Laterite

Data, research and analytics in Africa and Latin America

laterite

DATA | RESEARCH | ANALYTICS

About Laterite

Laterite is a data, research and analytics firm rooted in Africa and specialized in research for social impact. Our goal is to make development research more impactful, by using rigorous techniques to provide context-relevant evidence. Our team combines technical excellence with a deep understanding of the context to deliver high-quality data and insights.

Over the past 14 years, we have completed 100+ evaluations, surveys and research projects with clients active in social impact and development research including foundations and international organizations, universities, and NGOs. Our core sectors of expertise are education, public health, agriculture, livelihoods, and gender. We have offices in Rwanda, Ethiopia, Kenya, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Uganda and Peru, with a support office in the Netherlands. Our team is based primarily in Africa.

8
offices

90+
full-time staff

2,000+
enumerators available

50,000
interviews completed in 2023

35,000+
enumerator days spent on projects in 2023

30+
reports published in 2023

Our offices

Lima

Freetown

Addis Ababa

Kampala

Kigali

Nairobi

Dar es Salaam

Amsterdam

What we offer

Our strengths

Expert team of technical professionals with experience in emerging markets

Top quality at every step of the process, from enumerator training to data monitoring & analysis

Strong understanding of the context via our local teams, networks and relationships

Emphasis on **ethically sound research**, prioritizing the dignity of our participants

Full-cycle research project support capabilities, from design to data collection to analysis

We deliver **tech-enabled research**, and continuously seek innovative, data-driven ways to improve our work

Our services

Data

- Quantitative & qualitative data collection
- Phone & SMS surveys
- Audio-assisted surveys
- Behavioral games
- Anthropometric & biometric measurements
- Observational learning and child development assessments

Research

- Program / impact evaluation
- Socio-economic household surveys
- Poverty analysis
- Policy / program landscape mapping
- Learning partnerships
- Design of MEL frameworks

Analytics

- Machine learning
- Predictive analytics and modeling
- Geospatial data and analysis
- Large language models (LLMs) to power Intelligent Knowledge Hubs
- AI tools to accelerate research

Our work in agriculture

Laterite has hands-on experience in agriculture and rural development research, including impact evaluations, large quantitative surveys and mixed methods projects. We also have experience with yield measuring, especially in the coffee value chain, perception and attitudes studies, and secondary data analysis. Our team has a special interest in the intersection of agriculture and other themes such as livelihoods, gender, public health, and climate change.

Spotlight: Learning partnership

Independent research services for coffee agronomy training programs in East Africa

TechnoServe

Laterite works within TechnoServe's Coffee East Africa program to maximize learning, improve the research function, and increase harmony between implementation and research. Services include helping clients design research strategies that directly feed into their operations, while meeting monitoring and reporting requirements; helping clients design research projects in a way that is rigorous, pertinent, and feasible within budget and operational constraints; training at all stages of the research cycle, from instrument and research design to data management and cleaning to analysis; and backstopping and access to our network of expert researchers across East Africa. Together with TechnoServe, we test new approaches to ensure that research and data continue to inform operations.

> Read the **case study**

More of our projects

> Study of Ethiopian grain farmers' willingness to pay for crop micro-insurance (**Global Green Growth Institute**) - **policy brief**

> Full harvest study on the effect of stumping coffee trees on yields in Ethiopia (**HereWeGrow/TechnoServe**) - **blog**

> Randomized controlled trial evaluations of tree programs in Kenya and Rwanda (**One Acre Fund**)

> Series of thematic briefs exploring new insights from historic data on coffee farming households participating in the Nespresso AAA Academy in Ethiopia and Kenya (**Nespresso/Technoserve**)

> Step-wedged randomized controlled trial of the Pathways Out of Poverty program in Uganda (**HereWeGrow**)

> Mixed-methods study to evaluate the impact of the Nasho irrigation project in Eastern Rwanda, using geographic regression discontinuity design (**Howard G. Buffett Foundation**)

> Cross-sectional mixed-methods study on the impact of financing on household dynamics, dairy productivity, and nutrition among men and women dairy producers in Tanzania (**Tanzanian Agricultural Development Bank**)

