Jigsaw
Year in Review

FY 2021 - 2022

Introduction

The aim of Jigsaw's Year in Review is to give our wider community a window into all that we have been up to over the last financial year. We hope that you enjoy it. If reading it sparks ideas or questions for you then please do let us know - we would love to hear them!

Everything we do at Jigsaw is connected to others - to people, to places, to organisations. This year we have really enjoyed being able to travel again and connect with our partners face to face. We now have Jigsaw teams based in Pakistan and Rwanda and are pleased to have a more global outlook. Below you can read about the six new research assistants who have joined us and how they are shaping and sharpening our work.

One of our favourite things about building evidence for education in low-income countries is that we get the opportunity to interact with some pretty remarkable human beings. We are in awe of so many of you, and love your dedication to addressing the global learning crisis. A big thank you for all the time, energy and insight you have given to Jigsaw's work. We are grateful to work alongside you and look forward to all that lies ahead.

Best wishes,
The Jigsaw team

What we've been up to

Jigsaw entered the 2021-22 financial year with all our work focused on one central objective: to build evidence for education. To this end, we have worked on 11 engagements over the course of the year, three of which were multi-year contracts.

Our work has been evenly spread across our three core services (evaluation, strategy and research), with a technical focus on education technology, education for refugees and education for girls.

We engaged directly with 19 different countries this year - an increase from 11 in 2020-21. The reduction of travel restrictions caused by the Covid-19 pandemic has meant we have been able to conduct more in-person data collection than last year. This has been through the Jigsaw team and our research partners - consultants and enumerators with whom we have formed close partnerships (including in Jordan, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Niger and Guinea Bissau).

Distribution of projects this year - by type of service

11 projects

| 3 strategy pieces | 4 research studies | 4 evaluations |

Distribution of projects this year - by technical focus*

Areas of technical focus

| 7 Education technology | 3 Education for refugees | 4 Education for girls |
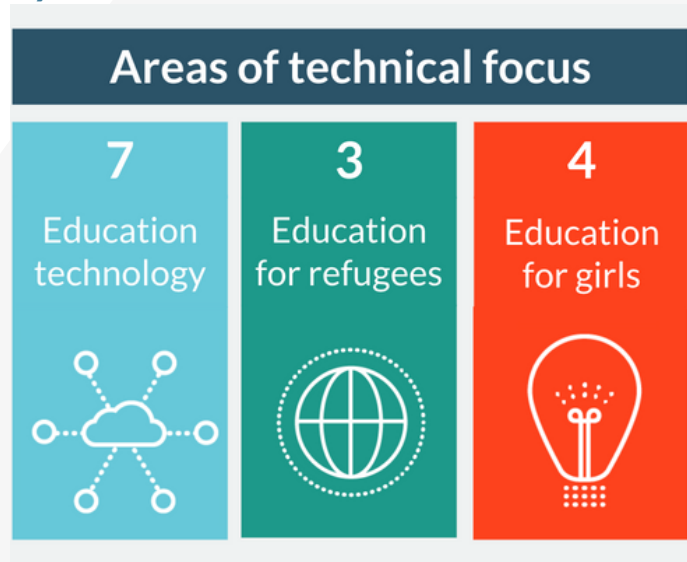
*some projects spanned multiple technical focus areas

Remote data collection has continued to form a core part of the way we work, utilising all that we learnt during the pandemic about how to do this effectively. The map below highlights the distribution of our work, showing countries where we have had a high, medium and low level of engagement over the last year.

All of our work led to 27 written outputs and 26 in-person or virtual engagements. We are committed to building pathways to uptake from our work so that the evidence generated through them can be used to improve decision-making in education. One way we have done this through the year is by diversifying the range of outputs which we produce. In addition to six technical reports, two academic articles and two evaluation reports, we also produced multiple blogs and community reports. Links to our open-access articles, reports, policies and blogs can be found in the Annex.

