



# Metis Collective 2025

ANNUAL REPORT

*Look closely at the present you are constructing; it should look like the future you are dreaming.*

ALICE WALKER

170+ FELLOWS

2,500+ TEACHERS REACHED

1.5M LEARNERS DIRECTLY IMPACTED

INSIDE THIS REPORT

# What You'll Find

01

Note from the Executive Director

02

About Metis: Mission, Vision & Values

03

Our 2025: Impact & Highlights

04

The Metis Fellowship

05

Catalytic Grants

06

InnovaatED AMal

07

Knowledge Sharing & Government

08

Our Lessons

09

Our Future

10

Our Team

11

Our Partners

# Dear Friends,

---

2025 marked the close of Metis's first five-year strategic plan. From the very beginning, we have been bold dreamers and committed co-creators of a world that prepares learners not just to succeed, but to truly thrive. As the world evolves at an unprecedented speed, we hold a unique responsibility and opportunity to ensure children are ready for the future unfolding before them.

Since Metis was founded, we have supported 170 strategic and catalytic educators to build schools, platforms, after-school programs, and influence policy. Together, this work has directly impacted 1.5 million learners across East Africa and indirectly reached more than 4 million learners. This impact is a testament to what becomes possible when local educators are trusted, resourced, and connected.

*The world is shifting – fast. What got us here will not be enough for what comes next. But we are not building this alone. Our greatest asset, our greatest strategy, is each other. The education leaders we have the honor of walking alongside, the partners who back us, the funders who trust us. We only go far if we go together.*

The past two years, however, have tested us deeply. Internally, we navigated a leadership transition. Externally, the global funding ecosystem shifted dramatically, particularly affecting organizations in the social impact space. It was a season of uncertainty, but also one of clarity.

As we reflected on our strategy, we made a set of deliberate and necessary pivots.

First, we chose to scale deep. Metis is home to one of the most connected and influential education communities in Kenya. Our fellows are embedded where change matters most, from informal settlements to refugee camps, pastoralist communities, and national government technical working groups. This phase is about going deeper with the community we already serve: investing in collaboration through catalytic grants, collective learning spaces, and targeted support in fundraising, impact measurement, and advocacy.

**Second, we recommitted to scaling teacher support.** In 2025, through a partnership with the Ayaat Foundation, we successfully scaled this work. Together, we are bringing the Metis approach, alongside Amal Labs, a CBC-aligned AI co-teacher, into schools, supporting more than 2,500 teachers to date. The world is shifting fast, and the challenges ahead are real. But so is the community we have built, 170 alumni, 2,500+ teachers, five extraordinary grantee partners, and the funders and champions who walk alongside us. We are not going it alone. We only go far if we go together.

---

**Muthoni Gakwa**

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, METIS COLLECTIVE.**



**Don't let anyone tell you that you cannot make a difference. Your voice and actions have the power to change the world.**

**-Wangari Maathai**

**With gratitude,  
the Metis Team**

WHO WE ARE

# Equipping Africa's Education Leaders

OUR VISION

## A world where all learners thrive.

OUR MISSION

### To equip African education leaders to strengthen and scale their impact for systemic change.

We do this through three programmatic areas: The Metis Fellowship, tools and training, and collective learning and action events.

OUR CORE VALUES



#### DO HARD THINGS

We seek out challenges with courage and curiosity.

#### GO FURTHER TOGETHER.

We collaborate to help each other grow and achieve sustainable transformation.

#### LISTEN + LEARN.

We reflect and learn from successes, setbacks, and each other. Solutions are guided by those closest to the problems.

#### REDEFINE EXCELLENCE.

We hold ourselves to high standards in pursuit of a world where all people have the skills and opportunities to thrive.

#### DO SMALL THINGS WITH GREAT LOVE.

We practice the kindness and generosity we wish to see in the world.

## THE PROBLEM

# East Africa's Learning Crisis

East Africa faces a profound learning crisis. **89%** of African learners are in learning poverty.

Primary school education in the region is deeply ineffective; 9 out of 10 children in Sub-Saharan Africa are unable to read and understand a simple text by age 10.

We radically need to reinvent education. But the proximate leaders best placed to do this the teachers, founders, and community organizers working inside the crisis, lack access to the networks, support, and resources to start and scale innovations and collaborate for systemic impact.

## OUR RESPONSE

# Local Leaders. Systemic Change.

**Metis equips, connects, and amplifies local education leaders — so they innovate for systemic change, and enable learners to thrive.**

We do this through three mutually reinforcing programmes: the Metis Fellowship, InnovatED, and Collective Learning and Action Events.

