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## **LGT Venture Philanthropy Continues Partnership with Lively Minds to support Governments unlock the power of parents to improve Early Childhood Development across Africa**

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LGT Venture Philanthropy (LGT VP) is pleased to announce the continuation of its partnership with Lively Minds, reinforcing a shared commitment to ensuring that children in underserved rural communities have access to quality early childhood development by helping governments deliver scalable, parent-powered solutions.

Access to early childhood education in Sub-Saharan Africa remains limited, with only 26% of children regularly attending an ECD program. Where programs do exist, quality is often poor, particularly in rural areas where schools face large class sizes, undertrained teachers, limited materials, and high absenteeism. These challenges are compounded by limited nurturing care at home, as many parents lack the knowledge, support and confidence to provide early learning opportunities. As a result, children enter school unprepared, reducing their chances of academic success and future earning potential, and perpetuating cycles of poverty and vulnerability.

Lively Minds helps governments deliver quality Early Childhood Development (ECD) at scale for children aged 3–6 in resource-poor, rural communities, by activating the power of parents. Building on nearly 20 years of designing, testing and scaling practical ECD solutions, the organization and government co-develop practical, affordable approaches that strengthen children's early learning and care at home and at school. In 2025, the Ghanaian government trained 136,000 mothers to provide nurturing care at school and at home and reached 304,000 children through 3,900 community-run play groups. Recent independent evaluations have demonstrated that this approach continues to deliver meaningful improvements in children's cognitive, social, emotional, and motor development, while maintaining impact at scale.

Since the beginning of the partnership, LGT VP has supported Lively Minds as a strategic partner, providing funding for organisational capacity-strengthening and strategy refinement, while sharing its expertise on governance, facilitating peer learning across its portfolio and creating opportunities to strengthen fundraising and global visibility. This has contributed to Lively Minds' mission of influencing the establishment of sustainable public systems that empower caregivers and improve children's readiness for school. In Ghana, Lively Minds has demonstrated that parent-powered ECD can be successfully integrated into government systems at national scale. Today the programme is fully government-owned and government-funded, with Lively Minds transitioning into a technical advisory role.

The organization now has a new expansion strategy to provide technical support to governments to design and integrate scalable early learning programs that fit their country context, needs and systems, with responsibility for funding and implementation resting with government from the outset. This new Technical Advisory model is already being implemented in 2026 with new partnerships in Oromia Region, Ethiopia, and with Gambia. The next phase of LGT VP's support will focus on strengthening Lively Minds' expansion strategy, deepening institutional capabilities, and supporting collaboration with government partners as the organization validates its model across multiple countries.

LGT VP's education strategy aims to increase the delivery of quality early education through various direct and indirect models, including delivery of quality education in schools and other learning environments, and building government capacity to adapt and run early learning programs, while influencing governments' willingness to pay. Marcia Parada, Investment Director at LGT Venture Philanthropy, says: "We are proud of the work Lively Minds has achieved, particularly in securing government adoption of their model in Ghana, alongside funding to implement these initiatives. We are excited to continue this journey together as they refine and implement their expansion strategy, supporting countries seeking sustainable, locally owned solutions for early childhood development."

Alison Naftalin, Chief Executive Officer of Lively Minds, adds: "We are deeply grateful to LGT Venture Philanthropy for their continued partnership and trust. They have supported us not only with funding, but by backing our ability to learn, adapt and make the right decisions as we evolve our model. Together, we are helping demonstrate one of the key paths to sustainable scale is one where governments design, own and deliver solutions from the outset."

**LGT Venture Philanthropy (LGT VP)** is an independent charitable foundation established in 2007 with partners in Switzerland, Sub-Saharan Africa, and India. The Foundation strives to improve the quality of life of people facing disadvantages, contribute to healthy ecosystems, and build resilient, inclusive, and prosperous communities. LGT VP focuses on strengthening the capabilities of locally rooted organisations that deliver effective, scalable solutions across health, education, and the environment contributing directly to the SDGs. For more information, please visit [www.lgtvp.com](http://www.lgtvp.com).

**Lively Minds** helps governments deliver quality early childhood development at scale for pre-school children (aged 3 – 6) in resource-poor, rural communities. The organization works with governments to develop scalable, low-cost, parent-powered approaches that strengthen children's learning at home and at school, using existing government infrastructure and systems. This improves the life-chances and quality of life for children, parents, and the wider community.