



## TRANSFORMING EDUCATION THROUGH VALUES: THE ROLE OF VBE IN PROMOTING PLURALISM IN KENYA

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS >>>

<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>VALUES-BASED EDUCATION &amp; THIS EVALUATION</b>	<b>9</b>
→ The pedagogical underpinnings of Values Based Education (VBE)	
→ The VBE Theory of Change	
<b>METHODS</b>	<b>13</b>
→ Intent of the Study	
→ Setting and Sample	
→ Data Collection	
→ Data Analysis	
→ Limitations	
<b>RESULTS</b>	<b>22</b>
→ Personal Transformation: From Emotional Self-Regulation To Empathy-Driven Pluralism: A Spectrum Of Personal And Professional Growth	
→ Relationship Dynamics: From Self-Awareness To Collaborative Empowerment - Building Inclusive And Responsive Classroom Communities	
→ Educational Outcomes: Facilitating Pluralism Through Inclusive Pedagogy And Community Engagement	
→ The Social Return On Investment of VBE	
→ VBE Design & Facilitation, and Scope for Adaptation and Scaling	
<b>DISCUSSION &amp; RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>60</b>
→ How Effective is VBE in Advancing Pluralism?	
→ Three reasons why VBE is a powerful intervention to foster pluralism.	
<b>REFERENCES</b>	<b>65</b>



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY >>>

This report investigates the impact of the Aga Khan Foundation's (AKF) Values-Based Education (VBE) programme in Kenya, focusing on its ability to improve emotional awareness, inclusivity and pluralistic mindsets among educators. The study seeks to address the challenge of creating dynamic, inclusive learning environments in contexts where social tensions, socio-economic disparities, and historical inequalities persist. The VBE programme aims to transform educators by cultivating empathy, emotional regulation, and respect for diversity, thereby creating positive classroom environments that embrace pluralism.

A mixed-methods approach was employed, including World Café dialogues, and surveys of educators, learners, and facilitators. In Kenya, data was collected from 253 teachers, 31 facilitators, and 26 learners. Qualitative data was analysed using the Qualitative Impact Assessment Protocol (QUIP) to assess personal growth, professional relationships, and the integration of pluralism into teaching practices.

A Social Return on Investment analysis calculated that there is 16:1 social return on investment for VBE. The VBE programme in Kenya has led to significant personal and professional transformation among teachers, fostering improvements in classroom environments, learner engagement, and overall educational outcomes. Teachers demonstrated increased self-awareness, emotional regulation, and empathy, which in turn enhanced their sensitivity to the social-emotional dynamics of their classrooms. As a result, they adopted more inclusive, facilitative teaching practices that contributed to improved learner engagement and performance, as well as reduced absenteeism.

A key outcome of the programme was the development of deeper teacher-learner relationships, driven by improved interpersonal skills and classroom management approaches. Teachers incorporated innovative methods, such as gamification and creative lesson designs, that made learning more enjoyable and interactive for learners, leading to increased curiosity and participation. While the analysis focused primarily on teacher outcomes, there is strong evidence of the ripple effect these changes have on learners, though further research involving a larger learner sample is recommended to fully capture this impact.



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY >>>

The VBE training also promoted community engagement, with teachers becoming advocates for inclusive education, both within schools and in their broader communities. This extended the impact of the programme beyond individual classrooms, fostering a culture of collaboration and support among teachers, learners, and community members. The programme's impact on reducing absenteeism, improving learner performance, and building inclusive classroom environments underscores its potential for broader scale-up.

The VBE course has proven highly effective in fostering a pluralistic education system by promoting personal transformation, relational changes, and inclusive pedagogy among educators in Kenya. To further scale and sustain the impact of VBE, it is recommended that the programme be integrated into Kenya's Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC), supported by continuous professional development and mentorship for educators, and expanded to include broader community and non-education sectors. These steps will ensure that pluralistic values are embedded in both educational institutions and the wider society.







# INTRODUCTION

# INTRODUCTION >>>

*Education systems that lack inclusive content and pluralistic pedagogy reinforce social inequalities, perpetuate exclusion, and contribute to social division by failing to equip learners and educators with the tools to engage with and respect cultural diversity.*

Education systems play a central role in shaping the values, attitudes, and worldviews of learners, and when not designed inclusively, they can reinforce narrow perspectives that foster division, stereotyping, and exclusion. UNESCO (2019) highlights how education that lacks inclusive content and pedagogy can perpetuate social inequalities by failing to equip learners with the tools to respect and engage with cultural and social diversity. In many education systems, curricula often reflect dominant cultural, national, or religious narratives, which can exclude or diminish minority groups and perspectives. When learners from marginalised communities do not see themselves represented in their education, it can lead to disengagement and reinforce social inequalities. Furthermore, pedagogical practices that do not foster critical thinking and reflection on diverse identities can perpetuate stereotypes and social biases. Banks (2009) has shown that schools failing to integrate diversity and pluralism in their teaching are more likely to perpetuate structural inequalities, reinforcing social boundaries and sustaining historical patterns of exclusion. Teachers who have not been trained in pluralistic and inclusive pedagogies may unintentionally reinforce existing social hierarchies and biases. Without an education that fosters self-awareness of personal biases and equips educators to handle diversity, teachers may perpetuate exclusionary practices and unequal treatment of learners from different backgrounds, contributing to disparities in learner achievement and long-term social inequalities (OECD, 2015). In societies where education does not promote pluralism, schools can become microcosms of social division, increasing social tensions, leading to greater polarisation, and weakening social cohesion in diverse societies (World Bank, 2018).



# INTRODUCTION >>>

*A pluralistic worldview is a precondition for fostering an inclusive and equitable society.*

Pluralism, as articulated by philosophers like Isaiah Berlin, John Rawls, and Charles Taylor, provides a powerful framework for understanding and navigating diversity in modern societies. Berlin's concept of value pluralism argues that multiple, often conflicting, values can be equally valid, challenging the notion that there is one universal truth or moral framework (Berlin, 2000). Rawls builds on this by introducing the idea of "overlapping consensus," where individuals with diverse moral, religious, and philosophical beliefs can still agree on shared political principles necessary for a just society (Rawls, 1993). Taylor, extending these ideas, emphasises the importance of recognition and respect for both individual and group identities, arguing that true social harmony can only emerge when diverse identities are acknowledged and affirmed (Taylor, 1994).

***“Pluralism is no longer simply an asset or a prerequisite for progress and development; it is vital to our existence.”***

***(His Highness the Aga Khan)***

In this philosophical context, a pluralistic worldview becomes more than the passive acceptance of difference; it is a proactive and generative force capable of addressing contemporary issues like social fragmentation, inequality, and exclusion. By recognising the legitimacy of multiple perspectives, such a worldview fosters dialogue and cooperation across divides, creating the space for more inclusive decision-making processes. This inclusivity, in turn, helps counter systemic inequalities by ensuring that marginalised voices are heard and valued. Pluralism's inherent respect for diversity offers a path toward healing social fragmentation, laying the foundation for more cohesive and equitable communities where difference is seen not as a source of conflict, but as a wellspring of innovative solutions.

An inclusive and equitable society can only thrive when differences are not merely tolerated but embraced, and when systemic inequalities are addressed by ensuring that everyone, especially marginalised groups, has a voice. A pluralistic worldview provides the ethical and cognitive framework necessary to navigate the complexities of the modern world, making it foundational to achieving true social equity and inclusion.



# INTRODUCTION >>>

***The education system in Kenya has historically been “anti-difference” and is only recently opening up avenues to create more inclusive learning experiences for young people.***

Historically, the Kenyan education system has been shaped by a central focus on nation-building and social cohesion, often at the expense of recognising and valuing diversity. In the post-independence era, the curriculum was designed to emphasise national unity, which in practice meant promoting dominant cultural, religious, and national narratives. Sifuna and Otiende (2006) argue that the desire to forge a cohesive national identity led to the marginalisation of minority ethnic groups and their contributions to Kenyan history, creating an “anti-difference” educational environment. This narrow focus on unity often downplayed the value of Kenya’s rich multicultural fabric, fostering a system that sought to homogenise rather than celebrate diversity. This exclusionary framework, embedded in both the content of the curriculum and in pedagogical practices, reinforced social boundaries and sustained existing inequalities, particularly for marginalised communities such as ethnic minorities, girls, and learners from rural areas.

Further reinforcing this approach has been the education system’s reliance on high-stakes examinations. The exam-centric focus, as Bold et al. (2015) highlight, has long prioritised academic performance in a limited range of subjects over the holistic development of learners. This model of education, geared toward producing a workforce that fits into predefined societal roles, has discouraged creativity, critical thinking, and the exploration of diverse perspectives. Teachers, lacking training in pluralistic and inclusive pedagogies, often unconsciously reinforce societal hierarchies and biases, perpetuating a cycle of exclusion for marginalised groups. Oketch and Rolleston (2007) note that teacher preparation in Kenya has historically been insufficient in addressing multiculturalism and inclusion, leaving educators ill-equipped to handle the diversity present in their classrooms. Consequently, the system has often been aligned with a societal norm that rewards conformity, sidelining those who do not fit into the dominant framework.

However, Kenya is now on the cusp of embracing a more inclusive and pluralistic approach to education. The introduction of the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) represents a significant shift away from the rigid, exam-oriented model that dominated the past. The CBC aims to focus on the holistic development of learners, promoting skills such as creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving. The Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (2017) argues that the CBC offers the potential to cultivate learners who are adaptable and open to diversity, breaking from the historically narrow focus of the education system. While the successful implementation of the CBC is still unfolding, it marks a positive step toward an education system that recognises and values difference. This shift aligns with broader global efforts to create inclusive, equitable education systems that foster pluralism and prepare young people to engage constructively with a diverse world. If fully realised, the CBC could transform the Kenyan education system into one that not only acknowledges difference but actively celebrates and integrates it, helping to address long-standing social fragmentation and inequality.







# VALUES-BASED EDUCATION & THIS EVALUATION

# VALUES-BASED EDUCATION & THIS EVALUATION >>>

AKF's 'Why' is to enable every child to thrive in a world enriched by diversity. AKF nurtures education systems that celebrate differences and champion inclusion, so that educators and young people learn to navigate differences and cultivate a pluralistic disposition that recognises the dignity and worth of every person and enables them to become contributing members of society.

In response to the problem that education systems lack inclusive content and pluralistic pedagogy; AKF co-designed, tested and implemented Values Based Education (VBE) as an experiential learning experience for educators. This study seeks to understand the extent to which VBE is fostering a pluralistic disposition that embraces diversity and inclusion among educators and learners.



# THE PEDAGOGICAL UNDERPINNINGS OF VALUES-BASED EDUCATION >>>

Values-based education (VBE) is a transformative learning journey that integrates experiential learning, creativity, and self reflection. The course aims to cultivate empathy, respect for diversity, and collaboration; aiming to create lasting behaviour change among educators. The course has three objectives for teachers and education officials who participate; that they gain a deeper understanding of their identity, values, and ethics; that they apply the personal qualities of pluralism and ethics to themselves and others; and that they have the opportunity to build a supportive community and have fun.

The VBE course takes participants through a transformative learning journey that integrates experiential learning, creativity, and self reflection. The course aims to cultivate empathy, respect for diversity, and collaboration; aiming to create lasting behaviour change among educators.

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The Arc of Transformation guides the learning process, and consists of four stages:

1. **Powerful Beginnings:** Activities focus on building safety, trust, and connection among participants.
2. **Powerful Experiences:** Participants engage in introspective processes using creative visualisation to explore their values and ethics.
3. **Meaning-Making:** This stage allows participants to connect their experiences to their identities, values, and ethics.
4. **Celebration:** Emphasises a positive environment to consolidate the transformation.

The methodology promotes a safe, non-judgmental community of educators, engaging in activities that foster personal growth, self-awareness, and a deeper understanding of values and ethics, ultimately enhancing their ability to contribute positively to the learning environments of learners. The experiential and reflective learning methodologically that underpins VBE aims not only to enhance educators' skills, but also to profoundly impact learners' learning experiences by promoting a more inclusive, engaging, and empathetic classroom atmosphere.



