GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR EDUCATION KNOWLEDGE AND INNOVATION EXCHANGE (KIX) ANNUAL REPORT 2020-2021

GPE KIX
KNOWLEDGE INNOVATION EXCHANGE

IDRC · CRDI
Canada

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About IDRC
Part of Canada's foreign affairs and development efforts, the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) invests in knowledge, innovation, and solutions to improve lives and livelihoods in the developing world.

About GPE
The Global Partnership for Education (GPE) is a shared commitment to ending the world's learning crisis. We mobilize partners and funds to support 76 lower-income countries to transform their education systems so that every girl and boy can get the quality education they need to unlock their full potential and contribute to building a better world.

About KIX
The Global Partnership for Education Knowledge and Innovation Exchange (KIX) connects expertise, innovation, and knowledge to developing countries that are building stronger education systems and progressing toward the Sustainable Development Goal of inclusive and equitable quality education for all (SDG4). KIX is a joint endeavor between GPE and IDRC.

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Cover photo: GPE / Stephan Bachenheimer

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ACRONYMS

EMIS	Education management information systems
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
IDRC	International Development Research Centre
KIX	Knowledge Innovation Exchange
KIX Africa 19	Regional hub for GPE partner countries in East, West and southern Africa
KIX Africa 21	Regional hub for GPE partner countries in West and Central Africa and the Indian Ocean
KIX EAP	Regional hub for GPE partner countries in Eastern Europe, the Middle East and North Africa, Central Asia, and Asia-Pacific
KIX LAC	Regional hub for GPE partner countries in Latin America and the Caribbean
MEL	Monitoring, evaluation and learning
ROSIE	Research on Scaling the Impact of Innovations in Education
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal

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Photo: GPE/Kelley Lynch

INTRODUCTION

Learn more about **how** and **where** KIX works on its website.

Photo: GPE/Federico Scoppa

The Global Partnership for Education Knowledge and Innovation Exchange (KIX) began its second year of programming just as much of the world was entering the first wave of COVID-19. Globally, the pandemic has had a devastating impact on education systems, as families and educators dealt with school closures, the loss of employment and income, and the need to find safe, alternative ways to provide education and protect the most vulnerable learners. Among developing countries, these challenges are heightened by the scarcity of resources to support education, as governments divert funding to health and economic responses to the pandemic.

COVID-19 inevitably had an impact on KIX programming and priorities this year, and dramatically changed how our partners and grantees were able to engage. Because of the pandemic, KIX events all took place virtually, and the impact of COVID-19 on education systems became a key topic for learning. As the scale of the challenge became apparent, KIX launched a new initiative to monitor COVID-19 responses in African educational systems and rapidly synthesize available evidence for policymakers and stakeholders across the continent.

Despite the unprecedented challenges of working through a pandemic, KIX made important strides and valuable contributions this year, by filling knowledge gaps, increasing access to evidence, and strengthening education systems to support the generation and uptake of evidence and innovations. In this second annual report — covering April 1, 2020 to March 31, 2021 — we highlight how we continue to sustain progress towards KIX' overall objective of strengthening national education systems and accelerating educational progress in GPE partner countries.

About KIX

KIX is a joint endeavor between the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) to connect expertise, innovation, and knowledge to help developing countries build stronger education systems and accelerate progress toward Sustainable Development Goal 4: quality education. Launched in 2019, with a total budget of CA$103 million, KIX is the largest fund solely dedicated to bridging the knowledge gaps that undermine education systems in developing countries. It comes as a response to GPE partner countries' demand to learn from each other: being responsive to the needs and priorities of GPE partner countries is therefore a key principle for KIX.

KIX operates through two main mechanisms, which contribute to strengthening national education systems with relevant and actionable evidence:

- **Exchange of knowledge:** KIX creates spaces for GPE partner countries to share information, innovation, and best practices in relation to their needs and priorities, and disseminates knowledge generated through KIX-funded projects. The exchange of knowledge is facilitated through KIX' four regional hubs.
- **Applied research projects:** KIX projects build evidence, mobilize knowledge, and strengthen capacity of educational stakeholders on how to adapt and scale innovations that address education priorities of GPE partner countries. KIX now supports 36 projects at global and regional scales.

These mechanisms are mutually reinforcing: building and mobilizing evidence through applied research generates new knowledge to support the scaling of promising and proven innovations, while knowledge exchange plays an important role in identifying priorities for research and learning, synthesizing and sharing relevant knowledge to facilitate learning, and encouraging the uptake of evidence in policies and practice.

These two mechanisms are complemented by support for **monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL)**, and **communications and engagement**.

MILESTONES 2020-2021

Photo: GPE/Tabassy Baro

APRIL 2020

LAUNCH OF REGIONAL HUBS AND THE FIRST OF THE GLOBAL APPLIED RESEARCH PROJECTS

REGIONAL LEARNING PARTNERS IDENTIFIED SHARED POLICY CHALLENGES

MAY - JULY 2020

LAUNCH OF KIX WEBSITE

JULY 2020

LAUNCH OF RESEARCH ON SCALING THE IMPACT OF INNOVATIONS IN EDUCATION (ROSIE)

4 REGIONAL CALLS FOR PROPOSALS

Call for expressions of interest in KIX EAP
Call for proposals in KIX LAC
Call for proposals in KIX Africa 21
Call for proposals in KIX Africa 19

JULY - NOVEMBER 2020

NOVEMBER 2020

LAUNCH OF THE KIX COVID-19 OBSERVATORY

DELIVERY OF MEL TRAINING TO REGIONAL LEARNING PARTNERS AND GRANTEES FROM GLOBAL APPLIED RESEARCH PROJECTS

NOVEMBER 2020 - JANUARY 2021

FEBRUARY 2021

LAUNCH OF THE KIX PEER LEARNING AND EXCHANGE PORTAL

LAUNCH OF KIX LIBRARY

MARCH 2021

LAUNCH OF THE FIRST COHORT OF REGIONAL APPLIED RESEARCH PROJECTS

SECOND YEAR PROGRESS

Photo: GPE/Federico Scoppa

Despite the challenges of the global pandemic, KIX started gaining traction in GPE partner countries this year. The exchange of knowledge and applied research worked together to strengthen demand-driven knowledge sharing among national stakeholders — both government and non-government decision-makers. By establishing strong ties with these intended end users, our regional learning partners and grantees worked to ensure that KIX evidence and innovations would be taken up in national policy processes in the Global South.

Four newly established regional hubs laid the groundwork for multi-year inter-country learning exchange, facilitating engagement with key in-country partners and defining national and regional priorities in education. The priorities identified through these hubs informed the regional calls for proposals issued in 2020, ensuring KIX funding is responsive to regionally defined needs.

In addition to launching a series of global applied research projects and calling for regional proposals, this year KIX also launched ROSIE — Research on Scaling the Impact of Innovations in Education — a project designed to support the scaling efforts of KIX grantees. ROSIE will also generate meta-knowledge about how to effectively scale the impact of educational innovations in low-and middle-income contexts.

Responding to the pandemic, the KIX COVID-19 Observatory was launched, to collect, synthesize and mobilize information on the pandemic impacts and responses observed in primary and secondary education systems in GPE partner countries in Africa.

Here, we look at progress across our two mechanisms: the exchange of knowledge and the applied research projects

I. Exchange of knowledge

KIX' learning is facilitated through four regional hubs, selected in 2019 - 2020, each led by a consortium of regional learning partners:

- KIX Africa 19, which includes 18 GPE-partner countries in East, West, and Southern Africa
- KIX Africa 21, which includes 21 GPE-partner countries in West and Central Africa and the Indian Ocean
- KIX Europe, Asia, Pacific (EAP), which includes 21 GPE-partner countries across Eastern Europe, the Middle East and North Africa, Central Asia, and Asia-Pacific
- KIX LAC, which includes eight countries in Latin America and the Caribbean

Regional learning partners advance three key objectives for the exchange of knowledge:

- Foster demand-driven regional knowledge exchange and strengthen the capacity of hub members to identify, use, share, and mobilize evidence related to priority policy challenges.
- Produce relevant knowledge and evidence syntheses and disseminate these to relevant actors.
- Mobilize regional knowledge and evidence uptake.

