



Global Partnership for Education Knowledge and Innovation Exchange

KIX ANNUAL REPORT 2022-2023

Scaling educational options for out-of-school children





Recommended citation: International Development Research Centre. 2023. *Global Partnership for Education Knowledge and Innovation Exchange (KIX) Annual Report 2022–2023: Scaling educational options for out-of-school children*. Ottawa, Canada.

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 low- and middle-income countries.

About GPE

The [Global Partnership for Education \(GPE\)](#) is a multi-stakeholder partnership and funding platform that aims to strengthen education systems in developing countries to dramatically increase the number of children who are in school and learning. It brings together developing countries, donors, international organizations, civil society, teacher organizations, the private sector, and foundations.

About KIX

The [Global Partnership for Education Knowledge and Innovation Exchange \(KIX\)](#) connects expertise, innovation, and knowledge to GPE partner 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 endeavour between GPE and IDRC.

Acknowledgements

This report was prepared by IDRC in fulfilment of the reporting requirements of its partnership with the Global Partnership for Education. We would like to acknowledge the thoughtful contributions from colleagues at IDRC and GPE. We deeply appreciate the support from Mary O’Neill. Special thanks to Cheryl Chan for designing and laying out the report and the accompanying infographics throughout.

Cover photo: *GPE/Rodrig Mbock*

Contact

International Development Research Centre
PO Box 8500, Ottawa, ON
Canada K1G 3H9
Email: kix@idrc.ca
www.gpekix.org

ACRONYMS AND GLOSSARY

AEP	Accelerated education program
CBC	Competency-based curriculum
CoP	Community of Practice
EdTech	Educational technologies
GEI	Gender equality, equity, and inclusion
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
IDRC	International Development Research Centre
KIX	Knowledge and 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
Primary research outputs	Outputs capturing the direct results and findings of research, including situational analyses, scoping studies, synthesis reports, and research reports
ROSIE	Research on scaling the impact of innovations in education
Secondary knowledge products	Videos, podcasts, newsletters, blog posts, policy briefs, and other knowledge-sharing vehicles that communicate research findings and results to diverse audiences
TPD	Teacher professional development



Photo: GPE/Kelley Lynch

CONTENTS

Executive summary	1
Message from the KIX Executive Committee	3
Introduction	5
Milestones 2022-2023	7
At a Glance 2022-2023	9
Progress 2022-2023	
1. Generating new knowledge on educational innovation and scaling	11
2. Mobilizing knowledge to strengthen education policy and practice	17
3. Strengthening capacities to scale the impact of innovations and apply evidence	21
Selected contributions to research uptake	27
Feature theme: Scaling educational options for out-of-school children	29
What we are learning	35
Upcoming priorities	37
Annex I: Financial summary	39



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This year, the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) Knowledge and Innovation Exchange (KIX) achieved noteworthy results toward its three key objectives:

- generating high-quality, demand-driven knowledge;
- mobilizing insights and evidence from applied research and learning exchanges; and
- strengthening the capacity of knowledge producers and users in low- and middle-income countries to scale innovations and improve the use of evidence in education planning, policy, and practice.

This progress can be seen in the rising volume of quality research produced, the increased use of research evidence in education decision-making in GPE partner countries, and the growing ability of country representatives to adapt and scale innovations that strengthen their education systems – including to address gender and social inequalities.

With many regions experiencing high numbers of out-of-school children, this annual report highlights how KIX is responding to this challenge in the feature theme “Scaling educational options for out-of-school children.”

Knowledge generation

KIX supports 41 applied research projects that are building evidence on six priority themes identified by partner countries. Grantees produced 111 primary research outputs this year – a 59% increase from last year, with 70% of this new knowledge related to gender equality, equity, and inclusion (GEI). To consolidate emerging evidence, KIX launched knowledge synthesis processes this year, reviewing findings on early childhood education and educational options for children who are out of school.

The Research on Scaling the Impact of Innovations in Education (ROSIE) initiative produced two major reports: one presents insights from 14 KIX applied research projects; the other explores national-level decision-making on adopting innovations at scale.

As the COVID-19 pandemic ebbs, educators seek guidance on how to prepare for future pandemics and other crises. The KIX Observatory on COVID-19 Responses in Africa’s Educational Systems summarized lessons emerging from its research, and the KIX LAC hub released the results of a comprehensive regional survey on how teachers and learners were affected by the pandemic and how they adapted. Research grantees studying educational technologies (EdTech) also offered insights on how prevailing gender norms can determine who can access online learning and how EdTech can support gender-responsive education.

Knowledge mobilization

Expressions of interest by educational stakeholders in using KIX research and interventions and actual evidence of research uptake increased sharply. Among other results, KIX-supported research and learning helped shape decisions on funding for accelerated education programming in Sierra Leone, teacher training in Uzbekistan, and the integration of 21st-century skills in Vietnam and the Maldives.

This year also saw increasing interaction between KIX hubs and applied research projects, along with signs that the generation and mobilization of new knowledge are mutually reinforcing. In 2022, three hubs conducted two large international conferences: the Second International KIX LAC Conference focused on strategies, research, tools, and innovations to help teachers in Latin America support learning recovery following the pandemic; and the Africa 19 and Africa 21 hubs jointly hosted the first KIX Continental Symposium for Educational Research and Innovation, which brought together education stakeholders from 51 African countries.

Capacity strengthening

KIX hubs and applied research projects both work to build the capacity of education stakeholders to apply evidence and scale innovations. Tackling gender and social inequality was a major focus of capacity strengthening this year. For example, in Yemen, participants in the KIX EAP Learning Cycle on diagnostic tools for improving education policy planning used these tools to identify policy options—such as providing incentives to families and offering flexible alternative learning programs—to keep girls in school.” In Cambodia, the project [Adapting, testing and scaling a proven summer pre-primary education model in Cambodia, Lao PDR and Tanzania](#) conducts capacity strengthening workshops that have resulted in a noticeable increase in teachers’ ability to use gender-responsive techniques in classrooms.

KIX extension to 2027

Following a positive mid-term evaluation that found KIX is well-positioned for impact and provides a valuable service to educational stakeholders in GPE partner countries, the program was formally extended by three years. This allows KIX to strengthen its efforts in generating and mobilizing evidence to address key policy challenges – deepening connections to country-level policy cycles and strengthening links with local education groups and GPE in-country processes and grants. A new country support mechanism will target policy priorities and opportunities in individual countries.

What we are learning

This year generated cross-program learning and reflection on several topics core to the KIX mandate, including effective strategies for knowledge mobilization; integrating gender equality, equity, and inclusion objectives in education policy and practice; and adapting innovations for scaling.

Upcoming priorities

KIX priorities for 2023-2024 include extending and expanding the work of the four hubs and launching a new mechanism for targeted country support. It will also continue to synthesize and share lessons and findings from existing research while launching new calls for research on priority themes.

MESSAGE FROM THE KIX EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

We are pleased to share this fourth annual report on the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) Knowledge and Innovation Exchange (KIX), a joint endeavour with Canada's International Development Research Centre (IDRC). This report overviews KIX's progress and provides rich examples of findings and results from a wide array of GPE partner countries. New evidence is emerging, tailored for use in today's education systems. KIX hubs and research projects are engaging with those working in these systems at all levels — from the local to the global. Country capacities for educational reform are being strengthened as ministry officials and other key stakeholders learn from each other's experiences. As KIX set out to achieve, evidence and innovation are informing improvements in education in GPE partner countries.

Appropriate, tailored evidence, supported by knowledge mobilization and validated through peer exchange, can ensure greater impact from education financing. In a time of scarce resources and more urgent learning needs than ever, that evidence is vital to ensuring that education interventions achieve impact and provide value for money. KIX is supporting these efforts and, in the process, learning how to do research better. This report shines a light on a crucial challenge: providing educational options for children and youth who are out of school. As countries look for ways to address learning loss and strengthen educational resilience in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, KIX is funding and synthesizing research results on why too many children remain out of the classroom and what approaches are successful in bringing them back.

This year, we celebrate the extension of KIX — the evidence arm of GPE — to 2027. Approval of this extension followed a positive mid-term evaluation, presented to the GPE board in June 2022. The board concluded that KIX has made significant progress, is valued by its stakeholders, and is well positioned for impact. With sustained support through GPE and an increased contribution from IDRC, KIX will now have three additional years to listen to country responses, continue what is working, adapt what needs to be strengthened, and meet emerging demands.

This report showcases KIX's growing progress, surfaces the key lessons we have been learning this year, and lays out our priorities for delivering continued impact.

Naser Faruqui, Director of Education and Science, IDRC

Margarita Focas-Licht, Manager, Partnerships, GPE



Photo: GPE/Roun Ry

INTRODUCTION

Since 2019, the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) Knowledge and Innovation Exchange (KIX) program has been working with more than 70 low- and middle-income countries to address shared education policy challenges that must be overcome to ensure all children and youth have access to quality education. Education stakeholders in these countries have identified the need for improved teacher training, more and better early childhood education, better ways to measure learning outcomes, greater use of data and evidence, and new strategies to address inequalities and reach out-of-school learners as priorities if they are to achieve universal goals for quality education.