# THE VBE THEORY OF CHANGE >>>

Fig. 1

Impact		A more pluralistic and ethical world that recognises the dignity and worth of every person	
Final outcome	Learners start to develop personal competencies that indicate a pluralistic disposition	<i>Indicated by:</i> 1/ Skills to reflect on & own their personal story 2/ Skills to relate to others 3/ Active listening skills 4/ Taking responsibility for their own learning	5/ Skills to build trust 6/ Skills to support one another, to take risks, and share 7/ Tension management skills 8/ Skills to support analysis and reflecting on their learning experience
Immediate outcomes	1. Participants in the VBE programme emerge as educators who understand the influence of their personal values, attitudes, & biases on learner interactions	2. Teachers who have participated in VBE become exemplars of pluralism in their classrooms	3. Teachers who have experienced VBE continue to invest in their personal & professional development
<i>Indicated by</i>	1/ Evidence of self-awareness, compassion & empathy 2/ Consistent application of an ethic of respect in all interactions, irrespective of difference 3/ Evidence that they recognise the effects of societal labels on developing identities.	1/ Evidence of them crafting dynamic and inclusive learning environments - (listening, validation, authentic stories, managing tension) 2/ Understanding & addressing their learners' diverse influences & needs, 3/ Incorporating experiential learning techniques, and 4/ Demonstrating unwavering care & compassion to learners in nurturing relationships	1/ Evidence of participants embracing life long learning and self discovery 2/ A community of practice that is non-judgmental and endures beyond the VBE workshop







# METHODS



# INTENT OF THE STUDY >>>

*This study aims to explore the changes that have occurred for teachers and learners as a result of the VBE course, and assess the value of these changes.*

Specific lines of inquiry include

1. Transformation: How have teachers' worldviews transformed as a result of participating in VBE?
2. Relationship Dynamics: How has experiencing the VBE course influenced educators' interactions with learners, and their relationships with their families and their communities?
3. Educational Outcomes: How has VBE impacted their teaching philosophies and pedagogical practices? How are the teachers integrating pluralistic values into their classroom practice and to what extent has this enhanced learners' learning outcomes?
4. Innovation Adoption and Scaling: What are the key considerations for designing future iterations of the programme; and what factors may facilitate or hinder the adoption and scaling of high-potential innovations within the broader education ecosystem?



# SETTING & SAMPLE >>>

The study took place in Mombasa and Lamu in Kenya. Data was collected in May 2024. 253 teachers, Head of Institutions and Curriculum Support Officers participated in dialogues about the effects of the VBE course.

This is roughly 8% of the total number of participants in the VBE course. 26 learners also participated in these dialogues. Surveys were sent out to all teachers who had participated in the VBE course and 172 responses were received (71% from females and 29% from males); along with 29 survey responses from VBE facilitators. Of the teachers who participated in the survey, 67% had participated in the compressed 3 day VBE course and 33% in the longer six-day version.



# DATA COLLECTION >>>

Data was collected from teachers, learners, and education officials through extensive dialogic consultation, via World Cafés which were held in both Lamu and Mombasa. The World Café process is a structured conversational technique used to foster open, creative dialogue around important topics or questions. It is designed to tap into the collective intelligence of groups in a collaborative way. Key elements of the World Café are as follows.

- **Small Group Conversations:** Participants are divided into small groups, seated around café-style tables. Each group engages in conversations around a central question or theme.
- **Rounds of Dialogue:** Conversations occur in multiple rounds, lasting about 20–30 minutes each.
- **Shared Themes:** As participants move between questions, they continue the conversation, building on others' insights and exploring new ideas. A host stays at each table to summarise the previous discussions for newcomers.
- **Visual Recording:** Participants are encouraged to jot down key ideas, doodle, or make notes on large sheets of paper during their discussions.
- **Harvesting Ideas:** After several rounds, the group reconvenes for a “harvest,” where key insights, common themes, and emerging patterns are shared with the larger group.

The World Café approach encouraged collaborative problem-solving and the sharing of multiple perspectives in a relaxed and engaging environment. Interestingly, we found these large-group conversations to be more generative than the FGDs that were conducted in Uganda in a parallel evaluation of VBE in that context; and participants' feedback was that the World Café methodology was not only a wonderful route to “self-evaluation”; but also a technique that they felt they could apply in their classrooms.

In the World Cafes we explored how participation in the VBE course had influenced participants' personal values, attitudes, and biases, and how they applied these insights to their professional and personal practices, particularly in the classroom. For the learners, we focused on their perspectives regarding the changes they observed in their teachers' behaviour following the VBE course, and how these changes have impacted their own personal competencies.



# DATA COLLECTION >>>

## Overview of Questions:

- **Main Changes:** This open-ended question prompted participants to reflect on significant changes in their lives without presuming the influence of the programme. “Can you describe the most significant changes in your professional and personal life in the last two years?”
- **Attribution of Changes:** After discussing these changes, we explored the reasons behind them: “What do you think are the main reasons for these changes?” This encouraged participants to consider and articulate the factors driving the changes, whether related to the VBE course or not.
- **Specific Influences:** To directly assess the impact of the VBE course, we asked: “How has the VBE course contributed to these changes?” This question helped understand the programme’s perceived influence from the participants’ perspective, capturing both positive and negative feedback.
- **Unexpected Changes:** “Have there been any changes in your personal or professional life in the last two years that you did not expect? What caused these changes?” This question aimed at identifying any unanticipated effects of the programme or other influencing factors.
- **Comparative Influence:** To contextualise the programme’s impact, we asked participants to compare and rank influences: “Compared to other factors, how significant has the VBE course been in bringing about changes in your life?” This question provided a relative assessment of the programme’s impact against other drivers of change.
- **Suggestions for Improvement:** Finally, we sought feedback for future programming with the question: “What could be done to make the VBE course more effective or beneficial?” This offered valuable insights for refining the course.



# DATA COLLECTION >>>

After analysis of the qualitative data that emerged from these dialogues we then sent out a survey to all teacher participants and VBE facilitators. The first survey aimed to gather further information on teachers' self-assessments on the impact of the VBE course on their personal and professional development. It explored changes in teachers' awareness of their strengths and weaknesses, emotional management, collaborative work with peers and learners, and inclusive teaching practices. The survey included rating scale questions to assess specific areas such as changes in their ability to engage in reflective teaching, interaction with learners, lesson planning for diverse needs, and the use of creative teaching methods. Open-ended questions sought to capture specific examples of how creative methods are applied, teachers' reflections on the uniqueness of the VBE training, and their willingness to pay for similar future training. Additionally, teachers were asked to estimate how long the professional skills they gained would last and to provide insights into the factors that contributed to these changes. This data became the basis for the social value calculation presented in the results section of this report.

The facilitator survey aimed to gather insights into the experiences and practices of facilitators delivering the VBE course. The survey sought to understand how facilitators applied VBE principles during their sessions, focusing on specific actions and interactions with participants. It included open-ended questions that explored what aspects of facilitation went well, areas for improvement, and key lessons learned from facilitating the course. Facilitators were asked to reflect on how their experiences influenced their understanding of effective facilitation and how they might change their approach in future sessions.

Additionally, the facilitator survey investigated the impact of transitioning from a 6-day workshop to a compressed 3-day format, asking facilitators to assess how this change affected their facilitation and participant engagement. Facilitators were also asked to identify challenges, unexpected benefits, and factors to consider for adapting the VBE course to different contexts. Finally, the survey gathered recommendations for scaling the VBE course to a wider audience while maintaining its effectiveness. The feedback from this survey is captured in the results section on VBE Design and Facilitation, and Scope for Adaptation and Scaling.





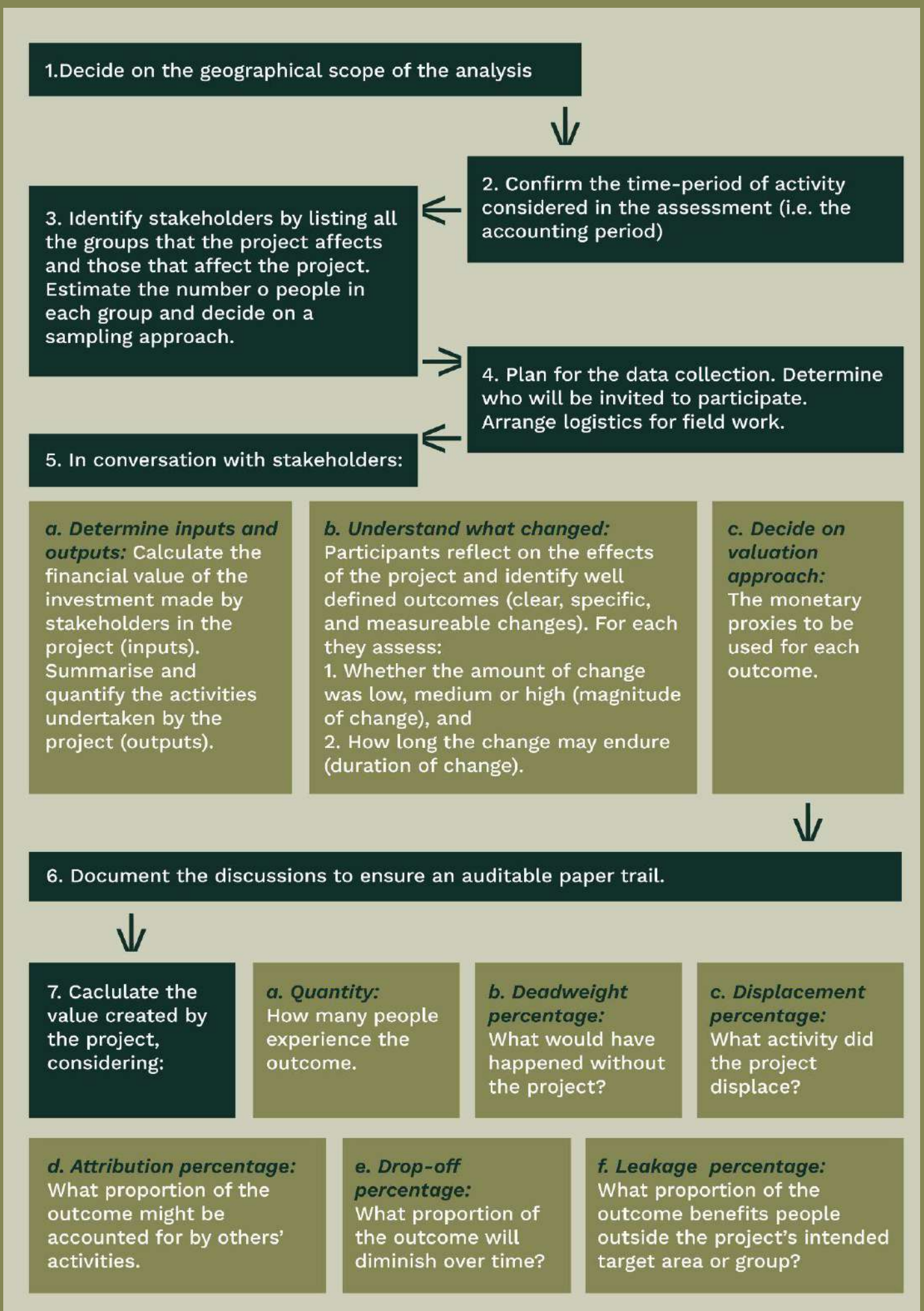
# DATA ANALYSIS >>>

The qualitative data collected was analysed using the Qualitative Impact Assessment Protocol (**QUIP**). This is an impact evaluation approach that draws on Contribution Analysis and supports the validation or countering of a programme's theory of change. The data was coded using **Causal Maps**. Causal Map is a research tool that supports the coding of data in a way that enables the researcher to analyse and visualise the relationship between cause and effect in micro-fragments of data. It can generate causal maps from narrative data that enable researchers to understand what has changed and why. The outcome from this analysis of the narrative data was a set of well defined outcomes (see Results). In this report these changes have been compared to the outcomes and indicators in the VBE theory of change (Fig. 1) to enable us to validate or challenge the assumptions underpinning the programme.