The following sections highlight the progress hubs have made towards these three key objectives.

At a glance: 2020–2021 activities of KIX regional learning partners

MOST CITED ASPECTS OF HUB USEFULNESS BY COUNTRY REPRESENTATIVES

- Relevance to countries' needs
- Unique opportunities for exchanging information and ideas
- Production of useful resources
- Space for new knowledge and insights

MAP LEGEND

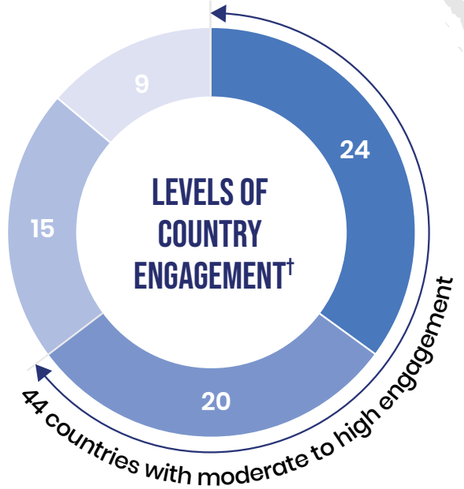
- KIX Africa 19
- KIX Africa 21
- KIX EAP (Europe Asia Pacific)
- KIX LAC (Latin America and the Caribbean)

31
total hub events

2814
total participants

1700
total participants from GPE member countries (GPE participants)

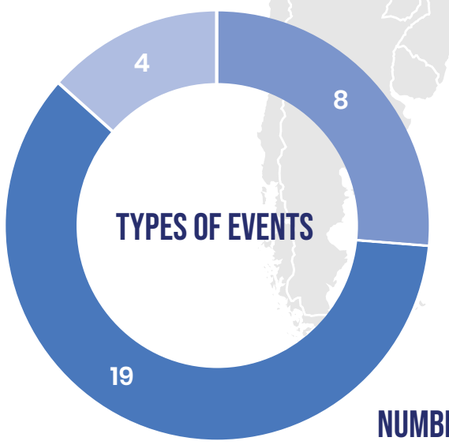
LEVELS OF COUNTRY ENGAGEMENT†



- 3 – high engagement
- 2 – moderate engagement
- 1 – low engagement
- 0 – no engagement

† in hub activities as of April 2021, per a rubric used by learning partners to monitor engagement

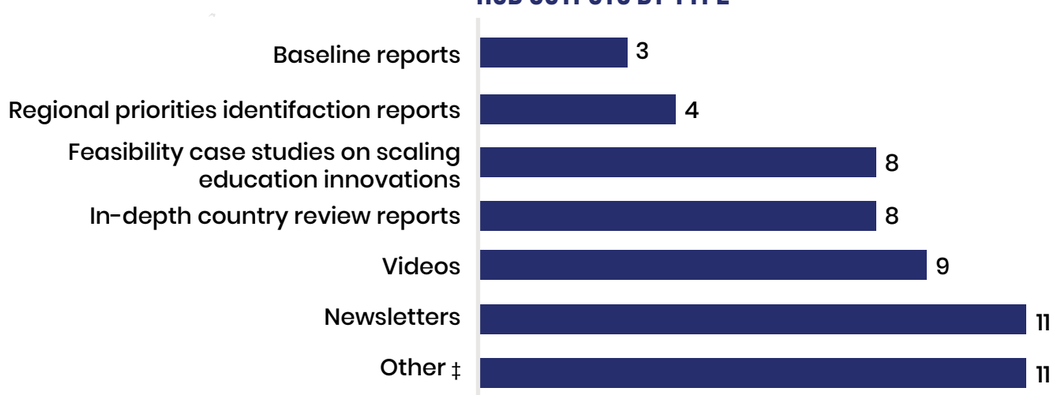
TYPES OF EVENTS



NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS PER EVENT TYPE

* e.g., priority validation, country coordination, onboarding of country representatives, digital repository launch

HUB OUTPUTS BY TYPE



‡ event highlights, policy briefs, country infographics, websites

A. Fostering demand-driven knowledge exchange and strengthening capacity to apply evidence

KIX' regional learning partners began setting up their respective hubs on April 1, 2020. They laid the groundwork for successful operations of the hubs and made tremendous progress despite the challenges posed by COVID-19. Each GPE partner country was invited to nominate a group of five educational stakeholders — up to three from the Ministry of Education and up to two from the local education group[1]— to participate in KIX learning exchange activities on an ongoing basis. These national delegations share their national priorities with the regional hub, participate in hub activities, and transfer knowledge gained from the hub back into their education systems.

Regional learning partners led the process of identifying regional priorities to inform both their peer learning agenda and the calls for proposals for KIX regional applied research projects. They also facilitated knowledge exchange among GPE partner countries, whose participation and engagement levels show they are motivated to use KIX to learn from one another and mobilize knowledge gained in their own contexts.

In all, delegates from 44 countries took an active part in the hubs this year, helping to shape an agenda to address their shared regional priorities. In addition to members of national delegations, other educational stakeholders attend hub meetings and activities that are open to a broader public.

Due to COVID-19, regional learning partners had to adjust their approaches to convening the national delegations. Instead of bringing delegates together in-person, all meetings took place online. Initial events focused on introducing country representatives to regional learning partners, mobilizing national delegations, soliciting feedback on their needs and interests to inform regional hub activities, and discussing how hubs could help them strengthen national education systems.

The high demand for South-South knowledge exchange can be seen in country responses to the invitations to participate in KIX hubs. Participation is entirely voluntary, and prior to the pandemic, estimates were that 70% of GPE-partner countries might engage over time. Despite the unprecedented challenges of COVID-19, by the end of the year, 65% of partner countries had mobilized national delegations and were showing moderate to high levels of engagement (see page 7-8).

Following the initial inception meetings, hubs hosted 31 events: webinars and roundtables, workshops, conversations with education experts, short-term courses, and inter-country exchanges. While the national delegations are key audiences, participation has gone well beyond these core delegates. Hub events brought together a total of 2,814 participants, 1,660 of whom were from GPE partner countries.

Driven by regional demand, hub events — such as the KIX EAP hub Learning Cycle activities — offered hands-on exploration of important issues, tailored to the needs and interests of participants.

Table 1 summarizes thematic areas explored and examples of the events conducted within each theme and region. Overall, hub events provided the opportunity for regional knowledge exchange in the areas of professional development, curriculum and learning, gender equity and inclusion, and scaling interventions and systems thinking. Given the impact of COVID-19 on all facets of the education system, this was also a dominant topic.Producing and disseminating regionally relevant knowledge and evidence

1 Local education groups (or LEGs) are education aid coordination and policy dialogue groups that seek to improve education in GPE partner countries. They comprise international and national civil society organizations, development partners (i.e. donors), other government ministries, and actors such as teachers unions.

"My experience with the hub has been wonderful. It's an opportunity for us to engage at a continental level on issues of education [...] When COVID-19 surfaced, the forum was an opportunity to share experiences on how the pandemic was being managed in different countries. This was very important."