KIX supports research, capacity strengthening, and the uptake of evidence to inform the scaling of education innovations that address these challenges. In its fourth year of progress, with a full portfolio of supported research projects in their final year, notable results are emerging across the program's three outcome areas:

- **Knowledge generation** — producing high-quality, demand-driven evidence through applied research, regional knowledge exchange, and research on scaling impact;
- **Knowledge mobilization** — sharing insights and evidence from research and learning exchanges through regional hubs and projects, as well as via the KIX website; and
- **Capacity strengthening** — further equipping researchers and knowledge users in low- and middle-income countries to improve the use of evidence in planning, policy, and practice and in scaling education innovations.

As the rollup of findings across KIX-supported applied research begins, new knowledge is crystallizing into insights and recommendations that partner countries can act upon. Policymakers and practitioners are using KIX evidence, and partner countries are taking ownership of knowledge sharing and learning through regional hubs — addressing shared challenges through South-South collaboration. KIX hubs are also increasingly collaborating with each other and with applied research teams to profile emerging evidence and increase its uptake.

This year, we feature how KIX is responding to one of the gravest problems shared across GPE partner countries: out-of-school children. According to a [2022 UN report](#) on progress toward the Sustainable Development Goals, before the COVID-19 crisis, 17% of primary and secondary school learners were not in attendance. Prolonged school closures due to the pandemic — which, globally, averaged 41 weeks between March 2020 and February 2022 — put millions more learners at risk of never returning to school. Most vulnerable are those who were unable to access distance learning, those already disadvantaged by the need to generate income for their households, and girls who must care for other family members or are forced into early marriage. This year, KIX set out to synthesize knowledge from supported research on out-of-school children and youth. The aim is to identify and share practical lessons on solutions that can be adapted and scaled to get these vulnerable learners back into the classroom.

About KIX

KIX connects expertise, innovation, and knowledge to support low- and middle-income countries in building stronger education systems and accelerating progress toward Sustainable Development Goal 4: ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education. KIX works through two interconnected mechanisms. Through **four regional hubs**, KIX creates opportunities for people in GPE-supported education systems to share expertise, innovation, and evidence. It also funds **applied research** on priority topics identified through the hubs. This research builds evidence, mobilizes knowledge, and strengthens capacity to adapt and scale innovative approaches for education priorities of partner countries.

Learn more about **how** and **where** KIX works at www.gpekix.org.



MILESTONES 2022-2023

APR 2022

MAY 2022
International KIX LAC Conference: Education post-pandemic

JUN 2022
Mid-term evaluation presented to GPE Board

OCT 2022
First KIX Continental Research Symposium on Learning Outcomes in Sub-Saharan Africa
• Jointly organized by the KIX Africa 19 and Africa 21 Hubs

OCT 2022
KIX Annual Symposium
• Included representatives from ministries of education in GPE partner countries on Gender Equality and Data Systems

DEC 2022
KIX extension approved

FEB 2023
First KIX inter-hub workshop

MAR 2023
KIX represented at the Commission on the Status of Women

MAR 2023
Bigger KIX footprint at the Comparative and International Education Society (CIES) Annual Conference than ever before

MAR 2023



Photo: GPE/Rodrig Mbock

AT A GLANCE

Map Legend

Darker shading: GPE partner countries with KIX applied research projects
Lighter shading: Additional GPE partner countries that have participated in KIX hub events

LAC	EAP	Africa 21	Africa 19
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Nicaragua, St. Lucia Dominica, Grenada, St. Vincent and the Grenadines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, Georgia, Kyrgyz Republic, Lao PDR, Maldives, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Sudan, Tajikistan, Timor Leste, Uzbekistan, Vietnam, Yemen Albania, Moldova, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Ivory Coast, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Madagascar, Mali, Niger, Senegal, Togo, Sao Tome and Principe Cabo Verde, Comoros, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Mauritania 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, South Sudan, Tanzania (mainland and Zanzibar), Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe Eritrea, Liberia, Somalia (Federal, Puntland, Somaliland)

2022-2023 ACTIVITIES OF APPLIED RESEARCH PROJECTS AND REGIONAL HUBS

Engagement and reach



664

Total events



29,780

Total participants



25,942

Participants from GPE partner countries

Stakeholder endorsement



48

Expressions of interest in using project research and interventions



20

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



24

Citations of project interventions or evidence in policy documents

Research outputs



111

Primary research outputs



280

Secondary knowledge products

PROGRESS 2022-2023

After three years of supporting demand-driven research and the establishment of networks linking southern education stakeholders across regions, KIX made significant progress toward its core objectives for **knowledge generation, knowledge mobilization, and capacity strengthening**. All four hubs continued to catalyze South-South learning and the uptake of evidence.

This year also saw increasing interaction between KIX hubs and applied research projects, along with signs that the generation and mobilization of new knowledge are mutually reinforcing.

Monitoring KIX progress

We look for signs that:

- **Partner countries take ownership** of regional hubs to sustain knowledge exchange according to their priorities.
- **Country representatives mobilize new knowledge and skills**, including new policy and practice options related to GEI, to strengthen their national education systems.
- **Grantees produce high-quality applied research** that supports locally relevant educational innovations that can be scaled by partner countries.
- **Education stakeholders use KIX-supported research** to frame debates about sustainable, inclusive, and equitable scaling in education.
- **Education stakeholders engage** with decision-makers **to scale KIX-supported innovations**, including those related to GEI.

1. Generating new knowledge on educational innovation and scaling

KIX supports 41 applied research grants involving 53 countries and 104 organizations – most based in low- and middle-income countries. This research focuses on six themes identified in 2019 and further prioritized with regional input in 2020. These include teacher professional development; early childhood education; gender equality, equity, and inclusion (GEI); learning; out-of-school children and youth; and data use.

In all, KIX grantees produced 111 primary research outputs this year, an increase of 59% over last year. Seventy percent of this new knowledge related to GEI.

To consolidate emerging evidence on promising education system innovations, KIX launched knowledge synthesis processes by reviewing findings across clusters of applied research. In December, synthesis began on two themes: early childhood education, and educational options for children who are out of school. (See “Feature Theme” on page 29). Over the coming year, these synthesis efforts will highlight key results to the broader education research community; advance thought leadership around scaling education innovations; generate lessons about the implementation of applied research during the COVID-19 pandemic; and identify knowledge and capacity gaps to inform future programming and research.

Scaling continues to be a core focus for KIX-supported research. The [Research on Scaling the Impact of Innovations in Education \(ROSIE\)](#) initiative brings together researchers and practitioners from KIX projects working in 29 partner countries to study issues related to scaling. This year, ROSIE presented four emerging insights in its report titled [Deepening education impact: Emerging lessons from 14 teams scaling innovations in low- and middle-income countries](#):

- Researchers need to engage more stakeholders as champions of their scaling goals.
- Teachers and school leaders need to be seen as active partners in scaling.
- In scaling innovations, complications are predictable and can be planned for, while complexity is unpredictable and demands an adaptive response.
- Finding the right incentives is important to scaling, and achieving lasting impact demands long-term thinking.

A second report – [How do government decisionmakers adopt education innovations for scale?](#) – explores scaling issues in national-level decision-making based on literature review and over a dozen interviews with decision-makers in Bhutan, El Salvador, Guatemala, Kyrgyzstan, and Malawi. Among its insights, the report calls attention to the challenges of scaling in a context of overly centralized decision-making and recommends strategies to make room for local education innovations, such as by communicating their successes to the national level. It also notes that donors, researchers, and other scaling practitioners should pay more attention to provincial, district, and other mid-level decision-makers.

COVID-19 had a significant impact on teachers and their classroom practices as widespread and prolonged school closures spurred a rapid move to online learning. Since 2021, the [KIX Observatory on COVID-19 Responses in Educational Systems in Africa](#) has been collecting and synthesizing policy and practice responses to the pandemic in 40 GPE partner countries in Africa. This year, the Observatory highlighted [five lessons](#) emerging from its research to date. It urged partner countries to learn from their pandemic responses in preparing for future education crises, pointing to the need for:

- new domestic resources for emergency education responses, including resources to ensure equity and inclusion;
- monitoring systems for sexual and gender-based violence, mental health, and food security among vulnerable children;
- stronger contingency planning for education disruptions;
- more investment in teacher training; and
- better learning assessments during crises, tapping the power of education technologies.

As the world emerges from the worst of the pandemic, research has helped consolidate lessons needed for education systems to recover and build resilience for the future. For example, the rapid shift to online learning propelled by the pandemic revealed tremendous inequalities in access to educational technologies (EdTech). KIX research grantees offered [insights](#) at an IDRC-hosted event during the [67th Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women](#) on leveraging digital technology, education, and innovation for gender equality. Drawing on experience from [Using technology to improve literacy in the Global South](#) and [Bridges to impact through innovative EdTech: Forging links between policy, research and practice](#), presenters highlighted how prevailing gender norms – such as pressure on young girls to provide care, or expecting young boys to herd livestock – determine who can access EdTech tools and can exclude certain groups from online learning. These projects are designing digital innovations to recognize and challenge gender norms and are strengthening teachers’ capacity to successfully use EdTech for gender-responsive education.

