THE SUSTAINABILITY OF INTEGRITY CLUBS IN KILIFI COUNTY, KENYA: EVALUATION SUMMARY

Owl RE — Wise research & evaluation

INTEGRITY ACTION

About Integrity Clubs

Integrity Clubs are student-led groups within secondary schools, where teenagers aged 14-18:

- ✓ Learn about accountability through interactive exercises and discussions
- ✓ Identify and monitor issues affecting their school environments and education
- ✓ Work constructively with management and authorities to resolve problems
- ✓ Champion integrity and collaboration
- ✓ Advocate for improvements that will benefit all students

Integrity Action's current programme, delivered in partnership with **Kesho Kenya** since January 2024, has established clubs in ten schools in Magarini Sub-County. This follows a much bigger programme called SHINE, which established over 500 Integrity Clubs in five countries between 2017-21. Kenya was one of those five countries, and Kesho Kenya were involved in supporting 45 schools Kilifi North Sub-County.

Evaluation Approach

This evaluation focused on exploring the OECD-DAC criteria of relevance, effectiveness, and sustainability. Particular attention was given to examining how Integrity Clubs could be encouraged to continue beyond the programme's end date of December 2025. To this end, five of Kesho Kenya's 45 schools from SHINE were also included in the sustainability section of the evaluation, alongside all ten of the new clubs.

The evaluators spoke with **379 respondents** across the 15 schools:

- 271 students, including club members and non-members
- 53 teaching and non-teaching staff
- 45 Board of Management representatives
- 10 other stakeholders, including officials from the Ministry of Education and the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC)

Key Findings

Individual growth and development

Integrity Club members consistently displayed profound personal development, including:

- Improved self-confidence, problem-solving skills, and ability to speak publicly
- Deeper understanding of personal responsibility and accountability
- Development of leadership skills, including club members being elected as school prefects and head boys or girls
- Increased trust and respect from peers and teachers
- Stronger academic engagement and discipline, including reports of reduced absenteeism

"Club members are invited to do presentations on integrity-related issues [at the] school assembly. We are now more confident, take initiative, and are even doing presentations [elsewhere], for example in the annual general meetings."
~ Integrity Club member, Fundi Issa Secondary School
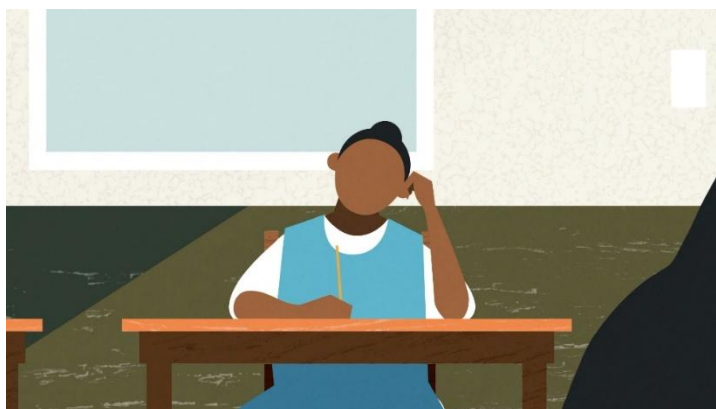
These values were seen spreading beyond Integrity Clubs, with students outside the clubs adopting attitudes and behaviours modelled by club members.

"I have seen drastic changes in the students. This [school] environment is hostile, where sometimes the students became rowdy. Now, I see other students respecting Club members and students even keep each other in check."
~ Teacher, Ngomeni Secondary School

"In the dorms, there was shouting and stealing at night last year. This year, it is quieter, due to peer counsellors in the Club who talked to other students."
~ Teacher, Galana Boys Secondary School

The EACC official interviewed in this evaluation viewed Integrity Clubs as a scalable model for youth engagement, describing them as "*incubators of ethical leadership*" that help students to develop values that extend beyond school life.

Staff transformation

The presence of Integrity Clubs was also found to have an effect on the conduct of school staff. Improved behaviours included better punctuality and classroom preparation, greater responsiveness to students' needs, and increased offering of additional lessons for those who need them.

"[The club] has had a positive impact on both teachers and students. For teachers, it is making us lead by example - seeking to be fair and avoid favouritism."
~ Teacher, Marereni Secondary School

"[Some] teachers were lax in teaching, habitually arriving late in class. The Club members reported one such case to the school administration, and the issue was remedied. This has led to improved quality of teaching."
~ Student, Magarini Girls Secondary School

Monitoring of non-teaching staff by Integrity Clubs has led to further positive changes, such as improved hygiene in school kitchens, and reduced complicity with truant students by some school security guards.