**89%**

OF AFRICAN LEARNERS IN  
LEARNING POVERTY

**~33%**

GRADE 2 - 3 STUDENTS PASS  
GRADE-LEVEL TESTS

**4M+**

OF AFRICAN LEARNERS IN  
LEARNING POVERTY

**This is not a resource problem alone. It is a leadership and innovation problem. And Metis exists at that exact intersection.**

## OUR PROGRAMS

# Three Pathways to Systemic Change

01



### The Metis Fellowship

A flagship leadership development program for proximate education leaders building schools, platforms, and influencing policy across Kenya's 47 counties and beyond.

02



### Catalytic Grants

Seed funding and capacity-building support for grassroots education innovators developing evidence-based solutions to Kenya's most pressing learning challenges

03



### InnovatED

Bringing Human Centered Design thinking and AI powered teaching tools directly into classrooms, reducing administrative burden so teachers can focus on what matters: their learners.

04



### Knowledge Sharing & Advocacy

Convening educators, policymakers, and system-shapers to translate grassroots insights into national policy and practice

2025 AT A GLANCE

# A Year of Depth, Scale & Resilience

**1.5M**

Learners Directly Impacted Since Founding

**2,500+**

Teachers Supported Through InnovatED

**11**

Fellows Supported in Cohort 8

**40,000+**

Learners Reached by C8 Fellows

**265**

Teachers Certified in HCD + AI Course

**1,106**

Teachers in Active Communities of Practice

**15**

Alumni Supported over 9 Months

**5**

Organizations Funded via Catalytic Grants

**150**

Teachers Convened at EdTech Summit

**2**

Government Technical Working Groups

**170+**

Total Alumni in Metis Community

**4M+**

Learners Indirectly Reached

# Equipping Changemakers: The Metis Fellowship

Cohort 8 of the Metis Fellowship brought together 11 extraordinary education leaders working across Kenya's most underserved communities. Over the course of the fellowship, these leaders innovated and led play-based interventions that collectively are impacting 40,000+ learners, 700+ teachers, and 400+ caregivers.

Alongside Cohort 8, 15 alumni were supported for 9 months to strengthen their organisations' capacity across program design, impact evaluation, fundraising, and communication.



**40,000+**

LEARNERS  
REACHED

**700+**

TEACHERS  
SUPPORTED

**400+**

CAREGIVERS  
ENGAGED



## Brian Bosire

Teach For Kenya

Empowering parents, caregivers, and teachers to strengthen children's holistic development through play, building a world where play is not a break from learning, but the way every child learns.



## Collins Oluoch

ChezaCheza Dance Foundation

Creating access to safe spaces through dance, and supporting schools to embrace movement and play to strengthen social-emotional learning and academic growth.



## Frank Njoro

Futures Infinite

Working to ensure children in rural schools in Western and Nyanza regions have access to technology they can use to learn, play, and thrive in the 21st century.



## Hellen Wambui

Elimu Plus Homeschool

Transforming online and home-based learning into a joyful, hands-on experience where every learner thrives, making quality education accessible regardless of setting.



## Joel Kahindi

STEAMLabs Africa

Making coding accessible, fun, and culturally relevant in rural and marginalised areas of Kenya's coastal region, opening doors to the digital economy for the next generation.



## Lucy Mwaniki Ngatia

AfriToys

Designing and manufacturing culturally relevant, CBC-aligned, sustainable, and inclusive toys and learning through play solutions for African classrooms.



## Nelly Kagoro

Ohana Africa Foundation

Creating a sustainable educational model that provides quality, affordable, and joyful learning experiences for children in low-resource urban communities.



## Patrick Munguti

Kenya Connect

Training and supporting teachers in rural schools to leverage technology to make learning joyful, engaging, and relevant, preparing learners to thrive in the 21st century.



## **Cherop Priscilla**

Elimu Daraja Initiative

Designing and implementing with teachers, simple, low-cost, CBC-aligned, and culturally relevant play activities that transform everyday classrooms.



## **Sammy Murimi**

Kidogo

Designing with and supporting caregivers to implement a collection of play-based activities that engage children and help each one achieve holistic growth and development.