How teachers and learners were affected by the pandemic and how they adapted was the topic of a 2021 regional survey conducted among 200,000 teachers by

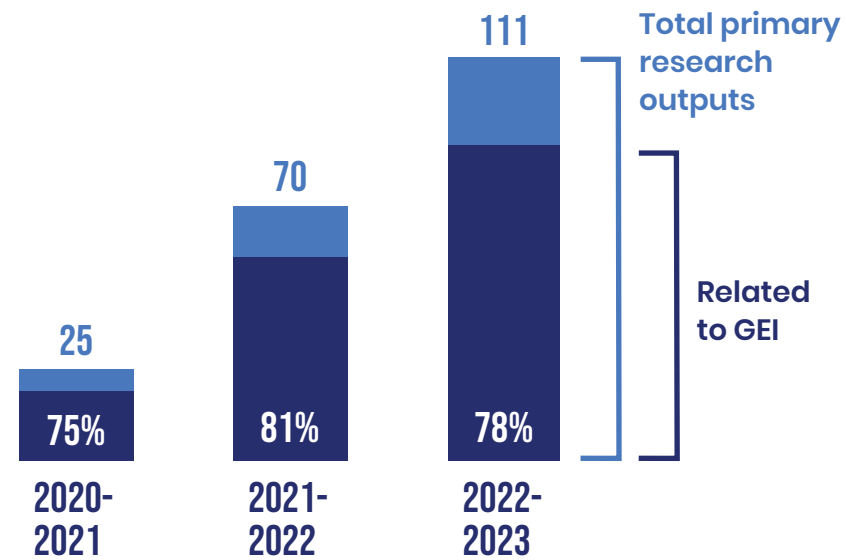
the KIX LAC hub in collaboration with 21 ministries of education. In October 2022, the [results of the survey](#) were launched. Despite efforts made by school communities and ministries of education, teacher testimonials indicate that children's right to education was undermined during the pandemic, especially for students from the most disadvantaged backgrounds. Teachers observed that the greatest difficulties faced by their students were Internet connectivity, low access to electronic resources, lack of time for families to help with homework, and socioeconomic difficulties. Nearly 38% of teachers said they received insufficient training to help them adapt their pedagogy to the pandemic environment. In its efforts to help ministries of education and other education stakeholders address these shortfalls, KIX LAC also published two mapping studies on pedagogy and teaching training for post-pandemic learning recovery in 2022: [Recovery strategies for student learning](#) and [Effective practices in training teachers and facilitators in recovery learning strategies](#).



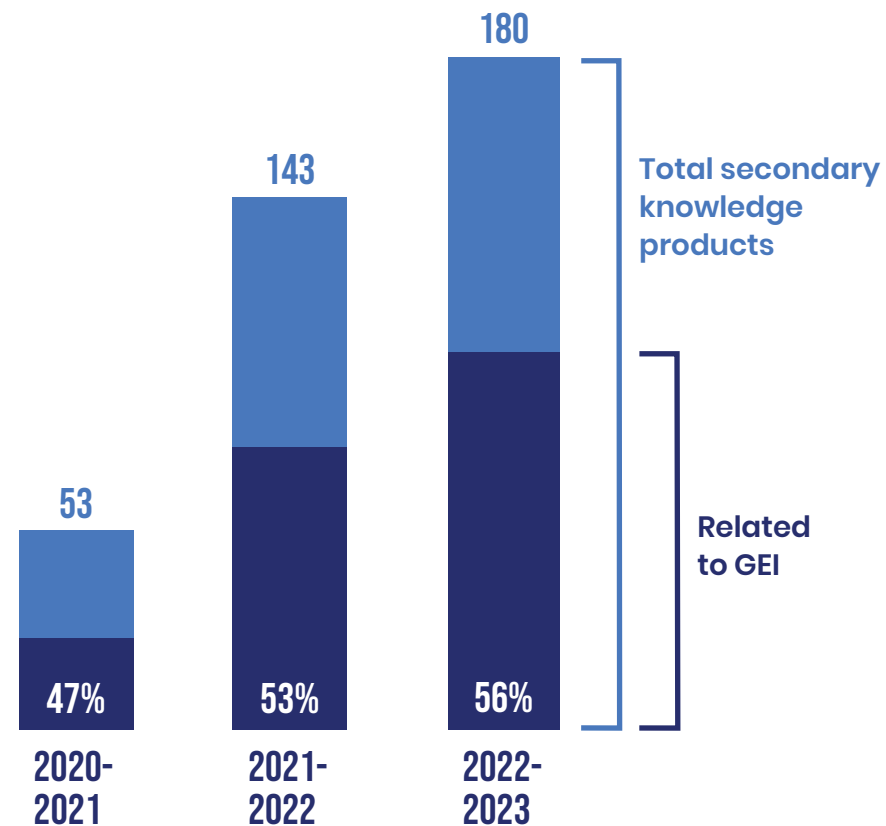
Photo: GPE/Kelley Lynch

PROGRESS ON...

KNOWLEDGE GENERATION

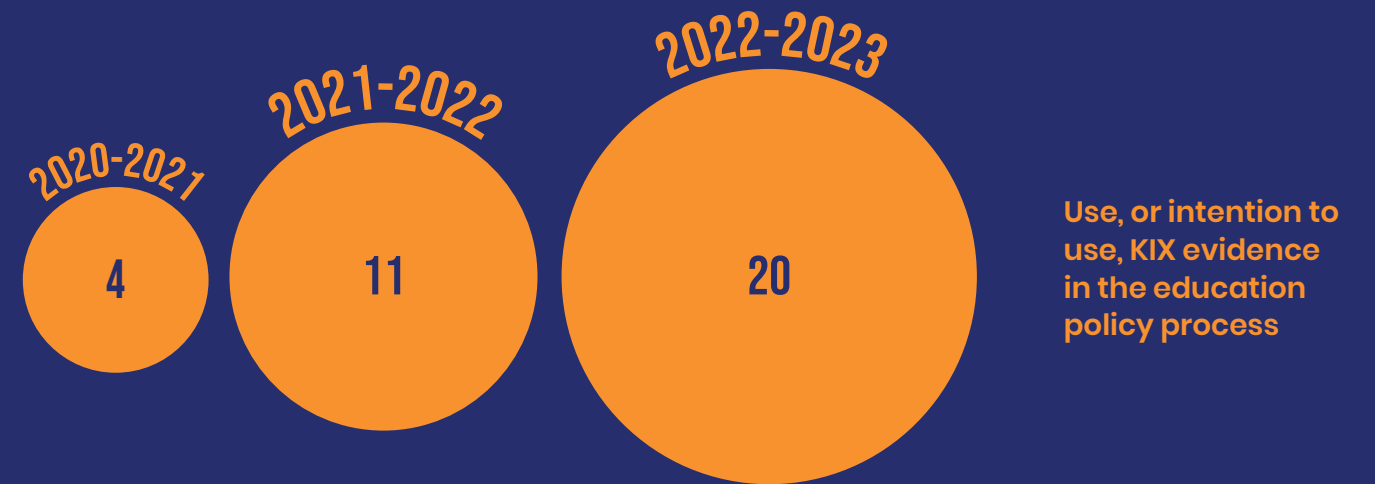
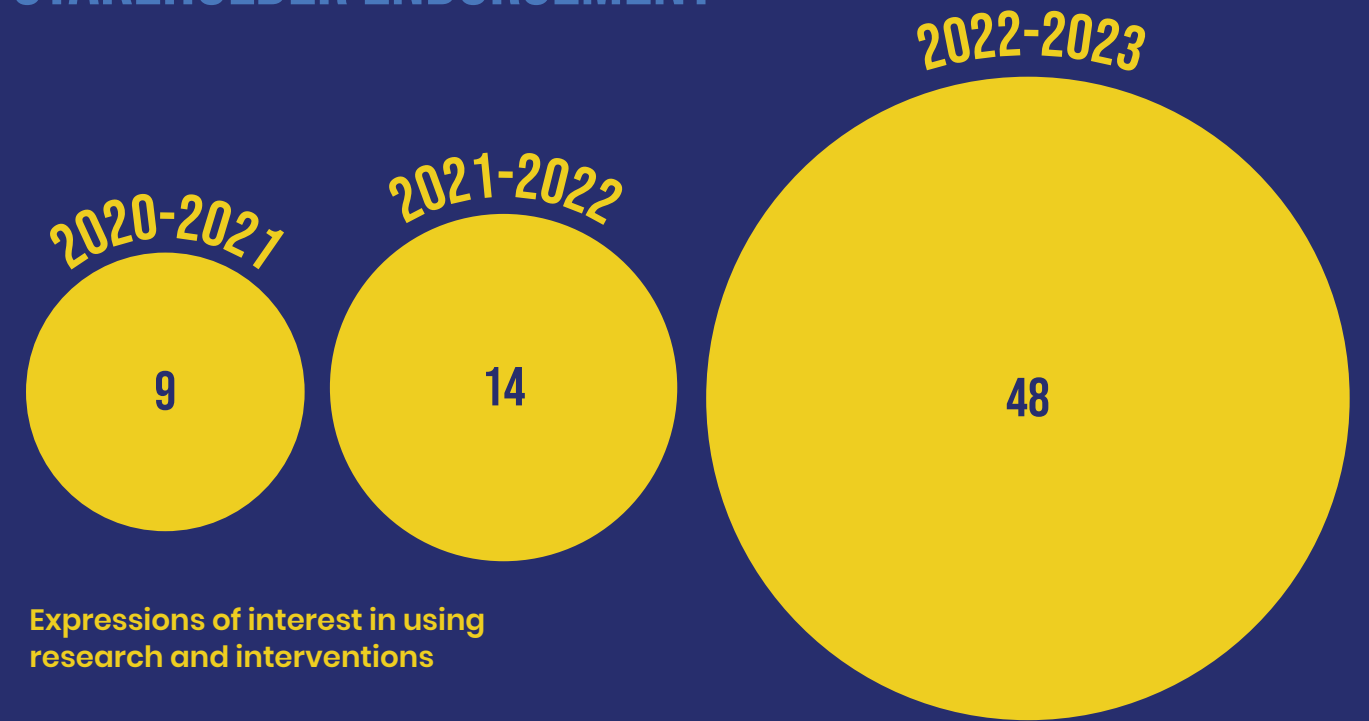


