

Global Partnership for Education
Knowledge and Innovation Exchange

KIX ANNUAL REPORT

2023-2024

FOSTERING INNOVATIONS IN
EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION





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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 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

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Cover photo: GPE/ Translieu/ Nainkwa

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Acronyms and glossary

ECE: Early childhood education

GEI: Gender equality, equity and inclusion

GPE: Global Partnership for Education

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 EMAP: Regional hub for GPE partner countries in Eastern Europe, the Middle East and North Africa, Central Asia and Asia-Pacific (previously: KIX EAP)

KIX LAC: Regional hub for GPE partner countries in Latin America and the Caribbean

LMICs: Low- and middle-income countries

MEL: Monitoring, evaluation and learning

Partnership compact: A road map to transformation articulating how a GPE partner country intends to work with others around a priority reform with the potential to catalyze system-wide change

PBL: Play-based 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

Scaling outputs: Outputs that capture insights about how to scale the impact of the education intervention in focus

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

Thematic outputs: Outputs that present new knowledge in a thematic area of focus (e.g., teacher professional development, out-of-school children and youth, data systems and data use)

CONTENTS

1	Executive summary
3	Message from the KIX Executive Committee
4	Introduction
5	Milestones
6	At a glance
9	Progress
9	Generating knowledge through research
11	Mobilizing knowledge to increase impact
13	Strengthening capacity to translate evidence into action
16	Feature theme: Fostering innovations in early childhood education
19	What we are learning
21	Upcoming priorities
22	Financial summary





EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Photo: GPE/ Kelley Lynch

This year, the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) Knowledge and Innovation Exchange (KIX) made significant strides toward its three key priorities: generating high-quality, demand-driven research; mobilizing insights from applied research and learning exchanges into action; and strengthening the capacity of knowledge producers and users in developing countries to scale up successful innovations and integrate evidence-based practices into education planning, policy and implementation. Progress is evident not only in the increasing volume of high-quality research, but in the frequency with which partners are taking up research and applying it to their local contexts.

This year's report features the theme of early childhood education, dovetailing with the inaugural UN International Day of Play. KIX-supported ECE research plays an important role in informing evidence-based policies and practices that integrate play into early learning.

Knowledge generation that unlocks scaling

This year, key areas of research focus included early childhood education, teacher professional development, and data systems. Additionally, KIX generated significant new knowledge to facilitate the scaling of educational innovations. Projects produced 164 primary research outputs, with 77% addressing gender equality, equity and inclusion (GEI). These efforts aim to address education priorities in GPE partner countries, exploring the impact, cost-effectiveness and scalability of successful programs.

Scaling research highlighted critical findings in three main areas. One group of studies examined how to scale educational innovations, such as through a youth-led mentorship program for marginalized girls in Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe, or through digital adaptations for rural education in Honduras and Nicaragua. These studies emphasized the need for contextual adaptation and government integration. A second set of scaling research focused on impact and cost-effectiveness, providing crucial data for policymakers, shedding light on the financial viability

of scaling successful pilots and guiding their decisions on scalability and sustainability. A third group concentrated on GEI. In rural communities of Ethiopia, Kenya and Tanzania, for example, research produced guidelines for inclusive education, while in Tanzania, KIX-funded research tailored curricula to ensure gender responsiveness.

The Research on Scaling the Impacts of Innovation in Education (ROSIE) project summarized lessons on scaling experiences and decision-making processes in low- and middle-income countries. ROSIE's insights have guided national education decision-makers in adopting strategies to promote equity and inclusion as they scale education initiatives.

KIX also launched a series of calls for proposals this year to generate additional new knowledge on five themes: GEI, data systems and data use, early childhood care and education, teacher professional development and education in emergencies.

Knowledge mobilization for increased impact

KIX knowledge mobilization activities promoted the uptake of evidence to inform educational policies and strategies in GPE partner countries. Applied research projects and regional hubs conducted 346 knowledge mobilization events and produced 251 secondary knowledge products, resulting in nearly 50 instances of research and innovation uptake.

Regional hubs facilitated valuable inter-country learning and collaboration, allowing countries to share best practices and develop strategies for common challenges. For example, the KIX Africa 19 Hub enabled knowledge-sharing between Uganda and Kenya, providing insights that informed Uganda's curriculum reform efforts linked with GPE funding processes. These hubs also provide platforms for national experts to engage in policy dialogues and identify solutions for improving access to education, particularly for marginalized groups. Hubs hosted national dialogues in six African countries this year, sparking insights on inclusion in education.

Research findings have been pivotal in informing national policies and plans and in fostering the adoption of education innovations at scale. For instance, Vietnam used research findings on using data to improve equity and inclusion to shape its new education development plan. In Mongolia, e-courses for teachers developed through KIX research are now being scaled up through national e-learning platforms.

Capacity strengthening

KIX strengthened capacities at several levels through 130 applied research project activities and 20 regional hub events that aimed to equip stakeholders in GPE partner countries to translate research into effective action. Through workshops, learning visits, and webinars, KIX facilitated knowledge exchange between and within countries, fostering collaboration and innovation. These efforts targeted national education ministries, district officials, school leaders, teachers and community members.