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Spotlight: Data collection

Evaluation of the Uganda Coffee Agronomy Training (UCAT) program

IFPRI

Laterite was the data collection partner for the RCT impact evaluation of UCAT, led by principal investigators from IFPRI and Harvard University. Drawing from our experience delivering research projects in the coffee sector, we drafted a comprehensive coffee best practice survey and designed a yield measurement protocol which involved taking detailed plot measurements using GPS, random sampling of coffee trees, and stripping and weighing unripe coffee cherries to estimate future harvests. We implemented baseline and endline surveys in 9,037 coffee farming households led by a team of 120 enumerators.
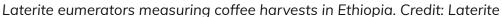
> Read the **case study**

Spotlight: Research

RCT to evaluate the impact of incentives on stumping uptake in Ethiopia

HereWeGrow & TechnoServe

To understand how to motivate coffee farmers to adopt the best practice of 'stumping' their old coffee trees, Laterite developed the 'Tools For Stumping' pilot alongside TechnoServe and HereWeGrow. This program provided coffee farmers with farming tools in exchange for their use of the stumping best practice. The pilot was expanded in 2022, to target 23,000 coffee farming households in Sidama. Laterite designed and led an RCT evaluation of this expansion, using econometric and machine learning methods to estimate a relationship between tool-based incentives and stumping adoption.

> Read the **blog**

Laterite eumerators measuring coffee harvests in Ethiopia. Credit: Laterite

Our work in education

We have worked on projects across all levels of the education system: pre-primary, basic, secondary, university, and vocational. In addition to large-scale surveys and qualitative interviews, we have experience with methods such as student literacy and numeracy assessments (e.g., EGRA, EGMA), classroom observations, and tools to teach and encourage playful learning in the classroom. Laterite is also a learning and research partner leading studies, evaluations, and implementation research in education-related programs.

Examples of our projects

> An assessment of dropout and repetition in primary and secondary education in Rwanda (**UNICEF / Rwandan Ministry of Education**) - **policy brief**

> Intersectional gender analysis of basic education in Rwanda, bringing together existing evidence with primary data collection and analysis. gender study (**World Bank**)

> RCT evaluation of the 'First Steps' early childhood education program in Rwanda (**Save the Children**) - **endline report**

> Scoping study of the context for teaching and learning in Ethiopia focusing on secondary education, TVET and non-formal education for adults (**Mastercard Foundation**)

> Learning partnership to develop an e-certification course on Learning through Play for lower primary (P1-P3) teachers in Rwanda (**Right to Play**) - **case study**

> In-country testing for the primary tools of the LEGO Play Measurement Research Study in Kenyan classrooms (**RTI**)

> Classroom observations and qualitative data collection to support evaluation of a non-formal education program in Ethiopia (**IPA**)

> Study of the landscape for EdTech in Rwanda, including desk research, stakeholder interviews, and insights from a workshop with 80 EdTech stakeholders (**Mastercard Foundation**) - **summary**

> Diagnostic of monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) approach for an education NGO in Kenya and recommendations for a revamped MEL strategy (**Flying Kites**)

> Quantitative data collection in 200 schools for the Global Education Policy Dashboard in Rwanda (**World Bank**)

> Pilot program testing the viability of using AI-based optical character recognition (OCR) models to read and mark student assessments (**Rising Academies**) - **blog**

> Technical support to uBoraBora grantees on using implementation research to improve foundational literacy and numeracy in sub-Saharan Africa with Brink (**Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation**)

> Learning partner for the first cohort of the Regional Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning in EdTech (**Mastercard Foundation**)

> Situation analysis on the state and delivery of science training at the secondary level in Rwanda (**African Institute for Mathematics and Science**)

A teacher participating in continuous professional development as part of Leaders in Teaching in Rwanda. Credit: Etienne Ntawigira/VVOB

Spotlight: Learning partnership

Leaders in Teaching learning partnership in Rwanda

Mastercard Foundation

Laterite partnered with the Mastercard Foundation and the Research for Equitable Access and Learning (REAL) Centre at the University of Cambridge to lead strategic monitoring, evaluation, research and learning for the Leaders in Teaching initiative. Leaders in Teaching was a five-year suite of teacher training programs to support improved teaching quality and learning in Rwandan secondary schools, with a focus on STEM. Laterite co-led a large-scale research program in 355 schools over the five years to generate evidence of improved teaching and learning; led knowledge sharing events; provided tailored support to implementing partners to support their capacity to collect and use quality data for adaptive management and program design; and **disseminated findings directly** to educators and policy-makers.

