

# ENERGISING THE GLOBAL MOVEMENT FOR SOCIAL AND FINANCIAL EDUCATION

Network Strategic Plan  
2022-2026





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## THE VOICES OF OUR NETWORK



*The voices of the children, our partners, and our stakeholders were at the centre of building our strategy for 2022-2026. Over a period of three months from August to October 2021, many hundreds of people across the globe – including children, parents, teachers, trainers and facilitators, Aflatoun partners, funders, key external stakeholders, the Supervisory Board, the Global Network Board and Secretariat staff – were consulted and shared their opinions, views, concerns, criticism, praise and ideas, about what they believe Aflatoun International should do over the next five years. For an overview of the consultation, see Annex 1: Consultation Process.*

*The Global Network Board, the Supervisory Board and the Secretariat wish to express their immense gratitude for everyone's contribution to the strategy development process. We look forward to making this strategic plan a reality together.*

*Thank you very much!*

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The need to energise and empower our world's 2.2 billion children is bigger than ever before. The global Covid-19 pandemic and climate crisis are likely to count children and youth among their hardest-hit victims and highlight the importance for them to

have the social and financial skills to deal with the many challenges they will face. The world needs children and youth who possess socioemotional and financial skills, who are not only able to but who dare to think critically and act as agents of change in their own lives for a more equitable and sustainable world.

### AFLATOUN TODAY

Aflatoun International pioneered social and financial education (SFE) fifteen years ago when financial education for children was still essentially taboo. In the years since, Aflatoun has worked with over 300 partner organisations and 40+ governments in over 100 countries covering every region. Research evidence has shown the positive impact of SFE in children and youth's educational performance and financial habits.

Today, we believe Aflatoun remains uniquely positioned to bring essential life and financial skills to children and youth worldwide. Education resources and training continue to be Aflatoun's core strengths, constituting a solid platform upon which to further build important 21<sup>st</sup> century themes such as green skills and digital skills, to extend into digital education, and to provide educational content and materials to parents. Aflatoun's global partner network is a source of innovation and testing ground for new SFE initiatives. A growing number of governments and multilateral agencies approach Aflatoun for support on their life skills and financial education curricula. Aflatoun's rigorous research agenda

offers a strong foundation for wider thought leadership.

To maintain Aflatoun's strong position, we will have to take steps to more actively engage children, youth and partners in our decision-making and in shaping new initiatives. Programme quality assurance and capacity building of our partners need to be further strengthened. Wider awareness of research findings on SFE's effectiveness and of Aflatoun's brand is needed, and commercial talent needs to be attracted to ensure financial sustainability.

### ASPIRATIONS

Aflatoun International's central aspiration for 2030 is to ensure that future generations of children are empowered by ensuring that SFE becomes included in the post-2030 social development goals.

Over the next five years, by training over 250,000 teachers, growing the Aflatoun movement to 600 partner organisations and working towards national integration with governments and multilateral agencies in over 60 countries, we aim to reach 60 million children and youth.



## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

To this end, Aflatoun strategic framework 2022-2026 will focus on three strategic objectives, each with several strategic initiatives:

1. Continuously improve inclusive and responsive education resources through different delivery models (e.g. in-person, digital)
2. Ignite and grow the Global Aflatoun Network, and
3. Drive bold thought leadership in a turbulent (post-Covid-19) world.

These objectives will be supported by three Strategic Enablers: further building a world-class organisation to support the growth of the global network, further diversifying our sources of funding for financial sustainability, and rolling out globally endorsed branding.

## NEW INITIATIVES

While our strategy for 2022-2026 continues many of the themes and activities that Aflatoun has launched and undertaken over the past

fifteen years and which will remain relevant in the next 5 years at least, we are also launching several new key initiatives:

- Inclusion of 21st century citizenship themes (e.g. green skills, digital skills) in the learning materials
- Aflatoun certification of trainers and teachers
- Launch of inclusive digital education
- Development and delivery of Social and Financial Education (SFE) education resources to parents to reach more children and youth
- Strengthening of our monetisation of digital expertise and education resources
- Publication of a flagship annual "State of the Field" report and organisation of a biannual SFE Award and ceremony
- Inauguration of a "Futures of 21st century SFE" Aflatoun Thinktank with youth representation to stay on top of the latest developments around SFE, to support global advocacy and to inspire change
- Creation of a range of working groups and task forces to support the network's continuous co-creation and adaptability.