KNOWLEDGE MOBILIZATION



“This year saw increasing interaction between KIX hubs and applied research projects, along with signs that the generation and mobilization of new knowledge are mutually reinforcing.”

STAKEHOLDER ENDORSEMENT



2. Mobilizing knowledge to strengthen education policy and practice

This year, expressions of interest by educational stakeholders in using KIX research and interventions more than tripled – from 14 instances last year to 48. Meanwhile, the actual or intended use of KIX-generated evidence in education policymaking nearly doubled, with 20 such instances in all. For example:



In Sierra Leone, where the issue of out-of-school children is pressing, results from [A comparative study of accelerated education programs and girls' focused education models in Ghana, Nigeria, and Sierra Leone](#) informed the government's decision to allocate over US\$22 million from the Qatar Foundation to accelerated education programs. This project shared its research findings with the technical lead and team members of the Ministry of Education in several ways, including through policy briefs and events. Its influence on the government's decision will support scaling, giving more children the opportunity to return to school or gain access to basic education.

Photo L: GPE/Ludovica Pellicio
Photo R: GPE/Federico Scoppa



In Uzbekistan, the Presidential Educational Institutions of the Republic (PIIMA) adopted the TPD@Scale model, through the project [Adapting and scaling teacher professional development approaches in Ghana, Honduras and Uzbekistan](#), to provide ongoing in-service education and teacher training to improve instructional quality and student learning outcomes. The Ministry of Education has tasked the recently established Center for Pedagogical Excellence with overseeing the adoption and expansion of TPD@Scale. PIIMA views the hybrid online and in-person TPD@Scale model as offering a cost-effective and efficient way to provide ongoing professional skills development. The hybrid model also enables rural teachers without Internet access to complete professional development courses offline, at their own pace.



In Nepal, the mayor of Kalalamai – who has participated in the KIX research project [School leaders as agents of change towards equity and inclusion](#) since its inception – recently announced plans to draw on evidence from the project to integrate equity and inclusion perspectives within the municipal education emergency plan. A continuity grant was recently approved for this project to support scaling of its impact.

Photo: GPE/NayanTara Gurung Kakshapati

KIX hubs were instrumental in catalyzing the uptake of evidence into education policy and practice, and in strengthening the capacity of education stakeholders to use evidence in their plans and policies. For example, both Vietnam and the Maldives are taking steps to integrate 21st-century skills into their classrooms, drawing on the participation last year by country representatives in the [KIX EAP Learning Cycle](#) on that topic. During the learning cycle, in December 2022, Vietnam's Ministry of Education and Training reviewed how skills integration is being implemented under its 2018 General Education Curriculum. Based on this review, the Department of Secondary Education has engaged technical support to develop a set of teaching guidelines and will conduct training for secondary school teachers to ensure they are covering relevant 21st-century skills. In early 2023, the Maldives Ministry of Education decided to act on a strategic plan produced by a team of five national experts who participated in the same KIX EAP Learning Cycle. The ministry has called for a comprehensive curricula review aimed at integrating these skills at all levels.

Following a national policy dialogue in Niger facilitated by the KIX Africa 21 Hub, the Ministry of Education established a committee of senior ministry officials, researchers, and members of civil society to surface education innovations that would strengthen Niger's education system. Three innovations have been selected, focused on non-formal education, digital education, and education in crises. The committee is currently developing a strategy to scale these innovations for use in Niger's education policy and practice.

In 2022, two regional hubs organized large international conferences that brought together KIX applied research teams, senior education officials from GPE partner countries, and other education researchers and stakeholders. In May, the [Second International KIX LAC Conference](#) focused on strategies, research, tools, and innovations to help teachers support the recovery of comprehensive learning following the

pandemic. In October, the Africa 19 and Africa 21 hubs jointly hosted the [KIX Continental Symposium for Educational Research and Innovation on Reimagining education for a better impact on learning outcomes in sub-Saharan Africa](#), which attracted more than 280 education stakeholders from 51 countries. Showcasing findings from KIX-supported and other research, it promoted continental learning between national policy actors, researchers, and practitioners about how to improve children's learning outcomes, including in the context of COVID-19 and other educational challenges.

This year saw increasing interaction between KIX hubs and applied research projects, along with signs that the generation and mobilization of new knowledge are mutually reinforcing. These synergies were on display at the [Third Annual KIX Symposium](#), which took place on October 12 and 13, 2022. This year's symposium focused on two key education priorities: gender equality; and data systems and data use. Over 260 attendees – including government partners, policymakers, and researchers from around the world – explored how these priorities are being addressed through KIX applied research and regional hubs and how education stakeholders are using KIX-supported evidence and knowledge.

KIX had a bigger footprint than ever at the [Comparative and International Education Society's annual conference](#), represented by all four regional hubs and 13 applied research teams. They shared insights on educational equity and inclusion, data systems and data use, teacher professional development, and the quality of early childhood education. KIX partners shared their experience with strengthening education systems and exchanged lessons on how to scale innovations and support the uptake of evidence in education policy and practice. For example, the KIX EAP Hub facilitated a [two-part panel discussion](#) on the value of knowledge brokers in translating research evidence into policy and planning.



Photo: GPE/Kelley Lynch

3. Strengthening capacities to scale the impact of innovations and apply evidence

The KIX mid-term evaluation identified capacity strengthening as the most effective type of support KIX offers to country representatives and other education stakeholders. Regional hubs provide a host of opportunities for peer exchange and learning, including through webinars, workshops, and thematic learning cycles. KIX applied research projects also work to build the capacity of education stakeholders to apply evidence and scale innovations.

Instilling skills and knowledge to address gender and social inclusion in educational plans and policies remains central to KIX objectives. Launched in October 2022, the KIX LAC [Community of Practice on Gender Equality](#) involves participants from El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, and Honduras. It provides a forum for country representatives to learn from each other's experience while reflecting on their own unique gender equality issues, such as the persistence of patriarchal gender norms within some school systems. Participants recognized the need to integrate gender perspectives into teacher training to ensure that education does not perpetuate sexism and inequalities. They report gaining new insights on the role of teachers as agents of change and on approaches to implementing educational initiatives with a gender perspective.

KIX LAC has also been instrumental in linking peers within regional education ministries. In December, the hub organized a [learning visit](#) between ministry counterparts from El Salvador and Chile, focusing on early childhood education. Delegates also met with the Gender Unit of Chile's Ministry of Education to learn about its work in integrating gender equality approaches in the education system, including through curriculum, textbooks, and teacher training. This visit laid the groundwork for a follow-up meeting that will take place next year between the two national ministries, facilitated by the hub, to deepen

the design and implementation of strategies for comprehensive sexuality education, work with families, and teacher training.

From September to November 2022, the KIX EAP Hub facilitated the eight-week Learning Cycle [Diagnostic tools for improving education policy planning](#). It brought together 14 national teams from 13 countries to strengthen their ability to identify bottlenecks, using diagnostic tools to analyze system performance. The team from Yemen, composed of experts with practical experience in educational administration, curriculum design, and teacher training, used these tools to prioritize the challenges and root causes of girls' high dropout rates from primary education – including the impacts of war, the accompanying poverty, and challenges in recruiting and retaining teachers. In a [case study](#) that lays out their findings, they identified a series of policy options to address these priorities. These include providing economic incentives to encourage families to keep their daughters in school; increasing awareness of the educational harms caused by early marriage; and widening the potential pool of funders to support teachers' salaries.