KIX hubs expanded their capacity-building efforts, prioritizing long-term activities like communities of practice and learning cycles. These initiatives bolstered data-driven decision-making by enhancing countries' abilities to collect, analyze and use data for education policy and planning. A significant example is in The Gambia, where KIX-funded research has contributed to the adoption of an open-source platform for real-time data access, enhancing regional education operations.

Teacher professional development was another key theme, with projects in Kyrgyzstan and Mongolia enhancing educators' digital skills, leading to improved teaching effectiveness and student participation. KIX also contributed to gender equality, equity and inclusion in Haiti, Nicaragua and Honduras through initiatives that created safer and more equitable learning environments.

Individual countries also began to tap the direct, tailored capacity strengthening support available through KIX's new country support mechanism. For example, the Maldives' National Institute of Education partnered with a KIX grantee to strengthen staff capacity on integrating 21st-century skills into the national curriculum.

What we are learning

This year, ROSIE revealed important lessons about scaling — including on connecting with national decision-making about scaling, and the continuing need to consider gender equality, equity and inclusion in scaling processes. KIX applied research projects also shared valuable insights on connecting with national decision-making processes, based on their experience in engaging stakeholders on the ground.

Upcoming priorities

In 2024–2025, KIX will enhance knowledge exchange and collaboration with key partners. The four regional hubs will continue to support intercountry learning as well as country-specific agendas. Key events will promote dialogue and best practices. With 19 research projects concluding, KIX will support knowledge mobilization to reach decision-makers. KIX will launch new projects on five themes based on this year's calls for proposals. The country support mechanism will provide rapid, tailored responses to national educational needs. Most importantly, KIX will continue to demonstrate impact, informing future efforts to achieve equitable, high-quality education.



MESSAGE FROM THE KIX EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Photo: GPE/ Kelley Lynch

In the face of persistent educational challenges affecting millions of children, this fifth annual report on the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) Knowledge and Innovation Exchange (KIX) highlights the progress of KIX in GPE partner countries. A joint endeavor with Canada's International Development Research Centre (IDRC), KIX supports the increased production and use of evidence in national policy and practice dialogues, through demand-led, targeted, and brokered collaboration between knowledge producers and policy stakeholders. This approach is strengthening national ecosystems for evidence in education.

Five years into KIX's implementation, ministry of education officials are deepening their engagement with KIX hubs and applied research projects. KIX grantees and partners are increasingly connecting with government and policy decision-makers. Overall, KIX is expanding and deepening national and transnational evidence networks to foster exchange, learning and more inclusive, evidence-based policy dialogue.

In addition to charting our progress, this report shares examples and stories from a wide range of partner countries, including from governments, civil society, development partners and academia. They emphasize the growing importance of timely and robust evidence and the critical need for partnerships and collaboration within and across national borders and among diverse stakeholders. Responsive, co-created research and knowledge activities have a significant impact.

This year's report features KIX work on early childhood care and education, with an emphasis on play-based learning. It also reflects on evolutions in KIX strategies, approved in a costed extension in 2022. These include a country support mechanism that provides targeted support to individual countries, and new rounds of research funding for a more targeted set of thematic priorities.

We are encouraged by KIX's ability to respond to country needs, fill gaps and strengthen links to national policy processes — thanks to deepening support by GPE and its sustained partnership with IDRC. We will work to ensure KIX continues to build knowledge partnerships at national, regional and global levels and adapts to changing political, societal and environmental dynamics. We look forward to collaborating with partner countries and organizations in the global education community to transform education systems.

Margarita Focas Licht, Partnerships Manager, GPE

Naser Faruqui, Director of Education and Science, IDRC

The Global Partnership for Education (GPE) Knowledge and Innovation Exchange (KIX) celebrates its fifth year with this report showcasing significant progress in driving positive change across GPE partner countries.

Key achievements in 2023–2024 relate to three core KIX objectives: knowledge generation, knowledge mobilization, and capacity strengthening. Beginning with the Progress section, the report delves into the key outcomes and results of concluding projects, showcasing the lasting impact of KIX research.

This year focused on operationalizing the program’s extension to 2027, with an additional USD88 million allocated to support contextually relevant evidence and knowledge sharing. Four regional hubs continue to play a critical role in connecting GPE partner countries, increasing the reach of KIX applied research projects, and connecting research and learning into the processes that GPE supports in partner countries.