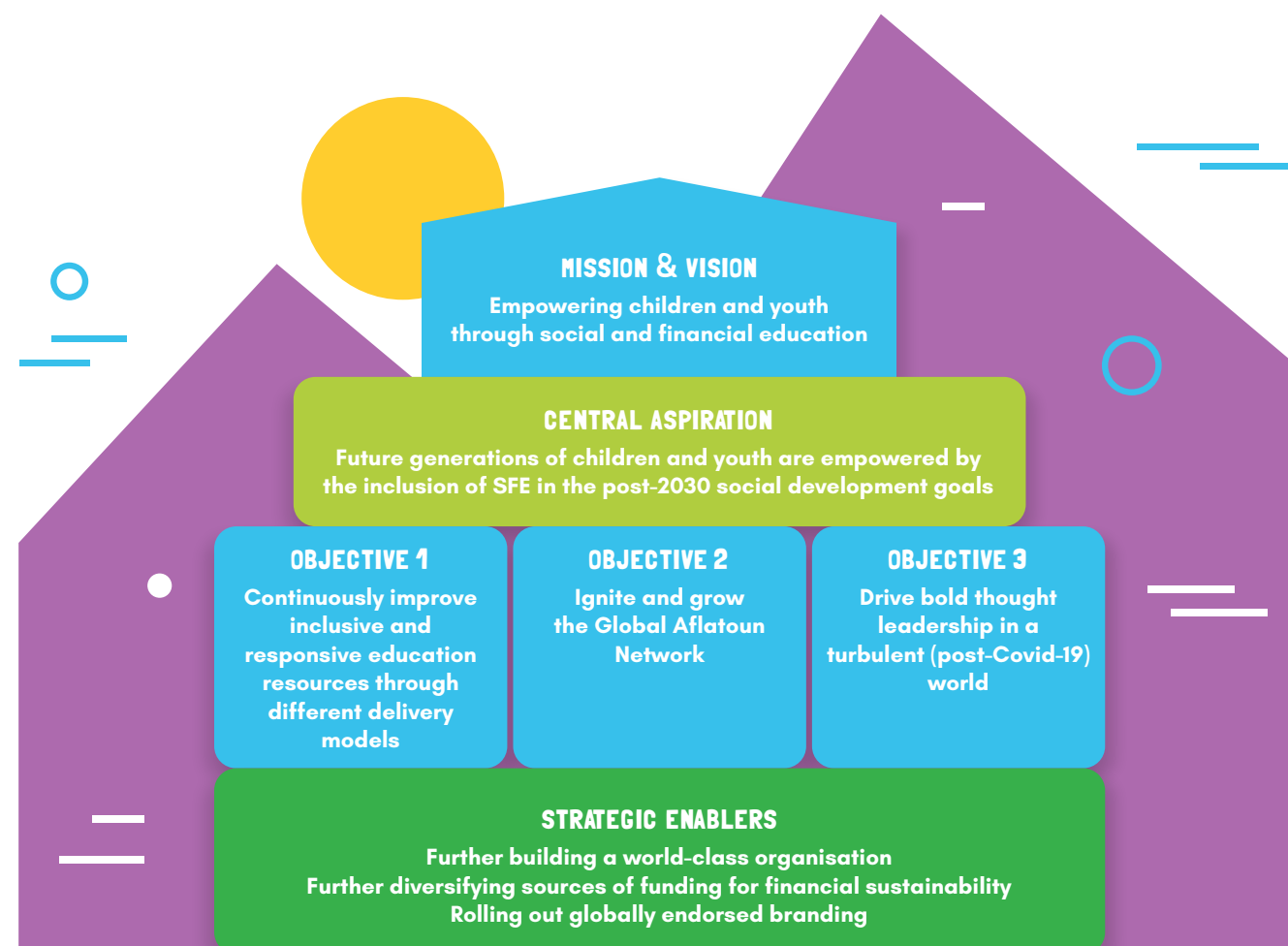


Figure 1 – Simplified Strategy Framework 2022-2026

# INTRODUCTION

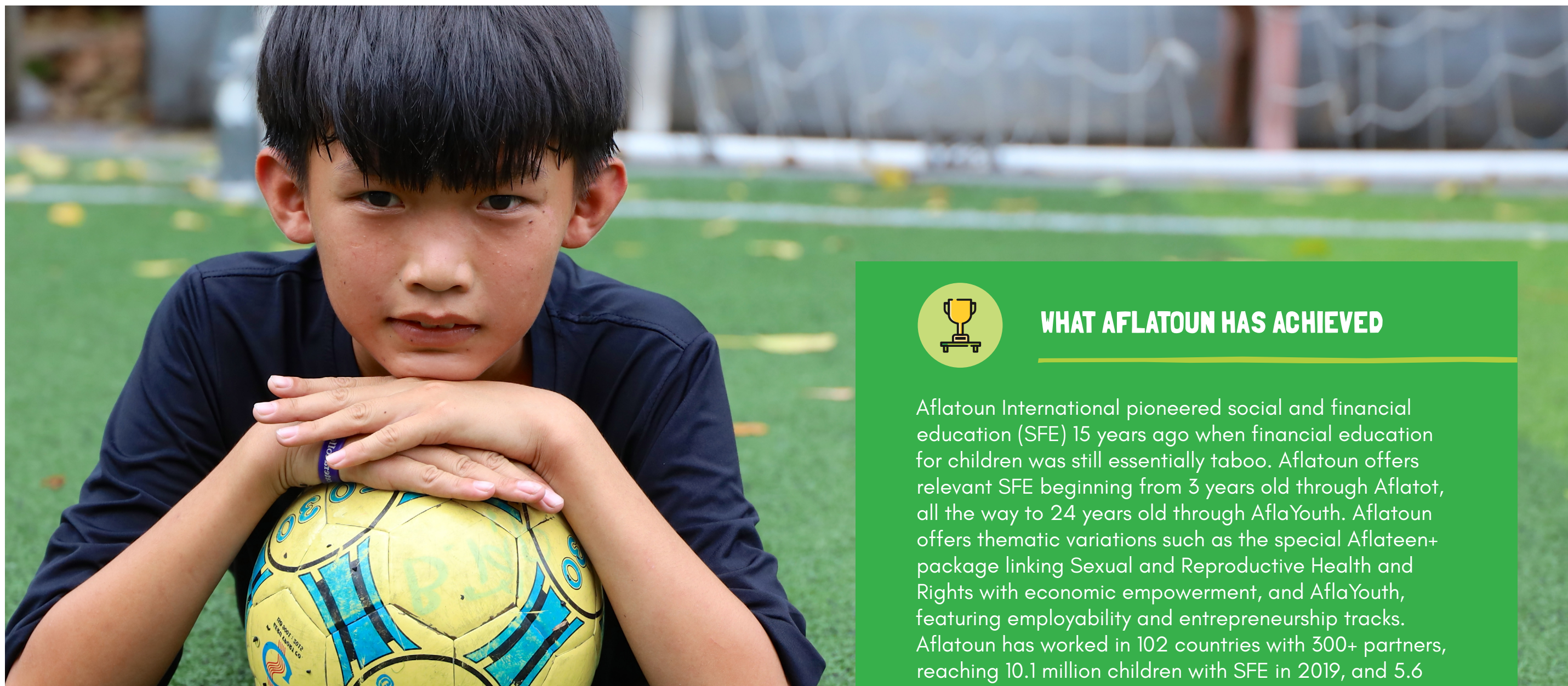
## Children today and their challenges for the turbulent post-Covid-19 future

Energising and empowering our world's 2.2 billion children is more important than ever before. The global Covid-19 pandemic and climate crisis both threaten to claim children and youth among their biggest victims.<sup>1</sup> And both show how vulnerable education systems are to shocks and how important it is for individuals to be resilient in turbulent times. Children and youth need essential life skills to be self-confident when facing challenges, and the world needs children and youth who show empathy and are able to think critically, and who dare to help reshape systems that do not support them.

Children today continue to face many challenges. There are 700 million children living in monetary poor households. Approximately one-sixth of children of school-going age were out of school in 2018,<sup>2</sup> and the Covid-19 pandemic has significantly set back education systems, as the most vulnerable children and youth were not reached through online education – even in developed countries.<sup>3</sup> Some 160 million children are in child labour, of which 79 million are in hazardous, or the worst forms of child labour.<sup>4</sup> Twelve million girls aged 15-19 years and 777,000 girls under 15 give birth each year in developing regions,<sup>5</sup> and two out of every seven HIV infections globally in 2019 were among young people (15-24 years).<sup>6</sup> There are 67 million young people actively searching for but unable to find a job and the global Covid-19 pandemic has worsened youth unemployment.<sup>7</sup> Safe financial inclusion of youth is still far off, given that, despite a rapidly growing number of children and youth having access to digital (mobile) financial services, 48% of people in OECD-surveyed countries do not reach what is considered the minimum score for a "financially knowledgeable person".<sup>8</sup>







The climate crisis is affecting the safety and mental health of children and youth worldwide<sup>9</sup> and, unless governments and communities worldwide radically shift gears, is likely to create dramatic climatic events further negatively affecting the lives of children and youth.

Sustainable solutions to any or all of these challenges will have to involve supporting children and youth, to grow their self-confidence and economic self-reliance to better face the range of problems and challenges they will encounter, spot opportunities, and discover ways in which they can become part of changing systems for the better. Socially and financially empowered children and youth will have a higher chance of avoiding dropping out of

school, teenage pregnancy<sup>10</sup>, and being drawn into child labour, and they are more likely to be more climate-resilient and engage in dialogue with key stakeholders in their community to push for more sustainable development.

Importantly, the Covid-19 pandemic is increasingly leading governments to recognise the importance of children's socioemotional life skills and youth entrepreneurship, and similarly the global climate crisis creates urgency for green skills<sup>11</sup> in education. However, teachers and parents worldwide need to be better equipped to help children and youth develop these skills. Also, digital education needs to be made an ally to reduce inequality and to not further grow the digital divide.



## WHAT AFLATOUN HAS ACHIEVED

Aflatoun International pioneered social and financial education (SFE) 15 years ago when financial education for children was still essentially taboo. Aflatoun offers relevant SFE beginning from 3 years old through Aflatot, all the way to 24 years old through AflaYouth. Aflatoun offers thematic variations such as the special Aflateen+ package linking Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights with economic empowerment, and AflaYouth, featuring employability and entrepreneurship tracks. Aflatoun has worked in 102 countries with 300+ partners, reaching 10.1 million children with SFE in 2019, and 5.6 million children (of which 53% girls) in 2020 amidst the global Covid-19 pandemic. Recent Randomised Controlled Trials (RCTs) in India, Burkina Faso and Cameroon showed significant improvements in children's financial knowledge, savings behaviour, and awareness of children's rights and civic responsibilities. Aflatoun has worked with 40+ governments worldwide and works across regions with UNICEF, the World Food Programme, and several other bi- and multilateral agencies and initiatives. Aflatoun was ranked 23<sup>rd</sup> in the NGO Top-500 World's Best Social Good Organisations 2020, and as one of the most impactful and scalable innovations in K12 education by HunderED.





## Aflatoun International mission and vision: more relevant than ever before

Aflatoun is uniquely positioned (see section below) to energise new generations of young people worldwide. This spirit is captured by our mission and vision, which have been fully endorsed again in our partner consultation.



### OUR MISSION:

ensuring access to high-quality, inclusive, child-centred social and financial education for all children and young people, especially the most vulnerable



### OUR VISION:

socially and economically empowered children and young people who act as agents of change in their own lives for a more equitable and sustainable world

# 2 AFLATOUN'S UNIQUE APPROACH

## Aflatoun International's unique model

Aflatoun International energises children and young people by equipping them with social and financial skills. Aflatoun lights children's fire through a unique triangle of fire-starters (Figure 2):

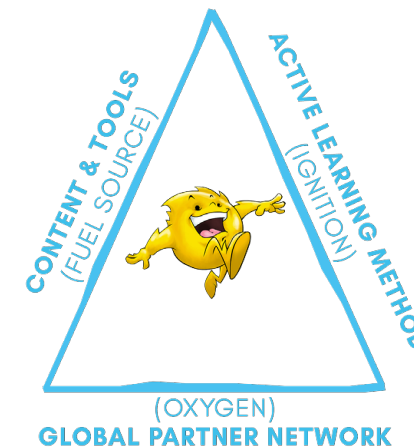


Figure 2 — Three Elements to Energise Children Worldwide

- 1. Content & Tools (Fuel Source):** Our education resources provide the fuel, building various essential life skills on a basis of social and financial skills education. Children build socioemotional skills and awareness about rights and responsibilities, sound financial habits and understanding, and many even build small social and financial enterprises.
- 2. Method (Ignition):** Our Active Learning Method (ALM) provides the heat and ignites the spark. Trainers and teachers learn how to really engage their learners and make learning exciting, fun, and relevant, which changes everything.
- 3. Network (Oxygen):** Our global network of partners provides the oxygen, unleashing a global movement. In over 100 countries, partners adapt and contextualise our educational resources, reaching millions of children. Governments and bi- and multilateral agencies in 40 countries integrate our educational resources in national curricula and projects, giving more and more children access to essential life skills and financial education.

