

PAL EVIDENCE FOR ACTION FORUM

CONCEPT NOTE



**EVIDENCE
FOR ACTION
FORUM**

www.palnetwork.org

PEOPLE'S ACTION FOR LEARNING (PAL) EVIDENCE FOR ACTION FORUM

A South-South Foundational Learning Exchange

1. Introduction

The People's Action for Learning (PAL) Network is a south-south partnership of 17 members working across Africa, South Asia and the Americas to promote children's foundational learning. Over the years, we have pioneered Citizen-Led Assessments (CLAs), an innovative and cost-effective approach to evaluate children's foundational learning in developing nations. This inclusive model has gained traction globally, with over 60 assessments conducted in over 15 countries, reaching more than 9 million children in their homes by 2024.

The organic growth of CLAs resulted in effective national advocacy efforts, but a gap remained in promoting a common voice across countries. PAL members came together to build common assessment tools to facilitate cross-country analysis and enable them to speak at one voice. Building on two decades of pioneering the globally renowned CLAs, the PAL Network developed three robust and scalable assessment tools: ICAN (International Common Assessment of Numeracy) tool, which won the WISE 2023 award, ICAR (International Common Assessment of Reading) tool, and PAL-ELANA (Early Language & Literacy and Numeracy Assessment).

In 2025, PAL Network is carrying out the ICAN- ICAR common assessments to measure learning levels of 89,870 children aged 5 to 16 years across 12 countries in the Global South. PAL Network plans to launch the ICAN/ICAR findings on 25th and 26th November 2025. The event is dubbed the '**PAL Evidence for Action Forum**' in line with the Network's impact goal as outlined in its new 2025-2030 strategy, that is, **by 2030, data generated by PAL Network's citizen-led assessments and actions is used in at least 15 global South countries to inform governments, civil society, and citizens about the status of foundational learning, and inspires actions to improve foundational learning.**

2025 also marks 10 years since the establishment of PAL Network. The launch event will therefore include **PAL@10 celebrations, a platform to raise visibility on the impact Citizen Led Assessments has had in improving learning outcomes in the Global South.** CLAs can be traced back to 2005, when the first Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) was born. (ASER is an annual, nationwide survey of children's ability to read a simple text and do basic arithmetic.) **CLAs are low cost, household-based effort to collect nationally representative data, giving PAL Network a unique position in the generation of evidence on foundational learning.**

This forum will provide a platform for policymakers, education practitioners, and civil society to reflect on the state of foundational learning in the Global South and co-create actionable, evidence-based strategies to ensure that all children are learning.

2. Objectives of the Event

The forum will have 4 main objectives:

a. Launch of the ICAN - ICAR Findings

Official release and discussion of findings from the PAL Network ICAN and ICAR assessment will take place, offering insights into foundational learning outcomes across 12 countries

including Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Senegal, Mali, Mozambique, Botswana, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Nepal, Mexico and Nicaragua.

b. Celebrating PAL@10

PAL Network will mark its 10-year anniversary by amplifying the impact of Citizen-Led Assessments on education systems, learning equity, and policy influence across the Global South.

c. Engaging Policymakers, Practitioners and civil society

The forum will create space for dialogue among education policymakers, practitioners and civil society to respond to the challenges highlighted by the assessment findings and co-develop actionable solutions.

d. Exploring Global Issues Affecting Foundational Learning

Through panel discussions and workshops, the forum will facilitate expert-led discussions on global trends, systemic barriers, and opportunities that influence the design, implementation, and use of foundational learning assessments and practices.

3. Target Attendees

The forum will bring together about 150 civil society organizations, policy makers, partners, donors, researchers, teachers, parents, and education networks to discuss the status of foundational learning in the global south and scalable evidence-based solutions to challenges that are affecting children's learning trajectories negatively. PAL Network members will invite two senior government representatives/Ministers of education from each participating country.

4. Discussion Themes

Panel Themes	Workshop Themes
Panel 1 SDG 4.1.1 a: The role of citizen-generated data in driving accountability and strengthening education policy and practice.	Workshop 1: Designing Comparable Assessments for SDG Monitoring – The Case of ICAN–ICAR
Panel 2 Transformative Pedagogies: Scaling Teaching Innovation to Prepare Learners for a Rapidly Changing World.	Workshop 2: From Evidence to Action: Designing Learning Interventions Using Data-Driven Insights
Panel 3 Building a Stronger Evidence Ecosystem for Foundational Learning: How public and private institutions can work together to enhance evidence uptake and data-informed decision-making in education.	Workshop 3: Holistic Learning: Tools and Strategies for Measuring Social-Emotional Learning

5. Venue and Registration Details

The PAL Evidence For Action Forum will take place in Nairobi Kenya, 25th – 26th November 2025 at the Pullman Hotel.

Fully and partially sponsored participants will receive an invitation and registration link directly from PAL Network.

We also welcome **self-funded participants** who wish to attend the forum in person. The participation fee is **USD 200**, which covers:

- Conference access for both days
- Tea/coffee breaks and lunches
- Networking dinner
- Conference materials

Please note: Travel, accommodation, and other logistical arrangements are not covered by the event fee and will be the responsibility of the self-funded participant.

Why attend as a self-funded participant?

- **Expand your network** – Build connections with policymakers, donors, and sector leaders for networking and collaboration.
- **Access exclusive insights** – Be among the first to explore the ICAN–ICAR findings before public release.
- **Be part of the solution** – Engage in workshops, panel discussions, and roundtables where your input can influence strategies for scaling impact.
- **Learn and apply** – Take home proven tools and approaches to strengthen your own projects and advocacy.
- **Exhibit your work** - Show case your work on the event gallery walk

How to RSVP and Register as a Self-Funded Participant

1. Make your event payment of **USD 200** via the PAL network Website.
2. Once your payment is received, you will be sent a registration link to complete your details and confirm your participation.

For any questions or clarifications, please contact us using conference@palnetwork.org