> Read the **library of publications**

Spotlight: Research study

Improving learning through classroom experience in East Africa: Temperature, Lighting and Sound Quality

Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO)

Laterite, Fab Inc and academic partners are working to generate evidence on the role of classroom conditions and learning outcomes in the educational experence of students and teachers in Tanzania. The project focuses on light, sound and acoustics, and temperature. The project aims to gather quantitative and qualitative data on light, sound and temperature conditions in Tanzanian schools; draw insights on how these conditions link with school-level infrastructure; generate evidence on the potential links between classroom conditions and learning outcomes; and articulate concrete ideas on how modifications to the classroom environment can enhance learning outcomes.

Our work in public health

Laterite's public health portfolio includes projects focused on sexual and reproductive health, child development, mental health, and nutrition. From longitudinal cohorts to nationally representative cross-sectional studies, our team of in-house public health professionals design studies, collect data, and conduct analyses that inform health policy and strengthen health systems. Our team has extensive experience collecting complex data on health outcomes including anthropometric assessment to assess for stunting and malnutrition, child development assessments such as the Malawi Developmental Assessment Tool, and 24-hour dietary recalls.

Spotlight: Data collection

Data collection for longitudinal study of pregnant women in Kitui and Kiambi counties

Kenya Medical Research Institute (KEMRI) - Wellcome Trust

The QuEST Network conducted a longitudinal study of women's experiences during pregnancy and childbirth in Kenya, Ethiopia, South Africa, and India. In Kenya, this study followed 1,000 women at 20 health facilities throughout their pregnancy via monthly surveys. KEMRI conducted the in-person baseline and endline surveys, and Laterite conducted the monthly phone surveys. Laterite also developed an Electronic Data Capture System and database hosting for all modules, trained enumerators, and carried out piloting, data quality control and cleaning, as well as frequent transfer of data to the client. These efforts saw a retention rate of 89% of study participants.

Spotlight: Research study

Monitoring & evaluation roadmap for programs to improve maternal and newborn health

Jacaranda Health

Jacaranda Health works with governments to implement scalable and sustainable solutions to improve maternal and newborn health. Laterite partnered with Jacaranda Health to co-design a monitoring and evaluation roadmap. Laterite conducted a desk review of Jacaranda Health's existing M&E framework, Theory of Change, data systems, and previous research. Laterite also led a scoping literature review to identify internationally-recognized best practices for monitoring and evaluation of maternal and newborn health programs. Laterite synthesized this information into a roadmap that provided guidance on how to measure, calculate, and interpret evidence-based key indicators across every stage of Jacaranda Health's Theory of Change.

Laterite eumerators measure mid-upper arm circumference (MUAC) of mothers and babies in Rwanda. Credit: Laterite

Spotlight: Data collection

Data collection for an impact evaluation of the group Problem Management plus (gPM+) mental health intervention in Ethiopia
IFPRI

Laterite was the data collection partner for IFPRI's evaluation of the gPM+ intervention. gPM+, developed by WHO in 2013 to address common mental health problems such as depression, stress and anxiety, was implemented in 272 villages across 72 kebeles in remote parts of Oromia and Amhara, many of which were affected by fragile security situations. Laterite conducted a listing and screening survey to select eligible participants from all 272 villages. This resulted in 3,808 participants (50% female, 50% male) taking part in the baseline survey, which included modules on sensitive topics such as intimate partner violence and mental health (PHQ-9). Our team matched female enumerators to female respondents to ensure respondents were comfortable discussing sensitive subjects. Finally, Laterite led an immediate follow-up survey with 3,033 respondents, and a 1-year follow-up. Our robust respondent tracking security protocols meant that 94% of respondents were reached, with no safety incidents.