The Social Return on Investment (SROI) process, as outlined in Figure 2 (**Social Value UK**), uses the survey data and secondary literature to calculate the social value of the well-defined outcomes resulting from participation in the VBE course. This calculation quantifies the broader social, educational, and economic benefits of the programme by assigning monetary value to these outcomes. The process enables stakeholders to clearly understand the overall impact of the VBE course, particularly how it contributes to positive changes in individuals, schools, and communities. By translating these outcomes into financial terms, the SROI analysis helps justify investments by demonstrating the tangible returns from VBE.



Fig 2. The SROI process



# LIMITATIONS >>>

There are two limitations to the data we collected. The first is that we collected data at a specific point in time following participation in the VBE course. Without longitudinal follow-up, it is difficult to assess the sustainability of the reported changes in teacher behaviour, pedagogical practices, and learner outcomes. The second limitation is that although learner feedback was included, the number of learner participants was relatively small. This limits the ability to fully capture the breadth of learner experiences and perspectives on the changes observed in their teachers and classroom environments.

This feeds into an important limitation in the SROI analysis, which is that while some outcomes, such as reductions in absenteeism, improved relationships, and enhanced academic performance, primarily benefit learners, we have attributed these outcomes to teachers. This is because the focus of our evaluation is on outcomes from the teachers' perspective. Although these outcomes benefit learners, making such claims would require a much larger sample size to validate. Given that over 100,000 learners are targeted by the programme, our engagement with approximately 0.003% of that population does not provide sufficient grounds to defend those outcomes on the learners' behalf. In contrast, our survey of teachers had a response rate of 4.5% from the 3,227 teachers, giving us a more solid basis to defend the claims and outcomes related to teachers.





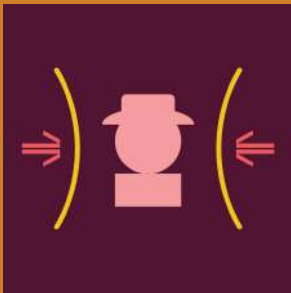


# RESULTS

## RESULTS >>>

## Personal Transformation: From Emotional Self-Regulation To Empathy-Driven Pluralism: A Spectrum Of Personal And Professional Growth.

The goal of VBE is to help teachers deepen their understanding of their identity, values, and ethics so they can recognise how their personal values, attitudes, and biases influence learner interactions. Module 1 of the VBE training, titled “The Self,” focused on eight personal qualities and competencies. Participants reflected on their pluralistic values, ethics, identities, and context.



**1. Self-awareness and resilience:** Skills for reflecting on one's personal story and identity



**2. Empathy and open-mindedness:** Skills for embracing one's own identity and story, and relating to others

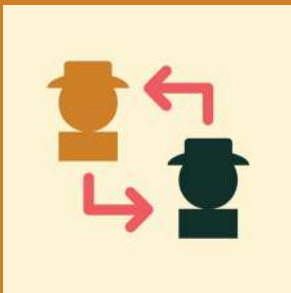


### 3. Respect for diversity:

Active listening to hear others' stories, appreciating diversity, including all voices, and creating safe spaces



#### 4. Taking responsibility: Owning one's learning and personal journey



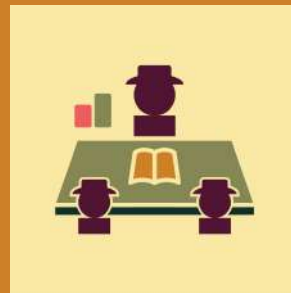
## 5. Relationship building:

Building trust through sharing and understanding others



## 6. Collaboration:

Supporting one another, taking risks, and sharing



## 7. Reconciling tensions:

Managing conflicts and tensions



**8. Critical thinking and problem-solving:**  
Analysing and reflecting on one's learning experience



# RESULTS >>>

## *VBE Course Outcome Chain: Nurturing Empathy and Social-Emotional Sensitivity to Classroom Dynamics.*

Fig. 4: Outcome chain: More sensitive to the social & emotional aspects of the classroom.



I attended VBE



I have learned critical thinking & a deeper understanding of myself



I understand the differences in people's characters



I have become humble, empathetic and open-minded



I am more sensitive to the social and emotional aspects of the classroom



*It has helped me to understand myself more about myself and the nature of me. To better understand myself today - improving teacher-teacher and teacher-learner relationship.*



# RESULTS >>>

Teachers in Kenya recognised how their emotions and experiences outside the classroom influence their behaviour in class. The VBE training helped them develop greater self-awareness and emotional regulation, with a specific emphasis on understanding differences in character and becoming more empathetic and open-minded.

**Self-Awareness and Emotional Regulation:** As a result of the training, teachers reported increased self-awareness, particularly in recognising and managing their emotional states. The focus of change amongst Kenyan educators was on developing sensitivity to social and emotional dynamics, both within themselves and their learners. Teachers described becoming more humble, empathetic, and open-minded, indicating a shift towards a broader understanding of emotional needs rather than just controlling their own emotions.

**Application of Personal Transformation in the Classroom:** Teachers in Kenya applied their personal growth by becoming more attuned to the emotional and social needs of their learners. They adapted their classroom interactions to be more empathetic and mindful, fostering a supportive environment where learners' emotional well-being was a priority.

**Depth of Critical Thinking and Understanding of Differences:** The course also prompted deeper critical thinking, with teachers gaining a reflective understanding of individual differences in character. This allowed them to approach their learners with greater thoughtfulness and empathy, reflecting a broader, more inclusive approach to interpersonal dynamics.

**Impact on Classroom Behaviour:** The primary change in Kenya centred around creating emotionally aware classrooms, where teachers became mindful of their own emotions and more sensitive to the emotional landscape of their learners. This fostered trust and created a more supportive, empathetic learning environment.

AKF's assumptions that the VBE training would foster greater self-awareness, compassion, and empathy were affirmed. In Kenya, the focus was on developing deeper critical thinking and empathy, with teachers becoming more sensitive to the emotional and social dynamics of their classrooms; fostering greater interpersonal understanding and emotional sensitivity.



# RESULTS >>>

The VBE course aims to help participants apply the personal qualities of pluralism and ethics to themselves and to foster a supportive community. It is designed in such a way that participants are likely to enjoy the learning process. VBEs overarching goal is that educators emerge with a deeper understanding of how their personal values, attitudes, and biases influence their interactions with learners.

AKF anticipated that the programme would lead to educators

- Consistently applying an ethic of respect in all interactions, regardless of differences
- Recognising the impact that societal labels have on the development of identities
- Demonstrating care and compassion in nurturing relationships with learners

To understand how the VBE course influenced educators' interactions with learners, as well as their relationships with family and community, we explored the most significant changes in their personal and professional lives over the past two years. We asked both teachers and learners to reflect on these changes, what they believed to be the key reasons for them, and how the VBE course contributed. We also encouraged them to share any unexpected changes in their lives and what might have caused those shifts.

In Kenya, teachers' personal growth quickly led to enhanced social-emotional sensitivity in the classroom and improved collaboration with colleagues. This sensitivity allowed teachers to recognise the emotional dynamics of their learners and their own influence on classroom interactions.



# RESULTS >>>

## Outcome Chain: Heightened Social-Emotional Sensitivity

Fig. 5: Outcome chain: Improved conflict resolution.



I am more sensitive to the social and emotional aspects of the classroom



I am more expressive and better able to communicate



I have improved self-management and interpersonal skills



I have become patient



I have developed critical thinking



I have become more open-minded



I have an improved ability to listen



I have a better understanding of people's differences



I have respect for others' opinions



I have improved conflict resolution

***So we are trying to remind ourselves, the respect for diversity. In a school where we have Muslims and Christians. How do you handle these people? Not unless you have respect for diversity and open mindedness.***

***(Lamu World Café)***

This outcome chain reflects the shift from personal emotional awareness to open communication and patience, fostering an environment where teachers engage more thoughtfully with others. As teachers became more open-minded and better listeners, they deepened their understanding of differences and improved their ability to manage conflict.



# RESULTS >>>

## *Outcome Chain: Strengths-Based Approach and Collaboration*

Fig 6: Outcome chain: Improved relationships with teacher colleagues.



I embrace my own and others' strengths



I embrace learners' strengths



I have improved relationships between teachers and learners

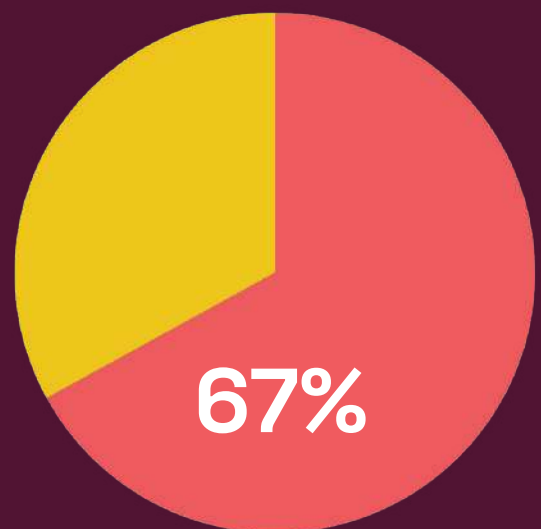


I collaborate more with colleagues



I have improved relationships with teacher colleagues

**67% of teachers rated their self-awareness of their strengths and weaknesses at 8 or higher on a 10-point scale, demonstrating a strong overall sense of personal insight among the majority of participants.**

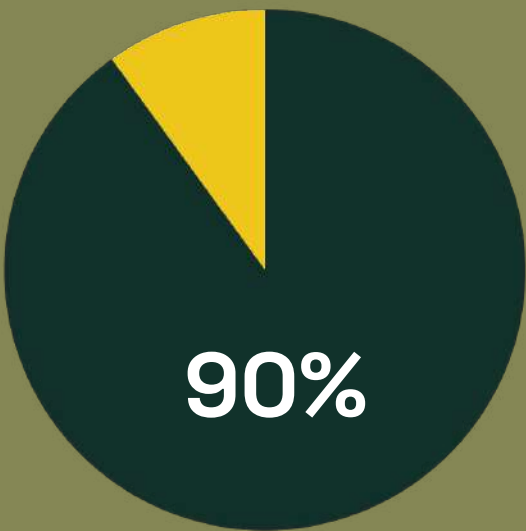


As teachers developed better emotional control and patience, they became more attuned to their learners' strengths, which enhanced relationships within the classroom. This strengths-based approach extended beyond learners to include more collaboration with colleagues, creating a supportive and cooperative teaching environment.



# RESULTS >>>

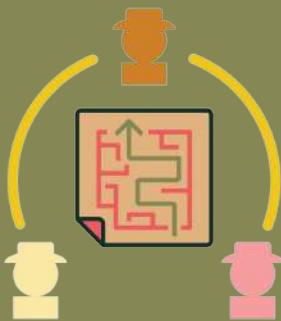
*90% of teachers rated their ability to collaborate with their teacher colleagues at 8 or higher on a 10-point scale, demonstrating a strong culture of teamwork and professional cooperation among the majority of participants.*



This progression highlights how teachers used their personal growth to foster stronger connections with both learners and colleagues, creating a more inclusive and supportive classroom and professional environment. Collaboration became a key outcome of these relational changes, reinforcing a sense of community within the school.

## *Outcome Chain: Expanding Networks and Community Advocacy*

Fig 7: Outcome chain: Better advocate for children with special needs.



I have learned to network and to problem-solve



I have improved my relationships with the wider community



I am better able to advocate for children with special needs (within both the school and the community)



# RESULTS >>>

As this collaborative spirit took root, teachers expanded their networks and problem-solving capabilities beyond the school walls, involving the broader community in learner support. The teachers' improved emotional sensitivity and collaborative skills allowed them to advocate more effectively for children with special needs, both within their schools and the larger community. This final chain reflects how teachers' personal and interpersonal growth evolved into community engagement, emphasising their role as advocates for inclusive, learner-centred education.

## *Rationale for the Unfolding Change*

The VBE programme in Kenya catalysed a rapid transformation from personal growth to relational application. Teachers began by becoming more sensitive to the emotional dynamics of their classrooms, which quickly led to improved self-management and interpersonal skills. This foundation of emotional regulation and open-mindedness enabled teachers to build stronger, more empathetic relationships with learners, creating inclusive, emotionally supportive classrooms. Teachers emphasised their efforts to ensure learners felt safe to express themselves, linking their personal emotional awareness to outward-facing empathy.