There are increasing signs that country representatives are taking ownership of hub learning activities. Representatives from The Gambia, Kenya, and Lesotho jointly led a Community of Practice (CoP) with the KIX Africa 19 Hub on Foundations of Educational Quality for their peers in other countries. The CoP provided an opportunity for curriculum and assessment officers from ministries of education to hear from teachers on the realities of implementing a competency-based curriculum (CBC). Half of KIX Africa 19 member states had requested capacity strengthening on this learner-centred pedagogy as a means to enhance student motivation and learning outcomes.

Capacity strengthening is at the core of cross-regional applied research that aims to improve the quality and inclusiveness of early childhood education. [Adapting, testing and scaling a proven summer pre-primary](#)

[education model in Cambodia, Lao PDR and Tanzania](#) conducts workshops for teachers, parents, community teaching assistants, community leaders, and education officials at all levels of government. It uses a “train the trainer” method to extend the reach of findings and methods. This year has seen an increase in parents' knowledge and engagement in early childhood education and gender equality and inclusion, and more community leaders are acting as champions for inclusive early childhood education. In Cambodia, the research team observed that teachers were more confident and better able to use child-focused and gender-responsive techniques in the classroom. Education officials in Tanzania have committed to reviewing policies and guidelines associated with the summer pre-primary education model, paving the way for enhanced school readiness programming in other parts of the country. In Laos, trained heads of schools have been conducting regular school visits and progress checks to provide mentorship. The team observes that teachers who receive this support are increasingly able to function independently and manage their classrooms effectively.

ROSIE represents one of the largest KIX investments in strengthening grantees' scaling efforts. This year, it hosted workshops and other learning events on cost data and analysis, practical issues of scaling, and gender-transformative education. It also hosted cross-team chat sessions to facilitate peer learning and cohesion.

KIX extension to 2027

For KIX, 2022–23 was a pivotal year. Following a mid-term evaluation that found KIX is valued by education stakeholders in GPE partner countries, is aligned with their priorities, and is well positioned for impact, the program was formally extended by three years, to 2027. The [US\\$88 million extension](#), approved in December 2022, allows KIX to strengthen its efforts in generating and mobilizing evidence to address key policy challenges. It brings a renewed focus on connecting

to country-level policy cycles, providing differentiated support for countries to engage with KIX, and strengthening links with local education groups and GPE in-country processes and grants. The extension aligns with [GPE's strategic plan](#) and enables KIX to invest in new applied research on priority themes while building on program learning and evaluation results to date. The goal is to provide partner countries with evidence and innovations they can use to accelerate access, learning outcomes, and gender equality through inclusive and resilient education systems fit for the 21st century.

What's new?

- A new **country support mechanism**, provided through the hubs, will target policy priorities and opportunities in individual countries. It will support national partnership compact processes, demand-driven knowledge synthesis, and knowledge mobilization while building countries' capacity to generate and use evidence.
- KIX will expand to involve **new countries** that join GPE as partners.
- Applied research will address **fewer, more focused themes** to build synergies across the portfolio for collective learning and impact.
- There will be greater emphasis on **knowledge synthesis and implementation research**.
- Hubs, research, and country support will feed directly into **education system transformation**.
- There will be **more types of research** supported, including projects designed for single-country, multi-country, or broader regional or global outcomes.
- Continuing our focus on gender equality, equity, and inclusion, KIX will provide countries with enhanced tools for an **intersectional approach**.



Photo: GPE/Carine Durand

Widening access to learning for displaced children through research, training, and policy uptake

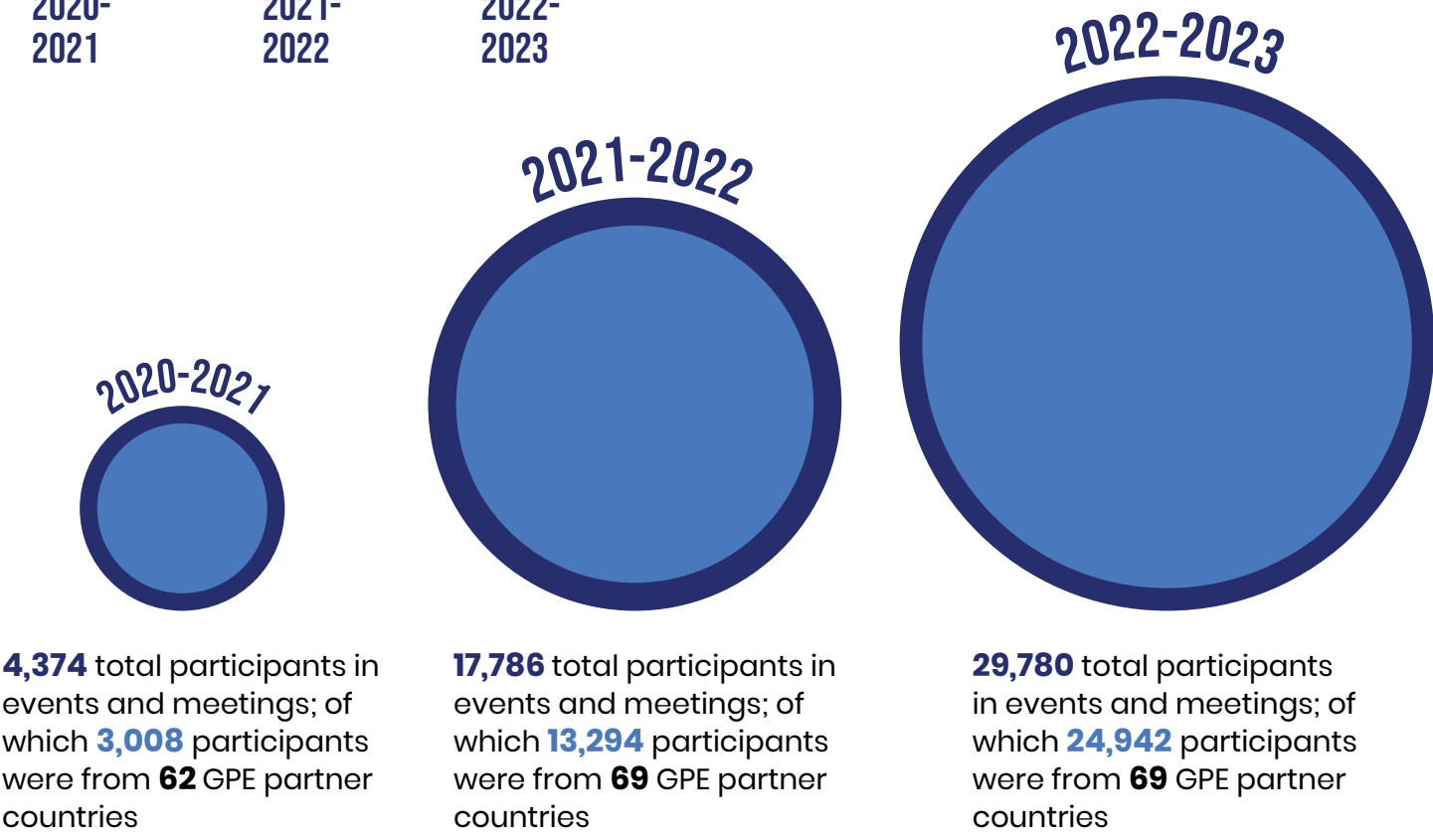
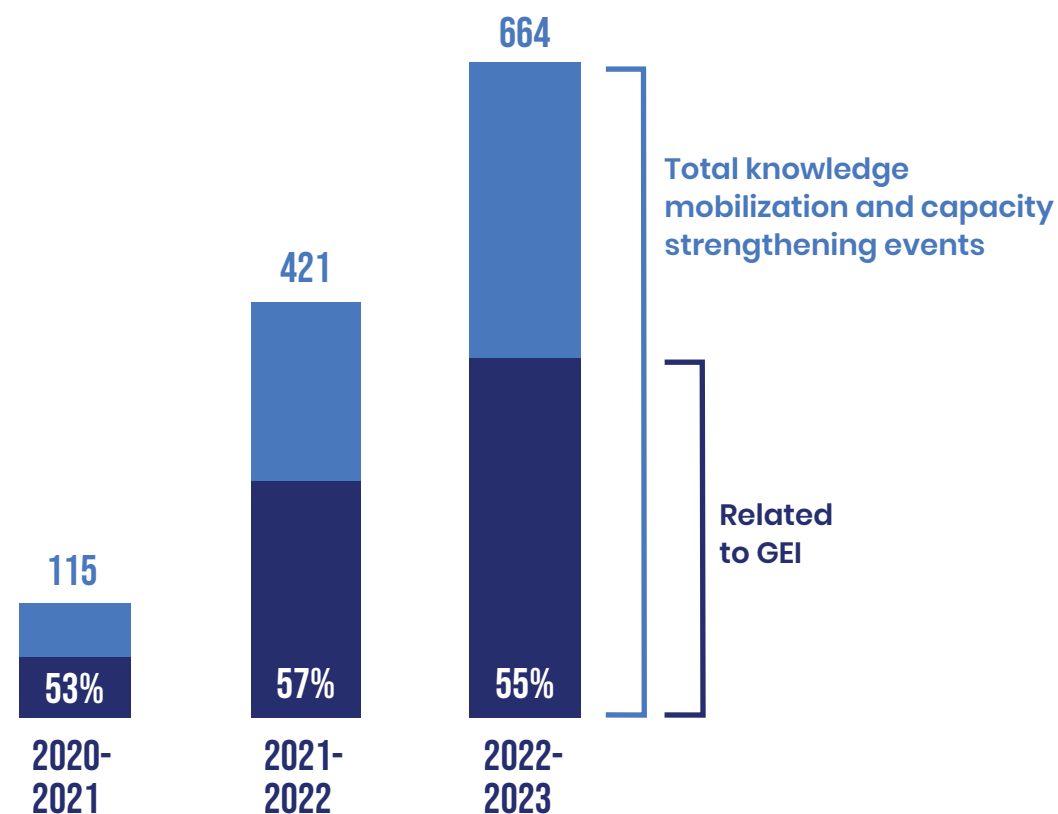
The [Bridges to impact through innovative EdTech: Forging links between policy, research and practice](#) project exemplifies how KIX-supported research, capacity strengthening, and knowledge mobilization come together to address key challenges in education. Bridges to Impact responds to the urgent learning needs of refugee and displaced children in conflict-affected areas, including testing the scale-up of a proven game-based educational technology called Can't Wait to Learn. It provides a curriculum-based response for teaching math and reading in Arabic and English that can be adapted for different learning levels and speeds.

