



IGNITE FORWARD - 26 March 2026

Inspiring Girls and Grassroots Networks for
Inclusive and Transformative Education

FROM TRANSACTIONAL TO RELATIONAL PARTNERSHIP

On 26 March, 90 participants from across the globe gathered at **IGNITE Forward**. The event brought together IGNITE grantee partners from 5 African countries with representatives from governments, international organizations, international non-governmental organizations, and media to discuss how collectively we can better support women-led organizations to respond to their community needs.

For some IGNITE partners, **IGNITE Forward** was their first opportunity to connect with a diverse group of stakeholders, including donors, and share both their vision and their practical work. For others, this was a critical opportunity to meet with similar civil society organizations, sharing insights and expertise on promoting gender equality through safe and inclusive education. For everyone, it was a rousing moment in which we came together to celebrate and collectively reflect on the power of equitable partnerships when moving from transactional to trust based relationships.

Throughout the years that the IGNITE project has been supporting partners, IGNITEes have grown in capacity and confidence. That was on full display when three of our partners – Leonard, Lydie, and Favour – gave Ted-talk style interventions to the full room.

In each, the speakers reminded us why we were in the room to begin with: 122 million girls out of school; 12 million girls married as children each year; growing pushback against those working to achieve gender equality.



90 Participants



30 Organizations
represented



45 IGNITEes



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IGNITE Forward was an opportunity for grantees to not only share about the roles they are playing in their communities, but also for them to continue to build the networks that will sustain them over time along the feminist movement.

While IGNITE facilitated this meeting, IGNITE Grantee Partners took advantage of it to speak for themselves, and to bring their challenges and solutions to the international organizations, foundations, government and private sector representatives in the room.

We hope each participant left energized to advocate for the necessary changes within your organization or agency; to demand co-design of projects and programs moving forward; and to influence those you work with to understand the critical role of local organizations and women-led movements in leading change and programming for girls and their communities.

But IGNITE Forward is just a beginning.

Help us sustain the momentum by sharing your reflections in [this brief survey](#). Your insights will help shape how we collectively advance trust-based, feminist partnerships.



Relive the most powerful moments from [IGNITE Forward](#)

Stay connected: Reach out to the [IGNITE team](#) if you'd like to connect with grantee partners or fellow participants—we're here to facilitate those relationships. Share what you learned within your networks.

And most importantly, **take action:** Within your own organizations and networks, advocate for and make the shifts in how we fund and partner as women-led movements. We envisioned feminist futures together and have both the IGNITE model for partnership and the IGNITE network to make those visions real.

The IGNITE Consortium thanks each and every one of you for your commitment and your participation.

FORWARD, TOGETHER!