As their personal growth extended into their professional relationships, teachers engaged in more immediate collaboration with colleagues. They shared ideas, supported one another, and co-created inclusive teaching environments. This collaborative teamwork was a key aspect of the relational changes in Kenya, where teachers moved smoothly from individual growth to collective problem-solving and teamwork.

Moreover, teachers in Kenya integrated community engagement into their relational development, involving parents and other stakeholders in their journey. This outward expansion was marked by the teachers' increased advocacy for children with special needs, reflecting how they applied their personal growth to broader community efforts. Their ability to connect personal insights with community involvement highlighted the speed with which relational change unfolded in Kenya.

In Kenya, the progression from personal growth to relational change happened fluidly, driven by a strong emphasis on social-emotional sensitivity. Teachers not only developed self-awareness and emotional regulation, but they also immediately applied these skills to recognise and address the emotional climate of their classrooms. This progression from internal personal growth to relational application reflects a distinct focus on empathy as a tool for classroom management. Teachers became more attuned to their learners' emotional states, using their enhanced sensitivity to foster emotionally supportive environments. This emphasis on addressing the emotional dynamics of the classroom set the tone for creating inclusive spaces where learners felt safe to express themselves.



# RESULTS >>>

The Kenyan results further demonstrate a clear focus on building inclusive classroom communities. Teachers actively worked to ensure that learners' diverse emotional and social needs were recognised and met. This outward-facing empathy highlights how teachers moved beyond self-regulation to create a more inclusive environment. The relational changes in Kenya were characterised by teachers' ability to empathise with their learners, which helped them foster emotionally supportive, learner-centred classrooms. This approach goes beyond managing one's own emotions and extends to creating environments that nurture open communication and trust.

Teachers in Kenya integrated their personal growth into professional collaboration and teamwork. Teachers applied their enhanced emotional sensitivity to strengthen relationships with colleagues, forming a community of practice where they shared ideas, supported one another, and co-created inclusive teaching environments. This collaborative spirit was central to the relational changes observed in Kenya, where teamwork and cooperation were prioritised. The ability to move fluidly from personal growth into collaborative professional environments suggests that Kenya's teachers were able to quickly leverage their personal insights for collective benefits.

The relational changes in Kenya were marked by an integration of empathy, collaboration, and community engagement. Teachers moved swiftly from internal emotional growth to building inclusive environments for both learners and colleagues, creating emotionally supportive classrooms and fostering professional collaboration. Kenya's pathway highlights how personal growth was immediately applied to relational dynamics, with a focus on inclusivity and empathy. This rapid progression from self-awareness to community-centred advocacy demonstrates the effectiveness of the VBE programme in fostering relational change.



# RESULTS >>>

## ***Educational Outcomes: Facilitating Pluralism Through Inclusive Pedagogy and Community Engagement.***

VBE aims to ensure that teachers who participate in the programme become examples of pluralism in their classrooms. AKF anticipated this would be reflected in the creation of dynamic, inclusive learning environments that prioritise listening, validation, the use of authentic stories, and effective tension management. Additionally, it was expected that teachers would understand and address the diverse influences and needs of their learners, using experiential learning techniques to enhance educational outcomes.

AKF's theory of change is that change in educational pedagogy and practice will impact on learners, who will in turn develop personal competencies that foster a pluralistic mindset. These skills involve reflecting on and embracing their personal stories, relating to others, actively listening, and taking responsibility for their own learning. Learners are also expected to build trust, support one another, take risks, manage tension, share their experiences and be authentic. Finally, they are encouraged to develop skills in analysing and reflecting on their learning experiences, promoting deeper understanding and a growth mindset.

During the World Cafes, we asked teachers what they had done differently in the classroom, in their families, and in their communities as a result of their participation in the programme. We also explored how integrating values into their educational practices had enhanced learners' educational outcomes. The same questions were posed to learners, asking them what had changed in their teachers and how these changes had impacted their educational experience.

In the survey, we asked teachers about the extent to which they interact with learners outside the classroom and understand their needs; collaborate with learners to improve the learning environment; work with other teachers to create a more inclusive school environment; and engage with the local community to foster inclusivity. We also asked about their practices in lesson planning, such as determining the needs of different learners, considering these needs while teaching, and using creative methods and techniques like gamification and art in their lessons.





# RESULTS >>>

## *Educational Outcomes: Personal Growth and Professional Ethics*

Fig 8: Outcome chain: Involve community members in school activities.



**I have a deeper understanding of self**



**I embrace my strengths**



**I am more confident and at the same time also more humble**



**I am more open-minded & empathetic**



**I think critically**



**I understand that people have different experiences**



**I respect others' opinions**



**I take responsibility & work with minimal supervision**



**I offer equal opportunities to all learners**



**I treat all learners fairly and equally**



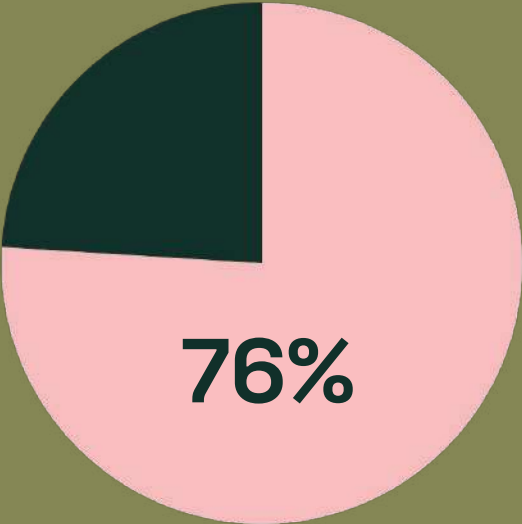
**I advocate for the interests of different learners through my networks**



**I involve community members in school activities**

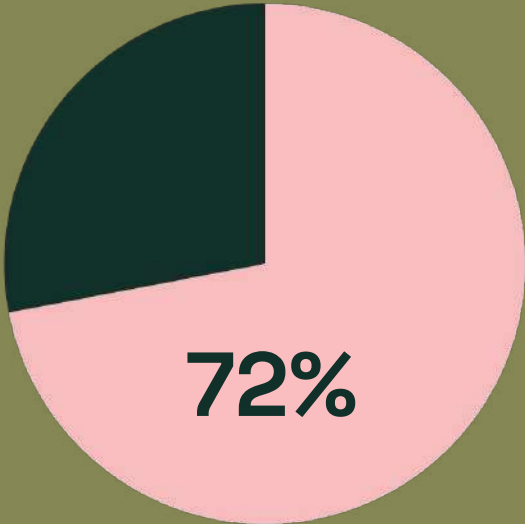
This sequence reflects the personal and ethical transformation that teachers undergo as a result of the VBE programme. It focuses on internal changes in mindset, self-awareness, and professional responsibility, which are fundamental to fostering an inclusive and empathetic approach to teaching. These changes are critical preconditions for engaging with learners, colleagues, and the community in a more equitable and inclusive manner.

# RESULTS >>>



76% of teachers rated their ability to reflect on their behaviours and attitudes to learners at 8 or higher on a 10-point scale, demonstrating a strong commitment to self-reflection and personal development.

72% of teachers rated their ability to prepare lesson plans that respond to the needs of different learners in the class at 8 or higher on a 10-point scale, and 81% said that they consider the needs of different types of learners in class; demonstrating a strong commitment to differentiated instruction and meeting diverse learner needs.

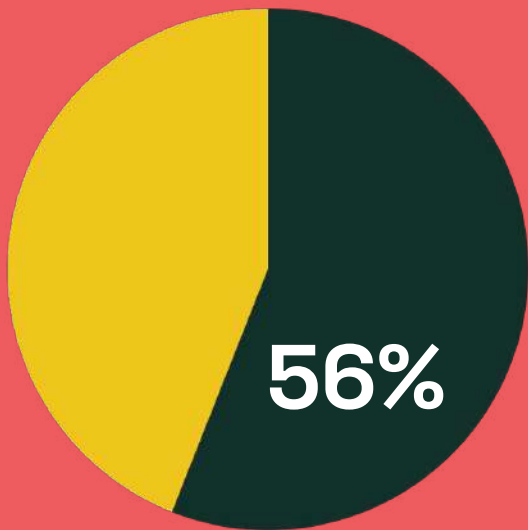


Teachers demonstrate deeper understanding of self and critical thinking. These are foundational steps that reflect the teachers’ internal growth and reflection. Teachers then start to embody professional ethics, where they take responsibility, advocate for learners, and ensure fairness and inclusion.

This phase culminates in involving the community, reflecting the broader impact of the teachers’ transformation beyond the classroom, connecting their professional responsibility with community involvement.



# RESULTS >>>



56% of teachers rated their ability to work collaboratively with the local community to foster an inclusive learning environment in their school at 8 or higher on a 10-point scale, demonstrating a moderate engagement with the community in creating an inclusive educational environment.



# RESULTS >>>

## Outcome Chain: Facilitation and Relationship-Building

Fig 9: Outcome chain: Improved teacher-learner relations.



*In our community, that is parents and our learners, most of them are facing difficulties with tuition, or with their family and sometimes when they come to school they find that they're not okay. Before we were trained, maybe sometimes we used not to listen to them or not to listen to their parents why they are behaving the way they are. Sometimes the learners are not coming to school, sometimes the learners do not want to answer questions, but after the VBE training we were taught how to listen and we listen to parents and learners on how to help them.*

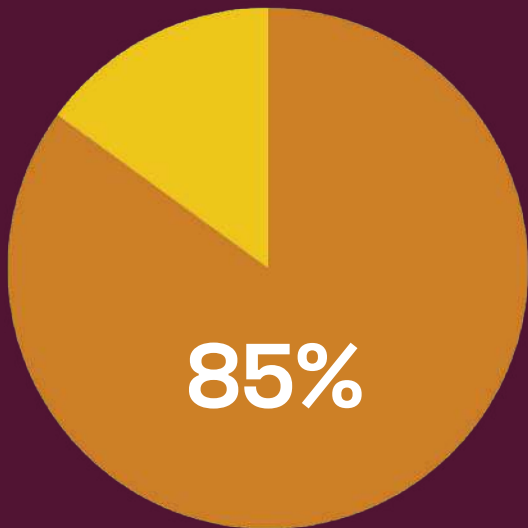
*(Mombasa World Café)*

This sequence of change focuses on how teachers, after undergoing personal growth, evolve their teaching practice and relational dynamics. The central theme here is the shift from a traditional teacher role to a facilitator who builds meaningful relationships with learners and colleagues.





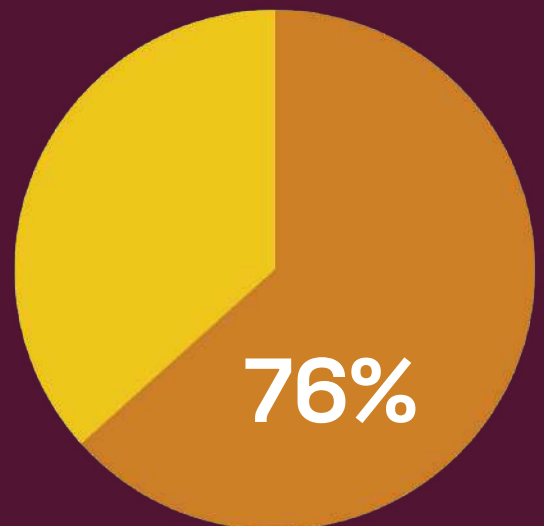
# RESULTS >>>



85% of teachers rated their ability to interact with learners outside the classroom at 8 or higher on a 10-point scale, demonstrating a strong commitment to building positive, supportive relationships with learners beyond the classroom setting.

The sequence starts with the teachers adopting a facilitative approach, signalling a pedagogical shift. They manifest relational and communication skills with improved listening, patience, and communication that enhance their interactions with learners and colleagues, creating a more inclusive and supportive classroom environment.

76% of teachers rated their ability to manage tension inside and outside the classroom at 8 or higher on a 10-point scale, demonstrating a high level of confidence among the majority of participants in handling stress and conflict in both professional and personal contexts.



As facilitators, teachers not only improve relationships but also become more creative and adaptive in their lesson planning and instructional strategies, building stronger relationships with learners and embracing their strengths.

The sequence culminates in improved relationships, which reflect the relational outcomes of teachers adopting a facilitative and learner-centred approach.