Valentino Zimpita (Malawi Ministry of Education, Science and Technology) *on the occasion of the KIX Africa 19 Digital Repository Launch*

The KIX EAP hub Learning Cycle 1: Exploring how to scale innovation

In September 2020, KIX EAP kicked off the first of its Learning Cycles — a series of professional development opportunities offered to national education sector experts from 21 GPE partner countries. The first Learning Cycle, focusing on the feasibility of scaling education innovations, was offered in Russian for national experts from Georgia, Moldova, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan.

Nine teams from these six countries took part, each selecting an education innovation or pilot project that they deemed worthy of scaling. They then explored how feasible it would be to scale the use of the innovation to their national context. Through a mix of weekly lectures, tailored advisory sessions, and inter-country exchange sessions, participants gained the skills needed to produce a data-driven feasibility study.

More than just a capacity-strengthening exercise, the Learning Cycle provided a venue for participants to create a useful, actionable project, share experiences, and learn from each other. As a final product, teams produced case studies on their innovations, which included digital tools useful in the remote teaching environment of COVID-19, such as gaming software and online conferencing platforms. Their findings will be shared nationally and presented at the first regional KIX EAP conference scheduled for October 2021.

Photo: GPE/ Deepa Srikantaiah

Table 1. Hub events by theme

Thematic area	Topics explored	Events and hubs
Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on educational systems	Issues experienced by education authorities and teachers, the ways in which teachers navigated school closures and distance learning, the impact of the pandemic on equity in education systems, and assessment practices and challenges in light of the pandemic	Implementing Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) during COVID-19: Thoughts, ideas and reflections (KIX EAP) Cross-country exchange on teaching and learning during COVID-19 (KIX Africa 19) *KIX Conversation* webinar on COVID-19 and equity in education (KIX LAC) Innovation in assessment emerging in the COVID-19 era in sub-Saharan Africa (KIX Africa 19)
Teachers and professional development	Challenges in professional development for teachers, the role of teachers' leadership in education transformation, and trends in teacher training	*KIX Conversation* webinar on the challenges of teacher professional development in Honduras (KIX LAC) Challenges in teacher professional development in Latin American and the Caribbean countries (KIX LAC) Teachers as agents of change: Supporting, enabling, and empowering (KIX EAP) Innovations for teacher professional development: What role do teacher unions play? (KIX LAC) The need to renew teachers' skills and knowledge in the 21st century: A look at the African context (KIX Africa 21)
Curriculum and learning	Teaching, learning, and assessment approaches and the use of data in defining, measuring, understanding, and improving learning outcomes	Using data to improve learning: Engaging with policy and reform (KIX EAP) Curriculum implementation: Competency-based learning and the alignment of curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment (KIX EAP)
Gender, equity, and inclusion in education systems	Innovative financing solutions for inclusive and quality education and the state of inclusion in education systems	Potentials of innovative financing solutions for inclusive and quality education (KIX EAP) *KIX Conversation* webinar on the GEM report for Latin America and the Caribbean (KIX LAC) Gender mainstreaming in education and strategies for inclusion (KIX Africa 21)
Scaling interventions and systems thinking	Scaling education interventions and system-design thinking approaches to educational transformation	KIX EAP Learning Cycle 1: Feasibility study on scaling innovation + 2 virtual inter-country exchanges (KIX EAP) Designing with people for people in education: An introduction to design thinking and human-centered design methodologies (KIX EAP) Scaling impact: An introduction to achieving impact at scale (KIX EAP)

B. Producing and disseminating regionally relevant knowledge and evidence

In addition to convening events to share knowledge and strengthen capacities, regional learning partners play an important role in collecting and synthesizing information and producing reports and reviews that capture the challenges and priorities of GPE partner countries. As global and regional research grantees start to produce evidence on those themes, regional learning partners will again play a role in synthesizing that knowledge in ways that are regionally relevant for hub participants.

This year, regional learning partners conducted surveys, documentation reviews, interviews with experts, policymakers, and multilateral organizations and held consultation and validation meetings with country representatives in their respective regions. The aim was to identify regional priorities of GPE partner countries, moving beyond KIX's initial six broad themes to hone more specific regional agendas for peer learning and exchange.

Several shared priorities emerged across the four regions: strengthening and supporting teachers; supporting improved learning outcomes and competencies through effective teaching; and addressing gender equality issues. A summary report on the priorities for each region can be found on the KIX web pages for each hub: KIX Africa 19, KIX Africa 21, KIX EAP, and KIX LAC. Collectively, these reports help to define a southern-led knowledge and innovation agenda, pinpointing the top priorities of education systems in low- and lower-middle income countries.

To further engage with countries, regional learning partners produced and shared knowledge in the form of websites, monthly or quarterly newsletters, webinar recordings, event summaries with additional resources, news alerts with resources of interest to country representatives, and thematic videos and podcasts. KIX Africa 19 also produced a digital repository which compiles policy documents, briefs, fact sheets, infographics and other sources of information related to six key education themes. In all, hubs generated almost 54 outputs in their first year.

Photo: World Bank/Arne Hoel

Photo: World Bank/Arne Hoel

C. Positioning research and innovation for uptake

Ultimately, KIX seeks to encourage research uptake among key policymakers in GPE partner countries to strengthen national education systems. While the exchange of knowledge process just began this year, there were early signs that country representatives are beginning to mobilize and apply knowledge gained through these exchanges.

For instance, country representatives from Lesotho reported using what they learned from Kenya about learning assessments via the KIX Africa 19 hub in their policy dialogues. Ministry representatives from Dominica reviewed and provided feedback on the in-depth country report produced by the KIX LAC hub and indicated they plan to draw on it in their education sector planning. Similarly, country representatives from Maldives, Bhutan, and Afghanistan reported sharing knowledge and resources from KIX EAP webinars with their government colleagues and thinking about how they can use them in their own work. Notably, representatives from Uzbekistan who took part in the KIX EAP Learning Cycle helped their Ministry of Education to review the content of an educational gaming application studied by the team during the learning cycle. The Ministry took into consideration the team's recommendations on scaling. This was an important step towards overcoming a persistent lack of interaction between education practitioners and policymakers and a sign of the increasing use of research and evidence in evaluating education innovations.

These examples of relevance and traction in the first year of hub operations are a promising start. More work remains to ensure the continued relevance of the hubs and support national delegations in bringing knowledge back into their national education context. Regional learning partners continue to engage with national representatives to develop more bespoke strategies.

Proving their value: How country representatives see KIX regional hubs

Feedback from GPE partner country representatives is one sign of how well KIX regional hubs are responding to their needs. According to monitoring data gathered by regional learning partners, country representatives identify four key ways in which the they find the hubs most useful:

Relevance to countries' needs

Representatives from Senegal and Chad who actively engaged in the KIX Africa 21 webinar on gender and inclusion reported they found the topics discussed useful in light of related challenges experienced in their countries. A civil society representative from Georgia found the KIX EAP webinar on innovative financing solutions for inclusive and quality education very relevant to her country's education system priorities. She reported sharing what she learned about innovative financing mechanisms with research centres and academics.

Unique opportunities for exchanging information and ideas

Representatives from Lesotho appreciated having one-on-one knowledge exchanges with Ghana and São Tomé and Príncipe, thanks to their engagement in KIX Africa 19 activities. Similarly, by participating in inter-country exchanges promoted by the KIX EAP hub's first Learning Cycle, a country representative from Tajikistan was able identify a project from another country In Central Asia that resonated with the needs of his education system.

Production of useful resources

Country representatives from the Eastern Caribbean states plan to use the in-depth country reviews developed by the KIX LAC hub to inform their own education sector analysis and development plans. Representatives from Malawi found the KIX Africa 19 digital repository useful in thinking about how to create a data portal for storing and sharing information within the education ministry. They reported that it inspired them to write a concept paper on creating such a portal to address the issue of data fragmentation across the ministry.