Chad's education system is hobbled by a legacy of internal conflict and a spillover from humanitarian crises on its borders. As a result, hundreds of thousands of refugee children lack access to quality education: schools are underfunded and overcrowded, and qualified teachers are scarce. In 2019, Can't Wait to Learn was introduced and implemented in refugee settlements after pilot testing in Sudan showed that participating children improved nearly twice as much in math and almost three times as much in reading as those using traditional approaches. In July 2022, following an in-country evaluation of learning impacts and value-for-money analysis, Chad's Ministry of National Education and Civic Promotion formally endorsed the program and committed to support its scaling with an appeal for funding from partner agencies. World Vision has committed to join War Child to implement Can't Wait to Learn in its education response.

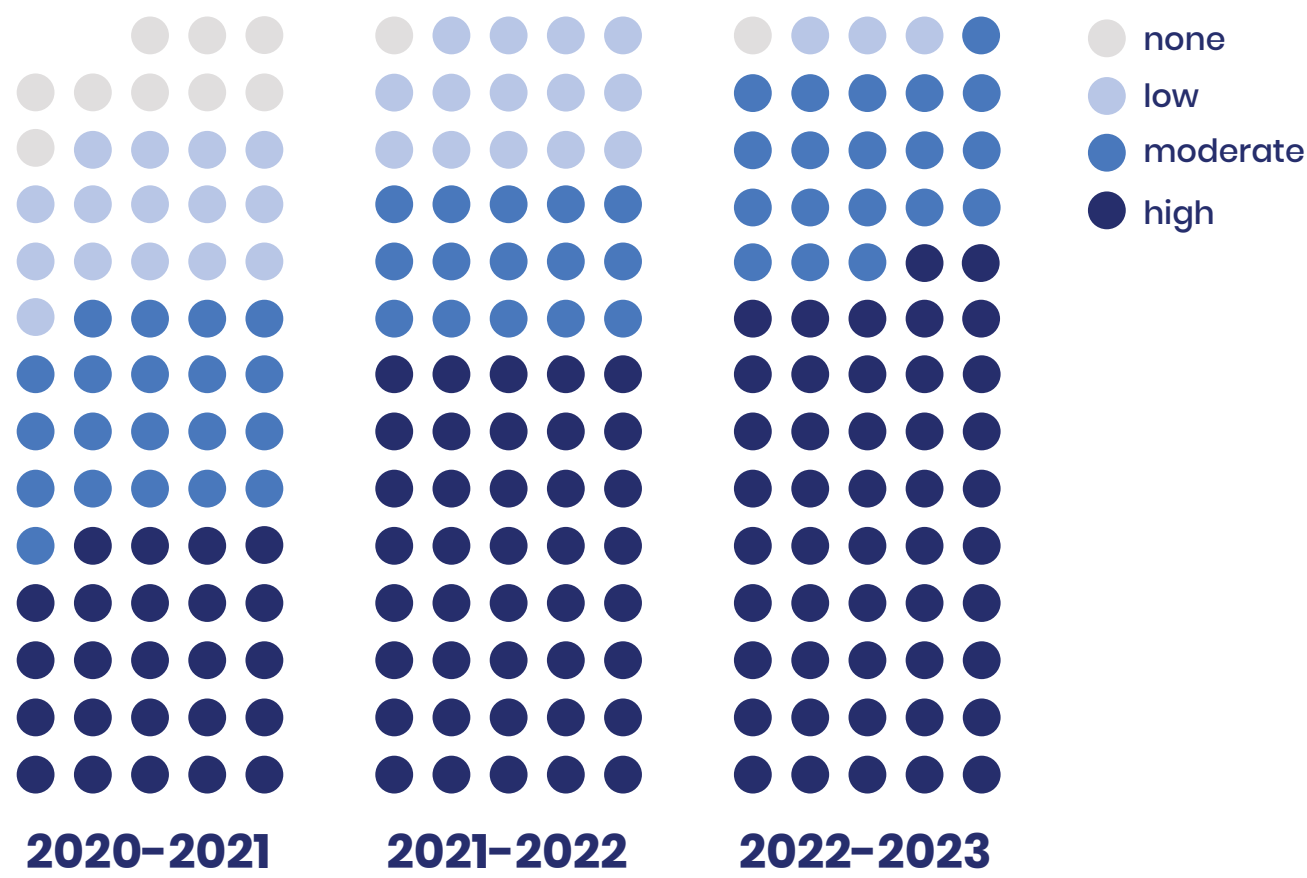
In Uganda, which also hosts many refugee communities, the government has noted teachers' limited digital skills as a barrier to scaling digital education solutions across the country. In the West Nile subregion, enrolment tracking has been unreliable, with learner registration typically done by hand, resulting in incomplete records. In response, the Bridges to Impact team conducted capacity strengthening and knowledge mobilization activities for teachers and government officials. Following a training session in August 2022, teachers reported learning new ways to collect rigorous data; they gained new EdTech skills and knowledge along with a desire to use these tools in future.

PROGRESS ON...

ENGAGEMENT AND REACH



LEVELS OF COUNTRY ENGAGEMENT



El Salvador and Chile: Ministry counterparts in El Salvador and Chile are learning from each other on inclusive education and teacher training following a learning visit facilitated by the KIX LAC Hub.

Chad: Chad formally endorsed and committed to scaling the *Can't Wait to Learn* program advanced by *Bridges to Impact through Innovative EdTech: Forging links between policy, research and practice*.

Uzbekistan: Uzbekistan's Presidential schools have adopted the TPD@Scale model of teacher training, developed through *Adapting and scaling teacher professional development approaches in Ghana, Honduras and Uzbekistan*.

SELECTED CONTRIBUTIONS TO RESEARCH UPTAKE

This year, evidence of results from KIX-supported knowledge mobilization and capacity strengthening can be seen from the countries on this map.

Map Legend

- LAC
- EAP
- Africa 21
- Africa 19
- Knowledge mobilization
- Capacity strengthening

Sierra Leone: Following its engagements with a comparative study of accelerated education programs and girls' focused education models in Ghana, Nigeria, and Sierra Leone, Sierra Leone allocated over US\$22 million to AEPs for out-of-school children.

Niger: Following a national policy dialogue organized by the KIX Africa 21 Hub, a committee of policymakers, researchers, and civil society members have selected three promising innovations that can be scaled to strengthen Niger's education policy and practice.

Lesotho: Representatives from Lesotho are using knowledge from a KIX Africa 19 Hub Community of Practice on CBC to train others on implementing new concepts in their national education system.

Vietnam: Following a KIX EAP Hub learning cycle on 21st century skills, Vietnam is developing guidelines and training resources for teaching these skills across the country.



FEATURE THEME

Scaling educational options for out-of-school children

Worldwide, an estimated 244 million children and youth were out of school in 2021. Despite greater access to education, completion rates in primary and secondary education have stagnated across many countries, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, where only 43% of girls and 46% of boys completed lower secondary school in 2020. COVID-19 exacerbated this challenge, keeping large numbers of children and youth, especially girls, out of school for extended periods of time. The resulting learning loss represents a significant loss of human potential.