## RESULTS >>>

### Outcome Chain: Learner Engagement and Educational Outcomes



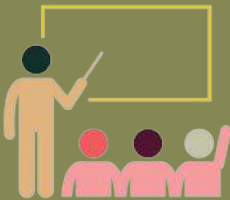
I encourage learners to reflect on their own childhoods



**Learners ask  
more questions**



**Learners are more curious**



**Learners are more engaged in class and respond to the activities**



Learners are more expressive



## Learners are opening up to their teachers



## Classroom learning has become fun



## Reduction in poor attendance

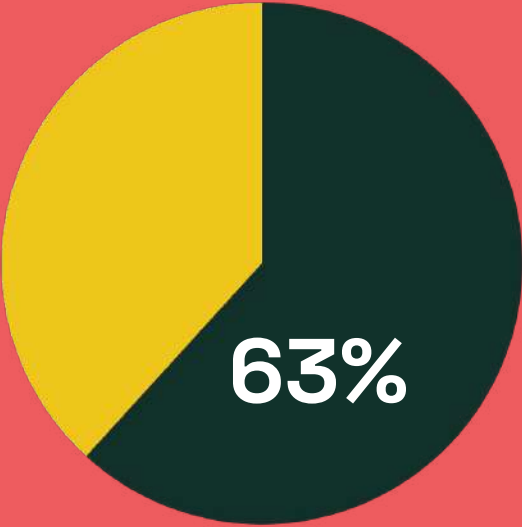


## Improved learners' performance

This sequence focuses on the impact of teacher transformation on learners. It represents the tangible educational outcomes that result from the personal growth and facilitative approach of teachers. The sequence begins with learners becoming more engaged and curious, reflecting the impact of the facilitative teaching approach on learners' active participation in their learning. Encouraging learners to reflect on their own experiences leads to greater self-expression and openness with teachers. The classroom environment becomes more enjoyable and engaging, which leads to a reduction in poor attendance and improved overall learner performance.

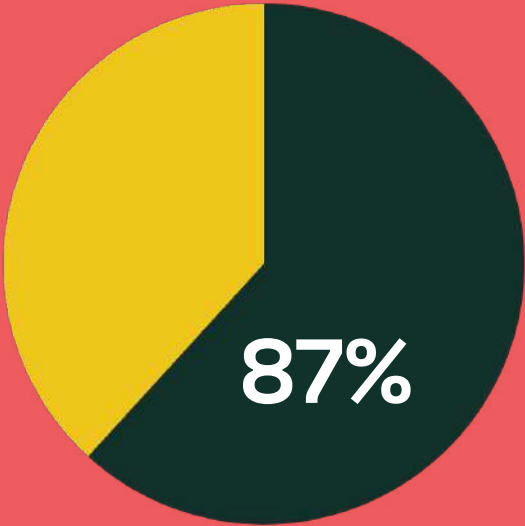


# RESULTS >>>



63% of teachers rated their ability to use creative methods and techniques (gamification, art, etc.) while teaching at 8 or higher on a 10-point scale, demonstrating a moderate but growing confidence in incorporating innovative and engaging teaching strategies.

The final step, improved learner performance, ties the sequence to tangible educational improvements, highlighting the ripple effect of teachers' personal growth and pedagogical changes.



87% of teachers rated their ability to work collaboratively with learners to improve the learning environment in their school at 8 or higher on a 10-point scale, demonstrating a strong emphasis on learner-teacher collaboration and shared responsibility for creating a positive learning environment.



# RESULTS >>>

## *Rationale for the Unfolding Change*

### **1. Personal Growth as a Foundation for Change**

The personal transformation of teachers is a key outcome of the VBE programme. Teachers gained a deeper understanding of themselves, embraced their own strengths, and developed empathy and open-mindedness. This personal growth served as a foundation for professional and relational changes. In Kenya, personal growth led teachers to think critically, become more confident and humble, and ultimately offer equal opportunities to learners. The focus on critical thinking and responsibility was prominent, with teachers actively advocating for learners and involving community members in school activities, reflecting a broader social and ethical responsibility.

### **2. Pedagogical Changes and the Role of Facilitation**

The shift from traditional teaching to a facilitative approach is a critical aspect of the VBE programme's impact. In Kenya, teachers demonstrated a pronounced shift toward facilitative teaching. Teachers became more innovative and creative in lesson design, using local materials to engage learners. They also developed better listening skills, became more patient, and created inclusive learning environments that emphasise collaboration and learner participation. The data from Kenya shows an explicit connection between personal transformation and changes in teaching practices, with teachers incorporating creativity and learner-centred approaches into their pedagogy.

### **3. Impact on Learner Outcomes**

In Kenya, the shift toward a facilitative and learner-centred approach led to tangible improvements in learner engagement and performance. Learners became more curious, asked more questions, and were more expressive in class. The teachers' efforts to make learning fun and engaging resulted in reduced absenteeism and improved learner performance, suggesting that the changes in teaching practices had a direct impact on learners' academic outcomes.

### **4. Community Engagement**

Teachers in Kenya took an active role in engaging their communities, advocating for the interests of learners through their networks and involving community members in school activities. This reflects a strong focus on social responsibility, suggesting that teachers in Kenya are proactive in extending their influence beyond the classroom.





# RESULTS >>>

## *Rationale for the Unfolding Change*

The change process in Kenya highlights a logical progression that begins with personal growth in teachers, which then influences their teaching practices and ultimately impacts learner engagement and performance. This change process can be understood as three interconnected yet distinct phases.

**The first phase** centres on personal transformation, where teachers develop a deeper understanding of themselves, embrace their own strengths, and become more open-minded and empathetic. This personal growth lays the foundation for critical thinking and an understanding of diverse experiences, allowing teachers to foster an inclusive mindset. However, this personal growth does not immediately translate into changes in the classroom; it first affects teachers' professional behaviours, such as offering equal opportunities to learners and advocating for their interests. In this phase, teachers also expand their influence into the community by involving parents and local stakeholders in school activities.

**In the second phase**, teachers shift from a traditional authoritarian role to becoming facilitators of learning, where they prioritise communication, collaboration, and innovation. Improved listening and patience, alongside creativity in lesson design, show how personal growth shapes pedagogical approaches. This relational and facilitative shift helps create a more supportive classroom environment, resulting in improved teacher-learner relations. Through this transformation, teachers are better equipped to manage classroom dynamics, support learners with diverse needs, and build stronger connections with learners.

**The third and final phase** involves the impact on learners. Teachers' new facilitative approach fosters an environment where learners become more engaged, curious, and expressive. By encouraging self-reflection and making classroom learning more enjoyable, teachers help reduce poor attendance and create conditions for improved learner performance. This final phase shows how changes in teaching practice, driven by personal growth, culminate in tangible educational outcomes for learners, demonstrating that the transformation in teachers' internal perspectives leads to measurable changes in their learners' experiences and achievements.

This phased approach emphasises that personal transformation is a precondition for pedagogical shifts, which then pave the way for learner-centred outcomes, illustrating a coherent and layered change process.

In Kenya, the evidence suggests that the assumptions made in AKF's theory of change are largely valid.

**Creation of Dynamic and Inclusive Learning Environments.** Teachers in Kenya showed clear signs of adopting a facilitative role, with a strong emphasis on listening, validation, and openness to learners' diverse experiences. They incorporated creative and experiential learning techniques, such as using local materials, fostering curiosity, and encouraging learners to ask more questions. The reported outcomes - such as increased learner engagement, curiosity, and expressiveness - indicate that teachers were indeed fostering inclusive environments where learners felt more comfortable and supported in their learning.

**Addressing Diverse Needs:** Kenyan teachers also demonstrated a growing ability to understand and address their learners' diverse influences and needs. Through inclusive practices like offering equal opportunities to learners and treating them fairly and equally, teachers were addressing diversity in a pluralistic way. The involvement of community members in school activities and advocacy for learners' interests through networks further highlights the teachers' commitment to supporting diversity beyond the classroom.



# RESULTS >>>

## *Rationale for the Unfolding Change*

**Experiential Learning Techniques:** Teachers' use of innovative lesson design and the shift towards a learner-centred approach reflects the incorporation of experiential learning techniques. These practices contributed to improved learner outcomes, including greater classroom engagement, reduced absenteeism, and enhanced performance.

The assumption that teachers would become more empathetic, open-minded, and sensitive to diversity holds true. In Kenya, the assumption that teachers would create dynamic, inclusive learning environments is largely valid. Teachers demonstrated a shift from traditional roles to becoming facilitators, incorporating learner-centred approaches, creative lesson design, and experiential learning techniques. There is evidence that teachers started to facilitate pluralism through both inclusive teaching practices and active community engagement. This highlights the expansion of pluralism beyond the classroom, as teachers engage with communities and advocate for diverse learners. The changes in pedagogy are manifesting in a reduction in the use of corporal punishment, improved learner attendance and signs of improved learner performance.



# RESULTS >>>

## 4) *The Social Return on Investment of VBE*

### **The purpose and value of a social return on investment analysis.**

A Social Return on Investment (SROI) analysis was conducted to provide a robust estimation of the overall value created by the VBE programme. This methodology assigns a financial value to social, educational, and emotional outcomes that are often difficult to quantify.

By doing so, SROI offers a meaningful measure of the programme's true impact on stakeholders. It demonstrates how VBE contributes to societal value in ways that traditional impact measures often overlook, ensuring that the programme's contributions to solving long-term social problems are recognised and appreciated.

Furthermore, SROI analyses help decision-makers, funders, and policymakers understand the long-term benefits of investing in such interventions. By aligning these intangible outcomes with financial metrics, SROI aids in resource allocation, future planning, and advocacy, ensuring that programmes like VBE are seen not just as educational initiatives but as critical investments in the fabric of society.

### **How the social value calculations were made.**

1. Identification of Inputs: The resources invested in the VBE programme were identified, including:
  - a. Transport costs for participants: This was estimated using the total number of teachers, facilitators and heads of institutions attending the course multiplied by the total amount given to them to reimburse their transport costs. The following amounts were used: Kes 1000 (USD 7.73) for teachers in Mombasa, Kes 1300 (USD 10.05) for teachers in Lamu and Kes 1500 (USD 11.60) for Heads of Institutions in both sites - these amounts are per person amounts.
  - b. Facilitators Fee: This comprises the amount paid to facilitators to deliver the course. To estimate this input we multiplied the total number of facilitators by the amount paid per facilitator. Facilitators for both Mombasa and Lamu were paid Kes 3500 (USD 27.07) (facilitation fee 2000 (USD 15.47) and transport costs 1500 (USD 11.60)).



# RESULTS >>>

These inputs constitute the necessary inputs to deliver the course to the target stakeholders excluding cost of venue and materials. All these figures in Kes were converted into USD using an exchange rate of 1 USD to 129.3 Kes, exchange rate value as of 26th September 2024, when the final analysis was presented.

1. **Stakeholder Identification:** The number of key stakeholders who benefit from the VBE programme, such as learners and teachers were identified to determine whose outcomes would be measured. Total number of teachers and heads of institutions who attended the course were derived from discussion with programme managers upon reviewing their programme documents and reports. For the total number of learners benefiting, we assumed that all learners constituting 111,108 learners (55,438 Male and 55,670 Female) in 211 schools (Mombasa 102 & Lamu 109) would have benefitted from VBE. While for teachers benefitting, programme documentation showed that 3227 teachers and heads of institutions went through the training and therefore all of these are included as stakeholders benefiting from VBE in the analysis.
2. **Teachers were surveyed:** To understand the extent to which they had experienced changes in their self-knowledge and educational practice as a result of participating in VBE and their willingness to pay for the VBE course.
3. **Outcome Mapping:** Tangible and intangible outcomes for each stakeholder group were mapped based on analysis of the World Cafe data and the survey.
4. **Financial Proxies:** were identified and assigned to each identified outcome, to quantify benefits that do not have a direct market value. For example, reductions in absenteeism were translated into monetary values.
5. **Deadweight and Attribution:** Adjustments were made to account for deadweight (outcomes that would have occurred without the VBE programme) and attribution (other factors contributing to the outcomes). This ensured that only the social value attributable to the VBE programme was captured.
6. **Duration and Drop-off:** The duration of the benefits was estimated to reflect how long the outcomes would last. A drop-off rate was applied to acknowledge that the impact of certain outcomes may diminish over time.
7. **Discounting Future Benefits:** To account for the fact that the value of future benefits is typically less than their value today (due to factors like inflation or opportunity costs), the future social value was discounted. This adjustment brings future benefits to their equivalent present value, ensuring accurate comparison with current costs.
8. **Calculation of the Net Present Social Value and the SROI Ratio:** Finally, the total social value generated by the VBE programme was divided by the total investment costs. This produced the SROI ratio, which indicates the value created for every unit of currency invested in the programme.