Space for new knowledge and insights

In each hub, country representatives reported gaining new knowledge and skills as a result of participating in hub activities. In the context of COVID-19, representatives from Zambia, Lesotho, and Somalia gained insights from the KIX Africa 19 webinar on learning assessment. They reported learning about innovative strategies for assessing competency-based learning outcomes, considering equity issues in their assessments, and doing assessment remotely during the pandemic. Participants in the KIX EAP webinars and Learning Cycle found useful knowledge on how to conduct feasibility studies to support scaling of innovations.

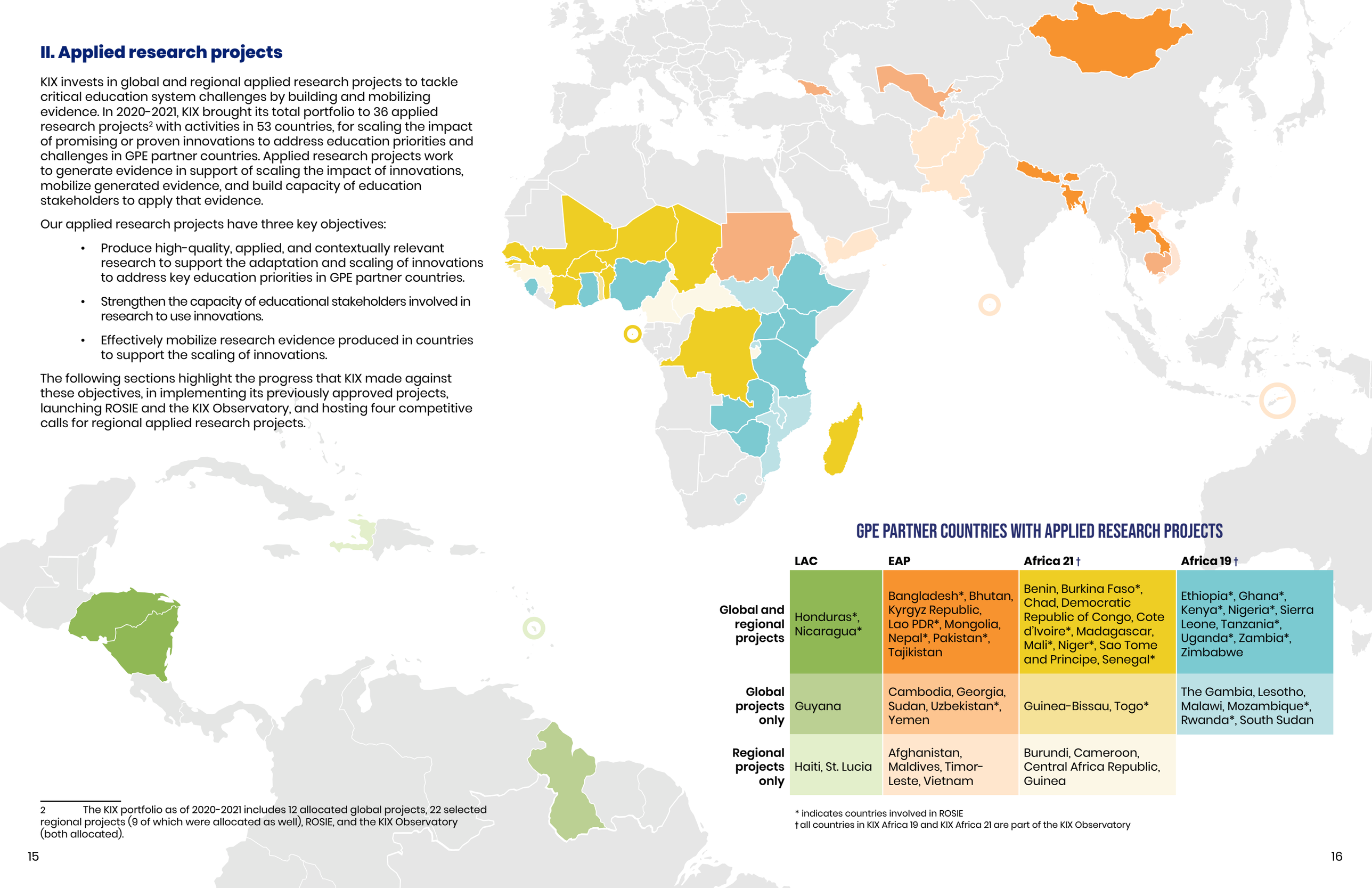
II. Applied research projects

KIX invests in global and regional applied research projects to tackle critical education system challenges by building and mobilizing evidence. In 2020-2021, KIX brought its total portfolio to 36 applied research projects[2] with activities in 53 countries, for scaling the impact of promising or proven innovations to address education priorities and challenges in GPE partner countries. Applied research projects work to generate evidence in support of scaling the impact of innovations, mobilize generated evidence, and build capacity of education stakeholders to apply that evidence.

Our applied research projects have three key objectives:

- Produce high-quality, applied, and contextually relevant research to support the adaptation and scaling of innovations to address key education priorities in GPE partner countries.
- Strengthen the capacity of educational stakeholders involved in research to use innovations.
- Effectively mobilize research evidence produced in countries to support the scaling of innovations.

The following sections highlight the progress that KIX made against these objectives, in implementing its previously approved projects, launching ROSIE and the KIX Observatory, and hosting four competitive calls for regional applied research projects.



GPE PARTNER COUNTRIES WITH APPLIED RESEARCH PROJECTS

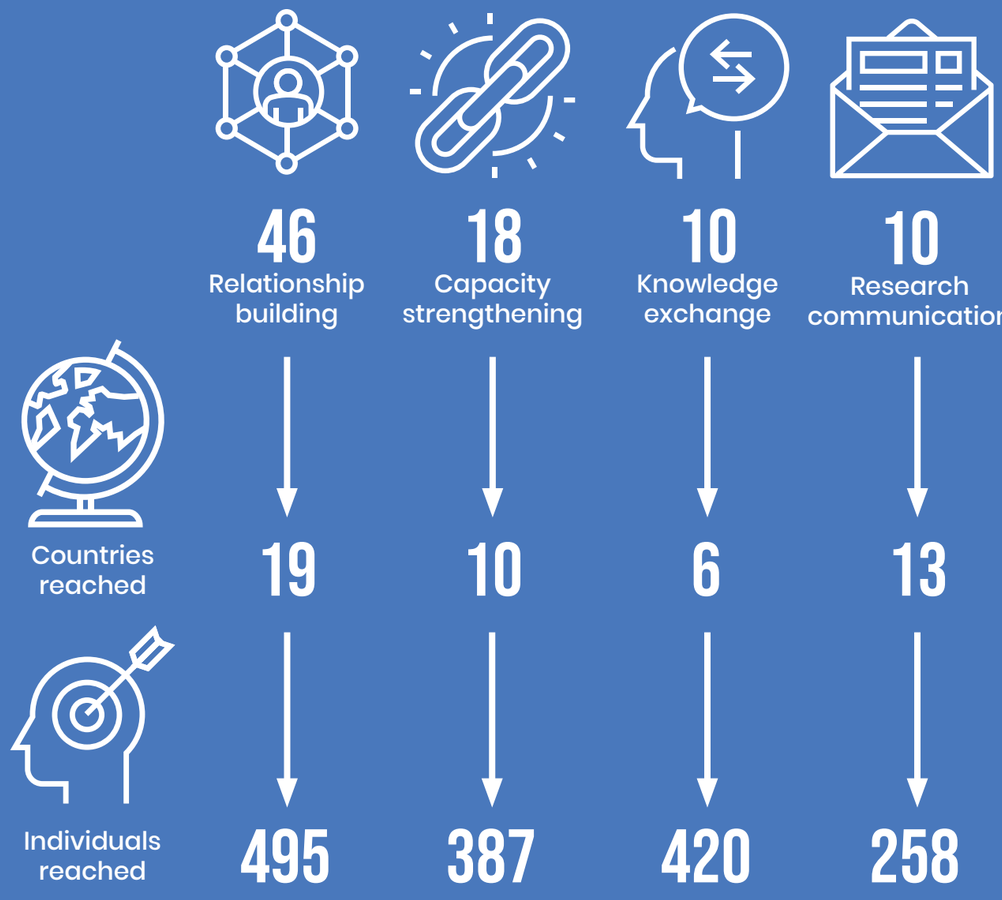
	LAC	EAP	Africa 21 †	Africa 19 †
Global and regional projects	Honduras*, Nicaragua*	Bangladesh*, Bhutan, Kyrgyz Republic, Lao PDR*, Mongolia, Nepal*, Pakistan*, Tajikistan	Benin, Burkina Faso*, Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo, Cote d'Ivoire*, Madagascar, Mali*, Niger*, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal*	Ethiopia*, Ghana*, Kenya*, Nigeria*, Sierra Leone, Tanzania*, Uganda*, Zambia*, Zimbabwe
Global projects only	Guyana	Cambodia, Georgia, Sudan, Uzbekistan*, Yemen	Guinea-Bissau, Togo*	The Gambia, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique*, Rwanda*, South Sudan
Regional projects only	Haiti, St. Lucia	Afghanistan, Maldives, Timor-Leste, Vietnam	Burundi, Cameroon, Central Africa Republic, Guinea	