## **Stephen Ikonya**

The Action Foundation (TAF)

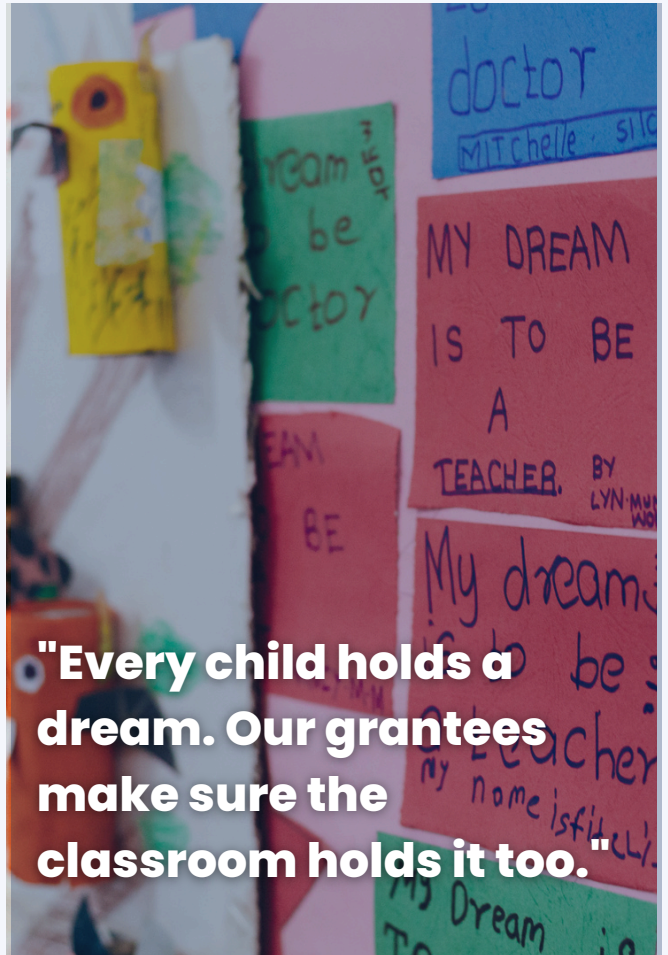
Designing inclusive early childhood development centres to support children with disabilities aged 2–8 years in low-resource urban settings, ensuring no child is left behind.

**Read each fellow's full story and  
project details on LinkedIn.**

**Meet all C8  
Fellows**

# Catalyzing Evidence-based Innovations

In 2025, the Metis Catalytic Grants programme funded 5 grassroots organisations working at the intersection of learning, livelihoods, and economic opportunity, reaching hundreds of girls and women across Kenya and Uganda. Each grant, ranging from \$5,000 to \$15,000, was designed not just as funding, but as a catalyst. Our goal is to help organisations strengthen their systems, sharpen their impact measurement, and build the evidence and credibility they need to attract larger institutional funders. We walk alongside them, not just write cheques.



**500+**

Girls  
&  
Women  
Reached.

**5**

Organizations  
Funded.

**\$5K– \$15K**

Grant range per  
organization.

## UGANDA · KAMPALA & GULU

### FacesUp Uganda & Second Chance Foundation

Provided 50 young women in suburban Kampala and Gulu with vocational training in basketry, jewellery making, and hairdressing, alongside business development and digital marketing skills. By year-end, participants were selling through established retail outlets, including Latitude Zero Hotel and Worldwide Handmade Gifts, and had fulfilled an international order to Israel. One participant, Tracy, used her basket sales income to return to school and ranked 10th out of 67 students in her first term back.

"I never knew that I could sell my baskets just using the phone. Ever since then, I take WhatsApp as a business which is always open even when I am sleeping."

— **Nakimuli Lovinsa**, participant

## KENYA · NAIROBI

### Freely in Hope - Malkia Programme

"Malkia", meaning "Queen", provides a safe space for women in prostitution aged 13–30 to be equipped, educated, and strengthened as agents of change. In 2025, Freely in Hope onboarded Cohort 4 (10 women), delivered 14 training sessions, 5 group counselling sessions, and disbursed seed grants to all 10 cohort members, who launched businesses ranging from children's clothing to poultry farming. All 5 alumni grantees from prior cohorts remain in business.

"Before joining Malkia, I doubted myself and my business ideas. Now I dare to stand and present with confidence."

— **Nancy Njeri**, soapentrepreneur & Malkia alumna

## KENYA · KISUMU COUNTY

### M-taka-Empowering Women in Waste

M-taka's revolving fund and capacity-building programme supports women waste entrepreneurs in the informal economy. By year-end, 100% of participants who began in the low-income bracket had transitioned upward, 85% to middle income and 15% to high income. The programme formalized multiple women's groups as registered CBOs, and one participant, Diana Abwao, expanded her operations to 3,000kg of recyclables per month and created employment for another woman in her community.

"The support from M-taka gave me the tools and confidence to formalize our work. Now, as Safisha Nchi Limited, we've built a business and created jobs for 6 people."