# RESULTS >>>

## *Well-defined outcomes from VBE that were valued*

The outcome chains presented in the results section of this study map the progression of changes based on insights shared by participants in the World Cafes. Each outcome chain culminates in a final, well-defined outcome, the social value of which has been quantified using monetary proxies and the Social Return on Investment (SROI) methodology.

### Final outcome: Improved self management and interpersonal skills



**Awareness of Emotional and Social Dynamics**



**Development of Critical Thinking and Empathy**



**Increased Emotional Regulation**



**Improved Communication and Conflict Resolution Skills**



**Improved self management and interpersonal skills**

Through the VBE course, teachers became more aware of the emotional and social dynamics within their classrooms, recognising how their behaviour and emotions impact learners and classroom interactions. This newfound awareness encourages reflection on personal values and biases. With a deeper understanding of their learners' diverse emotional and social needs, teachers engage in critical thinking, which helps them develop empathy and appreciate differences in character and perspectives. As empathy and critical thinking grow, so does their ability to manage their emotions, leading to more patient and thoughtful responses to classroom challenges. This emotional regulation enhances communication skills, making teachers better listeners and more effective at resolving conflicts. All of these changes manifest in improved self-management and stronger interpersonal skills.



# RESULTS >>>

## Final outcome: Improved relationships between teachers and learners



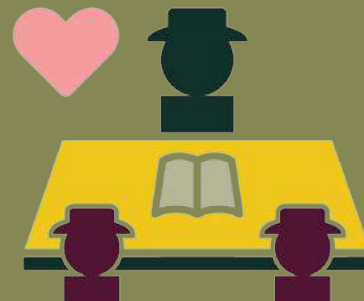
Improved Emotional  
Regulation



Enhanced  
Communication Skills



Fostering a Supportive  
Environment



Improved Teacher-Learner  
Relationships

Through the VBE programme, teachers were exposed to the principles of pluralism, empathy, and self-awareness. This deepened their understanding of their own values, biases, and attitudes, which in turn shaped their interactions with learners. With better emotional regulation, teachers became more patient and empathetic in the classroom. They developed stronger listening and conflict resolution skills, fostering more open and supportive dialogues with their learners. As teachers grew more attuned to the emotional and social needs of their learners, they created a more inclusive and trusting classroom environment. This led to stronger teacher-learner relationships.



# RESULTS >>>

## Final outcome: Reductions in school absenteeism amongst leavers



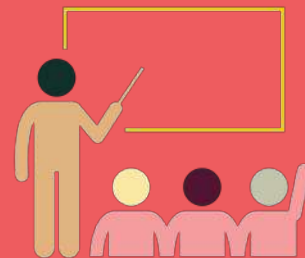
Shift to Facilitative Teaching Approach



Improved Classroom Atmosphere



Reduction in Punitive Measures



Increased Learner Engagement



Reduction in School Absenteeism

Teachers shifted from traditional, authoritarian methods to a more facilitative role, fostering an engaging and participatory classroom environment where learners feel their voices are heard and valued. As teachers practised active listening and showed respect for the diverse needs of learners, the classroom became a more inclusive and supportive space. This shift reduced fear and anxiety that may have previously contributed to absenteeism. With the reduction of corporal punishment and the adoption of empathetic, constructive discipline methods, learners felt safer and less threatened, increasing their willingness to attend school. The use of creative and experiential learning techniques - such as incorporating local materials and encouraging curiosity - made lessons more interactive and engaging. This heightened engagement makes school more enjoyable, encouraging regular attendance. Ultimately, this inclusive, supportive atmosphere led to a significant reduction in school absenteeism.



# RESULTS >>>

## Final outcome: Improved learners' performance



Learners feel safe  
in class



Learners reflect on their own  
childhoods and open up



Use of games and  
interactive teaching  
methods



Increased use of  
group work



Learners ask more questions,  
show curiosity, and become  
more engaged



Classroom learning  
becomes fun



Improved learners'  
performance

This outcome chain highlights how a safe and supportive classroom environment, coupled with innovative teaching practices, leads to improved learners' performance. When learners feel safe in class, they are more likely to reflect on their personal experiences and open up to their teachers. Teachers further enhance engagement by incorporating games and interactive methods, alongside increasing the use of group work, which fosters collaboration among learners. As a result, learners become more curious, ask more questions, and engage more deeply with the material. This active participation makes classroom learning enjoyable, creating a positive learning experience that ultimately boosts academic performance.



# RESULTS >>>

## Calculating deadweight, displacement, attribution and drop-off.

The key assumptions used to estimate and adjust the social value generated by the programme are summarised in the table below.

Outcome	Deadweight	Displacement	Attribution	Drop-off
Improved self management and interpersonal skills	Some teachers may have improved their self-management and interpersonal skills independently (e.g. through personal development, other professional training, or experiences). Although it is challenging to estimate this due to lack of literature highlighting this, we found a study that 74% of teachers are willing to pay or invest their own funds in their own professional development (Acumen East Africa, 2024). We assume that 74% could be the deadweight for this outcome.	The improvement in these skills is unlikely to displace skills or outcomes elsewhere negatively, so displacement related to this outcome is set at zero.	The attribution to VBE is likely to be high as there were no known significant interventions happening simultaneously in the regions. We estimate that the contribution from other organisations would range between 5-10%.	According to the survey, teachers indicated that they expect to continue benefiting from these outcomes for more than five years. Therefore, we assume there will be 0% drop-off in the first five years, with a decline beginning after that period.
Improved relationships between teachers and learners.	Some improvement in relationships may have occurred naturally as teachers gain experience or as a result of other factors, such as the adoption of a competency based curriculum. It is challenging to estimate the deadweight for this outcome due to the lack of literature. We assumed that learner absenteeism and learner attendance can be a proxy for good learner-teacher relationships. The rate of learner attendance in Kenya is 77% and we assumed that half of this is due to inside school influences; applying a deadweight of 38% which is half of the overall attendance rate.	Improved teacher-learner relationships should not negatively impact other relationships, so we assumed that displacement will be minimal or close to zero.	While other factors could contribute to improved teacher-learner relationships, the majority of the improvement can be attributed to VBE which explicitly aimed to foster these improvements, we assumed 10 - 20 % could be attributed to other influences.	Improved teacher-learner relationships are expected to remain strong in the short term (during the analysis period), but there may be a decline in quality over time as new people enter the schools, unless ongoing effort is made to maintain them. Since we are estimating SROI for the next 5 years we assume a drop-off of 0% in the first five years and room to explore drop-off beyond 5 years which is outside the scope of this analysis.





## RESULTS >>>

## Calculating deadweight, displacement, attribution and drop-off.

The key assumptions used to estimate and adjust the social value generated by the programme are summarised in the table below.

Outcome	Deadweight	Displacement	Attribution	Drop-off
<b>Reductions in school absenteeism amongst learners.</b>	We assume that learner absenteeism rates can be aligned with national absenteeism levels. However, since our analysis views a reduction in absenteeism as an improvement in attendance, we apply a 77% deadweight to reflect the current attendance rate in Kenya.	Reducing absenteeism and improving attendance in one school is unlikely to negatively impact attendance in other schools, unless resources are being redirected from other schools to support attendance improvements. Therefore, we assume a displacement of zero.	The VBE programme was not specifically aimed at reducing absenteeism but rather focused on improving learner engagement and enhancing teachers' personal and pedagogical skills. As a result, the reduction in absenteeism can be considered a moderate spillover effect. Therefore, we apply an attribution range of 30-50%.	When absenteeism is reduced and learner engagement improves, sustaining these outcomes may be challenging if external factors continue to pose difficulties. Without proper incentives and given other pressures, we assume the drop-off could be relatively high, ranging from 10-30%.
<b>Improved learners' performance.</b>	We assume that learners may have improved their academic performance due to other factors, such as extra tutoring, government education improvement policies, or personal motivation. To estimate the deadweight, we use the national pass rate for exams, which provides an approximate benchmark for expected academic performance. Based on the 2022 KCSE results, at least 76% of learners achieved a grade of D+ or above (Kenya National Examination Council, 2022). We assume this pass rate as the deadweight, as it reflects the typical level of learner performance across the country.	We assume a displacement of zero because improvements in academic performance resulting from pedagogical changes are unlikely to divert resources from other activities or outcomes.	Attribution for VBE could be moderate, as the programme specifically aims to improve pedagogical approaches that enhance learner outcomes. Therefore, we apply an attribution range of 30-50%.	We expect learner performance to continue improving over time, so we assume a 0% drop-off for this outcome. For example, with the development of new teaching methods and increased access to diverse learning tools, we anticipate continued improvements in learner performance, regardless of any changes in educator involvement.

# RESULTS >>>

## *Choosing monetary proxies.*

In a SROI study, choosing monetary proxies is an essential step in assigning a financial value to outcomes that do not have a direct market price. This process helps translate intangible benefits, such as improved relationships or personal growth, into measurable financial terms, making it easier to assess the overall value created by an intervention.

Monetary proxies are selected based on relevant, existing data from secondary sources or similar outcomes in related contexts. The aim is to find credible and transparent valuations that closely approximate the benefit or change experienced. For example, improved school attendance might be valued based on the increase in future earnings linked to higher educational achievement. Proxies are chosen carefully to ensure they reflect the specific context of the intervention and provide a clear picture of the social impact being assessed.

In this study these proxies have been selected based on the following rationales.

**Improved self management and interpersonal skills** reduce the need for teachers to seek additional professional coaching or personal development courses, leading to cost savings. To estimate the value of this outcome, we use the financial proxy method, applying the average cost of a professional or life coaching session in coastal areas, which is approximately \$150 per person.

**Improved teacher-learner relations.** In the survey, we asked teachers how much they would be willing to pay for a course or training like VBE based on the outcomes they experienced and valued. The most common response was 1,000 KES (USD7.73), which we used for valuation. Since this value applies to two outcomes, including improved learners' performance, we split the amount between them to avoid double counting.

**Reductions in school absenteeism amongst learners.** Each additional year of schooling can boost earnings by 10-21% (UNESCO, 2023), with returns being particularly high in low-income countries due to the scarcity of skilled labour. Using the assumption of an average livable wage of 47,541 KSH (USD340) per month (Anker Research Institute, 2023). The financial proxy value was calculated by applying a 3.5% discount rate over a 40-year period. The total Net Present Value (NPV) of the earnings gains was then divided by the number of days in those 40 years (assuming 365 days per year) to determine the daily increase in value. Therefore, we estimated that reducing absenteeism could result in an increase of 132 KSH (USD0.94) in lifetime earnings per learner per day, which is the value we used for the analysis.

**Improved learners' performance.** In the survey, we ask teachers to estimate how much they would be willing to pay to attend a course or training like VBE, based on the outcomes they have experienced and found valuable. The mode of the responses is 1,000 KES (equivalent to USD7.73), which we use for valuation purposes. Since two key outcomes were valued using this "willingness-to-pay" amount including improved teacher-learner relationships we divided the value between these two outcomes to avoid double counting. Therefore the value used for the analysis is 500 Kes (USD3.87) for valuing this outcome.



# RESULTS >>>

## Limitations in the SROI analysis.

It is important to note that while some outcomes, such as reductions in absenteeism, improved relationships, and enhanced academic performance, primarily benefit learners, we have attributed these outcomes to teachers. This is because the focus of our evaluation is on outcomes from the teachers' perspective. Although these outcomes likely benefit learners as well, making such claims would require a much larger sample size to validate. Given that over 100,000 learners are targeted by the programme, our engagement with approximately 0.003% of that population does not provide sufficient grounds to defend those outcomes on the learners' behalf. In contrast, our survey of teachers had a response rate of 4.5% from the 3,227 teachers, giving us a more solid basis to defend the claims and outcomes related to teachers.