* indicates countries involved in ROSIE
† all countries in KIX Africa 19 and KIX Africa 21 are part of the KIX Observatory

2 The KIX portfolio as of 2020-2021 includes 12 allocated global projects, 22 selected regional projects (9 of which were allocated as well), ROSIE, and the KIX Observatory (both allocated).

At a glance: 2020–2021 activities of KIX applied research projects

GLOBAL PROJECT ACTIVITIES BY TYPE IN GPE PARTNER COUNTRIES



NUMBER OF RESEARCH OUTPUTS BY TYPE FROM GLOBAL PROJECTS

5
Primary research outputs (e.g., scoping studies, reports)

11
Secondary knowledge product (e.g., blog posts, presentations, websites)

STAKEHOLDER ENDORSEMENT OF GLOBAL RESEARCH AND INTERVENTIONS

9
Expressions of interest in using project research and interventions

in

Chad, Honduras, Kenya, Sierra Leone, Sudan, South Sudan, The Gambia, Uzbekistan

4
Use, or intention to use, project evidence in the education policy process

in

Kyrgyzstan, Nepal, Zambia

3
Citations of project interventions or evidence in policy documents

in

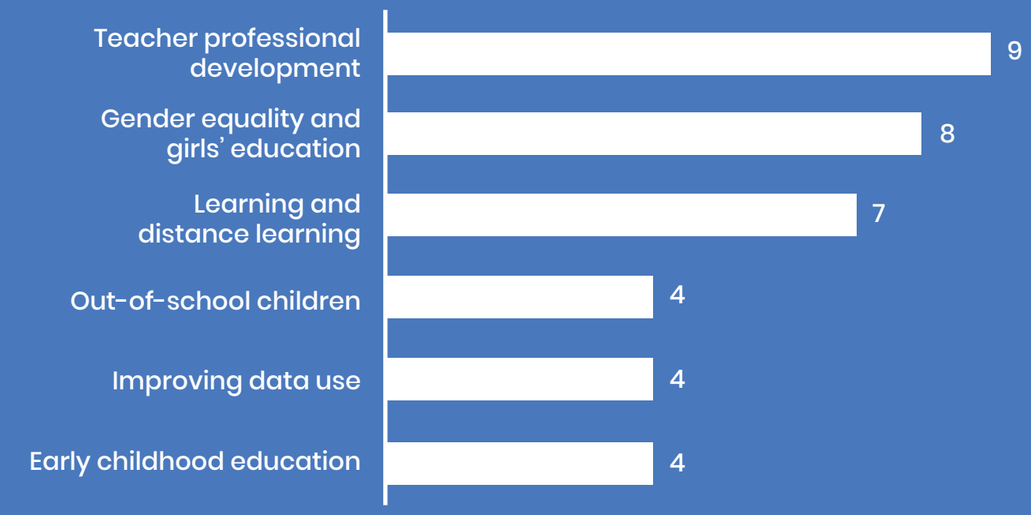
Chad, Laos, Georgia

1
KIX-supported researchers invited to be part of national education dialogues

in

Sudan

TOP THEMES IN KIX APPLIED RESEARCH PROJECTS PORTFOLIO



A. Producing research to support the adaptation and scaling of education innovations

Progress in producing high-quality, contextually relevant research to support the scaling of innovations in GPE partner countries could be seen across our portfolio of global applied research projects, and with the launch of ROSIE and the KIX COVID-19 Observatory. And while our portfolio of regional projects are yet in early stages — with new calls for proposals and the first cohort of projects launched this year — we note the foundations they are building towards conducting research relevant to regional needs.

Global projects: Building evidence to scale innovations across regions

Following a call for proposals and selection process in 2019, KIX' 12 global applied research projects were launched in April 2020, establishing connections with partner countries and adjusting their research plans in light of COVID-19. Selected for their quality, based on independent expert review, these projects are being implemented across 44 countries by 32 partner institutions.

Global applied research projects aim to identify which proven education innovations work across different contexts, who they work for, and how these interventions can be successfully adapted and scaled for wider impact. Each of these projects has identified an innovative approach with positive results in one context and is seeking to understand how this approach might work in others. They each address key education priorities in at least three GPE partner countries in at least two regions.

In their first year of activities, global applied research projects began to engage stakeholders, refine their methodologies, set up a process for inter-country collaboration, and collect initial data. Despite the pandemic, some managed to start their fieldwork with the support of country offices or researchers, on the ground or online. Some are also beginning to receive strong support and endorsement from government ministries and other education stakeholders in their countries of focus.

ROSIE: Accompanying projects in research on scaling

KIX's Research on Scaling the Impact of Innovations in Education (ROSIE) is a "meta" project that works to support the scaling efforts of other KIX-funded projects through action research, and generate cross-cutting learnings on how to effectively scale the impact of innovations in low- and middle-income country settings. In March 2020, The Center for Universal Education at the Brookings Institution was selected to lead this effort.

In its first year of activity, ROSIE selected the first cohort of six global projects to participate in the action research (see Annex II). Upon their selection, project teams worked with the Centre for Universal Education to establish a common language around scaling and identify common learning questions to be examined through action research. ROSIE also developed information-gathering tools to address common learning questions related to issues such as the drivers, constraints, trade-offs, and incentives of scaling and systems change of direct interest to the KIX projects, and relevant to the broader education community.

A review of existing research on identifying, adapting, and scaling innovations was conducted to determine gaps and pinpoint areas for further examination as part of ROSIE's complementary research, which aims to investigate scaling from the perspective of national education decision-makers. This additional research will examine how these decision-makers approach scaling, including how they identify innovations to scale, what they see as some of the key drivers and impediments to scaling education innovations, and how innovations can be integrated and sustained within government systems.

Calls for proposals: Tailoring research to regional priorities

Reports and reviews produced by hubs on regional priorities directly informed the four regional calls for proposals launched in 2020. In this way, the priorities of southern education systems — as defined by the people who work in those systems, and their national plans — formed the basis for research funding (see topics in Table 2). As with the 2019 global call for proposals, regional calls were issued by IDRC and adjudicated by independent expert panels who recommended projects based on their quality, including their likelihood of impact.