A particular highlight of the year has been the opportunity to engage with our partners and other education stakeholders at a range of conferences and workshops. We enjoyed presenting at conferences including ReWired, CIES 2021, Expo 2020 and UKFIET 2021, as well as hosting a range of workshops. Our ongoing partnerships with the CLCC, EdTech Hub, REUK and Research Development and Management (RDM) remain core pillars of our work.
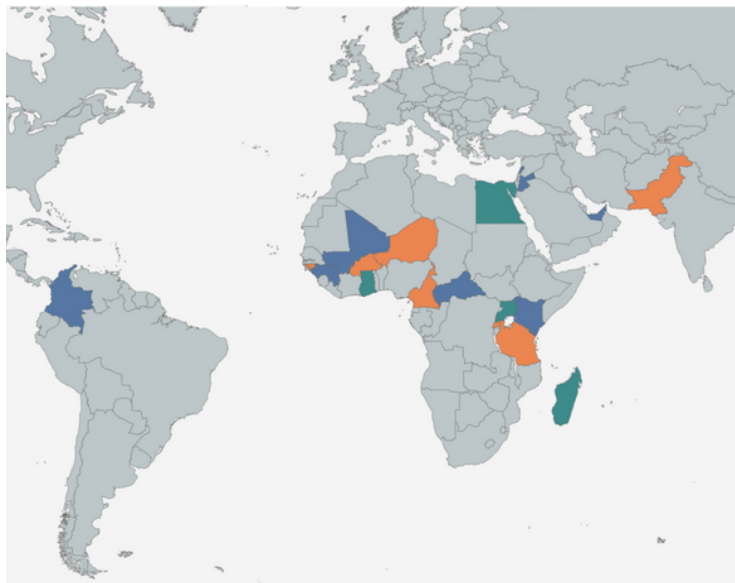
Countries in which Jigsaw's work has involved a high level of engagement

1. Rwanda
2. Pakistan
3. Burkina Faso
4. Cameroon
5. Guinea-Bissau
6. Niger
7. Tanzania

Countries in which Jigsaw's work has involved a medium level of engagement

1. Kenya
2. Jordan
3. Lebanon
4. CAR
5. Guinea
6. Mali
7. UAE
8. Colombia

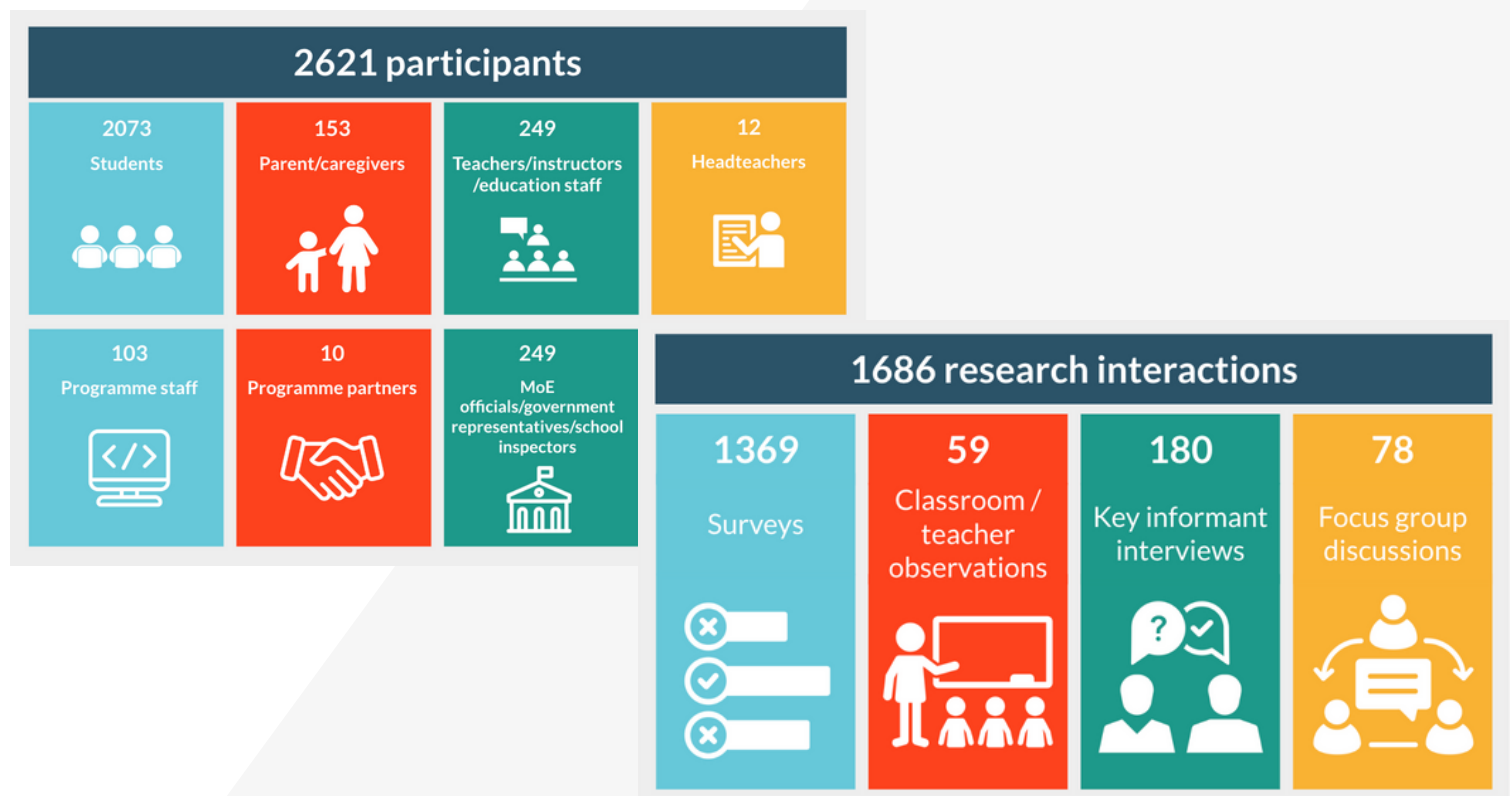**Countries in which Jigsaw's work has involved a low level of engagement**

