table above), as well as consultations with African education researchers and policy-makers.

Geographic and content scope

It could a single Africa-wide platform, and include filters for regional, national and sub-national levels. The research hosted on the platforms must be conducted by African researchers based at African institutions, either alone or in collaboration with others. The platform(s) should be able to scale up access to African education research.

Gender, equity and social inclusion (GESI)

The platform(s) should be designed to ensure the specific inclusion of research that is by women, people with disabilities and early career researchers. It must cover topics relevant to the advancement of these groups in the education system. Consideration must be given to how research can be made more accessible and relevant to a wider array of stakeholders, including grassroots audiences, through translation into French, Portuguese and English, and into local languages (see more below).

Offering a viable alternative to the dominant academic publishing system

To further promote inclusivity and equity, the intervention should allow education researchers to by-pass the traditional publishing industry, by providing a reliable, credible and efficient service for disseminating research publications. It should advocate for open access and data sharing and promote policies and practices that make education research freely accessible and widely available. The design of this intervention should also include strategies to support advocacy more broadly to address exclusionary practices and epistemic bias in the global academic publishing system, which perpetuates inequality in education research. This could involve lobbying for open access publishing requirements among funders and institutions to ensure that research outputs are not locked behind paywalls, spotlighting predatory publishers and advocating for a decolonised bibliometric index for African research in general, and education research in particular. The intervention should also include measures to raise awareness among researchers, policymakers, educators, and other stakeholders about the importance of open access to support evidence-based decision-making and foster a culture of transparency and collaboration in education research across the continent.

Avoiding duplication

Stakeholders in the development sector, including funders, are understandably cautious about undertakings with big set-up costs and questionable sustainability. The aim of this intervention should not be to 'reinvent the wheel', but rather to work with what already exists in terms of infrastructure and expertise. This may mean collaborating with one or more existing platforms and extending their scope to the publication of education research. It may mean working with an existing education research platform and extending its functionality and reach. It could also involve establishing a portal or other kind of digital space that curates and guides access to various other education-related sites, knowledge repositories, resources and tools (possibly linked by shared branding, for example, the EERA logo).

Designing for the user experience

As explained above, this intervention need not take the form of a single platform. It should however provide user experiences that are streamlined, informative and potentially pan-African. Irrespective of where the platform(s) are housed or how they are built, the result should be an easy-to-access and easy-to-use digital experience where users are able to explore education-related topics and find a comprehensive array of relevant information from and about education in African countries. Focussing on the desired user experience provides a useful entry point for developing a design brief for this intervention.

Platform requirements and functions

Further discussion and planning will be required to design the communications platform(s) envisaged by this intervention. As part of this process, it is suggested that the following requirements and recommendations be borne in mind.

- **Knowledge brokerage**: It was suggested during the EERA consultations that this intervention should go beyond simply providing dissemination platform(s) for education research, to establish a more holistic research communications infrastructure and set of services that act as a knowledge broker for African education research. **Intervention 8** provides more guidance on how this broader brokerage could extend to capacity building of education researchers in communication skills, and support community

engagement around research findings. In designing this intervention further, thought should be given to what this total basket of communications support will include (see some suggestions below), whether all aspects should be offered from the start or phased in over time, and so forth.

> **What does it mean to act as a knowledge broker?**
>
> Knowledge brokering facilitates the connection between knowledge producers (researchers) and users (for example, policymakers and practitioners) through intermediaries who help to ensure that the knowledge is understandable, clearly presented, easy to engage with, accessible, well-organised and otherwise conducive to being taken up and used.

→ **Target users and formats**: The platform(s) will benefit from a broad understanding of who its target users are, with due attention to the different needs of various categories of users. To appeal to a diverse range of users, research findings and knowledge products should be packaged or package-able in multiple formats, ranging from more traditional academic papers to user-friendly briefs or summaries, infographics, presentation slides. audio-visual materials and podcasts.

→ **Use of AI**: This leads itself to AI integration, for translation, queries and to find aggregate information.