♡ More of our projects

> Survey & anthropometric collection from 11,250 children under five and their biological mothers for a baseline evaluation of a program to prevent stunting in Rwanda (**World Bank**)

> Baseline, endline, and follow-up data collection including use of Malawi Developmental Assessment Tool (MDAT) and anthropometrics for RCT of Sugira Muryango in Rwanda, a program to encourage responsive parent-child interactions (**Boston College**) - **case study**

> Data collection for follow-up study of Bandebereho, to assess the impact of the couples training program on new fathers in Rwanda, including 800 IDELA assessments (**Promundo**) - **case study**

> Qualitative research on beliefs about vaccinating children aged 5-17 against COVID-19 in Rwanda (**Johns Hopkins Center for Communication Programs**)

> Evaluation of Agonyora, a program to improve the uptake of family planning solutions and influence gender norms in Kenya (**Childrens Investment Fund Foundation**) - **case study**

> Mixed-methods study on the impact of financing on household dynamics, dairy productivity, and nutrition using the Global Diet Quality Score among dairy producers in Tanzania (**Tanzanian Agricultural Development Bank**)

Our work in gender

Gender is a cross-cutting theme in all Laterite work. Our team has experience in topics such as adolescence, gender-based violence, household dynamics, and women's empowerment. We have experience with measuring gender-related household, systems, and organizational outcomes through evaluations in the areas of agriculture, nutrition, child development and education, and we have conducted research on how gender affects the design or effectiveness of a policy or program. We also advise organizations on how to integrate a gender lens in their work.

Women working in agriculture in Amhara, Ethiopia. Credit: Shutterstock.

Spotlight: Research study

Advancing gender equity justice through care-inclusive Farmer Field and Business Schools

IDRC

Laterite has partnered with CARE Tanzania to evaluate an adaption of CARE's Farmer Field and Business Schools (FFBS), designed to improve nutrition, gender equality, and agri-cultural outcomes through training related to climate-resilient agriculture, market access and entrepreneurship skills, and women's empowerment. For this project, CARE will develop new FFBS modules specifically designed to reduce the amount of unpaid care work performed by women farmers. Laterite is overseeing a cluster RCT to compare the effectiveness of these new modules against the standard FFBS curriculum among 1,200 households in Iringa, Tanzania. If successful, the evidence from this project will be used to enhance CARE's scale-up of the FFBS program across 30 countries.

Spotlight: Learning partnership

Embedded research advisory and decision-focused research in four countries for IGNITE

Tanager

Over 5 years, Impacting Gender & Nutrition through Innovative Technical Exchange in Agriculture (IGNITE) aimed to strengthen African institutions' ability to integrate nutrition-sensitive and gender-integrated approaches into their agriculture interventions and way of doing business. Laterite provided M&E support to Tanager, who led implementation of IGNITE, and participating IGNITE clients in Ethiopia, Nigeria, Burkina Faso and Tanzania. Support included technical assistance, capacity building, monitoring, data collection and evaluation. Laterite also led mixed-methods research to support clients to make evidence-based decisions about gender- and nutrition-sensitive agriculture programming.

> Read the **library of gender and nutrition publications**

Spotlight: Evaluation

Evaluation of Women's Empowerment through Gender Transformative Opportunities

Evans School Policy Analysis and Research Group (EPAR)

The Women's Empowerment through Gender Transformative Market Opportunities (WEGO) program aims to increase women's empowerment in Ethiopia's agriculture sector through strengthening government systems and investing in gender transformative market development. Laterite is working with the WEGO consortium and the Evans School Policy Analysis and Research Group (EPAR) on the impact evaluation of the program. Our role covers the entire evaluation cycle, starting with research design, primary data collection, data analysis and reporting. The evaluation follows a mixed methods approach, with a qualitative component consisting of 40 key informant interviews with government officials and stakeholders, and a quantitative survey targeting 1,200 women farmers and their spouses in two regions in Ethiopia. The baseline was completed in 2023.

More of our projects

> Assessment of the gender and social inclusion issues facing the Rwandan health, nutrition and WASH sections, focusing on identifying obstacles to inclusive healthcare (**USAID / Rwanda Health Office**) - report

> Intersectional gender analysis of basic education in Rwanda, bringing together existing evidence with primary data collection and analysis in 150 schools with students, parents, teachers and school leaders (**World Bank**)

> Quantitative data collection partner for Gender & Adolescence: Global Evidence, tracking ~10,000 adolescent girls and boys over 5 years for a large-scale impact evaluation (**ODI**) - case study

> Baseline and endline data collection to support the evaluation of a couples training program for women entrepreneurs and their partners in Ethiopia (**World Bank**)

> Baseline, midline and endline data collection from 840 couples in Rwanda for a RCT evaluation of Indashyikirwa, a community-level gender-based violence prevention program. Included the use of Audio Computer-Assisted Self-Interviewing (**South African Medical Research Council**) - case study