## The Social Value of VBE in Kenya.

Total social value by outcome:

Stakeholder: Outcome	Social Value in Kenyan Shillings	Social Value in USD
Teachers: Improved self management and interpersonal skills	Kes 58,753,391	USD 454,396
Teachers: Improved relationships between teachers and learners	Kes 2,500,925	USD 19,342
Teachers: Improved learners' performance	Kes 1,048,775	USD 8,111
Learners: Reductions in school absenteeism	Kes 5,669,740	USD 43,849

**VBE has generated a 16:1 social return on investment, with a net present value of KES 59,673,681 (USD 492,735).**

**This demonstrates a significant impact on both individual teachers and the broader community, as reflected in the social value attributed to each outcome. With 3,227 teachers benefitting from the training, it has led to outcomes such as improved classroom environments, enhanced learner performance, and reductions in absenteeism.**

**For example, the improvement in teachers' self-management and interpersonal skills alone has created a social value of KES 58,753,391 (USD 454,396), while the reduction in learner absenteeism has contributed KES 5,669,740 (USD 43,849) in social value.**



# RESULTS >>>

We have been particularly prudent in our calculations by focusing only on the number of teachers rather than the larger number of learners impacted. This approach has led to relatively modest Net Present Value (NPV) figures for each outcome, despite the wider-reaching effects on learner outcomes such as absenteeism and performance. Additionally, the figures presented reflect only the costs of delivering the VBE course and do not include the design or development inputs. This contributes to the high SROI figure, as the costs captured are lower than if the full programme design were considered.

Improving teacher self-management and interpersonal skills delivers the highest social value, making it a key area for continued focus in educational interventions. These skills create spillover effects, such as improving the overall classroom environment and contributing to better learner performance and attendance. By enhancing teacher capacities, VBE is not only improving learner outcomes but also fostering more inclusive and empathetic school communities. The substantial social return on investment highlights the far-reaching benefits of VBE, positioning teachers as key drivers in shaping responsible, well-rounded future citizens. This is a critical consideration for decision-makers and stakeholders when assessing the potential for scaling up the programme.

It is important to note that while some outcomes, such as reductions in absenteeism, improved relationships, and enhanced academic performance, primarily benefit learners, we have attributed these outcomes to teachers. This is because the focus of our evaluation is on outcomes from the teachers' perspective. Although these outcomes likely benefit learners as well, making such claims would require a much larger sample size to validate. Given that over 100,000 learners are targeted, our engagement with approximately 0.003% of that population does not provide sufficient grounds to defend those outcomes on the learners' behalf. In contrast, our survey of teachers had a response rate of 4.5% from the 3,227 teachers, giving us a more solid basis to defend the claims and outcomes related to teachers.

For a more robust analysis, we recommend conducting a follow-up study focused specifically on the changes experienced by learners. Such a study would involve a larger sample size of learners and would allow for deeper insights into how the ripple effects of teacher transformation impact learner outcomes. While a larger learner sample may reveal that less change is directly attributable to VBE, it would provide a fascinating opportunity to explore the broader impact of teacher transformation on learners and how this influences the overall SROI analysis.



# RESULTS >>>

## ***5/ VBE Design & Facilitation, and Scope for Adaptation and Scaling.***

31 facilitators responded to the survey asking them to reflect on their facilitation of the VBE course and to identify the elements of the course that were especially successful or effective; moments or methods that did not go as planned or could have been improved, and key learnings they have taken away from their facilitation. They were also asked to reflect on their understanding of effective facilitation techniques and to identify specific changes they would make in their approach in the future. They were asked their views on how the shorter, condensed format of the course has affected participant engagement and the achievement of learning outcomes; and finally asked for their suggestions on how the course could be adapted to different contexts, audiences, or environments while preserving its core impact and effectiveness.

### **Design of the VBE Course**

The emphasis of the VBE course on developing eight personal qualities was regarded by facilitators as the most crucial and successful aspect of its design. This focus was so deeply integrated into the course that it allowed facilitators to observe clear personal transformations in participants. They noted that participants developed the ability to reflect on themselves, their relationships with others, and their roles as educators, which was seen as a major achievement. By the end of each module, teachers reported noticeable shifts in their mindsets and eagerly identified ways to apply these competencies in their daily teaching and personal lives.

A common theme facilitators remarked upon was the high level of active participation by educators during the course. This was attributed to the creative methods used, such as poetry, metaphors, storytelling, and role-playing, which significantly contributed to participants' enjoyment and engagement. These interactive approaches made learning fun and more enjoyable than formal learning. Activities such as the visualisation process, name games, and energisers were well-received, and facilitators noted that participants were enthusiastic about activities that encourage interaction, group reflection, and open dialogue. However, some facilitators voiced concerns about participants who were not fully engaged, suggesting that they needed more authority to manage participants who were attending for monetary benefits rather than for the learning experience. Facilitators also mentioned the need to reduce external disruptions during school-based sessions, as these impacted the overall flow of the training.

Facilitators praised the mechanisms that AKF had put in place to give them structured instructions on how to deliver the content, the collaborative planning process, and support with logistics. They felt that pairing facilitators based on their strengths helped create a supportive and effective facilitation environment. The collaboration between facilitators during the workshops was highlighted as an important factor in building trust and confidence among participants, and strong team dynamics were noted as key to the success of the sessions.



# RESULTS >>>

## Areas for Improvement in the VBE Design.

Several facilitators identified time management as a challenge, with issues arising from participants arriving late and insufficient time for discussions, sharing experiences, or completing certain activities.

Some facilitators also felt that certain concepts or activities could have been better explained or simplified. This was especially true for more complex activities like metaphors and validation, where participants engaged in the exercises but did not always connect them to the key messages of embracing diversity, creating safe spaces, or listening without judgement. Facilitators expressed a need to improve the introductory concepts of VBE to ensure participants understood the purpose and goals early on - particularly around the ideas of pluralism and why it is important to build a pluralistic mindset.

## Facilitating VBE.

Facilitating the VBE course had a transformative effect on the facilitators themselves, as they reported developing a newfound respect for diversity and an embrace of pluralism. Facilitators recognised the importance of appreciating the uniqueness of each individual, understanding that this diversity fosters harmony and positive interactions. Many emphasised how the process of facilitating also led to personal growth and improved emotional self-regulation, allowing them to practise and embody the very competencies they were facilitating, such as empathy, resilience, and open-mindedness. Facilitators came to understand that respecting and valuing differences is fundamental to creating an inclusive atmosphere where all participants can thrive.

They also gained insights into the importance of treating all participants as equals, ensuring that everyone has an opportunity to contribute and share. This emphasis on respect and fairness was seen as crucial to fostering a more inclusive and engaging learning environment.

Facilitators reported feeling better able to support adult learning, particularly in relation to their ability to communicate and actively listen. They learned that effective facilitation is not just about delivering content but about creating a space for meaningful dialogue and interaction. Listening - without judgement - was identified as a key skill, enabling facilitators to better understand participants' needs and to foster stronger relationships. This approach helped participants feel heard and validated, enhancing their engagement and overall learning experience.

Several facilitators shifted their understanding of their role, moving from initially thinking that their job was one of traditional instruction to adopting a more facilitative approach. They embraced the Teacher Facilitator Framework, understanding that their role was to guide participants on their personal learning journeys, and to foster active participation and collaboration. Facilitators noted that engaging participants through interactive methods like storytelling, group work, and reflection exercises led to more meaningful learning outcomes.

Facilitators identified patience as a key attribute when working with diverse groups of learners. They reflected on the gradual nature of change and learning, realising that being patient helped build stronger, more trusting relationships with participants. This patience was coupled with the need for flexibility - adapting to different personalities, learning styles, and unexpected changes during the sessions. Facilitators noted that understanding participants' backgrounds and showing empathy helped create a more inclusive and supportive learning environment.



# RESULTS >>>

## Facilitating VBE.

Facilitators acknowledged that facilitation is a continuous process of learning and unlearning. Every session provided opportunities for personal and professional development, and facilitators valued the experience of working with co-facilitators to learn new techniques and perspectives. This collaborative approach allowed facilitators to share responsibilities and leverage each other's strengths, which enhanced the overall facilitation experience. Facilitators found that stepping into participants' shoes helped them deliver content more effectively, creating a learner-centred experience that was crucial for fostering engagement.

Many facilitators emphasised the importance of thorough preparation and planning for effective facilitation. Being well-prepared with materials and content was critical for smooth delivery and allowed for flexibility when needed. Proper preparation helped build confidence and ensured that facilitators could adapt to the needs of their participants.

Additionally, facilitators noted the importance of creating a conducive and welcoming learning environment. Establishing a positive atmosphere where participants felt comfortable and included was seen as key to enhancing engagement and relationships. Facilitators highlighted the importance of powerful beginnings and learner-centred activities in setting the right tone for each session. They also recognised the need to remain flexible, adapting to participant needs, managing expectations, and allowing participants to take ownership of activities.

The VBE course empowered facilitators to become more confident and courageous in their roles. By embracing pluralism, becoming better listeners, and gaining confidence in their facilitation skills, they were able to deliver more effective and meaningful sessions. Facilitators noted that the positive responses from participants helped strengthen their belief in their abilities. Additionally, they recognised that creating opportunities for participants to express themselves and take the lead in activities boosted both facilitator and participant confidence and self-esteem.



# RESULTS >>>

## Pros and cons of compressing the VBE course.

The condensed format of the VBE course brought significant benefits in terms of **time efficiency**. Participants, particularly teachers with busy schedules, appreciated the reduced duration, which made it easier for them to attend the entire course without missing key modules. Compressing the training from six days to three also minimised absenteeism, allowing participants to remain focused and engaged throughout the shorter timeframe. Facilitators noted that this structure enabled more streamlined training sessions, as there were no long gaps between modules, helping to maintain momentum. Additionally, the shorter format made logistical planning - such as managing venues and meals - more efficient, which contributed to overall cost and resource savings. However, many facilitators felt that while time efficiency was a positive aspect, it also limited the depth of learning. Several facilitators suggested that more time was needed for participants to reflect on the material and fully grasp complex concepts, which could lead to better long-term retention. Some participants expressed feeling overwhelmed by the fast pace, with facilitators highlighting that a slower, more spaced-out approach would likely lead to deeper engagement with the content.

In terms of **participant engagement**, the condensed format resulted in high levels of active participation. Participants were consistently engaged in activities that encouraged collaboration, problem-solving, and interaction. The immersive nature of the format kept participants energised and actively involved throughout, promoting a dynamic and participatory learning environment. Facilitators observed that the shorter, more intensive sessions helped participants stay focused on the content, and the collaborative structure of the activities led to richer discussions and critical thinking. This engagement was reflected in participants' willingness to share personal stories and experiences, fostering a sense of openness and collaboration among the group. Some facilitators also noted that participants remained highly motivated, even requesting additional modules to continue their learning. However, despite the overall high engagement, there were challenges with the depth of understanding. While participants were actively participating, the shorter timeframe sometimes hindered their ability to fully absorb and internalise the material, leading to a need for more repetition and reflection over time.

Facilitators' views on the effect of compressing the course on **learning outcomes** were mixed. Some felt that the key objectives of the course were met, as participants were able to engage with the material and apply the concepts in practice. The format allowed participants to quickly immerse themselves in the content, leading to immediate practical application of the competencies being taught, such as empathy, collaboration, and problem-solving. However, others expressed concern that the condensed format limited the time available for participants to reflect and internalise the concepts, which could impact long-term retention. While the condensed format worked well for delivering content efficiently, it may not have provided enough time for deeper learning, particularly in areas that required more reflection and connection between modules. A few facilitators suggested that the format may be more effective as a refresher course rather than a primary mode of delivery, allowing participants to revisit the material after initial exposure to enhance their understanding and retention.