→ **Quality and sustainability**: It is important that the platform(s) are trusted sources of information. The platform must host high-quality outputs to attract users. It should establish its own system of peer-review and quality assurance to ensure that the research published is credible. The platform will be sustainable as long as the research is of good quality and up to date, because this means that people will use it, find it valuable and this will attract funding.

→ **Usability**: The platform(s) should provide user feedback mechanisms for continuous feedback from users to adapt and improve the platform(s) over time.

→ **Open access**: As mentioned above, the platform(s) should promote an open access research system, and work on creating partnerships with academic journals, repositories, and networks to host research on open platforms and encourage African education researchers to share their data sets, methodologies, and findings openly.

→ **Funding for researchers to publish and communicate**: Mechanisms should be considered to facilitate funding of African education researchers to publish their

research, and also to write or talk about their research in the form of blog articles, podcasts, interviews or presentations. Education researchers should be supported to distil, package and communicate complex research findings into compelling, actionable and accessible formats for diverse audiences.

⤤ See also **Intervention 8** for more on equipping education researchers to communicate about their research in accessible ways.

→ **Communications support services**: The platform(s) could provide writing, editing, audio-visual and graphic design services to education researchers – for free. The range of services offered should be tailor-made to support researchers in translating their knowledge into effective formats for different audiences, from global policymakers to grassroots organisations. The aim would be to ensure that research findings resonate across stakeholder groups and that research results are not only accurate but also compelling and relevant for decision-makers. The services could, for example, be coordinated by one of the institutions or hubs with a strong track record in research communications, by Research Chairs at various HEIs, or by Science Granting Councils.

→ **Translations**: The platform(s) could make use of artificial intelligence for translation purposes. It is important that education research if available in languages that users of education research in Africa actually speak.

→ **Scanning the education research landscape:** The platform could regularly map the education research terrain in Africa and provide 'big picture' overviews of what research already exists around key education topics. This would allow the platform to highlight where critical research gaps lie and what topics or types of evidence are needed to align with national, regional and continental research agendas.

⤤ For more on Africa-led research agendas, see **Intervention 1.**

→ **Synthesising across multiple sources:** The platform could provide services or other forms of support for research synthesis. This involves combining insights from multiple studies to create comprehensive and cohesive messages. Research synthesis supports better-informed decision-making by presenting synthesised evidence rather than isolated findings. It is also an important step in developing clear, concise and evidence-backed narratives that can be effectively communicated to stakeholders and the broader public. This kind of service would add considerable value in the education research terrain. There is little incentive for academic researchers to conduct syntheses, as academic reward systems tend to prioritise original research.

The Education Endowment Foundation is supporting Global South organisations (including SUMMA) to undertake more of this critical work. This work can also be supported by AI integration.

→ **Marketing and notifications**: Use of the platform(s) must be encouraged. Members of the education research community will benefit from greater awareness about the platform(s) and how to use them. They should be alerted about new publications. This could be done, for example, through existing news platforms (such as The Conversation – where journalists could be recruited to co-write or edit articles on education research) or University World News – Africa edition, or via newsletters/alerts and social media.

Supporting information technology infrastructure

This intervention envisages a situation where all higher education institutions and other research bodies involved in education–related work are connected via existing National Research Education Networks in their countries, and also connected through the NRENs to one another. This intervention should support NRENS to provide customised additional services to research organisations beyond internet connectivity. An example of an existing initiative that could help pave the way in this regard is Ubuntu–net.

Next Steps

If you would like to fund an intervention to support a platform for the dissemination of African education research, the following steps will help you to start planning your process:

1. **Establish a community of pioneers committed to driving this forward**: This would include education researchers and others who are specifically interested and involved in research communications.

2. **Reach consensus what form or structure the communications platform should take**: It could either be a stand–alone initiative to support education research in Africa, or it could be connected to another intervention – for example, as a project of the Research Chair initiative (see **Intervention 3**) or collaborative partnerships (see **Intervention 6**). It could also it be connected to a funding body, such as a National Science Granting Council (see **Intervention 2**). This structure might be different from country to country, depending on the stakeholders and infrastructure that exist in each country. It should ideally, be implemented together with research capacity strengthening and stakeholder engagement components (see **Intervention 8**).

