



Education innovation  
in Ethiopia:  
*accelerating  
the impact of an  
unconventional  
charity*

## Case Study: Imagine1day

The mission of *imagine1day* is that, by 2030, all children in Ethiopia will have access to quality education, free of foreign aid. Junxion helped them develop a realistic strategic framework to achieve it.



imagine1day™

### The Business Challenge

The scale of *Imagine1day's* ambition is matched only by their impressive determination to reach their goal.

Since Shannon and Chip Wilson (of

lululemon) launched and endowed the charity in 2008, it has continually grown. It now makes more than \$2.75 million in annual program investments in Ethiopia. So far, they have built 37 schools, and support hundreds more, along the way developing strong relationships with Ministry of Education officials and regional leaders. But the sheer scale of the need in Ethiopia dwarfs any single organization's ability to develop and deliver solutions.



Junxion's process and knowledge were essential to the development of our new strategic plan. They worked to an ambitious timeline, and brought plenty of strong ideas to the table without being married to any of them. The outcome is a strong framework for us to work from."

Scott Elliott, *CEO, imagine1day*

# In collaboration with Imagine1day's CEO we developed a framework for action through 2030. Imagine1day will build on their success, extending to new relationships with implementation partners.

*Imagine1day* stands out in Ethiopia's education development sector for their ambition, their roots in business, their entrepreneurial culture, and their focus on personal leadership development. In order to achieve their lofty goals, it was clear they needed to deepen their partnership with the Ethiopian Ministry of Education, and strike new alliances with much larger international aid organizations. At the same time, the *imagine1day* team remained committed to avoiding the 'business as usual' of International Development dependency. *Imagine1day* needed a clear road map for how they would successfully 'exit' Ethiopia in 2030 with their mission accomplished—a strategic plan that will leave behind a strong, domestic movement "run by Ethiopians, for Ethiopians."

## How We Helped

Junxion delivered our proprietary *TurningPoint*™ Strategy approach, working in collaboration with CEO Scott Elliott, his team, and two board members to develop the new strategic plan. We began with a comprehensive literature review, studying Ethiopia's cultural history and makeup, analyzing government plans and documentation, the efforts of other NGOs, and *imagine1day's* own historical plans and impact reports. Next, we interviewed a diverse range of key stakeholders inside and outside *Imagine1day*: embassy staff, experts in educational development in Ethiopia, key donors, fundraising staff, and more.

We presented the *Imagine1day* senior staff and Board members with a comprehensive review of the strategic issues for consideration in their plan—matching their strengths and capacities to opportunities for scaling their impact, and addressing blind spots and weaknesses with suggestions for mitigation.

Junxion introduced two key contributions into the planning conversation. First, recognizing that the challenge *imagine1day* aims to meet is an ever-changing one, influenced by myriad uncontrollable forces, we introduced complexity theory into the planning framework. To solve a 'wicked' problem, *imagine1day* will have to maintain an



agile and responsive approach to its strategy implementation. Second, we introduced insights from the growing field of social innovation, including approaches that reach across the public, private and 'third sectors,' complementing *imagine1day's* strong business-centric entrepreneurship.

In collaboration with *Imagine1day's* CEO we developed a framework for action through 2030, which was refined and focused through a series of iterations to three 'pillars' of activity—actions and initiatives for the next three to five years. *Imagine1day* will build on their success in developing models for rural educational development, while extending to new relationships with implementation partners.

## Measuring Success

*Junxion helped develop key indicators of success for each of the three pillars of action. Further investment in monitoring and evaluation will be a priority as the organization grows. As of this writing, imagine1day is in the process of developing detailed, annual business plans for each operating area, translating the strategic plan into organizational work plans. Some of the earliest observable results will be seeing how the plan helps imagine1day gain traction with a new approach to soliciting major gifts.*