Table 2. Topics of KIX' four regional calls for proposals in 2020-2021

Region	Topics
Latin America and the Caribbean (KIX LAC)	• Rural inequalities • Stronger teams, stronger institutions • Gender equality and inclusion
West and Central Africa and the Indian Ocean (KIX Africa 21)	• Pre- and in-service teacher training and development • Offering chances for out-of-school children and youth • Promoting gender equality and girls' success in school • Quality bilingual and pluri-lingual teaching and learning
East, West Africa and southern Africa (KIX Africa 19)	• Strengthening in-service teacher mentorship and support • Early childhood care and education • Increasing access to quality education for rural and marginalized children • Strengthening utilization of learning assessments
Eastern Europe, Middle East and North Africa, Central Asia, Asia-Pacific (KIX EAP)	• Realizing the potential of new curricula • Optimizing EMIS use • Ensuring inclusive access and stronger learning outcomes for girls and boys • Improving distance teaching and learning

Photo: GPE/Midastouch

As part of KIX' commitment to supporting vibrant learning environments within and across GPE partner countries, each project funded through the regional calls is southern-led, implemented by a range of universities, think tanks, networks, and other organizations based in the regions where research is conducted.

In 2020-2021, 22 regional projects were selected out of the four competitive regional calls for proposals. Selected projects will advance knowledge in areas such as inclusive distance learning, gender equality, learning for out-of-school children and youth, and teacher professional development, among other things, in the four regions above.

As of March 31, 2021, funding was allocated for the first nine of these 22 regional projects, in Latin America and the Caribbean, West and Central Africa, and the Indian Ocean regions allowing them to launch their start-up activities. Table 3 provides further details on the nine allocated applied research regional projects[3].

KIX COVID-19 Observatory: Researching pandemic responses in Africa

The outbreak of COVID-19 threatens recent progress towards quality education (SDG 4), especially in Africa, where the pandemic is compounding existing inequalities. In response, KIX invested in establishing an observatory on COVID-19 responses in educational systems in Africa, to collect, synthesize, and mobilize evidence about COVID-19 responses in primary and secondary education systems. Launched in November 2020, the KIX COVID-19 Observatory is implemented by the Association for the Development of Education in Africa and the African Union's International Centre for the Education of Girls and Women in Africa, with technical support from the African Population and Health Research Center and UNESCO Institute of Statistics.

The Observatory is filling evidence gaps on priority issues of immediate use to policymakers and other education stakeholders on the continent. This year, it began rapid data collection and synthesis on GPE partner country responses to education financing, learner well-being, and school reopening—three key challenges posed by the pandemic. Country-level data is live-tracked through an open-access spreadsheet covering these and other response areas. Synthesis reports on these topics will be shared with education stakeholders later in 2021.

B. Strengthening the capacity of educational stakeholders involved in research to use innovations

Global grant recipients undertook 18 capacity strengthening activities this past year, including trainings, technical co-creation sessions, on-site orientation visits, and online courses. In all, they involved 387 individuals from 10 GPE partner countries. These activities enabled participants to acquire new skills and knowledge in areas directly useful to strengthening their education policies and practice — such as interpreting and analyzing education data; effective financing and budgeting practices for early childhood education; and the use of educational technologies. Stakeholders who benefited from capacity strengthening activities this past year included specialists from national governments, staff from the regional and district levels, and local teachers, among others.

In Kenya, for example, participating teachers learned more about early literacy instruction through a comprehensive 20-week online course offered through the project Using technology to improve literacy in the Global South, which focuses on adapting and scaling two different software programs for teaching reading skills. In addition to conducting implementation-focused field studies in Kenya, Rwanda, and Bangladesh, the project offers professional development to teachers, including interactive multimedia activities designed to help them integrate the software into classroom routines.

In the Kyrgyz Republic, 54 accountants and economists involved in the early child education financing and budgeting processes, and other specialists from the Kyrgyz Ministry of Education and Science, received training on effective funding and budgeting for early childhood education through the project Integrating early child education in sectoral planning.

3 The remaining 13 applied research projects fall into the next reporting period (2021-2022) and therefore will be covered in the next annual report.

Table 3. List of regional applied research projects allocated in 2020-2021

	Project title	Implementing organization(s)
Latin America and the Caribbean	Strengthening teachers' and school principals' capacity for scaling innovation from the bottom up in the education system in the Caribbean	• Université d'Etat d'Haiti (Campus Limonade); • Wilfrid Laurier University; • Raise your Voice (St. Lucia)
	Strategies to prevent sexual and gender-based violence and foster equity in rural schools	• CLADE (the Latin American Campaign for the Right to Education); • Alternatives
	Adapting and scaling peer tutoring for teachers and school leaders for equitable rural education	• Fundación Educación 2020; • Fundación Fe y Alegría; • The Nicaraguan Educational Forum (Eduquemos)
	Digital adaptations for effective and inclusive distance learning in rural communities in Honduras and Nicaragua	Fundación Ceibal
West and Central Africa and the Indian Ocean	Strengthening bilingual and multilingual learning systems in Francophone Africa	• Dalberg Research; • American Institutes for Research (AIR)
	The Forum of African Women Educationalists' gender-sensitive school model as an innovative response to the challenge of gender equality	• Laboratoire de Recherche sur les Transformations Économiques et Sociales (LARTES-IFAN); • Fondation Paul Gérin-Lajoie
	A new model of bridging classes to improve learning of out-of-school children and youth	• Fondation Karanta; Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE); • Educational Research Network for West and Central Africa (ERNWACA)
	Improving community teacher development in the digital era	• Université de Yaoundé I (UYI); • École Normale Supérieure N'Djamena; • École Normale Supérieure de Bangui
	Improving knowledge on gender gorms to promote gender equality in schools in Africa	• Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE); • UNESCO; • Africa Office of the UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP-UNESCO)

C. Mobilizing evidence to support the scaling of innovations

As with regional hubs, we look for signs that KIX research grantees are supporting education stakeholders in taking up new knowledge they acquire through project activities and outputs, and applying it to strengthen their education systems and teaching practices. We gauge this through the relationship building that projects engage in, and by documenting instances of policymakers and practitioners endorsing and using KIX-supported evidence or learning.

Connecting with education system stakeholders

In the past year, global applied research projects connected with key stakeholders in education systems within countries where their research is conducted. In total, they hosted 46 relationship-building events across 19 countries. These connections help grantees better understand the needs of country-level stakeholders — from ministry officials to teachers — and tailor their proposed research so that it addresses existing gaps. In so doing, they increase the likelihood that the resulting research evidence will ultimately be taken up by the intended users.

In Uganda, for instance, the Bridges to Impact Through Innovative EdTech Project conducted a series of meetings with teachers and community members. The project responds to the urgent need for equitable learning access and outcomes for children in conflict-affected countries. It aims to adapt and scale a proven education gaming technology called "Can't Wait to Learn", which teaches numeracy and reading through active learning, adapted to different learning levels and speeds. Initial meetings helped to secure local support for the project and shed light on how teachers and community members would best be able to receive new knowledge and skills to allow them to tackle common issues they face in their schools and communities.

As part of the Improving literacy of children through the support of community networks project, team members connected with a representative from the Ministry of Education in Honduras. This resulted in a formal cooperation agreement (currently under review) through which the Ministry commits to provide support at the departmental, municipal, and local levels to facilitate the research process. It also expresses its intention to expand this research to other geographical areas.

The KIX COVID-19 Observatory also connected with key educational stakeholders, conducting two webinars that engaged high-level education officials — including ministers, deputy ministers, and permanent secretaries from Burkina Faso, Uganda, Rwanda, Côte d'Ivoire, and Mozambique. Each webinar drew over 100 participants, facilitating exchange among GPE partner countries in Africa about efforts, strategies, and partnerships to address the impact of COVID-19 on their education systems. The consortium partners implementing the Observatory also took part in international and regional events to present their work and foster awareness of the evidence being generated.