— **June Grace**, Site Director, Safisha Nchi Limited

## KENYA · LAIKIPIA COUNTY

### **Miti Alliance Regenerative Agroforestry**

Established a regenerative agroforestry garden at Murungai Comprehensive School in Laikipia, training 389 students and 200 parents in sustainable food production. The school now runs a daily feeding program, for the first time in its history, fueled by the garden's produce. 4,500 vegetable seedlings and 100 fruit trees planted.

"Students are healthier, happier, and stronger. Absenteeism has decreased, and they are excited about learning."

**-Mrs Flora Muthama, Headteacher**

## KENYA · MAASAI COMMUNITIES

### **Patinaai Osim Women's Textile Project**

Supporting young mothers from rural Maasai communities through structured tailoring skills development, using recycled and upcycled fabrics that preserve Maasai cultural identity. By 9 months, learners were independently producing shirts, shorts, Maasai attire, and eco-friendly bags, with several already earning income through repairs and small commissions. One participant, Evelyne Lankisa, now owns her own sewing machine

"I had never used a sewing machine before. Today, I can make bags using recycled fabric. My work supports my family and also protects the environment."

**-Jackline Silantoi, participant**

# Supporting Teacher-led Innovation: InnovatED

InnovatED equips teachers with human-centred design thinking and through a strategic partnership with Amal Labs, AI tools, so they spend less time on paperwork and more time where it matters: in front of their learners. The result is sharper lessons, deeper professional growth, and teachers who genuinely thrive.

The programme combines Metis's human-centred teacher training model with practical AI tools, ensuring teachers not only learn the technology but integrate it into meaningful classroom practice.

**2500+**

Teachers Reached  
Across Kenya

**1,600+**

Trained in Virtual &  
In-Person Sessions

**265**

Certified in the HCD +AI  
for teachers Course

**1,106**

Active in Communities  
of Practice



**Tr. Simon Mhindi | Kajiado County**

"Amal Labs is my 'digital Enkiguena', a trusted elder guiding me through the rhythms of education. Assessments are sharper and more intuitive, and feedback flows like proverbs around a village fire, timely, wise, and encouraging. This term, I taught with heart. I taught with heritage."



**Nancy Nderitu | Kiambu County**

"Before I discovered Amal Labs, creating exams and assessments was exhausting. That struggle is now behind me. I can create accurate, curriculum-aligned, personalized assessments in minutes, giving me more time, clarity, and confidence to focus on what truly matters: helping my learners thrive."



**Daniel Kamau | Nyandarua County**

"Planning used to take hours. Now, I create all of them with ease and confidence. During a science practical, I generated a clear lesson guide right from my phone. The activity flowed smoothly, and the learners were fully engaged."

**"My dream is to be a teacher."**

**Student , Kenyan classroom**

# Supporting Systemic Change: Knowledge Sharing & Advocacy



## Teachers' EdTech Summit - September 2025

150 teachers gathered at Makini School for a full-day summit combining the Metis Way design-thinking framework with the Amal Labs AI platform. Teachers used the METIS Way: Make Meaning, Empathize, Tackle, Iterate, Share, to identify real classroom challenges and prototype AI-powered solutions. They also tackled five national Policy Design Challenges on digital skills, online safety, inclusive learning, data use, and teacher resilience, producing concrete proposals for systemic change.

## Government Technical Working Groups

Metis contributed to policy formulation through two national Technical Working Groups: the Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) Guidelines and the KSRAT Review giving grassroots educator insights a seat at the policy making table.

## KEWOTA MoU - December 2025

Metis signed a landmark Memorandum of Understanding with the Kenya Women Teachers Association (KEWOTA), opening pathways to reach thousands of additional teachers with human-centred design and AI tools.

## Global and Local Representation

Metis was represented at BettUK, the Pwani EdTech Summit, the Kenya EdTech Summit, and Opportunity Collaboration, amplifying the voice of Kenyan education innovators on the world stage.

# Our Lessons from 2025

---

## Iteration is Everything

InnovatED reminded us of the profound value of consistent iteration. You can make plans, but implementation on the ground reveals what's truly working, and what needs reimaging. Stay flexible, stay curious.

---

## Peer Learning as a Pillar

Communities of practice proved to be key pillars in supporting collective knowledge sharing, not just for teachers, but for the entire Metis ecosystem.

---

## Community as Resource

InnovatED was made possible largely through partnerships with our alumni community. Working with Metis Fellows on the ground who already have trust from their community and local government enables us to design solutions that target root causes and have easier access.

---

## Strategic Partnerships for Scale

Partnerships with Ed Tech East Africa, KEWOTA, Amal Labs, and the alumni community multiplied our reach and amplified our impact in ways no single organisation could achieve alone.