1. Egypt
2. Uganda
3. Ghana
4. Madagascar

How we work

We have engaged in over 12,000 hours of project work over the last year. None of what we do would have been possible without the 2,621 participants who have contributed their time and expertise to shape our engagements. As always we hope that their diverse perspectives - from students to government ministers - are represented well in our work and in a manner aligned with our values.

All of our engagements have employed a suite of methodological approaches that are designed specifically for the educational context and objectives in question. Most of our work is based in mixed-methods approaches, to enable the triangulation of findings through multiple data types. The extent to which we used specific data collection tools during the last year is outlined below.

We are always looking for the best tools to help us conduct effective surveys. This year we have appreciated using Kobo Toolbox, surveylegend and mWater - each with their own useful features for surveys online or in-person. In the case of Voices of Refugee Youth - a longitudinal panel study - Kobo Toolbox enabled offline data collection in remote contexts, while surveylegend facilitated an online survey in an evaluation for Plan International Ireland across multiple countries.

2621 participants

2073 Students	153 Parent/caregivers	249 Teachers/instructors /education staff	12 Headteachers
103 Programme staff	10 Programme partners	249 MoE officials/government representatives/school inspectors	

1686 research interactions

1369 Surveys	59 Classroom / teacher observations	180 Key informant interviews	78 Focus group discussions

Spotlight: EdTech Hub

This year saw EdTech Hub shift its focus, from the rapid Covid-19 response work of the previous year, to establishing longer-term work with governments, all focused on providing decision-makers with the evidence they need to make effective decisions about technology in education. The Hub launched its research portfolio as part of this development. Studies the Jigsaw team is closely involved in with colleagues across the Hub include: Digital Personalised Learning (DPL) to Improve Numeracy Outcomes in Kenyan Classrooms; The Impact of a Tech-Supported, School-Based TPD model on Learning outcomes in Tanzania; and Optimising Messaging to Promote Returns to School in Ghana for Marginalised Learners. You can follow the progress of these studies - and many more - via EdTech Hub's blog, evidence library, or on social media.

We also worked on papers such as Technology Use for Teacher Professional Development in Low- and Middle-Income Countries: A systematic review and EdTech for Ugandan girls: Affordances of different technologies for girls' secondary education during the Covid-19 pandemic.

It is an exciting time to be part of EdTech Hub and help to drive forward its mission. We are now focused on building critical masses of evidence around high-potential technical topics through long-term applied research. We are happy to be conducting research studies alongside partners including Aga Khan University, EIDU, and Craft Education. (EdTech Hub is led by Results for Development and Jigsaw is a core consortium partner.)

Spotlight: Plan International Ireland

Jigsaw was commissioned by [Plan International Ireland](#) to conduct an endline evaluation of their Programme Grant II (PGII) and Humanitarian Programme (HPP) programmes, both ending in 2021, to capture key learnings and recommendations to inform future programme cycles. The programmes focus on promoting the right to quality education for all children, and addressing the education needs of children affected by conflict.

The evaluation included eight of the programmes' focus countries: Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Jordan, Mali and Niger. Our approach followed a mixed method design utilising both remote and in-person approaches, incorporating programme data, an online programme staff survey, remote key informant interviews with delivery team members and project management staff, and in-person focus group discussions and interviews with students, teachers, caregivers, school inspectors, and programme staff. We were also delighted to work in partnership with four research consultants in Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Niger and Guinea Bissau, who were integral to the evaluation.