Seeing early signs of endorsement and use of KIX-supported research

Some global applied research projects are already starting to receive support and interest from government and education stakeholders in their countries of focus and having a demonstrable impact on educational development plans. These initial signs of knowledge mobilization include expressions of interest in KIX-funded research and interventions; education officials planning to use the research findings in their education planning processes; invitations to KIX researchers to take part in national education dialogues; and citations of project interventions in education policy documents. These expressions of interest and uptake signal the relevance of global grantees' research to countries' needs and are an encouraging sign that KIX-supported research will have an impact.

In Uzbekistan, the Deputy Minister of Public Education endorsed the project "Adapting and scaling teacher professional development approaches in Ghana, Honduras and Uzbekistan" — which is testing the scaling of ICTs to widen teachers' access to professional development opportunities — and noted it aligns with the ministry's recently adopted policy on the continuous professional development of education personnel. The project's partnership should enable direct input from the project to Uzbekistan's teacher professional development strategy and the uptake of project evidence within the national education learning management system.

Lao is tapping knowledge from the KIX project Using data for improving education equity and inclusion to prioritize early childhood education in the country. It references a report from this project in its 9th Education and Sports Sector Development Plan for 2021-2025. Outcomes from one of this project's workshops were also incorporated into Mongolia's Education Sector Mid-Term Development Plan 2030. Among the issues incorporated were a focus on quality of education and ensuring equitable access to education for children with disabilities.

As a result of training for various budget and childhood education specialists provided through the Integrating early child education in sectoral planning project, mentioned above, the Kyrgyz Ministry of Science and Education has committed to refining its per capita financing model to incorporate equity issues and further target its spending to improve the quality of early childhood education.

In Uganda, the Data use innovations for education management information systems project — which seeks to leverage a proven health sector innovation to enhance data and information use at all levels of the education system — undertook a series of capacity strengthening activities for central- and district-level staff in seven implementing sites. Staff at one site used their data for budgeting, evidence-based planning, and reporting. This serves to improve resource allocation, as previously, EMIS data was managed centrally and there were data gaps at the district level.

Learn more about KIX's projects here, including its global and regional projects, ROSIE, and the KIX COVID-19 Observatory

SUPPORTING ACTIVITIES

Photo: GPE/Kelley Lynch

KIX mechanisms for the exchange of knowledge and for applied research are complemented by two key areas of support activity:

- Through its **monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL)** support, KIX has developed a results framework to monitor, evaluate, and learn from these mechanisms. As part of this effort, the team has developed an outcome pathway that describes KIX' key activities and envisioned outcomes.
- Additionally, KIX has developed a **communications and knowledge mobilization** strategy to enhance the visibility of its work, share the evidence that emerges, and encourage research uptake by key decision-makers in the education sector.

I. Monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL)

MEL plays an essential role in helping KIX partners and team members learn about what is effective in changing education policy and practice across vastly different contexts. In addition to helping projects track and learn from their results — and use that learning to finetune their research and strategies — MEL activities enable us to assess program-wide progress and generate evidence on the program's contribution to change.

In 2020, the KIX MEL Strategy was developed in collaboration with the MEL focal points of regional learning partners. This entailed refining the program's original theory of change, developing the results framework and monitoring tools, creating a learning strategy, launching an online KIX MEL Centre, and collecting program-wide baseline data with input from regional learning partners.

To support the implementation of the KIX MEL Strategy, we also launched a series of trainings for regional learning partners and global projects. The trainings presented the KIX theory of change, the conceptual underpinnings of the strategy, and the MEL responsibilities of grantees within the KIX program-wide results framework. The training sessions also provided a 'deep dive' into the KIX monitoring tools, with individual assistance to help grantees use them effectively to track results and for learning and adaptive management. A total of 50 individuals attended a series of MEL trainings—12 from regional learning partners and 38 from global grant projects. To coordinate and sustain MEL activities and share learning, regional learning partners have joined a KIX MEL working group, which meets monthly.

To develop program-wide targets and milestones for the KIX results framework, we worked collaboratively with regional learning partners and global project teams, who contributed their projected targets and milestones.

In the spring of 2021, we received the first round of KIX monitoring data, which informed the development of this report. Overall, we began to see first activities and outputs from our research grantees and regional learning partners, especially with respect to building relationships with educational stakeholders in GPE partner countries, their capacity strengthening, knowledge exchange, and knowledge production. We also began to see emerging evidence of immediate level outcomes: educational stakeholders engaging in hub activities and global research projects strengthening their knowledge and skills in country education priority areas. Lastly, at the intermediate outcome level, we began to see early signals of knowledge mobilization, through the interest and endorsement of KIX-funded research expressed by educational stakeholders in GPE partner countries. These are signs that KIX is on track towards achieving its results, especially in the spheres of control and influence.

II. Communications and engagement

Communications and engagement support activities enable KIX to effectively share information, results, and learning, while building strategic relationships and fostering an ongoing exchange of ideas with key stakeholders. Over the course of the past year, the visibility of KIX increased significantly through the dissemination of information about the initiative across KIX channels and by leveraging the communications outlets of grant recipients and KIX stakeholders. These included webinars, websites, bulletins and social media. A platform to facilitate inter-country knowledge exchange online was also created.

This year, communications and engagement efforts focused on two main activities: developing the KIX Digital Platform, and raising the visibility of KIX opportunities and research and hub activities.

A. Developing the KIX Digital Platform

The KIX Digital Platform serves both public outreach and internal collaboration and coordination.
It comprises:

- the public website, which shares KIX-related news, events, blogs and information about the different mechanisms of KIX;
- the KIX Library, which hosts evidence-based resources on education innovation in development contexts; and
- the KIX Peer Learning and Exchange Portal - a collaborative space that supports learning among KIX grantees and education policy stakeholders in GPE partner countries.

Since its launch in July 2020, the public website is steadily increasing in visibility and acquiring a growing base of new users each month.

The KIX Peer Learning and Exchange Portal, launched in February 2021, currently connects 466 members. These include national representatives of GPE partner countries, members of KIX-funded project teams, select members of KIX regional hubs, and select staff from IDRC and GPE. Members are already using the portal to announce upcoming events, share new knowledge products, and submit project data to the MEL Centre. The Africa 19 hub has also begun using the online discussion forum to introduce national representatives to each other. They have used the Portal to discuss topics such as “Resources and Research in the Repository for KIX Africa 19” and “Envisioning Early Childhood Education in Your Country”.

The KIX Library, launched at the end of March 2021, is now accepting contributions. It currently hosts a growing number of resources developed by KIX-funded projects, including education toolkits, event recordings, regional education priority reports, and more.

Measuring our visibility

From the launch of the KIX public website to year-end:

- Users nearly quadrupled—from **432 to 1618** unique users.
- Monthly visits grew from **578 to 3421**—nearly six-fold.

Photo: GPE/Kelley Lynch

Extending KIX’ reach

Since July 2020:

- **168 posts** on KIX were shared via IDRC’s accounts on LinkedIn, Twitter, and Facebook.
- These posts were displayed **202 867 times** across social media.

B. Raising the visibility of KIX opportunities and research and hub activities

Building on our website, in July 2020, we launched a bulletin to share targeted information about KIX funding opportunities, upcoming events, and new publications with interested subscribers. By March 2021, 11 bulletins had been sent in English, French, and Spanish and the number of subscribers had reached 1099. We regularly used social media to share updates on KIX and its grant recipients.

To mark progress since the program’s launch in 2019, IDRC and GPE jointly hosted the KIX Symposium. It enabled participants to share learning and identify opportunities for collaboration. The Symposium attracted 272 researchers, policymakers, and development practitioners. Recordings of the event on the KIX YouTube page have since been viewed 325 times.