---

## Rest as a Motivator

Prioritising rest for the team was critical in avoiding burnout and ensuring the team could sustain through high-stress periods. Sustainability begins internally.

---

## Trust Builds Brand

Building trust and staying true to our cause made it easier to forge meaningful connections and establish Metis as an impactful, recognisable brand in the ecosystem.

# No Superman. Just Us.

2025 marked the end of our first five-year plan. We leave it stronger, clearer, and more certain than ever that the change Africa's classrooms need will not come from outside. It will come from the educators already inside the system, already building the future with whatever they have.

Our job is to find them, back them, and connect them. That is what the next five years are for.

By 2030, we intend to reach 25,000 teachers, support 75–150 Fellowship alumni as systems-shapers, fund 25 grassroots innovations through Catalytic Grants, and build the most connected education leadership community in East Africa.

**"I have news for you, there is no Superman, it is up to us."**

—  
T O M M B O Y A

### Scale Deep: The Fellowship

15–30 systems-shaping leaders per year, including government officials, policy architects, and ecosystem builders who change the conditions in which innovation happens.

### Scale Wide: InnovatED

5,000 teachers per year by 2030, reaching 25,000 cumulatively through the Star Teacher and Metis Fellows cascade model and the Amal Labs AI co-teacher.

### Catalytic Grants

5 organisations per cycle, 5 cycles, surfacing, funding, and amplifying the grassroots innovations that won't make it onto funders' radar without us.

### Voice & Advocacy

Taking the insights of 170+ alumni into national policy spaces, so local knowledge becomes systemic change, not just individual impact



A  
better  
world  
is  
possible

# A better world is possible.

And it will be built by the educators already inside the system.

---

"There is no Superman. It is up to us."

Tom Mboya

THE PEOPLE BEHIND THE WORK

# Our Team



**Muthoni Gakwa**

Executive Director



**Naftaly Muroki**

Director  
Programs and  
Partnerships



**Goodness Mkanyika**

Programme Manager  
InnovatED Amal



**Naomi Mwololo**

Finance & Operations  
Manager



**Alvin Kiiru**

Training & Alumni  
Leadership Consultant



**Naomi Kahunya**

Communication &  
Community Manager



**Kamau Kamau**

Communications  
Lead



**Michael Kinyua**

Training  
Coordinator



**Eunice Malala**

Community  
Manager



**Esther Mumba**

Operations Intern



**Denis Kaaria**

Impact. Evaluation  
& Learning  
Consultant



**David Mwaura**

MEL Intern

THE PEOPLE BEHIND THE WORK

# Our Board

---



**Eric Nywamwaro**

(Board chair)  
Program & Partnerships Expert  
(Education, STEM, Livelihoods,  
Sustainability, Youth, Inclusion)



**Rebecca Ume Crook**

Co-Founder of  
Metis



**Wairimu Nyandia**

Chief Operating  
Officer (COO),  
Food For  
Education



**Soiya Gecaga**

Founder and Managing  
Director of The Vale  
School Muthaiga.



**Simon Bailey**

Director at  
Learning Ventures,  
Aflatoun  
International



**Richard King**

A partnership builder in  
the international education  
and consulting sector

# Previous Board Members

---



**Sharmi Surianarain**

Chief Impact Officer,  
Harambee Youth Employment  
Accelerator.



**Kaitlyn Pattillo**

Writer & Consultant at  
EdWell | Education reform in  
the Global South



**Roshni Walia**

Consultant, McKinsey  
& Company



**Juliana Mutisya**

CEO, Ritzy Business



**Dr. John Mugo**

Co-Founder,  
ZiziAfrique

# Our Partners

---

Our work was made possible by the generosity, partnership, and trust of our Fellows, alumni, funders and government partners, alongside others who prefer not to be named publicly. We are deeply grateful to every one of them.



AGA KHAN FOUNDATION



**THERE IS NO SUPERMAN  
IT IS UP TO US .**

# Join The Movement

Africa's education future will not be handed down. It will be built, by the teachers, the founders, the funders, and the champions who refuse to wait for someone else to act.

There is a place for you in this work.

**APPLY AS A FELLOW**

**FUND OUR WORK**

**VISIT OUR WEBSITE**

## Metis Collective

"There is no Superman. It is up to us." — Tom Mboya

© 2025 Metis Movement Limited. Registered in Kenya.  
Reaching learners across East Africa since 2017



info@metiscollective.org



metiscollective.org



Metis Collective



@metiseducation



@metiscollective



@metiscollective