Aflatoun International puts child rights first. We believe every child has the right to survival, the right to protection, the right to development, and the right to participation as defined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. While we think empowering children and youth will help create a better world, we believe it is of crucial value in and of itself. We balance social and financial, because being able to make a living has little value when we do not work to make our community and world more equitable and sustainable.



Aflatoun International is unique in more than one way:

- **We Balance North and South:** Even though the Aflatoun Secretariat is based in the North (Amsterdam, The Netherlands), the programme originated in the South with the Indian NGO MeJol in 1991, and its overall direction remains guided by elected partner representatives from each region.
- **We Consistently Innovate:** Aflatoun was the first international organisation to talk about financial education for children and to roll out programmes at scale, and the first to propose the combination of social and financial education. Aflatoun has consistently won global awards for its innovativeness in delivering and scaling education. Aflatoun's global network of locally contextualised programmes provides an ongoing source of programmatic innovation.

► **We Put Collaboration Over Competition:**

We partner across sectors and across borders with the goal of bringing social and financial education to every child. We partner with independent social franchise programme partners who choose to take on and finance their own Aflatoun programme, with bi- and multilateral agencies whom we support through custom educational resources, and through public-private-partnerships (PPPs) with creative new ways to create impact through collaboration.

- **We Grow Impact:** The Aflatoun Secretariat works to grow in impact rather than grow in organisation size – we choose to remain nimble. Aflatoun has had impact assessment in its DNA since its inception in 2005 and has consistently developed its research agenda over the past 16 years.

Our **UNIQUENESS** is what sets us apart.  
We **ENERGISE**. We **INNOVATE**. We **COLLABORATE**.  
**WE BELIEVE BEING DIFFERENT IS OUR STRENGTH.**

Aflatoun International is more than social and financial education alone: we are a global movement building children's self-confidence and youth's economic self-reliance. We have captured the various dimensions of what Aflatoun International seeks to accomplish in our Theory of Change (see Figure 4 below).

## Our Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (swot)

Reflecting on bringing our unique approach forward in the next five years, our strategy development process with the various partners and stakeholders throughout our network provided valuable insights on the things we do well and not so well, and the opportunities and threats that Aflatoun International may face. More detail on the outcomes from the network consultation can be found in Annex 4: What Does The Network Say?

### STRENGTHS

Aflatoun International's education resources are regarded widely as one of its core strengths, namely for its: relevance and methodological approach; contextual adaptability and flexibility; thematic supplements; wide age coverage; combination of social life skills and financial education; and comprehensiveness. Additionally,

Aflatoun's training of teachers and trainers, in particular the Active Learning Methodology, is valued by partners as an effective driver of impact for trainers, teachers and children. In the rapidly evolving fields of life skills and financial education, Aflatoun's 16-year track record (30 years when counting the inception years at MeJol in India) is another important strength, in combination with its scale and outreach in low- and middle-income countries. At the same time, Aflatoun's network of 300+ partners with many local NGOs remains a consistent source of innovation and a testing ground for new initiatives. The social franchise partnership provides a scalable model for adaptive network growth. Aflatoun's work with 40+ governments and different bi- and multilateral agencies provides authority and drives large-scale outreach. Finally, significant research in all regions on knowledge and behavioural change and

programme implications are seen as major strengths.

### WEAKNESSES

Ensuring the full and consistent application of quality standards in Aflatoun programmes and partners has proven difficult, as well as obtaining reliable network-wide field-level output and outcome data. Aflatoun does not always give sufficient voice to, and utilise the latent capacity within the network of, partners, children, youth, teachers, and regional structures. With the number of partners, the growing required volume of capacity building services to them on key areas such as programme training, fundraising and Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) remain a point of concern. Awareness of the Aflatoun brand by strategically important groups of stakeholders outside the Aflatoun network is less strong than desired, as is general awareness of the available evidence of Aflatoun's impact, negatively affecting its potential role as a thought leader. Institutional memory within the Secretariat requires improvement and project-related work is relatively demanding, affecting Secretariat capacity on certain key processes. Some difficulty in attracting commercial talent has resulted in less progress than desired in developing commercial income streams (e.g. offering a private school SFE package).

### OPPORTUNITIES

Governments worldwide are increasingly open to the importance of life skills and socioemotional skills in primary and secondary education curricula. They often look at bi- and multilateral agencies and coalitions for thematic educational resources, who often, in their turn, work with NGOs to this end. In addition, national and international governmental agencies worldwide express a growing interest in social and financial education, and Aflatoun's particular type of technical support on platform building, development of educational resources and trainings, and related educational policy. With the Covid-19 pandemic, demand for digital education has also grown rapidly, while the supply of promising platforms offered by social impact-minded education technology

providers with growing international reach has recently grown significantly as well. Funders report on a shift by impact investors and foundations towards funding local grassroots organisations which is key for Aflatoun partners.

### THREATS

UNESCO reports that almost one-third of children worldwide cannot access remote learning, mostly due to a lack of equipment or the absence of online learning policies.<sup>12</sup> Children and teachers often lack essential digital skills that then further deepen the already vast digital divide threatening children's equal educational access, even in countries with high mobile and internet penetration rates. The pandemic has led to a global setback in access to education and in girls' situations, with a huge rise in dropouts for ages 14 to 15, increasing child marriage and teenage pregnancies in unstable contexts.<sup>13</sup> With the pandemic, a significant shift to home education has taken place, putting much of the burden of social and financial education on parents, which may severely reduce children's skills in these domains. There is a trend in certain countries towards conservatism in education, shifting the focus back mostly to numeracy and literacy, and with a number of funders shifting their focus to health and other priorities, Aflatoun partners have reported decreased access to funding. Furthermore, the shift by impact investors and foundations towards funding local grassroots organisations may also pose a threat for the Secretariat.







## Aspirations 2030

Our overarching central ambition for 2030 centres around the idea that Aflatoun's impact should focus first on affecting as many children's lives as possible, and extend beyond its own organisation and programme. We believe that Aflatoun's most important legacy will ultimately be ensuring that social and financial education and skills development become embedded in global, regional, and country policies and programmes.



### CENTRAL AMBITION 2030:

Future generations of children and youth are empowered by the inclusion of social and financial education in the post-2030 social development goals

By training over 250,000 teachers, growing the Aflatoun movement to 600 partner organisations and working towards national integration with governments and multilateral agencies in over 60 countries, we aim to reach 60 million children and youth. As we further develop our M&E system and research and learning agenda, and solidify programme-wide outcome and impact indicators, we will be able to provide more depth to the different ways in which children and youth's lives have been affected through Aflatoun programmes.

## Strategic Framework 2022-2026

### WHO WILL MAKE SURE THE STRATEGY IS DELIVERED ON?

While the Secretariat has taken the lead in its development, this strategic framework was put together with significant input from the global network and has been developed as an aspirational document for the entire Global Aflatoun Network. For its part, the Aflatoun Secretariat aims to serve as an initiator and inspirer of action, a network hub, a centre of excellence, standard setting and support, and a global spokesperson and advocate. For their part, the Aflatoun Partners have expressed their joint aim to implement high-quality programmes, participate actively in the global network by attending events, sharing experiences and learning, co-creating initiatives, and joining in national/(sub)regional advocacy. With mutual accountability and a shared commitment to the larger mission we believe this Strategy 2022-2026 will be a success!



Aflatoun International was an early global pioneer in social and financial education for children and youth and has shaped the global field of Social and Financial Education (SFE). We believe our work today is still equally relevant but also needs some important adaptations. Therefore, while Aflatoun International's strategic framework 2022–2026 upholds Aflatoun's unique model (see above), it also launches several new key initiatives, designed with the SWOT in mind. Over the next five years, we will focus on three strategic objectives:

- 1. Continuously improve inclusive and responsive education resources through different delivery models (e.g. in-person, digital):** By ensuring that Aflatoun develops relevant materials and training based on needs and emerging trends, we maintain and grow the solid basis for empowering children and youth globally.
- 2. Ignite And grow the Global Aflatoun Network:** By reorganising and growing the global network of partners, teachers, and children and youth into a vibrant, decentralised global community, innovation and initiative are increasingly created from the bottom up and they influence and complement integration of SFE in national curricula worldwide.
- 3. Drive bold thought leadership in a turbulent (post-Covid-19) world:** By helping to spark a global research and learning agenda, and publishing and celebrating accomplishments in the field of SFE while actively keeping abreast of future trends and innovations, we help ensure the inclusion of SFE in the post-2030 international development agenda.

