

MEDIA RELEASE

YOUTH IMPACT NAMED AMONG TOP 10 FINALISTS FOR CHF 600,000 (\$614,000) KLAUS J. JACOBS BEST PRACTICE PRIZES 2022

- ***Botswana-headquartered Youth Impact recognized for ConnectEd, a remote, low-tech math tutorials program***
- ***Three Best Practice Prize recipients will be awarded CHF 200,000 each and announced on 30 September at a ceremony taking place in Zurich***
- ***All 10 finalists will convene for a co-creation event on 1 October, and are also eligible for follow-on funding of up to CHF 150,000***

Zurich, August 3, 2022: Youth Impact from Botswana has been named a top 10 finalist for the Klaus J. Jacobs Best Practice Prizes 2022, a set of three awards each worth CHF 200,000 (\$208,000) that honor outstanding achievement and practice in advancing quality education.

Based in Gaborone, Botswana, Youth Impact, is a grassroots, youth-led, evidence-based movement aiming to identify, adapt and scale up health and education programs by young people for young people. Last year it reached a milestone of having helped 100,000 young people across 10 countries.

The three recipients of this year's Best Practice Prizes will be announced at a ceremony in Zurich on 30 September 2022. For the first time, the 10 finalists will convene for a co-creation event, taking place on 1 October 2022. They will exchange knowledge and ideas on advancing learning, and will have the opportunity to partner with other shortlisted applicants to develop proposals for new projects. Two concepts will receive follow-on funding of up to CHF 150,000 (\$156,000) each.

Awarded every other year, the Klaus J. Jacobs Best Practice Prizes recognize non-profits, businesses, and social ventures that are bringing forth innovative solutions to some of education's biggest challenges.

Fabio Segura and Simon Sommer, co-CEOs of the Jacobs Foundation, said:

"We want to warmly congratulate Youth Impact on becoming a top 10 finalist for the Klaus J. Jacobs Best Practice Prizes 2022. These prizes were created to showcase the groundbreaking work that businesses, social ventures, and non-profits all around the world are doing to ensure children have access to quality education. There is not a moment to lose. By bringing to light the evidence of what works we can use it to implement solutions that can be tailored to learners' diverse individual needs.

"In the age of COVID, it is also important to share ideas and evidence of what works on the ground to help shift policy, particularly as education systems adapt to a new and unfamiliar terrain. That is why we are launching this new follow-on collaboration funding of up to CHF 150,000. We look forward to bringing together all 10 Best Practice Prize finalists for our co-creation event, and we can't wait to see what inspiring concepts they come up with together."

Noam Angrist and Moitshepi Matsheng, co-Founders of Youth Impact, said:

“We are thrilled to be recognized as a top 10 finalist for this prestigious award. Jacobs Foundation is a global leader in connecting the dots between rigorous evidence and scaled action in education – a mission which is at the heart of our work. We innovated during the Covid-19 pandemic to generate some of the world’s first experimental evidence on distance education, enabling tens of thousands of children to learn during a time of historic need.

“We hope to use this platform to share our learnings, and continue finding new ways to provide affordable, low-tech, and personalized education solutions to students across Botswana and around the world. We would like to thank the Jacobs Foundation for shining a light on the important work that organizations around the world are doing to advance education, and we look forward to exchanging ideas with all of the amazing 2022 Best Practice Prize finalists.”

Youth Impact

Youth Impact’s ConnectEd is a remote, low-tech education program which delivers simple math tutorials by phone and text message. Tested originally in Botswana, and later in an additional five countries around the world (India, Kenya, Nepal, Uganda, and the Philippines) with 15,000 children during the COVID-19 pandemic, ConnectEd has been shown to reduce innumeracy by up to 31% for enrolled children and deliver the equivalent of one year of high quality education per \$100. Through ConnectEd, Youth Impact has extended its reach beyond Africa to Nepal, India, and the Philippines, and reached over 25,000 children globally.

ConnectEd was declared a “Smart Buy” for improving learning in low- and middle-income countries by a global panel convened by the Global Education Evidence Advisory Panel, co-hosted by World Bank, UK Foreign, Commonwealth, and Development Office, and UNICEF. Sixteen partners comprise ConnectEd’s research and implementing coalition, including the World Bank and the governments of Nepal and the Philippines.

Youth Impact’s latest results show that mobile phones provide a low-cost and scalable way to target and teach to a student’s level. Moreover, they find that teachers can be equally as effective at delivering the program as hired tutors, representing the possibility for a wider path to scale. ConnectEd shares principles with the Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL) approach, another highly cost-effective education program. It is now seeking to understand how these two delivery models can be used together to produce the greatest impacts.

If Youth Impact is named a recipient of the Best Practice Prizes, it plans to invest the winning funds in further research how its phone-based approach and TaRL can further complement each other, including methods for optimally targeting delivery to reach students who are furthest behind; scale these targeted instructional approaches; and share its learnings and best practices widely to inform other global initiatives.

Klaus J. Jacobs Best Practice Prizes

Applications for the Best Practice Prizes 2022 opened on 6 January and closed on 10 February 2022. Recipients must demonstrate outstanding achievement in advancing learning and education, and embrace variability in learning. Their projects should draw on scientific evidence, use a clear results framework, and must be sustainable, scalable, and financially viable. Finally, they must build on strong leadership and partner networks.

In memory of its founder, the entrepreneur Klaus J. Jacobs, who passed away in 2008, the Jacobs Foundation presents two awards every other year for exceptional achievements in research and practice in the field of child and youth development and learning. The Klaus J. Jacobs Research Prize rewards scientific work that is highly relevant to society, and the Klaus J. Jacobs Best Practice Prizes honor exceptional commitment and innovative solutions of institutions.

Notes to editors:

The Jacobs Foundation is active worldwide in promoting child and youth development and learning. The Foundation was founded in Zurich by entrepreneur Klaus J. Jacobs in 1989. As part of its Strategy 2030, it has committed 500 million Swiss francs to advance evidence-based ideas for learning, to support schools in offering quality education, and to transform education ecosystems around the world. <https://jacobsfoundation.org/en/>

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