> Mixed-methods study to understand the gender-specific drivers of best practice adoption for teff farmers in Ethiopia (**Sasakawa Africa Association / Tanager**) - blog

> Evaluation of Agonyora, a program to improve the uptake of family planning solutions and influence gender norms in Kenya (**Childrens Investment Fund Foundation**) - case study

Our work in livelihoods

Laterite has extensive experience with projects focusing on personal trajectories and livelihoods in East Africa. To date, this work has included research on careers paths for youth, evaluation of social protection programs, the social and economic impacts of urban development, and the dynamics of migration and integration of displaced people in host communities. We have a special interest in understanding the impacts of climate change on urban and rural communities.

Spotlight: Impact evaluation

Impact evaluation of Advancing Citizen Engagement (ACE) in Rwanda

Spark Microgrants

Laterite is leading a quasi-experimental evaluation of ACE - a pilot community-driven development program that was rolled out in 249 villages in the Northern Province of Rwanda. In a first phase of the evaluation, Laterite used propensity score matching and geospatial data to select 48 pairs of control villages and treatment villages. The quantitative midline took place in 2023, and included focus group discussions, semi-structured interviews, and observations of village meetings. The endline consisted of a qualitative tracer study with semi-structured interviews and a quantitative component with house-hold surveys in 96 villages.

> Read the **blog post** on matching treatment and control groups using geospatial data

Spotlight: Data collection

Mixed-methods data collection among refugees in Kenya

UNU-MERIT / Maastricht University

Maastricht University and UNU-MERIT conducted annual surveys of refugees living in the Dadaab, Kakuma and Kalobeyei settlements to provide insight into their food security, nutrition, livelihoods, and well-being, as part of their work for the World Food Programme. Laterite was the local survey partner in 2020, 2021 and 2022. Yearly data collection reached 2,100 refugee households, contacted by phone in 2020-21 (due to the pandemic) and in person in 2022. The qualitative component included focus group discussions and key informant interviews (in 2021-22). In 2021, the survey was complemented by phone surveys with 48 heads of primary schools in the refugee camps. In 2022 Laterite held 37 focus group discussions with members of vulnerable households in the neighbouring counties of Isiolo, Samburu, and Marsabit.

> Read the **case study**

Paths to business for village-based advisors in Tanzania

AGRA

Laterite designed this mixed-methods study to explore the paths that AGRA's village-based advisors (VBAs) pursue to turn their role into an income-generating venture. Laterite contacted all 5,000 VBAs in Tanzania to assess eligbility to be part of the study. We selected 1,244 VBAs to take part in an entrepreneurship phone survey. We also conducted a 3-round tracer study with 77 VBAs with new businesses; key informant interviews with 40 VBAs who had successful businesses or were not successful; and key informant interviews with 20 government extension agents, AGRA officials, and agri-business representatives in Tanzania.

Kampala, Uganda. Credit: Shutterstock

More of our projects

> Mixed methods evaluations of the livelihoods and wage pathway components of the Productive Safety Net Program (PSNP) in Ethiopia (**World Bank**)

> Evaluation of the acquisition of academic and 21st century skills, and employment outcomes, of students and alumni of Kepler College's BA in Project Management in Rwanda (**Kepler**)

> Situational analysis of the school to work transitions in sub-Saharan Africa (**Mastercard Foundation**) - policy brief

> Qualitative phone survey to seek Rwandan digital credit users' perspectives on the use of their data (**Center for Financial Inclusion at Accion**) - blog

> Mixed methods study to map insights into the informal sector in Kenya and the future of work, with a focus on youth and women (**Brink / TRANSFORM**)

> High-frequency phone surveys of 3,300 households (18 rounds) & 800 firms (8 rounds) to study the impact of COVID-19 across 11 regions of Ethiopia (**World Bank**) - results

> Study of the economic geography of Rwanda, focusing on patterns of urbanization, migration and trade using data from Electronic Billing Machines (**International Growth Centre**) - policy brief

> Analysis of grain markets of Ethiopia and East Africa to assess the risk of a 'price cliff' in Ethiopia for wheat, maize, soybeans, and malt barley (**Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation**)

> Impact evaluation to measure the impact of programming in agriculture, logistics, and sexual and reproductive health on youth livelihoods in Tanzania (**Stiftungsallianz für Afrika (SAfA)**)

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From data to policy