These objectives will be supported by three **Strategic Enablers:** further building a world-class

organisation to support the growth of the global network, further diversifying our sources of funding to ensure financial sustainability, and rolling out globally endorsed branding to help embrace the global momentum.

Each strategic objective has several strategic initiatives (see Figure 3 below), which will be presented in more detail in the next section. In principle, this strategic framework refers to Aflatoun International as a whole, unless specified otherwise (e.g. Secretariat only).

While our strategy for 2022–2026 continues many of the themes and activities that Aflatoun has launched and undertaken over the past 15 years and which will remain relevant in the next five years at least, we are also launching several new key initiatives:

- Inclusion of 21<sup>st</sup> century citizenship themes (e.g. green skills, digital skills) in the learning materials
- Aflatoun certification of trainers and teachers
- Launch of *inclusive* digital education
- Development and delivery of SFE education resources to parents to reach more children and youth
- Strengthening of our monetisation of digital expertise and education resources
- Publication of a flagship annual "State of the Field" report and organisation of a biannual SFE Award and ceremony
- Inauguration of a "Futures of 21<sup>st</sup> century SFE" Aflatoun Thinktank with youth representation to stay on top of the latest developments around SFE, to support global advocacy and to inspire change
- Creation of a range of working groups and task forces to support the network's continuous co-creation and adaptability.



Figure 3 – Strategic Framework 2022–2026



## Examples of issues the Aflatoun International Secretariat will *not* focus on

Despite Aflatoun International's broad and ambitious agenda, there are a range of issues and activities that the Aflatoun Secretariat chooses *not* to focus on as we believe them to be outside our core competencies or the scope of our mission. To mention some examples that have been suggested at various points in relation to Aflatoun's strategy:

- ▶ Aflatoun International will not become a youth entrepreneurship incubator or develop employability guarantee programmes (but may still partner with organisations that do run these organisations/programmes if they also run education/training programmes, or Aflatoun can provide them with relevant technical resources).
- ▶ Aflatoun will not become an education technology company/provider or develop educational apps ourselves. We *will*, however, partner with EdTech providers.





AFLATOUN THEORY OF CHANGE

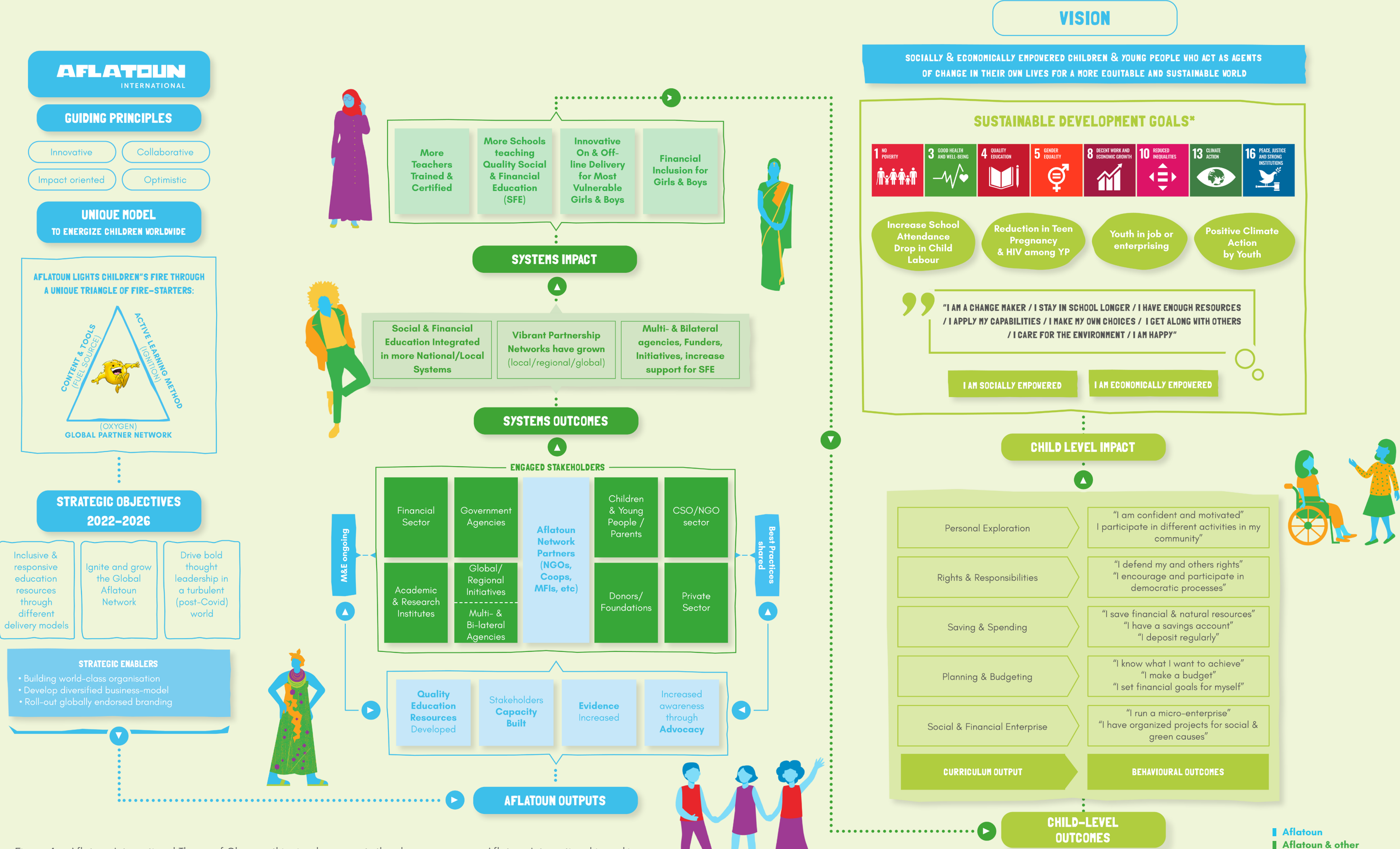


Figure 4 – Aflatoun International Theory of Change: this visual represents the change processes Aflatoun International is seeking to establish through its collaboration with different groups of stakeholders. Outputs represent the direct results from an intervention. Outcomes represent short to medium-term effects of individual or combined interventions. Impact represents the long-term effects on the children and youth, as well as the relevant systems (education or other) around them

\*Central ambition 2030: Future generations of children and youth are empowered by the inclusion of social and financial education in the post-2030 social development goals



# 3 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES & INITIATIVES 2022–2026

With the SWOT analysis in mind, we have developed strategic objectives and initiatives to build on our strengths and grasp key opportunities, as well as address our weaknesses and looming threats (see Annex 2: Overview of Strategic Initiatives for a tabular summary).



## Objective 1

Continuously improve inclusive and responsive education resources through different delivery models (e.g. in-person, digital)

Over the next five years, Aflatoun International aims to strengthen the quality and relevance of its programme content and delivery. Our educational resources will be further improved and expanded to include key themes such as green skills and digital skills. We will further expand into digital content and training delivery while assuring that the most vulnerable are reached. We aim to bolster programme quality by implementing programme standards, trainer and teacher certification, and strengthening our M&E system and tools.

### UPGRADE OUR EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES, INCORPORATING KEY 21ST CENTURY THEMES AND TRANSFORM TOWARDS INCLUSIVE BLENDED (IN-PERSON AND DIGITAL) DELIVERY, INCLUDING FOR PARENTS

How do we ensure that Aflatoun's educational resources and method of delivery continue to respond to the needs of children and youth, and that they are gender-responsive and inclusive of the most vulnerable, and contribute to teacher's professional development? In the next five years, we will:

- Adopt a competency-based learning approach and continuously upgrade the core learning materials and Active Learning Methodology (ALM) ensuring they are gender-responsive, inclusive of the most vulnerable children and youth, and embrace climate justice;
- Develop high-quality on-demand technical content;

- Integrate 21st century themes based on network demands, including green skills and climate resilience, digital skills, and digital finance (see Annex 3: Focus Areas);
- Develop relevant digital learning offerings, including games, of Aflatoun materials for children/youth and teachers;
- Redesign Aflatoun's programme guidance materials to include a blended learning approach, including a toolkit of localised delivery channels (e.g. radio, TV, in-country apps), to reach the most vulnerable children and youth;
- Develop additional educational content to support parents and guardians in educating their children in social and financial skills;

### WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE BY 2026?

- ➔ Green Skills integrated in core resources by 2023;
- ➔ Digital skills supplement by 2023;
- ➔ All core curricula will be upgraded and implemented by 2024;
- ➔ 30% of partners adopt parent/guardian resources.