Collaborative problem-solving

Integrity Clubs create opportunities for students to constructively identify problems and to help resolve them, transforming the relationship between students and school authorities. Issues successfully addressed in these ten schools included teacher shortages, water scarcity, poor toilet hygiene, and inadequate sports materials.

Improvements to the schools' physical infrastructure were seen in construction of new laboratories and toilets, installation of solar panels and handwashing facilities, repair or replacement of broken windows and furniture, and painting of buildings. The availability of extracurricular enrichment activities also increased, improving the learning environment for many students beyond the clubs.

"Last year, the school did not participate in drama festivals. A club member approached the head of institution, and subsequently, the school participated in the drama festival at the sub-county and county levels this year."
~ Student, Galana Boys Secondary School

Challenges for sustainability...

The evaluators visited five schools where Integrity Clubs had been established during Integrity Action's SHINE programme (2017-21). These were located in Kilifi North Sub-County, and had been supported by Kesho Kenya during the period of the programme.

It was found that none of the five schools still had active Integrity Clubs. The key reasons included:

- Competing demands on time and resources
- Lack of ongoing support and guidance from Kesho Kenya or the EACC, due to their own resource constraints
- Staff turnover, especially when club patrons or Heads of Institution move on
- Student progression, with few pupils now left at schools from the time when SHINE was active

Underlying all of these factors is a lack of institutionalisation or local ownership. Teachers frequently viewed Integrity Clubs as extra duties beyond their core responsibilities, and clubs are treated as temporary external projects rather than integral school activities. The EACC has a mandate to support Integrity Clubs, but has only one officer to cover three entire counties.

...But outcomes can be sustained

Despite Integrity Clubs from SHINE no longer running, the changes that they delivered may have been sustained. This evaluation did not fully explore this, in part since it would have involved tracing former students who have now left schools, but some conclusions are drawn from the types of outcomes being seen:

Personal growth. There is significant internalisation of positive attitude and behavioural changes among Integrity Club members. These developments are likely to remain with the individual students beyond the life of the project, with club members carrying forward their confidence, problem-solving and leadership skills, and understanding of accountability.

Physical infrastructure. Buildings constructed, facilities improved, and equipment installed during the life of Integrity Clubs should continue to benefit new students into the future.

Memories persist. Schools and their communities will likely retain some memory of what's possible when students have voice and agency. Teachers in SHINE schools affirmed the impact it had had, and noted the difference since Integrity Clubs had ended.

> *"During SHINE, [Club members] took up leadership positions in the school.*
> *All members of the school students' council were Club members...*
> *this year it took the school a long time to constitute the students' leadership council*
> *because [students] are not interested and are not willing. So, the teachers had to*
> *handpick students to assume leadership positions in the school."*
> ~ Teacher, Shariani Secondary School

Recommendations for future programmes

The following actions are suggested to maximise the impact of Integrity Clubs and their likelihood of being sustained beyond the life of future programmes:

More collaborative club formation. Use participatory approaches when establishing new Integrity Clubs, engaging a wide cross-section of teachers so that they understand the benefits and can support implementation. Avoid having Heads of Institutions simply appointing club patrons, and support schools to draft simple, actionable plans tailored to their specific contexts and resources.

Document and showcase learning. Support and encourage schools to share Integrity Club outcomes through KESSHA[1] meetings, social media, peer-to-peer school visits, and other channels. Make evidence visible to generate interest and support among school leaders and education authorities.

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[1] Kenya Secondary Schools Heads Association

Create systems for recognition and motivation. Introduce simple, affordable reward systems for students, such as monthly awards for behaviour or punctuality, or certificates of participation for Integrity Club members.

Partnership development. Support the formation of joint working groups or other platforms to connect Integrity Clubs with Boards of Management and parent communities, and encourage school management committees to allocate resources for club activities. Build relationships with other potential supporters who may be able to provide resources or guidance beyond the lifespan of individual programmes.

Advocate for better stakeholder coordination. Work with the Ministry of Education and EACC to strengthen their collaboration with Integrity Clubs, and their institutionalisation into standard school programming and budgets. Use joint forums at sub-county level, with clearly defined roles and regular engagement, and discuss ways for Kesho Kenya to work with them

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For further information, read the full evaluation report.