Despite a wide range of measures to increase enrolment and school retention, progress on the goal of having all children and youth in school and learning has stalled. Several innovative programs and practices therefore target the specific needs of out-of-school children, helping them transition back into formal education and reducing the pressures that caused them to leave school in the first place. These include:

- nonformal and accelerated education,
- alternative learning,
- education campaigns, and
- after-school programs for at-risk students.

Thanks to recent reviews and analysis, there is a growing body of evidence around programs and practices that serve the needs of out-of-school children and youth. Yet, considerable knowledge and evidence gaps remain.

A comparative study of accelerated education programs

This study is generating lessons to enhance the scalability of accelerated education programs (AEPs) in rural and fragile contexts in Ghana, Nigeria, and Sierra Leone. It is examining the impact of four ongoing innovations in the targeted countries: the School for Life Complementary Basic Education Project; the Strategic Approaches to Girls Education project; Addressing Education in Northeast Nigeria; and the Purposeful-Girls Circles project in Sierra Leone.

The Back2School project: Scaling an accelerated learning model for out-of-school girls in rural communities

Back2School is addressing the challenges facing out-of-school girls in rural communities in Ethiopia, Kenya, and Tanzania by refining an accelerated learning model called Complementary Basic Education in Tanzania (COBET). It is generating evidence about the effectiveness of the COBET model and how the key elements can be adapted and scaled in Ethiopia and Kenya.

How KIX research is responding

Four applied research projects are tackling the challenge of out-of-school children and youth as well as those at risk of dropping out. Together, these [OOSC] projects span 11 partners and 15 countries in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. Along with assessing the effectiveness of programs and approaches aimed at serving the needs of out-of-school youth, they seek to understand if and how these can be scaled across national education systems and in other contexts.

A new model of bridging classes to improve learning of out-of-school children and youth

This project focuses on reintegrating out-of-school youth in West Africa back into school and offering better educational opportunities to those who will not return. By exploring nonformal education practices that have proven successful as bridges back to formal education, it is identifying critical success factors and adapting them to generate a new model that offers bilingual bridging options for youth in Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Mali, Niger, and Senegal.

Effectiveness and scalability of programs for children who are out of school and at risk of dropping out

This project explores educational campaigns and after-school programs in Bangladesh, Bhutan, and Nepal to harness evidence on what works to identify out-of-school children and those at risk of dropping out. Focusing on equity, inclusion, and gender equality, the study is implementing and evaluating campaigns and programs chosen and adapted to each country's context to identify factors that determine their success, cost-effectiveness, and scalability.

What we're finding

In December 2022, KIX commissioned a synthesis of these four projects, which aims to identify lessons and evidence that can inform education debates while creating opportunities for mutual learning and collaboration among KIX project partners. A final consolidated synthesis report will be available in early 2024.

An initial scan of 18 reports from these projects – including baseline studies, interim technical reports, and situation analyses – has identified the following gaps in knowledge and evidence:

- Countries need **practical guidance** on how to roll out and scale policies and programs targeting out-of-school children and youth. The needs of these children are not sufficiently integrated into national education sector plans, budgets, or data systems. More research is needed on how to integrate and sustain potential solutions within formal education systems.
- There is limited knowledge about **program effectiveness and efficiency**. This includes gaps related to program characteristics and quality, how out-of-school learners are recruited, how teachers are hired

and trained, and how well programs and curriculum are being implemented.

- We need to know more about a wider range of **learner outcomes** resulting from different learning models – looking beyond literacy and numeracy to their impacts on life skills and socio-emotional learning. More evidence is also needed on the benefits of various models in emergency education, particularly in areas of crisis or conflict.
- More evidence is needed on how **gender-related challenges** intersect with poverty, insecurity, pregnancy, early marriage, and other social, economic, and cultural factors. We need to know how to design alternative learning approaches so they are gender-transformative and can change perceptions about girls' education.
- There is insufficient evidence to track the effectiveness and outcomes of **dropout-prevention** strategies, such as financial incentives, school feeding programs, and campaigns to counter early marriage.
- We need to better understand **how to build capacity** – at multiple levels – to strengthen relevant programs.

Exploring accelerated education programs for conflict-affected children in Nigeria

In 2021, some 20 million school-aged children in Nigeria were not enrolled in school. A [comparative study of accelerated education programs](#) in three West African countries – Ghana, Nigeria, and Sierra Leone – set out to explore how and why education systems were failing out-of-school children and how to scale effective responses.

A recent [cross-country synthesis](#) reveals that AEPs in all three countries have been largely successful in equipping participating children with the literacy and numeracy skills they need to reintegrate into formal education. But these countries also share many constraints: schools are inaccessible for many children and lack trained teachers and essential infrastructure.

The situation in Nigeria is dire, largely due to conflict in several regions. The study surveyed 30 communities in northeastern Borno state – an area made infamous by the kidnapping of hundreds of schoolgirls by the militant group Boko Haram. Only 48% of primary school-aged girls are in attendance in the country's northeast.

The study revealed other factors keeping girls from school. Focus group interviews with community stakeholders and parents found that financial difficulties, a lack of parental support, and student motivation are also key. Many parents in surveyed communities have themselves received only religious instruction and have reservations about formal schooling for their children. Pervasive gender norms also place a heavy domestic burden on girls and encourage early marriage. In impoverished households, both boys and girls are frequently taken out of school to generate income.

To address this crisis, Nigeria has partnered with local and international organizations to roll out accelerated education and nonformal learning programs, including girl-focused models. In Borno, an accelerated three-year basic education program covering three levels of mathematics, language skills, basic science, and history was piloted with 8,000 out-of-school learners, with plans to scale into two adjacent states.

The study found that accelerated learning had a positive effect on student retention and children's completion of formal education. Sixty-seven percent of children in an AEP completed primary school. In addition to making gains in literacy, the programs helped raise awareness of the right to education and reduced child labour and rates of early marriage. Unfortunately, for many children in AEPs, the transition to formal school is undermined by a lack of money and family support. In addition to increasing school access, improving facilities, and enhancing teacher-to-pupil ratios, researchers recommend more work with parents and communities to reinforce the value of education.



Understanding the drivers of poor school attendance in Dhaka, Bangladesh

School dropout rates are a major concern in urban Bangladesh, where poverty, the high cost of living, and deplorable living conditions are among the reasons why children and youth drop out, especially after primary levels. According to UNICEF, 33% of upper secondary school-aged children in Dhaka were not in school in 2019.

KIX-supported research in Bangladesh, Bhutan, and Nepal is exploring the effectiveness and scalability of programs for out-of-school children and those at risk of dropping out. In Bangladesh, a mixed-methods study that included a baseline survey covered 1,040 students in four primary and four secondary schools. Most live in overcrowded settlements of Dhaka that lack basic infrastructure and amenities. Students, teachers, and parents were also interviewed. Findings reveal how attendance is directly affected by the living conditions in these underserved settlements. Nearly all teachers point to illness as the most common reason for absenteeism, with students' health undermined by a lack of sanitation and access to health care. Surveys confirmed that most children lack basic knowledge about nutrition, health, and hygiene. Over 43% of teachers also pointed to family issues, with students staying home to care for sick family members or attend to emergencies.

Poor student motivation is another major factor, with teachers struggling to meaningfully engage learners. The lack of connection was exacerbated by COVID-19 lockdowns, when many students trapped at home spent long hours on digital devices. Researchers point to an alarming rise in online gaming that affects academic performance, mental health, and overall well-being. Back in class, many have lost ground in reading and writing and are struggling to adapt to the new syllabus.

Researchers are working with parents, teachers, and other stakeholders to tackle the factors driving absenteeism and dropout rates. This includes strengthening teachers' capacities in experiential learning, developing blended online and in-person learning models to widen student access, and working with parents to ensure a supportive home environment. A wide range of activities — including science and math fairs, health and nutrition campaigns, and support for online content creation — are designed to motivate hard-to-reach children and improve their diets and hygiene.

“Students have become so restless; they do not want to study at all. We are working harder than before, but ... realizing that we need to adopt new teaching strategies for them to pay attention in classes.”

– Teacher informant, Dhaka



Photo: GPE/Salman Saeed

WHAT WE ARE LEARNING

This year generated cross-program learning and reflection on several topics core to the KIX mandate, including effective strategies for knowledge mobilization; integrating gender equality, equity, and inclusion objectives in education policy and practice; and adapting innovations at scale.

How applied research projects mobilize knowledge

Analysis of monitoring data revealed that KIX applied research projects use five key knowledge mobilization strategies. To advance the uptake of evidence in education system decision-making, they

- invest in relationship building at the start of research and throughout its implementation;
- involve relevant education stakeholders in the rollout of project interventions;
- facilitate knowledge exchange and coordination among these stakeholders;
- develop knowledge products tailored to their needs; and
- take advantage of windows of opportunity, such as education sector planning or reform processes.