## EXPAND AND STRENGTHEN OUR MASTER TRAINER POOL, (ONLINE) TRAINING OFFER, AND ACTIVE LEARNING METHODOLOGY

How will Aflatoun International maintain sufficient training capacity for a growing global network, and upgrade its training methods and digital offer? In the next five years we will:

- ▶ Set up a partner working group on training;
- ▶ Review Aflatoun's overall training guides and approaches, expand the Active Learning Methodology, including for online training;
- ▶ Further expand Aflatoun's pool of Global and Regional Master Trainers;
- ▶ Develop and roll out trainings for Aflatoun Master Trainers, trainers and for teachers, using the Aflatoun Partner Platform.

## WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE BY 2026?

- ➔ 60 active Global and Regional Certified Master Trainers;
- ➔ At least 50% of current Global Master Trainers deliver training online (as well as in person).



## IMPLEMENT PARTNER AND MULTI-LEVEL PROGRAMME QUALITY STANDARDS MATCHED WITH SECRETARIAT SUPPORT, AND TRAINING CERTIFICATION

How does Aflatoun International assure that as the network grows, fidelity of programmes across the globe improves, as well as partners', trainers' and teachers' capacity to deliver high-quality programmes and resources? In the next five years we will:

- ▶ Work with a taskforce of partners and external stakeholders on developing a clear set of programme standards, including trainer and teacher certification;
- ▶ Design and implement evidence-based multi-level standards for programme implementation with matching Secretariat support. The standards include minimum standards and are flexible enough to allow for proper contextualisation, but unified enough to ensure meaningful global consistency;
- ▶ Revise and reinforce standards for partner selection;
- ▶ Set up a Master Trainer certificate, a Trainer certificate, and a teacher certificate;
- ▶ Develop and implement certification standards and develop clear, tangible benefits for teachers and Master Trainers.

## WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE BY 2026?

- ➔ A network-wide accepted set of programme standards has been agreed;
- ➔ Master Trainer and Trainer Certification launched in 2022;
- ➔ Online Teacher Training Certification launched in 2023;
- ➔ 70% of partners have certified trainers.

## STRENGTHEN OUR MONITORING & EVALUATION SYSTEM AND TOOLS ACROSS OUR LEARNING PRODUCTS, INCLUDING DIGITAL FIELD-LEVEL DATA COLLECTION FOR PARTNERS

How will Aflatoun International support its partner organisations in structuring and strengthening their Aflatoun output and outcome-level programme data collection? In the next five years we will:

- ▶ Strengthen the M&E system by further integrating and solidifying our outcome and impact indicator framework;
- ▶ Upgrade and develop M&E tools for all learning products;
- ▶ Pilot a digital field-level data collection tool for partners to support partners in their programme monitoring.

## WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE BY 2026?

- ➔ Partners report on clear and measurable core outcome/ impact indicators;
- ➔ M&E capacity building services have been offered to 100% of partners;
- ➔ All newly developed M&E tools for the different learning products have been tested in all regions (2024)





## Objective 2

### Ignite and grow the global Aflatoun network

Over the next five years, Aflatoun International plans to significantly strengthen and grow its global network by harnessing the ties and exchange within the network and extending its partner and teacher base. Partners will be supported on topics that matter to them. Partners, children and youth and other key stakeholders will be actively involved through working groups and taskforces in co-creating a more participatory, decentralised, and vibrant network. We plan to double our number of partners, train 250,000 teachers, and have partnerships towards national integration in 60 countries.

#### TRANSFORM NETWORK PARTICIPATION, EXCHANGE AND CO-CREATION OF CHILDREN, YOUTH, PARTNERS, AND EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS

How does Aflatoun International ensure that it better utilises the latent capacity of its children, youth and partners and ensure that they are more actively involved in the global network and shaping the global movement through active exchange, initiatives, and decision-making?

Over the next five years, we will:

- Design and implement effective and meaningful child and youth participation anchored in the Global Aflatoun Network and throughout Aflatoun's key processes affecting children (e.g. through a youth board). A taskforce of partners with strong child and youth participation structures and approaches in their own networks will take the lead on the design, and will take particular care on a gender-responsive approach;
- Ensure effective and meaningful partner participation to significantly increase partners' exchange of knowledge and good practices amongst themselves and with the Secretariat. A taskforce of partners will take the lead on the design of more structural partner participation throughout the network through the Partner Portal, Aflatoun Meetings and otherwise;
- Re-establish biannual International Meetings and annual Regional Meetings as powerful events to convene and organise exchange between all key actors in and around Aflatoun, including between partners and potential funders – and drive local and international advocacy agendas.

#### WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE BY 2026?

- ➔ A youth committee has been established and is engaged in the implementation of annual youth initiatives as of 2023;
- ➔ The voices of children and youth are clearly represented throughout the Aflatoun network and decision-making;
- ➔ There is a vibrant culture of partner participation and exchange in the working groups and taskforces on topics that are of importance to partners and the overall network;
- ➔ Two International and 18 Regional Meetings have been successful venues for connecting partners to funders, to other partners, and in fostering exchange of experience;
- ➔ 80% of partners are enrolled in the Partner Platform and 50% of partners engage on the platform quarterly.

#### PROVIDE PARTNERS WITH CAPACITY BUILDING ON CONTENT CONTEXTUALISATION, M&E, ADVOCACY AND FUNDRAISING

How can Aflatoun International support more of its social franchise partners in developing essential organisational capacities to boost their innovation and impact performance? In the next five years, we will:

- Utilise the platforms of International and Regional Meetings and the Partner Platform to provide demand-driven capacity building training on content contextualisation, M&E, advocacy, national integration, and fundraising;
- Host one partner representative per region for two weeks in Amsterdam at the Secretariat biannually for exchange, training, collaboration and innovation.



#### WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE BY 2026?

- ➔ 80% of partners have attended two or more capacity building trainings (online or in person);
- ➔ 30 capacity building trainings will be delivered every year;
- ➔ At least 12 partners will benefit from the Exchange Programme at the Secretariat level.



## GROW THE PARTNER NETWORK TO 600 PARTNERS PRIORITISING VULNERABLE GROUPS AND ESTABLISH FORMALISED REGIONAL PARTNER LIAISONS

How will Aflatoun International scale up its partner network while sharpening its focus on vulnerable groups and provide more regionally customised support against a lower costing structure? In the next five years, we will:

- ▶ Ensure an additional focus on selecting partners prioritising vulnerable groups;
- ▶ Identify and create formalised regional partner liaisons. These regional partner liaisons will support Regional Board Members and the Secretariat in partner support and growth of the partner network in the region;
- ▶ Develop an online partner application process.

### WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE BY 2026?

- ➔ Aflatoun has 600 programme partners of which 100 have a gender-specific focus, 50 a disability focus, and 200 an out-of-school focus;
- ➔ Aflatoun has functioning regional partner liaisons;
- ➔ Most partner applications are done online.

## BUILD PARTNERSHIPS TOWARDS NATIONAL INTEGRATION IN 60 COUNTRIES

How can Aflatoun International more effectively support national integration of Social and Financial Education (SFE) in a larger number of countries, while combining its different workstreams with both national and international public sector organisations? In the next five years, we will:

- ▶ Further develop our SFE National Integration Guidelines and Index to help structure, professionalise, and evaluate success of Aflatoun's support to national governments;
- ▶ Set up a National Integration Advisory Group composed of stakeholders across public, social, academic, and private sectors, to help support and coordinate all of Aflatoun's national integration efforts;
- ▶ Create national movements on SFE by supporting the organisation of partners and other stakeholders towards a common goal;
- ▶ Provide professional support (e.g. supporting stakeholder dialogue, national SFE platform building, policy advice, content development, curriculum integration) to the relevant national or international governmental entities, either through the Secretariat, a Regional Board Member, one or more Aflatoun Partners in that capacity, or a combination of these;
- ▶ Link our national integration efforts to other relevant national integration strategies (e.g. include SFE as part of national financial inclusion agendas).
- ▶ Engage with global and regional initiatives (e.g. the Global Partnership for Education, Generation Unlimited, OECD INFE, MENA Life Skills and Citizenship Education Initiative, UNESCO Education for Sustainable Development, PEPFAR) on the development of on-demand educational resources and national integration issues.

### WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE BY 2026?

- ➔ National governments and bi- and multilateral agencies in 60 countries have successfully engaged Aflatoun International in their SFE national integration efforts.

## TRAIN 250,000 TEACHERS

How can Aflatoun International ensure gender-balanced high-quality programme delivery in a scalable way while connecting teachers more directly in the global network?

