**VVOB** – ​The Brussels, Belgium, headquartered non-profit operates in Cambodia, Ecuador, Kenya, Rwanda, South Africa, Uganda, Vietnam, Zambia & Belgium, working on sustainably improving the quality of education. Countries in the South where VVOB operates have high rates of educational exclusion, and Sub-Saharan Africa has the highest rates of educational exclusion in the world. For many years and within the framework of the Millennium Development Goals, the focus of most governments has thus been on access. However, it is now widely acknowledged that while access is no longer the main issue, a vast majority of children are in school, but they are not learning. VVOB thus invests its efforts in working with national governments to work on the aspect of quality in education, to ensure children are not only in school but that they are also learning.

VVOB’s theory of change (ToC) is anchored on a human rights-based approach focused on capacity strengthening of government institutions responsible for the professionalisation of teachers and school leaders - given that they have the greatest impact on the academic performance and well-being of learners.

To do this, VVOB engages in long-term partnerships with national governments, working closely with those charged with supporting the professional development of teachers and school leaders. Long-term relationships, underpinned by country agreements, allow VVOB to closely support the ministries of education with technical assistance to achieve their objectives and sustain them over time.

VVOB also engages in strategic partnerships to strengthen its evidence base and to continuously refine programme interventions. Additionally, VVOB, identifies the most promising innovations for teacher professional development and school leadership development and brings those to scale. Multidisciplinary VVOB teams support the professionalisation of teachers and school leaders by strengthening institutions that are responsible for their initial and continuing professional development and guidance. VVOB’s work centres on education policies in the respective partner countries, existing good practices, lessons learned, and evidence. In an effort to systematize the approach to scaling, VVOB joined forces with other education focused partner organisations to create a publicly accessible knowledge product, the ‘Education Scalability Checklist’ – which is used across VVOB programmes to inform the scaling process, programme design and adaptations.

In leadership approaches to strengthen education systems, VVOB has been a pioneer in promoting effective school leadership in education systems. For example, VVOB helped establish a School Leadership and Management Unit at the Rwanda Education Board, the development of national standards for effective school leaders and the professional development of more than 3,000 school leaders. Building on this work and to bring the successes to regional scale, VVOB is now closely collaborating with the Government of Rwanda to establish an African Centre for School Leadership that will promote effective school leadership in the African region. School-based teacher and school leader professional development is one of the strategies that has proved highly effective, with VVOB successfully using this model in South Africa (reaching 58,288 teachers and school leaders) Uganda (reaching 900 teachers) and Vietnam (reaching 3,981 teachers and school leaders).

With any prize funds, VVOB would seed investment in the African Centre for School Leadership, one of the three ‘flagships’ in its Learning Unlimited strategy to support governments and their partners across the continent in school leadership initiatives, in countries starting with Ghana. The Centre would also be with EdTech expertise, to aid planning and delivery.

[www.vvob.org](http://www.vvob.org)