The evaluation explored the extent to which PGII had improved access, quality and governance of education. The findings demonstrated that overall, in complex and challenging environments, the two programmes made significant progress towards their objectives in a way that promoted inclusion and gender equality. Working across a range of countries and languages presented an interesting challenge that enabled us to utilise the linguistic abilities across the Jigsaw team. We were pleased to be able to offer Plan International Ireland a range of practical recommendations on how to further strengthen future programme cycles.

Spotlight: Connected Learning in Crisis Consortium

In December (2021) Jigsaw was delighted to be accepted as a member of the Connected Learning in Crisis Consortium (CLCC) alongside our longstanding partner REUK. The CLCC is a dynamic collection of organisations that exists to support the provision of quality higher education in contexts of conflict, crisis and displacement through connected learning. It does this by sharing and disseminating experience and evidence, developing good practices, and ensuring accountability to students and their communities in order to foster self-reliance.

The consortium was formed in 2016 and has grown to over 40 members, including UN agencies, NGOs, universities and independent research organisations. We are excited to start our journey with this group of inspiring and like-minded organisations. Our first step has been to serve on the CLCC research committee - helping build a strategy for effective evidence-building within connected learning in refugee higher education.

What our clients say

'Working with the Jigsaw team is always a wonderful experience! They handle every interaction with the utmost care, thoughtfulness, and transparency. We are delighted to be working with a partner so passionate about and dedicated to strengthening refugee youth led research for refugee education.'

Dubai Cares

'We engaged Jigsaw to undertake a complex evaluation related to our COVID-impacted EdTech project in East Africa. We were impressed by the knowledge possessed by the whole team, how quickly they understood the project, and the quality of the evaluation produced. The evaluation allowed us a frank and honest look at what has and has not worked and allowed us to refine future engagements.'

Avanti

Internal work

Building the team

We have had three years of fantastic collaboration with 31 young refugee researchers for the Voices of Refugee Youth initiative. This year we took the next step and recruited six of these researchers to join the Jigsaw core team. It has been a great pleasure to welcome Aime Parfait, Aimee, and Gentille (based in Rwanda) and Asma, Noor and Rozina (based in Pakistan) on board! All six have made a valuable contribution to both project work and internal Jigsaw activities, and have further developed their own research skills. Providing meaningful and secure employment opportunities for young refugees is central to Jigsaw's future.

Bringing researchers with lived-experience as refugees into the core Jigsaw team has strengthened everything we do. We think we will have a bigger impact on tackling challenges in education if all our studies are informed by those most directly affected - and this is a step in that direction.

We have also been pleased to start working closely with Professor Tim Unwin as a senior adviser to Jigsaw. Tim is a leading expert on education in low-income countries and has authored 16 books and more than 250 other publications. He engages in project work and also provides mentoring for various team members - we are looking forward to fruitful collaboration in the years ahead!

In December, we finally had the opportunity to enjoy our first in-person Christmas party after a two year hiatus due to Covid-19. We ate good food together, and took part in an immersive experience of the classic 90's game show, The Crystal Maze (see picture below).

This year we also said farewell to our brilliant colleague, Bethany. She was instrumental in the development of our Voices of Refugee Youth initiative, and central to many other Jigsaw projects. We are really grateful for all Bethany contributed to Jigsaw in her three years with us - and wish her every success in all her future endeavours.

Social impact

Environmental policy

At Jigsaw we are committed to promoting environmental sustainability across all our technical work and operations. We decided this year to publish a working version of our environmental policy for our own organisational accountability and as a useful resource for others. It is particularly relevant for us at the moment with increased flights and as we think about designing and opening our new office. Becoming a more environmentally sustainable organisation is an on-going journey for Jigsaw, and we really welcome ideas for how we can continue to improve what we do.

Language policy

The international nature of Jigsaw's work means that the team constantly engages with multiple languages. We are mindful of the complexities of this, and we celebrate linguistic diversity. This year we finalised our language policy that explains how we ensure that projects involving languages other than English are conducted both equitably and rigorously. It details the ways we uphold this commitment throughout the research process, from the proposal stage through to the dissemination of findings. Our hope is that sharing this policy can help catalyse wider conversation about conducting effective multilingual education research.