In the next five years, we will:

- ▶ Provide online training to a community of 250,000 teachers and certification to 100,000 teachers, with an equal gender balance;
- ▶ Manage relationships between teachers and Aflatoun through the Partner Portal;
- ▶ Explore offering certification in partnership with an authoritative third-party organisation to lend extra credibility and benefits for participants;
- ▶ Pilot (2022-2023) and roll out (2023-2026) a digital learning and relationship management system to manage the certification programme (also see 1.3).



### WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE BY 2026?

- ➔ 250,000 teachers worldwide have been trained online;
- ➔ 100,000 teachers have been certified;
- ➔ The percentage of female teachers attending Aflatoun trainings has significantly grown in programme countries where they are currently underrepresented.





## Objective 3

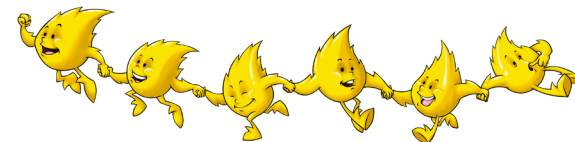
Drive bold thought leadership in a turbulent (post-Covid-19) world

Over the next five years, Aflatoun International aims to put gender- and climate crisis-responsive Social and Financial Education (SFE) that is inclusive of the most vulnerable on the global and regional post-2030 international development agenda. Aflatoun will lead policy and research thinking in the field by launching a comprehensive 2030 SFE research and learning agenda, an annual flagship “State of the Field” report presenting the latest research, good practices, and innovations, and the new SFE Award. Our “Futures of 21<sup>st</sup> Century SFE” Thinktank will help us stay abreast of, and adaptive to future trends and innovations in SFE. We will focus our advocacy efforts around key international/national events that will help us stay top-of-mind with our key stakeholders and, where needed, challenge the establishment and advocate for systems change.

### LAUNCH A 2030 SFE RESEARCH AND LEARNING AGENDA IN PARTNERSHIP WITH LEADING ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS

How does Aflatoun International ensure more coordination between internal and external research efforts around SFE while working towards a growing body of evidence resulting in programme adaptations? In the next five years, we will:

- ▶ Develop and publish a comprehensive research and learning agenda, built from the existing body of evidence, mapping the top SFE research priorities to help focus and coordinate research applications, support collaborative research projects and ascertain that research findings are translated in programme adaptation;
- ▶ Prioritise research on the effectiveness of our gender- and climate crisis-responsive approach, child and youth financial inclusion, child and youth social entrepreneurship in sustainable development while focusing on the inclusion of the most vulnerable;
- ▶ Develop partnerships with leading academic institutions and expert groups to help further the research and learning agenda.



### WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE BY 2026?

- ➔ Aflatoun International works with one or more leading academic institutions on the realisation of a research and learning agenda;
- ➔ Several leading research studies have found or have begun to find answers to key questions on the agenda;
- ➔ Several key adjustments to Aflatoun programmes have been made based on research outcomes.



### PUBLISH AN ANNUAL FLAGSHIP “STATE OF THE FIELD” REPORT

How does Aflatoun garner more attention for the vibrant field of SFE, highlight good practices and transformative innovations, while also presenting the growing body of rigorous research showing the impact of SFE? In the next five years, we will:

- ▶ Publish an annual flagship “State of the Field” report featuring key results and research findings from SFE programmes in countries worldwide as well as a discussion of the latest insights in social and financial skill building for children and youth;
- ▶ Highlight transformative innovations in SFE addressing girls’ vulnerability, strategies to include the most vulnerable, and child and youth social entrepreneurship in sustainable development.

### WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE BY 2026?

- ➔ Four editions of the report have been published;
- ➔ The report attracts increasing international attention and inspires others to up their game.

### LAUNCH SFE AWARD AND CEREMONY

How does Aflatoun drive thought leadership around innovative and high-impact programmes aiming at empowering children and youth, while also engaging, and showing appreciation to, the Global Aflatoun Network? In the next five years, we will:

- ▶ Organise a biannual SFE Award for children/ partners, with different award categories (e.g. children, Aflatoun clubs, partners, Master Trainers, trainers, teachers) with a jury of independent experts from different related fields;
- ▶ Hold a biannual awards ceremony to celebrate the winners.

### WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE BY 2026?

- ➔ Two editions of the SFE Award and ceremony will have been held;
- ➔ The SFE Award and ceremony attract increasing international attention.



## LAUNCH A "FUTURES OF 21ST CENTURY SFE" AFLATOUN THINKTANK

How can Aflatoun International stay on top of disruptive ongoing and future trends in or around children and youth education, development, and empowerment, and anticipate key opportunities for Aflatoun to affect systems change and launch high-impact innovations? In the next five years, we will:

- Set up a "Futures" taskforce of partners, youth representatives, and other network stakeholders with the explicit mandate to research and discuss potential sources of major disruption for Social and Financial Education (SFE) and the Aflatoun network.
- Keep a close eye on disruptive innovations such as education systems, gender approaches, sustainable development, digital finance and financial inclusion, (youth) entrepreneurship, and artificial intelligence;
- Frequently share insights from the "Futures" taskforce with the global network and beyond.

## WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE BY 2026?

- ➔ One or more disruptive trends have been spotted and adaptations integrated into Aflatoun's strategy and activities.



## CENTRE ADVOCACY AND RESEARCH COMMUNICATION AROUND KEY INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

How can Aflatoun International put SFE more successfully top-of-mind with key international stakeholders in policy, funding and academia, while ensuring that SFE gets associated with key development themes? In the next five years, we will:

- Present at a number of leading global and regional policy and international events, showcasing Aflatoun's leading publications, research findings and network innovations;
- Centre our (social) media, advocacy and research communication around key SFE-relevant international policy and research events;
- More effectively collect and use the stories and experiences of Aflatoun programme alumni.

## WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE BY 2026?

- ➔ The concept of life skills and financial education has been included, or has become an obvious candidate for inclusion, in the global post-2030 development agendas and leading international research agendas;
- ➔ Presentations at a minimum of 10 leading international conferences/events.



## Strategic enablers

Over the next five years, Aflatoun International will put in place several enablers to help achieve our strategic objectives. We will further build a world-class organisation to support our global growth, diversify the sources of our funding to strengthen our financial sustainability, and roll out globally endorsed branding to help embrace our momentum.

## SE1. CONTINUE BUILDING A WORLD-CLASS ORGANISATION TO FACILITATE ACCELERATED GROWTH OF THE GLOBAL MOVEMENT

How does Aflatoun International ensure the successful growth of its global network, bolster its institutional memory, safeguard its focus on partner support and, in general, organise the Secretariat to deliver on its comprehensive and ambitious agenda?

In the next five years, we will:

- Invest in establishing a world-class team;
- Double our capacity of programme managers, research staff, knowledge management and external communication;
- Within two years, programme managers will spend on average 80% of their time on programme partner support;
- Concentrate global and regional advocacy efforts with the Programmes team and invest in the development of team advocacy skills;

- Attract 15% of staff with specific higher education training on digital pedagogy;
- Develop the Secretariat staff's knowledge management capacity to better facilitate organisational memory;
- Develop the Secretariat staff's capacity to manage an online global training certification platform;
- Concentrate all training-related activities within the Secretariat;
- Direct 90% of Secretariat activities to low- and middle-income countries.

## WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE BY 2026?

- ➔ Increased staff retention rates;
- ➔ The majority of strategic initiatives have been successfully realised.



## SE2. FURTHER DIVERSIFY OUR SOURCES OF FUNDS TO ENSURE FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

How can the Aflatoun International Secretariat become less dependent on grant funding and develop its capabilities to become more financially sustainable? In the next five years, we will:

- ▶ Monetise on-demand high-value technical content (also see 1.1);
- ▶ Partner with top-notch social-impact minded education technology companies to test viable business models to deliver Aflatoun content on a large scale (also see 1.1);
- ▶ Attract commercial talent to further explore the successful development and monetisation of other commercial Aflaventures (e.g. sale of Schoolbank as a package to commercial banks, customised content for private schools);
- ▶ Optimise Aflatoun International's legal structure reflecting the various funding opportunities.

### WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE BY 2026?

Aflatoun International reduces its reliance on grant funding by 50%

## SE3. ROLL OUT GLOBALLY ENDORSED BRANDING AND MARKETING TO HELP EMBRACE MOMENTUM

How can Aflatoun International project its position as an innovator in empowering children worldwide and better position its brand and events top-of-mind with priority stakeholder categories? (see Annex 3: Focus Areas) In the next five years, we will:

- ▶ Redesign our marketing and communication strategy with support from a globally renowned creative agency, with the goal to put Aflatoun's brand top-of-mind with our priority stakeholder groups;
- ▶ Involve partners more closely in Aflatoun's global communication efforts;
- ▶ Create minimum standards for the use of the Aflatoun brand among the network and brand acknowledgment in third-party products;
- ▶ Target our (social) media communication around key SFE-relevant international events.

### WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE BY 2026?

- ➔ Aflatoun International is a household name in Aflatoun's priority stakeholder categories;
- ➔ 60% of NGO partners provide at least two human interest stories per year.





# ANNEX CONSULTATION PROCESS

During the development process of the strategic plan 2022–2026, a wide range of stakeholders in and outside of the Aflatoun network took part in different ways. Together, they reaffirmed their support of Aflatoun International’s Mission and Vision, and provided essential context, insights and opinions regarding Aflatoun International’s strategic direction for the coming years. The results of the consultation process and the voices of different groups of Aflatoun stakeholders have been presented with the respective strategic initiatives throughout the document.

Four different data collection tools were used throughout the consultation process, all of which took place from August to October 2021. See Annex 4: What Does The Network Say?, for outcomes of the consultation.



## METHODOLOGY

### AFLATOUN 2022–2026 STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT CONSULTATIONS

#### NETWORK PARTNER SURVEY

- ➔ Data collection: September 2021 [55 questions – including 18 open-ended questions]
- ➔ Response rate: 50% [100 partner organisations from 52 countries surveyed]
- ➔ Good mix of old and new organisations [10+ years 25; 6–10 years 27; 2–5 years 30; <2 years 16]
- ➔ Good mix of local NGOs, international NGOs and other partners [Local NGO 59; International NGO 16; Government Agency 4; Cooperative/MFI 5; Other 15]
- ➔ Good regional representation except for Europe & Central Asia [Americas 22; Anglophone Africa 27; Francophone Africa 20; Asia 18; MENA 11; Europe & Central Asia 2]

#### FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS – CHILDREN AND PARENTS

- ➔ 25 Focus group discussions [Botswana, Guatemala, Iran, Mali, Mozambique, Namibia, Philippines, Senegal, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Syria, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, India]

#### FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS – PARTNERS

- ➔ 10 Focus group discussions
- ➔ 174 representatives of 118 partners from 74 countries [Anglophone Africa: 30 partners, Francophone Africa: 19 partners, Americas: 11 partners, Asia: 24 partners, ECA: 18 partners, MENA: 16 partners]

#### STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATIONS

- ➔ 16 Interviews [Brookings, Echidna Giving, Credit Suisse, INFE/OECD, Ministry of Finance – Netherlands, Ministry of Foreign Affairs–Netherlands, Sint Antonius Stichting, Solve Education, ESD–UNESCO, Education–UNICEF, Vitol Foundation, VVOB, World Bank, WSBI, Catalyst 2030, CAF – Development Bank of Latin America]



# ANNEX 2

## OVERVIEW OF STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

### OBJECTIVE 1: CONTINUOUSLY IMPROVE INCLUSIVE AND RESPONSIVE EDUCATION RESOURCES THROUGH DIFFERENT DELIVERY MODELS (E.G. IN-PERSON, DIGITAL)

Over the next five years, Aflatoun International aims to strengthen the quality and relevance of its programme content and delivery. Our educational resources will be further improved and expanded to include key themes such as green skills and digital skills. We will further expand into digital content and training delivery while assuring that the most vulnerable are reached. We aim to bolster programme quality by implementing programme standards, trainer and teacher certification, and strengthening our M&E system and tools.

#### Strategic Initiatives:

- 1.1 Upgrade our educational resources, incorporating key 21st century themes and transform towards inclusive blended (in-person and digital) delivery, including for parents
- 1.2 Expand and strengthen our Master Trainer pool, (online) training offer, and Active Learning Methodology
- 1.3 Implement partner and multi-level programme quality standards matched with Secretariat support, and training certification
- 1.4 Strengthen our M&E systems and tools across our learning products, including digital field-level data collection for partners



### OBJECTIVE 2: IGNITE AND GROW THE GLOBAL AFLATOUN NETWORK

Over the next five years, Aflatoun International plans to significantly strengthen and grow its global network by harnessing the ties and exchange within the network, and extending its partner and teacher base. Partners will be supported on topics that matter to them. Partners, children and youth, and other key stakeholders will be actively involved through working groups and taskforces in co-creating a more participatory, decentralised, and vibrant network. We plan to double our number of partners, train 250,000 teachers, and have partnerships towards national integration in 60 countries.

#### Strategic Initiatives:

- 2.1 Transform network participation, exchange and co-creation of children, youth, partners and external stakeholders
- 2.2 Provide partners with capacity building on content contextualisation, M&E, advocacy and fundraising
- 2.3 Grow the partner network to 600 partners prioritising vulnerable groups and establish formalised regional partner liaisons
- 2.4 Build partnerships towards national integration in 60 countries
- 2.5 Train 250,000 teachers

### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3: DRIVE BOLD THOUGHT LEADERSHIP IN A TURBULENT (POST-COVID-19) WORLD

Over the next five years, Aflatoun International aims to put gender- and climate crisis-responsive Social and Financial Education (SFE) that is inclusive of the most vulnerable, on the global and regional post-2030 international development agenda. Aflatoun will lead policy and research thinking in the field by launching a comprehensive 2030 SFE research and learning agenda, an annual flagship “State of the Field” report presenting the latest research, good practices and innovations, and the new SFE Award. Our “Futures of 21st Century SFE” Thinktank will help us stay abreast of, and adaptive to, future trends and innovations in SFE. We will focus our advocacy efforts around key international/national events that will help us stay top-of-mind with our key stakeholders and, where needed, challenge the establishment and advocate for systems change.

#### Strategic Initiatives:

- 3.1 Launch a 2030 SFE research and learning agenda in partnership with leading academic institutions
- 3.2 Publish an annual flagship “State of the Field” report
- 3.3 Launch the SFE Award and ceremony
- 3.4 Launch a “Futures of 21st Century SFE” Aflatoun Thinktank
- 3.5 Centre advocacy and research communication around key international events.



# ANNEX 3 FOCUS AREAS

## STRATEGIC ENABLERS

Over the next five years, Aflatoun will put in place several enablers to help achieve our strategic objectives. We will continue building a world-class organisation to support our global growth, diversify the sources of our funding to strengthen our financial sustainability, and roll out globally endorsed branding to help embrace momentum.

### Strategic Initiatives:

- ➔ SE1. Continue building a world-class organisation to facilitate accelerated growth of the global movement
- ➔ SE2. Further diversify our sources of funds to ensure financial sustainability
- ➔ SE3. Roll out globally endorsed branding and marketing to help embrace momentum



### BENEFICIARY FOCUS

- In- and out-of-school children and youth
- Poor and vulnerable children and youth (incl. Children with disabilities, orphans, refugee/IDP children)
- Girls and women
- Unemployed and informally employed youth

### 21ST CENTURY THEMES FOR EDUCATIONAL CONTENT

- Green skills and climate resilience
  - Socioemotional learning
  - Digital skills
  - Digital financial skills
  - Financial access
- [This is in addition to existing Aflatoun themes: Social, Financial & Entrepreneurship education and existing supplements]

### SOCIAL & FINANCIAL EDUCATION RELATED POLICY AREAS

- Life skills
- Financial literacy & Financial inclusion
- Children's rights
- Early-Childhood Education
- Gender in education
- Health/ Sexual and Reproductive Rights / HIV/AIDS
- Livelihoods / Youth Employment and Entrepreneurship
- Child Protection
- Social Protection
- Peacebuilding
- Humanitarian response

### STAKEHOLDER FOCUS AREAS

- National governmental agencies (e.g. ministries of education/finance, central banks)
- Non-Governmental Organizations, Civil Society Organizations, incl. national networks & Catalyst 2030
- Regional Governmental Bodies
- Multi- and bilateral agencies & institutional funding agencies Global & Regional Initiatives (e.g. GPE, GenU, ECW, PEPFAR, GFATM, etc.)
- Cooperative movement
- Foundations
- Financial Institutions, including MFIs, commercial banks
- Private sector - Including: Agri Business/Supply chain sector; EdTech & FinTech.



# ANNEX 4

## WHAT DOES THE NETWORK SAY?

The findings below are based on the feedback and findings outlined in Annex 1: Consultation Process. The consultation highlighted some regional differences that cannot be fully captured here but will be incorporated into the further elaboration of Aflatoun International's operationalisation of this strategic plan.

### Content Priorities

In Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), youth express an interest in learning about other topics under an Aflatoun umbrella, such as the environment and women's rights. Interviewed funders regard the content and programmes as Aflatoun's greatest strengths. Over half of surveyed partners singled out our Active Learning Method as the top priority to get right in an overall content upgrade, followed by a demand for greater accessibility for learners with different levels of literacy or numeracy, and for more learning materials for primary learners. Partners prioritise "digital skills", "personal leadership", "children's and human rights", and "budgeting and finance" as topics Aflatoun should add to its content to stay relevant for children's lives in 2030. Most interviewed stakeholders believe Aflatoun should include some or all of the themes of socioemotional skills, digital skills, and green skills/sustainable development, while some cautioned against expanding the curricular focus.