KIX also hosted four webinars to support applicants in responding to the regional calls issued between the summer and fall of 2020. Together, these webinars attracted 938 participants, with each webinar attracting a progressively higher number of participants.

WHAT WE ARE LEARNING

Photo: GPE/Jawad Jalali

KIX' overarching goal is to strengthen education systems by mobilizing peer learning and supporting the generation and use of evidence. That was a challenging mandate when KIX started in 2019, and it became even more so when the implementation of the hubs and global projects started just as the COVID-19 pandemic hit. Key learnings in IDRC, the hubs, and KIX projects in 2020/2021 revolve around adaptive management during upheaval and uncertainty.

In April 2020, there was no consensus internationally about how long the pandemic would last. Contingency plans throughout KIX, including the halt on travel and shift to virtual work, were initially designed to last for some weeks, then some months. Over the year, we learned that COVID contingency plans had to anticipate continued disruptions for longer and longer timeframes, with uneven impacts in different countries at different times.

For the hubs, rather than just delaying face-to-face meetings, all strategies became virtual, eventually for the whole year. Regional learning partners realized that, while their initial hub-wide webinars were effective, they had to develop additional strategies to engage individual countries and sub-regional clusters of countries to develop familiarity and trust, and meet the diverse needs of member countries. Hubs reinvested their unused travel budgets in increased translation and devoted more resources to reaching out to countries individually. An unexpected upside of conducting KIX activities virtually and organizing short events instead of long, conference-style gatherings was that many more people took part, both online in real-time and by accessing the post-event recordings that became the norm during the pandemic.

Global projects made excellent use of technology and leaned on national partner organizations to carry work forward, but some classroom- and community-level activities simply could not take place while schools were shut down or operating at limited capacity, and where even inter-regional travel was impossible. COVID became both the background and foreground for KIX, as the pandemic also became a theme in hub activities and the impetus for the KIX COVID-19 Observatory project. Moving into the next year, COVID contingency plans have been built into all the new projects selected to begin in 2021/2022.

UPCOMING PRIORITIES

Photo: Educate a Child

Looking forward, KIX will continue to support regional hubs and ongoing projects, launch new regional projects, and issue one more call for proposals on early learning themes in Africa 19. Moreover, GPE has started to implement a new strategy, operating model, and replenishment campaign, all of which will offer important opportunities for KIX to contribute and adapt, as it continues to be a strategic asset of the partnership.

Strengthening regional hubs

The regional hubs will continue to facilitate peer learning and exchange among key actors in education. They will implement their bespoke strategies with individual countries and clusters of countries, as well as hub-wide activities. They will seek to strengthen engagement and ownership by national delegations and support knowledge mobilization at the country level.

Supporting ongoing and new applied research

KIX will support the inception phase of its most recently selected regional projects, as the pandemic continues to affect partner countries. In the same vein, KIX's global projects will continue their research implementation and engagements with education stakeholders, and further support capacity strengthening of those involved. The planned development of a KIX gender equality and inclusion strategy will help us further integrate these considerations throughout the KIX portfolio.

Thanks to additional funding to GPE from the LEGO Foundation, KIX will have supplemental funds to launch one additional call for proposals. It will focus on early learning for countries of the Africa 19 hub. Projects funded through this call will generate and mobilize evidence on how to adapt and scale up approaches that strengthen quality early learning for all children, supporting smooth transitions from pre-primary to primary education.

ROSIE will recruit a cohort of regional projects to participate in the action research on scaling and will continue to support capacity strengthening among KIX-funded projects. ROSIE will also begin to explore the scaling process from the perspective of national educational stakeholders, an area under-examined to date.

Sharing and synthesizing new knowledge

As research findings continue to emerge, KIX will contribute to important conversations in the broader education sector, through sustained engagement and dialogue with key stakeholders. Synthesis of collective work to date will begin, to document emerging lessons and continually refine future priorities, focusing on scaling impact; gender, equity, and inclusion issues; and other specific themes. In July, KIX will organize side events at the GPE Summit and will host another symposium in October.

Now that the KIX website, library, and peer learning portal are launched, the priorities over the next year will be to enhance their various features and further encourage KIX grant recipients and stakeholders to use these tools.

Understanding the educational impacts of COVID-19

The Observatory will continue to monitor COVID-19 education-related policy and practice responses in 40 African GPE partner countries and mobilize the gathered evidence in a variety of ways. The Observatory will also undertake case studies on promising practices that address key educational issues surfaced through its explorations.

Monitoring our progress

We will continue to closely monitor KIX progress, following its results framework. In the fall, KIX will host its first program-level learning event, enabling regional learning partners and grantees to reflect on their progress and generate program-wide insights and recommendations for going forward. An external evaluation will begin, with findings expected by May 2022.

ANNEX I: TOTAL EXPENDITURE IN 2020–2021

In its second year, KIX approved 14 projects for applied research. This included three global projects selected in a competitive process in the previous reporting period, the KIX COVID-19 Observatory and the Research on Scaling the Impact of Innovations in Education, plus the first nine projects selected through regional calls for proposals. The rest of the regional projects selected during this year will be approved and first payments made in the next reporting period. Overall, KIX is on track to meeting its target of allocating all its research funding by June 30, 2021.

The major source of the overall variance is from the line for KIX regional grants. Projects were selected and allocated as planned, however several initial project payments were delayed into the first quarter of the following reporting period because of delays in obtaining country clearance. These expenses will catch up in the next reporting period. Another variance was the expenditure for the KIX digital platform. The scoping exercise from 2019–2020 had determined that the budget required to build the platform was smaller than initially planned.

USD($)	BUDGET	ACTUALS	VARIANCE
PROGRAM ACTIVITIES			
1. Learning exchange mechanism			
Regional learning partner	2,272,727	1,792,424	480,303
2. Funding mechanism			
Global grants	8,003,491	7,545,060	458,431
Regional grants	8,333,333	1,110,142	7,223,191
Research on scaling	757,576	429,486	328,090
3. Supporting activities			
Program activities*	633,031	283,966	349,065
OAM fund**	259,962	160,346	99,616
Digital platform	625,000	201,601	423,399
4. **EXTERNAL AUDIT**	30,303	15,956	14,347
PROGRAM MANAGEMENT			
5. Direct costs	2,195,132	1,491,316	703,816
6. Indirect costs (7%)	1,617,739	912,120	705,619
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	**24,728,294**	**13,942,417**	**10,785,877**

* Program activities include monitoring, learning, and evaluation and communications and engagement.
**OAM stands for the Opportunity and Adaptive Management support fund.

ANNEX II: PROJECTS PARTICIPATING IN ROSIE

Research on Scaling the Impact of Innovations in Education (ROSIE) currently spans six global applied research projects, working in 22 different countries. These projects include:

- Adapting and scaling teacher professional development approaches in Ghana, Honduras, and Uzbekistan
- Common-scale assessment of early and foundational math learning across the Global South
- Data must speak about positive deviance approaches to learning
- Improving literacy of children through support from community networks
- Teaching at the right level: Learning how to improve teacher support through mentoring and monitoring in Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria, Zambia
- Using technology to improve literacy in the Global South

In order to participate in ROSIE, global applied research projects were invited to submit an expression of interest which was reviewed by an informal advisory group convened by the Brookings's Center for Universal Education to inform the selection process. Eight out of 12 global grant projects submitted their expressions of interest and six were selected to participate in ROSIE. The first cohort of projects bring with them their expertise, and the pressing scaling-related questions they wish to explore.

They will be joined by additional regional applied research projects in mid-2021, further contributing to this research and exchange. Those projects who chose not to participate in ROSIE will have access to resources, tools and findings generated through the project.