Since the use of research evidence is often not seen until later stages – when findings have been consolidated, reviewed, and shared, and effective relationships have been established – projects track different signs of progress toward research uptake. Early-stage results may take the form of endorsements by national education stakeholders, local governments, development partners, or other implementing agencies. More substantive signs of research uptake include the use of research findings to develop, implement, or adapt policies or to scale innovations that have been successfully pilot tested.

The experiences of KIX projects show that effectively positioning research for use in education policy and practice requires a flexible combination of strategies, adjusted over the course of research. In the coming year, KIX staff and research grantees will offer further insights on knowledge mobilization in a series of blog posts.

One strategy used in some KIX projects is research co-creation, which directly involves stakeholders as co-owners and active partners rather than as end-users. The approach has emerged as a way to achieve more fair and sustainable research impact, increasing the likelihood that evidence will be taken up by those it is intended to serve. This year, the [Data must speak about positive deviance approaches to learning](#) project shared its experiences with co-creating research with education stakeholders. In a blog post on [four realities when co-creating education research](#), it emphasized the need to recognize different perspectives and capacities; expect competing priorities and changing in-country conditions; anticipate data-related challenges; and tailor research outputs to the local context.

KIX hubs are instrumental in mobilizing knowledge and are reflecting on ways to enhance stakeholders' use of research evidence. At the first in-person inter-hub workshop, held in Ottawa in February 2023, hubs observed that they could play a greater role in connecting research projects with ministries of education. As research projects mature, hubs will work to deepen the involvement of researchers in events such as national policy dialogues, CoPs and learning cycles, regional conferences, and KIX knowledge synthesis activities. Hub coordinators also explored the potential for greater inter-hub cooperation in knowledge mobilization, such as through hosting joint events, public campaigns, and inter-regional exchange visits.

Addressing gender equality, equity, and inclusion

All hubs have identified gender equality, equity, and inclusion (GEI) as a priority, and they provide an essential forum for ministry representatives and other education stakeholders to examine their practices, identify challenges, and share knowledge on ways to enhance gender and social inclusion in the classroom and through planning, budgeting, curriculum reform, data collection, and policymaking. For example, in June 2022, the KIX EAP Hub held a webinar that explored how girls are undercounted in global education data regimes and which research-based frameworks could be used to improve the situation.

At their inter-hub gathering, the four hubs reflected on the need for a more intersectional approach to GEI, exploring how gender interacts with other critical aspects of equity and inclusion – such as displacement and the rural-urban divide – to affect educational quality and access. In tackling gender equality, they suggested focusing more on neglected areas, such as the situation of boys, and exploring exclusion through a masculinities lens. They also observed that language matters in discussing GEI in a southern context, where northern discourse may not reflect local realities and could inhibit country ownership.

To deepen its understanding of how GEI is integrated in the activities of hubs and applied research projects and is reflected in their results, KIX has commissioned an in-depth analysis of its monitoring data with a specific focus on GEI. The results of this analysis are expected in the fall of 2023.

Adapting innovations to scale

Scaling proven innovations can be an effective way to address challenges in education. But what works in one context or at a given scale may need to be adjusted to work in others. Eight KIX projects exchanged experiences on how educational innovations could be adapted to scale at a KIX-supported workshop at the [Comparative and International Education Society](#) in April 2022. [Three main lessons](#) emerged from their exchanges:

- Successful adaptation requires embracing a mindset that supports incorporating adaptation into the scaling process from the outset. This requires being reflective and flexible and viewing adaptation as ongoing.
- The process of adapting an innovation involves four key elements: assessing its relevance and effectiveness in new contexts; deciding which core elements need to be preserved and which can be adjusted or let go; contextualizing the innovation; and paying attention to the factors influencing its quality.
- Involving stakeholders is crucial. The more buy-in and ownership an innovation has, the better its chances of success. When involved at an early stage, stakeholders can become champions of the innovation.

ROSIE partners also explored lessons from what went wrong in their pursuit of scaling through a virtual workshop that created a safe space to discuss mistakes. These valuable insights – such as the need to start with a rigorous understanding of the scaling context and to check assumptions and definitions with team members and stakeholders – are captured in [The power of mistakes: 10 lessons to leverage learning in scaling](#).

UPCOMING PRIORITIES

With KIX now extended to 2027, the main priorities in the coming year include extending and expanding the work of the four regional hubs and launching a new mechanism for targeted country support. We will also continue to synthesize and share lessons and findings from existing research while launching new calls for research on KIX priority themes.

Extending hub support for knowledge sharing and mobilization

At year end, all four hubs were completing proposals to extend their work to 2027, with approvals expected early in the next program year. Regional hubs will continue to drive inter-country knowledge sharing and peer exchange, helping partner countries to apply evidence to their programs and policies. They will remain the key conduit for country partner input on the KIX programming agenda, supporting communication between the KIX national delegation, the GPE focal point, coordinating agencies, and other key stakeholders in local education groups. Hubs will develop differentiated strategies for countries at different levels of engagement with KIX. They will support highly engaged countries in accelerating the uptake of evidence into education system policies, while providing those with less capacity or interest with tailored strengthening activities and targeted communication strategies to highlight the value of participating in KIX.

Country support

The KIX 2021 mid-term evaluation, along with input from partner countries, revealed a demand for individual country support focused on national educational challenges and linked to specific policy moments. Hub extension proposals will thus include plans for responding to this need. Hubs will develop plans for demand-driven, customized research, capacity building for evidence use, and knowledge mobilization assistance

to ministries of education and other key stakeholders. Over the next three years, this targeted country support will address all three KIX result areas — generating new knowledge, building capacity, and mobilizing knowledge to strengthen education systems — on a country-by-country basis.

Synthesizing lessons and findings from KIX research

With many existing KIX research grants at or nearing completion, the roll-up of findings and lessons got under way this year and will continue through 2023-24, focusing next on gender equality, equity, and inclusion and on teacher professional development.

Supporting new research on priority themes

KIX will deepen research through new calls for proposals and through extensions to successful ongoing projects. As advised by the mid-term evaluation, the focus of research will narrow from six broad themes to a tighter set of priorities identified through hubs. Based on early consultations, we expect to issue calls for proposals on these four topics in 2023-24, following a scoping study to flesh out details:

- improving the quality and use of **education data and data systems** for decision-makers at all levels;
- supporting **gender equality, equity, and inclusion**, including understanding social norms and educational approaches to support the intersecting needs of all people;
- increasing **equitable access to early childhood education**; and
- strengthening **teacher professional development**.

To assess results from existing projects and generate lessons from their implementation, KIX will commission an evaluation of the original research portfolio, to be completed in early 2024.

Moving beyond the pandemic response focus of the KIX Observatory on COVID-19 Responses in Africa's Educational Systems, a closed call

will be used to identify appropriate grantees to continue rapid-response comparative policy research on education system resilience. KIX will also continue to fund research on scaling innovations and impact through a redesign of the ROSIE initiative. Finally, KIX will maintain its Opportunities and Adaptive Management Fund to respond to emerging themes and priorities.



Photo: GPE/Elvix Kwanu

ANNEX I: FINANCIAL SUMMARY

USD(\$)	BUDGET	ACTUALS	VARIANCE
PROGRAM ACTIVITIES			
Learning exchange mechanism			
Regional learning partner	2,570,348	2,599,135	(28,787)
Funding mechanism			
Global grants	6,900,321	6,750,565	149,756
Regional grants	7,078,175	5,545,065	1,553,110
Early learning grants	900,000	1,123,593	(223,593)
Research on scaling	717,177	476,514	240,663
Supporting activities			
Program activities*	754,229	278,194	476,035
OAM fund**	186,064	204,387	(18,323)
Digital platform	187,267	145,081	42,186
EXTERNAL AUDIT	18,984	12,110	6,874
PROGRAM MANAGEMENT			
Direct costs	2,144,650	1,731,562	413,088
Indirect costs (7%)	1,502,006	1,320,634	181,372
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	22,959,221	20,186,840	2,772,381

* Program activities include monitoring, learning, and evaluation and communications and engagement.

**OAM stands for the Opportunity and Adaptive Management support fund.

The majority of KIX funds were dedicated to the four regional hubs funded through the learning exchange mechanism, and applied research financed through the funding mechanism. Projections are scheduled at the beginning of each grant and actual expenditures can vary depending on the rhythm of project activities and grantee reporting. Expenses for the regional hubs and global grants were on track against original projections. Payments to regional grants were overall somewhat lower than projected due to some payments having been posted during the previous year, and some projects being underspent this year. Payments to a set of five projects on early learning that began in 2022 were somewhat higher than originally projected.

Program activities includes functions such as monitoring, evaluation and learning, and communications and knowledge translation. Knowledge synthesis activities were slower to start than planned, resulting in an underspend against projections, but these are now underway. The Opportunity and Adaptive Management fund finances the Covid-19 Observatory project, and the Digital platform budget pays for the KIX website and collaborative electronic workspace. Costs were less than projected, in line with an evaluation of the collaborative workspace aspect of the website recommended reduced investment.

Direct program costs were less than projected due to staff vacancies and lower travel expenses compared to initial plans.