### Beneficiary Focus

Over three-quarters of surveyed partners believe Aflatoun should prioritise both in- and out-of-school children and youth, girls and women, and poor and vulnerable people – an opinion echoed by children and youth in FGDs. Most surveyed partners believe Aflatoun should focus on low-income countries (95%) and middle-income countries (65%), with only 30% emphasising high-income countries. Some 82% believe Aflatoun should focus on both 6-14-year-olds and 15-19-year-olds, while 59% also include 20-25-year-olds, and 28% include 0-5-year-olds. Additionally, 77% of surveyed partners believe Aflatoun should "focus on educating parents to reach children" and that 36% of partner organisations are already doing so. Children and youth in FGDs also said they believe Aflatoun should educate parents.

### Digital Content

Digital offering of Aflatoun's educational content is prioritised by partners and other interviewed stakeholders, but they believe it needs to be blended (in-person and digital). Most also share a concern about continuing inclusiveness of the programme: blended education needs to keep reaching the most vulnerable.



### Minimum Programme Standards and Quality Assurance

Interviewed funders and other stakeholders regard Aflatoun's partners as one of its key strengths, but also emphasise the importance of better field-level quality assurance to ensure programme fidelity and accountability. Over 33% of surveyed partners rank programme minimum standards as a top or key priority.

### Programme Training and Certification

Master Trainers ask for more advanced refresher training opportunities. While teacher certification does not score very high amongst surveyed partners as a key means of quality assurance, in FGDs partners express the importance of teacher certification and further teacher and trainer professional development. A senior stakeholder highlights the central focus in the global education development field on teachers' professional development. Some external stakeholders with experience in teacher certification stress the importance of tangible benefits and an authoritative certification body. A recurring theme in youth's FGDs was their awareness and appreciation of the facilitation strategies, tools, and skills of their teachers and facilitators.

### Partner Capacity Building

Of the various forms of support that the Secretariat could provide to the partner network, training on different subjects ranks high. Among the surveyed partners, 55% would like training on fundraising, 51% on advocacy and national integration, and 43% on M&E. Funders and multilateral institutions indicate the importance of actively supporting local partners through general capacity building, and training on national advocacy in particular.

### M&E and Research and Learning Agenda

Of surveyed partners, 35% list "provide M&E tools" in their top five Secretariat support needs, and 38% rank "facilitate better field-data collection and programme monitoring" as top or second priority for programme quality assurance. Funders are very positive about Aflatoun's research and evaluation-focus, and value the broad range of rigorous field-studies already done, while also emphasising the need for field-level data collection support. They also believe that Aflatoun could do better: 1. in terms of having a proactive research agenda that pinpoints and prioritises key research questions, 2. in translating research findings into programme adaptations,



and 3. in sharing with a larger audience the results of prior research studies.

### Child and Partner Participation

Children and youth express in FGDs the desire to be more connected to other children and youth in the global network. Some 82% of surveyed partners put ensuring child and youth participation and giving them a voice in decision-making in their top three priorities for the Aflatoun network, which resonated with several interviewed stakeholders from institutional development agencies. And 75% of surveyed partners put “strengthen partner participation and exchange in the network – e.g. through working groups and taskforces” in their top three. Partner FGDs support the idea that partners want to be actively involved in exchange and co-creation of initiatives through working groups/taskforces.

### Strengthening Convening and Exchange

Some 56% of surveyed partners put International and Regional Aflatoun Meetings in their top five of most important types of partner support. Notably, 45% do so for “introduction to and involvement in the global partner network”, and 64% for “introductions to potential funders”. Interviewed funders and stakeholders comment on the value of Aflatoun’s International Meetings to learn about Aflatoun’s evidence of impact and partner experiences.

### National Integration

Of surveyed partners, 75% see “integration of SFE in your national government curriculum as a key priority for the next five years”. Only 4% say a national integration platform has already been set up, but 38% say initial work has already started. Surveyed partners, when asked to rank the different actors in the Aflatoun network by their importance in their country in terms of establishing national curriculum integration, on average put the Secretariat first, followed by national or (sub)regional coalitions of Aflatoun partners, Regional Board Members, and individual partners. Interviewed funders and most interviewed stakeholders, including bi- and multilateral agencies, emphasise the importance of both national advocacy for SFE and integration in the national curriculum for sustainable impact,

and advise to work closely with country offices of international development agencies.

### Publications and Advocacy

Of surveyed partners, 74% believe that SFE is insufficiently “included in the right global and regional policy frameworks (e.g. SDGs, children’s rights frameworks)” and that this should be a priority for Aflatoun. Most interviewed funders and external stakeholders believe that inclusion of SFE in relevant regional and global policy frameworks and coalitions will ultimately aid SFE adoption by national governments. Most interviewed funders and external stakeholders believe that Aflatoun should more proactively publish and present on Aflatoun’s research findings on the impact and effectiveness of SFE. Around 50% of partners believe financial inclusion should be an advocacy priority of Aflatoun, which is echoed by several external stakeholders.

### Organisation

Partners express the need to decentralise certain Secretariat tasks to ensure more bottom-up innovation and partner support. Some funders express concern about Secretariat staff turnover and communication, and team capacity to support global growth.

### Branding and Communication

Surveyed partners score Aflatoun (very) high on both relevance and uniqueness, and the majority of surveyed partners believe there is no organisation comparable to Aflatoun. Interviewed funders and external stakeholders think that the global brand is currently not strong enough, and does not garner the attention or level of thought leadership that is warranted by the research evidence and comprehensiveness of Aflatoun’s network. Interviewed funders and stakeholders suggest that Aflatoun’s communication strategy should focus more on key global events around issues and stakeholders important to Aflatoun, to help boost Aflatoun’s and SFE’s global presence. They suggest high-frequency communication showcasing research findings around impact to ensure that Aflatoun and SFE are top-of-mind among key stakeholders.





# ENDNOTES

- 1 <https://data.unicef.org/topic/child-poverty/covid-19/>  
“Monetary poverty” takes a family’s average daily income as the measure for poverty (this does not take into account, e.g., access to education and basic infrastructure)
- 2 “New Methodology Shows that 258 Million Children, Adolescents and Youth are Out of School”, Fact Sheet No. 56, September 2019, UIS/2019/ED/FS/56, UNESCO
- 3 <https://data.unicef.org/resources/education-disrupted/> and <https://blogs.unicef.org/evidence-for-action/where-do-children-have-internet-access-at-home-insights-from-household-survey-data/>
- 4 <https://data.unicef.org/resources/child-labour-2020-global-estimates-trends-and-the-road-forward/>
- 5 <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/adolescent-pregnancy>
- 6 [https://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media\\_asset/young-people-and-hiv\\_en.pdf](https://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media_asset/young-people-and-hiv_en.pdf)
- 7 “An update on the youth labour market impact of the COVID-19 crisis”, ILO Statistical Brief, June 2021
- 8 <https://www.oecd.org/financial/education/oecd-inf-e-2020-international-survey-of-adult-financial-literacy.pdf> p21
- 9 <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2021/10/how-is-climate-change-affecting-the-mental-health-of-young-people/>
- 10 Lee N, Beeler Stücklin S, Lopez, Rodriguez P, El Alaoui Faris M, Mukaka I. Financial education for HIV vulnerable youth, orphans, and vulnerable children: A systematic review of outcome evidence. Campbell Systematic Reviews. 2020;16:e1071. <https://doi.org/10.1002/cl2.1071> finds that combining financial education and sexual and reproductive health education (plural interventions) with self-efficacy (social education) is associated with positive health and economic outcomes for vulnerable youth and children in low and middle-income countries.
- 11 Green skills, according to UNIDO, are “the knowledge, abilities, values and attitudes needed to live in, develop and support a sustainable and resource-efficient society.” <https://www.unido.org/stories/what-are-green-skills>
- 12 <https://en.unesco.org/news/scaling-digital-learning-and-skills-worlds-most-populous-countries-drive-education-recovery>
- 13 <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/education-plus-development/2021/09/22/what-do-we-know-about-the-effects-of-covid-19-on-girls-return-to-school/>





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**Aflatoun International**

IJsbaanpad 9-11 | 1076 CV Amsterdam | The Netherlands

+31 20 626 2025 | [info@aflatoun.org](mailto:info@aflatoun.org) | [www.aflatoun.org](http://www.aflatoun.org)