3. **Identify a consortium of African partners to collaborate on the platform:** This could be made up of an institution where a Research Chair is positioned, or a science granting council. Alternatively, it could be a stand–alone organisation (like SUMMA) that coordinates all the activities of the platform.

4. **Recruit and build a skilled team**: Identify project managers, communications writers, trainers, digital media experts, and content developers who can provide services and manage the platform. This team will be responsible for ensuring that research is communicated effectively and that there is ongoing capacity building for education researchers to disseminate their work.

5. **Start building relationships with those who will use the platform from the start.** Again, this could start with the Research Chairs or the partners involved in collaborative research. A good way to start would be to offer webinars and start developing a community of practice in which researchers can share their research findings. These events can also include policy actors, as the initiative broadens out to engage with other stakeholders in the education sector and beyond.

Who should you speak to to start this Intervention off

As this intervention is designed intentionally to be regional, and we flag particular stakeholders any interested investor should engage with.

→ UbuntuNet Alliance is a well-led community of NRENs in East and Southern Africa actively building out its infrastructure services for research institutions.

→ Established and emerging EdLabs in Côte D'Ivoire and Ghana are exploring infrastructure to house research for policy use.

→ The Kenyan Education Research Database, the African Education Research Database and African Journals Online all house content that could be useful for seeding any African-led initiative.

→ The Education Endowment Foundation in the UK has supported several education knowledge platforms, including SUMMA and eBASE in Cameroon and is committed to building Southern-led capacity to synthesise education research.

→ The Jacobs Foundation, USAID and the What Works Hub for Global Education among others, are in the early stages of collaborating to invest in the international architecture for evidence in education globally. Connecting to this initiative will be critical to ensure it does not unintentionally crowd out existing expertise and leadership from Africa.

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Annexure 1: SWOT Analysis and communications platforms for education research

The table below depicts how establishing effective communication platforms is expected to address the SWOT analysis undertaken by education research stakeholders as part of the EERA process.

Strengths	Weaknesses
Quality research available: There is a growing knowledge base of African education research across various thematic areas and countries.	**Limited local reach and impact:** Despite international visibility, the application of research findings at the national and regional levels is often limited, hindering impact on local policy and practice.
Local evidence dissemination platforms: Many higher education and research institutions host education data and research repositories, as well as dissemination platforms. This is the case of the APHRC microdata Portal, KERD, among others.	**Limited support:** Inconsistent institutional support for African education researchers, including access to high–quality research databases, timely data
Increased awareness: There is growing recognition of the importance of research communication for enhancing the uptake of education research in Africa.	**Resource constraints:** Financial and infrastructural limitations impede effective research communication, including inadequate access to tools and training for effective dissemination
Technology infrastructures: NRENs provide infrastructure to connect African education researchers to the internet.	**Lack of tailored content:** Research outputs are often not translated into formats that are accessible or usable by policymakers, practitioners, and community stakeholders.
Regional initiatives: Some regional initiatives and events are emerging in the field of education research, offering stakeholders spaces for networking and evidence–based discourses. This is the case of country levels ECD networks, ADEA, EE4A, among others.	

Opportunities	Threats
Advocacy for open access and data sharing: Promoting open data policies and advocating for platforms that facilitate free access to research can improve the reach and influence of education research.	**Digital divide:** Inequitable access to technology and digital platforms can limit the reach of research communication efforts to marginalised communities and regions.
Additional revenue models, e.g. subscription services or partnerships with educational institutions.	**Poor dissemination infrastructure:** The presence of predatory journals and poor–quality journals in general does not promote quality research.
AI: Potential to integrate artificial intelligence to assist with access to information	**Language barriers:** Language and literacy challenges can hinder the effective communication of research to diverse audiences, particularly in multilingual contexts.
	Inadequate dissemination and policy engagement: Failure to effectively disseminate research findings to policymakers and the public can undermine the potential impact of education research.

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