Jigsaw journal club

At Jigsaw we love learning from one another and so this year we established a journal club: a monthly session where the whole team gets together to discuss an article or resource related to our work. The journal club provides space for us to explore new ideas and approaches to evidence-building in education, and consider the implications together. We all take it in turns to lead sessions and enjoy sharpening one another's thinking. In our first two sessions we considered some of the theoretical questions which frame our work. We started with Paulo Freire's influential Pedagogy of the Oppressed (1970), which facilitated ongoing discussions about pursuing decolonial research practices at Jigsaw and across the wider sector. In the next session we focused on Gert Biesta's article 'What is education for?' (2015), which helped us to debate some of the questions at the heart of the education systems and initiatives which we work with.

Our new home

We will move into our new long-term home - The Lighthouse (60–62 High Street, Harlesden) - as soon as the refurbishment works are completed. Renovating a derelict Victorian bank is not straight-forward, and our colleagues at REUK have done a brilliant job leading this initiative.

The Lighthouse will be an education centre for young refugees - you can read more about it here. We are proud to be part of this endeavour and look forward to moving in before long. We will host a series of events and parties to welcome people into the new space - and will invite you all to be part of them!

The year ahead

We head into the new year with a strong team and a clear mandate to build evidence for education. More than ever, we are motivated by working on big challenges in education in low-income countries, working together to help bring about positive change through the generation and use of applied evidence.

In the coming 12 months we will launch Global Evidence for Refugee Education (GERE). This is a new applied research initiative with young refugee researchers at the centre - it exists to build better evidence and improve decision-making for refugee education, and at the same time fundamentally change the way that research about education for refugees is conducted and who it is conducted by. We will be working with our partners REUK and UNHCR to design and implement GERE - and would love to hear from you if you would like to learn more about it.

We are excited to move into our new home and put down roots there. We hope that having a long-term place where we can work together will also help us to think big, be bold, and take brave decisions to help address the global learning crisis. We look forward to conspiring and collaborating with many of you there!

Connect with us

We want to collaborate with organisations doing exceptional work in education. Get in touch to discuss your ideas. If you'd like to join our brilliant team then please let us know and tell us why. You can find us on Twitter at @wearejigsaw, on LinkedIn, and on our website. For any enquiries please email info@jigsawconsult.com

Annex - Summary of projects and publications

Client	Summary of work
Avanti Communications	Endline evaluation of iMlango Transitions, a Girls' Education Challenge (GEC) project in Kenya. Project completed: public report available here; final reflections of achievements and lessons learned available here; case study available here.
Dubai Cares / UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees)	Voices of Refugee Youth: a longitudinal research study on refugee post-primary education in Pakistan and Rwanda. Multi-year, ongoing project: case study available here; ongoing blog series available here.
European Commission	A strategic advisory role regarding the Commission's approach to digital skills in its future educational programming in LMICs. Project completed.
FCDO	Founding partner of the global EdTech Hub, a global research initiative to equip people by providing evidence for effective decision-making about technology in education. Multi-year, ongoing project: case study available here. Publications co-authored by the Jigsaw team include: - Technology Use for Teacher Professional Development in Low- and Middle-Income Countries: A systematic review - EdTech for Ugandan girls: Affordances of different technologies for girls' secondary education during the Covid-19 pandemic - Evaluating Digital Personalised Learning Tools in Kenya: a new research study in collaboration with EIDU - Optimising Messaging for Returns to School - Using evidence to strengthen tech-supported teacher professional development in Madagascar Research article about Afghan refugee girls' access to and experience of EdTech during Covid-19. Project ongoing. Rapid evidence review on messaging for health in LMICs. Project ongoing.

MBRGI Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Global Initiatives)	Strategy work for the Digital School, to embed MERL within a large-scale initiative to improve education for marginalised children through online learning and training. Project ongoing.
PADILEIA (Partnership for Digital Learning and Increased Access)	Summative evaluation of higher education programmes in Jordan and Lebanon. Project completed.
PEAS (Promoting Equality in African Schools)	Endline evaluation of GEARRing Up for Success After School, a Girls' Education Challenge (GEC) project in Uganda. Project completed: full report here; case study available here.
Plan Ireland	Final evaluation of the EQuIP and HPP programmes in Burkina Faso, Mali, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Cameroon, Niger, Central African Republic and Jordan. Project completed.
UNICEF (United Nations Children's Emergency Fund)	Development of an evaluation framework and tools for multigrade schooling in Egypt. Project completed.