# RESULTS >>>

## Pros and cons of compressing the VBE course.

Despite the challenges related to time and learning outcomes, the condensed format had several unexpected benefits, particularly in **fostering collaboration** and relationships among participants. The immersive sessions encouraged greater interaction, with participants working together on group activities, sharing real-life experiences, and building connections. Facilitators noted that the compressed format helped participants see how different modules connected to one another, creating a smoother flow of learning. The structure also contributed to improved attendance and punctuality, as participants found the shorter sessions less demanding and easier to manage. Moreover, the format promoted sustained energy and focus, helping to prevent monotony and keep participants engaged throughout the training. The compressed format also provided an opportunity for facilitator development, with some facilitators noting that it allowed for the training of Curriculum Support Officers (CSOs) to become master facilitators, further extending the reach and impact of VBE across different regions and sectors.

The condensed format of the VBE course offered clear benefits in terms of time efficiency, participant engagement, and fostering collaboration, though it also presented challenges in ensuring long-term retention and deep understanding. Facilitators recognised the strengths of the format in maintaining energy and focus but emphasised the need for more time and reflection to ensure lasting impact and comprehensive learning outcomes.

## Potential for scaling VBE.

Facilitators and VBE participants all argued that the potential for scaling the VBE course is evident, but several key factors need to be considered to ensure its success and maintain its effectiveness across diverse contexts and audiences.

Everyone consistently highlighted the importance of **involving parents, guardians, and the wider community** in the VBE process. Extending the course beyond the classroom to include parents would help reinforce the values taught at school, creating a consistent framework for learners both at home and in their communities. Study participants emphasised that involving religious leaders, local authorities, and other community stakeholders would also ensure a more holistic adoption of VBE principles, fostering societal change that aligns with the values promoted in the course. This would also address the disconnect that some learners may face when the values learned at school differ from those reinforced at home.

The potential for **expanding VBE into other sectors** such as health workers, youth groups, and private schools was also noted. Facilitators felt that the principles of diversity, empathy, and self-awareness have universal applicability and should not be limited to educators and learners. By tailoring content for different professions and audiences, VBE could be adapted to meet the needs of a wider range of participants, helping foster values-based approaches in diverse sectors. To achieve this, facilitators suggested translating course materials into multiple languages and adjusting the content to accommodate illiterate or non-English-speaking participants, thereby making the course more accessible to broader groups.

To **make the course more inclusive and adaptable**, facilitators recommended revising the language and content to be less teacher-specific and more universally applicable. This would allow the VBE course to resonate with non-educational sectors while maintaining its core principles. Additionally, facilitators emphasised the need to ensure that activities, songs, and energisers reflect local cultures and contexts, particularly in diverse regions where unfamiliar content may disengage participants.

# RESULTS >>>

## Potential for scaling VBE.

There was strong support for **integrating VBE into the national curriculum**, specifically the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC). Facilitators believe this would provide a sustainable way to embed VBE into the formal schooling system, ensuring that all learners across the country benefit from the principles of VBE. Formal adoption would ensure that VBE reaches a much broader audience and is integrated into daily teaching practices nationwide.

**Follow-up and mentorship programmes** were also seen as critical to maintaining the momentum of the course after initial training sessions. It was suggested to implement mentorship systems where trained educators can support their peers in applying the values and methods of VBE in their classrooms. This could be supplemented with cluster training sessions and regular school visits to monitor progress and offer continued guidance, ensuring that the values of VBE are reinforced over time and don't fade after the initial course.

**Engaging with partners** and stakeholders, such as government bodies, NGOs, and private institutions, was seen as essential for scaling VBE. Collaborating with these organisations would help mobilise resources, secure funding, and create broader training initiatives. Such partnerships would provide the logistical and financial support needed to implement VBE on a larger scale, ensuring that the course reaches as many participants as possible while maintaining its quality.

To successfully scale VBE, facilitators also recognised the need to **adapt the course for different levels and audiences**. Adjustments to time allocation, content delivery, and facilitation methods would be essential for different groups. For example, facilitators recommended increasing the time allocated for Modules 1 and 2, which focus on self-awareness and interpersonal relationships, to ensure that participants have enough time to engage deeply with the material. They felt that adding more energisers and digital tools, like videos and role-playing exercises, would also make the course more dynamic and accessible to various learning styles.

The need for **ongoing professional development for facilitators** was also highlighted as a crucial factor in scaling the course effectively. Offering refresher courses and continuous training would help facilitators stay updated on the latest methodologies and ensure that they are confident and prepared to deliver the content. Training additional facilitators, particularly in underserved regions and private schools, would help expand VBE's reach while ensuring consistency and quality across different regions.

The VBE programme's remarkable 16:1 social return on investment demonstrates not only its substantial impact on individual educators and learners but also its potential for far-reaching societal benefits. Given the high social return and the transformative outcomes observed in classrooms and communities, there is a clear opportunity to scale the VBE programme across a broader range of schools in Kenya and beyond. By embedding VBE into the national curriculum and expanding its reach to more educators, the programme can continue to foster inclusive, pluralistic learning environments that shape future generations. Scaling VBE would not only multiply its positive effects but also provide a sustainable, high-impact investment in the development of empathetic, responsible citizens, making it a critical consideration for policymakers and stakeholders.







# DISCUSSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

# DISCUSSION & RECOMMENDATIONS >>>

The VBE course has shown significant potential in fostering a pluralistic education system, as evidenced by the personal growth, relational changes and pedagogical shifts that were witnessed by both facilitators and VBE participants in Kenya.

## How Effective is VBE in Advancing Pluralism?

This discussion explores the impact of VBE across several key areas: personal transformation, relational changes, inclusive pedagogy, and community engagement.

### **Personal Transformation: Embracing Diversity and Self-Awareness.**

A critical dimension of pluralism is the ability of individuals to recognise and embrace diversity, both in themselves and others. The VBE course has been highly effective in fostering this personal transformation among educators. Through the development of key qualities such as empathy, respect for diversity, and self-awareness, teachers internalised pluralistic values and applied them in their daily interactions.

Teachers reported significant shifts in their mindsets, moving from a focus on traditional, hierarchical roles to a deeper understanding of themselves as facilitators who foster inclusivity. They became more aware of their own biases, emotional responses, and interpersonal interactions, which allowed them to create more open, respectful, and inclusive classroom environments. This internal transformation was a crucial first step in advancing pluralism within the education system, as it equipped teachers with the tools to engage more effectively with learners from diverse backgrounds.

### **Relational Dynamics: Building Inclusive and Collaborative Relationships.**

VBE's impact on relational dynamics between educators, learners, and colleagues has been a driver of pluralism within schools. The course encouraged teachers to move away from authoritarian teaching styles and instead adopt more collaborative, empathetic approaches. This shift in relationships was crucial for fostering pluralism in educational settings.

In the teacher-learner dynamic, educators developed stronger, more supportive relationships with learners by recognising their individual needs and encouraging open dialogue. By providing a safe space for learners to express their perspectives, teachers cultivated an environment where diversity was not only respected but celebrated. This approach nurtured a sense of belonging among learners, which is a fundamental aspect of a pluralistic system.

The VBE course also fostered stronger relationships among educators. Teachers collaborate more closely, sharing their experiences and working together to create inclusive learning environments. This peer support system reflects a deepening of pluralistic principles, as educators learned to appreciate the different strengths and perspectives their colleagues brought to the table. By fostering a culture of respect and mutual understanding, VBE helped advance pluralism within the professional relationships of educators.



# DISCUSSION & RECOMMENDATIONS >>>

## **Inclusive Pedagogy: Advancing Pluralism in the Classroom.**

A key dimension of pluralism is the creation of inclusive, learner-centred pedagogy that values all voices and perspectives. The VBE course has been instrumental in helping educators move toward teaching practices that reflect these pluralistic values.

Teachers integrated creative and experiential methods such as storytelling, tapping into learners' lived experiences, and group work, which made learning more inclusive and engaging for learners from diverse backgrounds. This shift from traditional lecture-based teaching to participatory learning helped ensure that learners had a voice in the classroom, allowing for a more democratic and pluralistic learning experience. Facilitators noted that these creative approaches encouraged collaboration, critical thinking, and respect for diversity among learners, thereby advancing pluralism at the pedagogical level.

Moreover, teachers applied VBE principles by fostering a safe and open environment where learners felt comfortable sharing their personal stories and experiences. This sense of safety and inclusivity is central to a pluralistic education system, where all learners are encouraged to participate fully and where their identities are respected.

## **Community Engagement: Extending Pluralism Beyond the Classroom.**

VBE's ability to foster pluralism extended beyond the classroom, as educators became advocates for these values within their communities. Teachers played a crucial role in bridging the gap between school and community, engaging with parents, local leaders, and other stakeholders to ensure that pluralistic values were reinforced at home and in society. VBE is also being delivered outside of classrooms with partner CSOs and the LGE education teams.

The engagement of parents and community members was particularly significant in advancing pluralism on a broader scale. By involving these stakeholders in the educational process, VBE created a shared responsibility for promoting values such as diversity, empathy, and respect. This broader engagement reflects the pluralistic goal of building inclusive communities where differences are embraced and respected, both in and out of school.

Facilitators highlighted the potential of VBE to create lasting societal change by embedding pluralistic values not just in educational institutions but across the community. Teachers became role models for pluralism, influencing both learners and community members to engage with others in a respectful and empathetic manner.



# DISCUSSION & RECOMMENDATIONS >>>

*Three reasons why VBE is a powerful intervention to foster pluralism.*

## **1. Personal Transformation of Educators**

The emphasis on personal qualities such as empathy, self-awareness, and respect for diversity is at the heart of VBE's success. By transforming educators first - helping them to reflect on their own values, biases, and behaviours - the course empowers teachers to embody the principles they are teaching. This personal transformation makes them more effective role models and creates an emotional connection to pluralistic values, which deeply influences how they interact with learners and colleagues.

## **2. Relational and Inclusive Pedagogy.**

VBE shifts the dynamics in the classroom from traditional, hierarchical models to more collaborative and inclusive ones. The course promotes teaching methods that encourage participation, dialogue, and respect for each learner's unique voice. This pedagogical shift is crucial in fostering a pluralistic education system because it actively involves learners from diverse backgrounds and creates an environment where all perspectives are valued. By focusing on relationships - between teachers and learners, among teachers, and with the community - the course lays the groundwork for more inclusive, empathetic learning environments.

## **3. Community Engagement and Broader Social Impact.**

VBE's effectiveness is amplified by its ability to extend its reach beyond the classroom. The course encourages teachers to engage with parents, local leaders, and other community members, reinforcing pluralistic values in the wider community. This creates a powerful multiplier effect, as the values taught in school are mirrored and supported at home and in society. In the Kenyan context, where community structures are highly influential, this broader engagement ensures that the impact of VBE is not isolated to educational institutions but contributes to societal cohesion and inclusivity.

These three elements - personal transformation, inclusive pedagogy, and community engagement - work synergistically to make VBE a highly effective and impactful intervention in fostering pluralism.



# DISCUSSION & RECOMMENDATIONS >>>

*To effectively adapt or scale the VBE programme in the Kenyan context, I would recommend the following three steps:*

## **1. Integrate VBE into the National Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC).**

This would ensure that the pluralistic values and principles taught in VBE are embedded in the core educational framework, reaching all learners across the country. By making VBE a central part of the CBC, Kenya can institutionalise values such as empathy, respect for diversity, and collaboration, promoting pluralism consistently throughout the education system.

## **2. Develop Continuous Professional Development and Mentorship Programmes.**

To sustain and scale VBE's impact, it is essential to establish ongoing professional development and mentorship programmes for educators. Providing regular refresher courses, advanced training, and mentorship opportunities would ensure that teachers continue to deepen their understanding of VBE principles and are supported in applying them in diverse classroom settings. Mentorship programmes, where experienced VBE-trained educators support newer teachers, could create a ripple effect, expanding the reach of VBE across more schools and regions.

## **3. Expand VBE to Include Community Stakeholders and Non-Education Sectors.**

To maximise the broader societal impact of VBE, it would be valuable to expand the programme to include community stakeholders, such as parents, local leaders, and even sectors outside education (e.g., health, youth organisations). By adapting the VBE principles to these areas, the programme can foster pluralism and inclusive values across society, not just within schools. Community workshops, parent engagement programmes, and partnerships with local organisations could help reinforce the values taught in schools, ensuring that they are practised in homes and communities as well.

These steps - integrating VBE into the national curriculum, establishing continuous professional development, and expanding VBE's reach to community and non-education sectors - would significantly enhance the programme's scalability and adaptability, ensuring a deeper and more sustained impact.







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