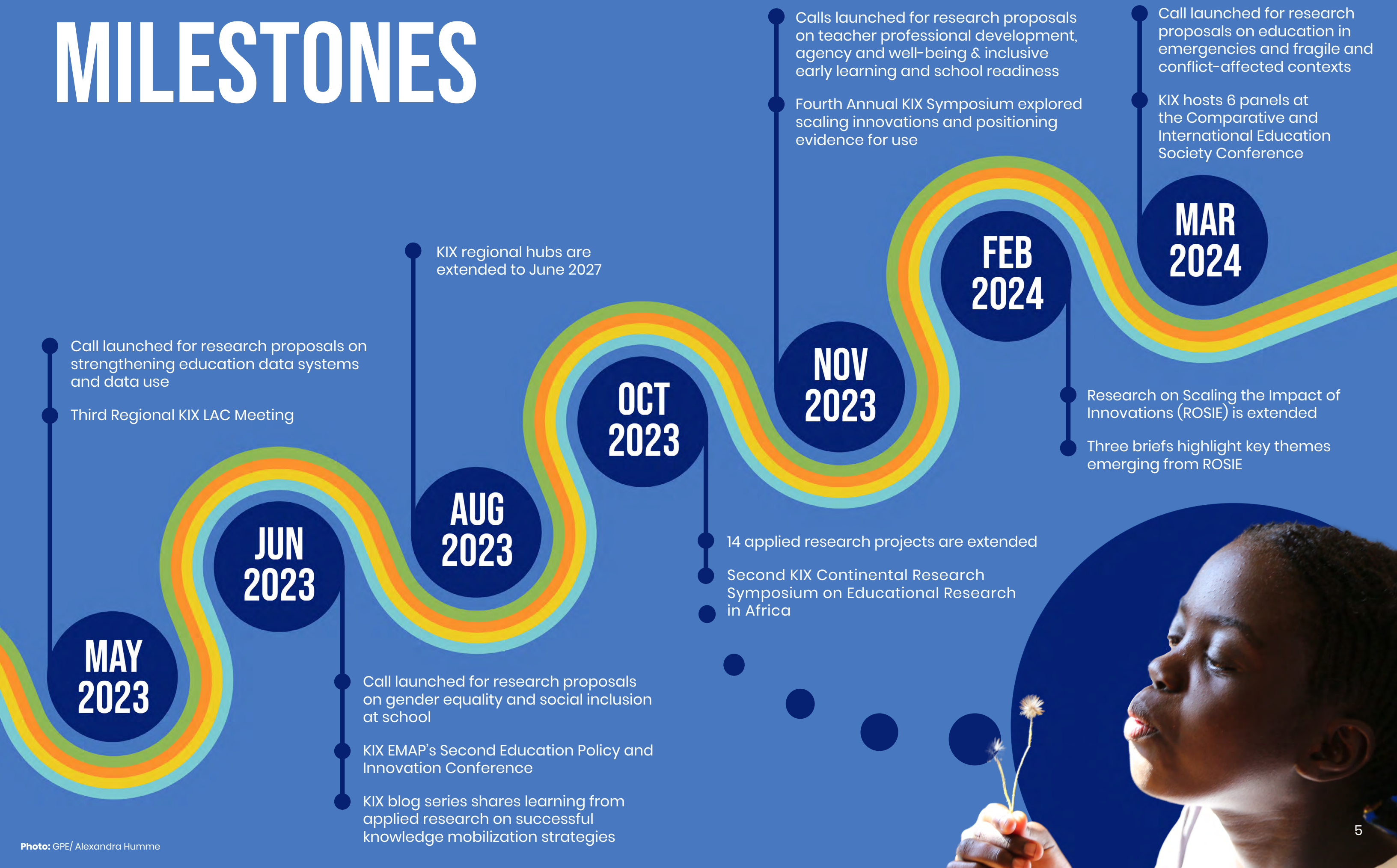
Since 2020, KIX regional hubs have facilitated more than 230 knowledge-building activities with direct impact for policymakers. The extension allows these hubs to further facilitate knowledge exchange, synthesize evidence and mobilize knowledge uptake. Further expanding the impact of KIX, knowledge mobilization continued from maturing research projects, while 19 new applied research projects were launched. Furthermore, project extensions were granted to 14 successful applied research projects to enable them to continue exploring diverse education innovations and effective scaling strategies.

The new country support mechanism, announced in last year’s annual report, brings KIX increased agility to respond to country priorities and needs by providing direct, targeted evidence mobilization and tailored capacity strengthening. In 2023–2024, the Maldives and El Salvador — among others — benefited from this targeted approach. Over the next three years, country support for education systems will respond to more evidence needs on a country-by-country basis.

This year’s report features the theme of early childhood education (ECE), highlighting the insights and contributions from research on early learning. Investing in ECE fosters positive change for families, communities and future generations by enhancing cognitive and social skills. It empowers parents and prepares all children to reach their full potential, ultimately contributing to a more equitable society.

INTRODUCTION

MILESTONES





AT A GLANCE

RESEARCH OUTPUTS

PRIMARY	164 this year	370 since 2020
SECONDARY	373 this year	849 since 2020

ENGAGEMENT AND REACH

EVENTS	556 this year	1,756 since 2020
PARTICIPANTS	25,682 this year	77,622 since 2020
>80% of total participants from GPE partner countries		
PARTICIPANTS FROM GPE PARTNER COUNTRIES	20,639 this year	62,883 since 2020

MAP LEGEND

- Africa 19 Hub
- Africa 21 Hub
- Europe, Middle East and North Africa, Asia, and Pacific (EMAP) Hub
- Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) Hub

COUNTRY ENGAGEMENT



UPTAKE OF EVIDENCE AND INNOVATION*

EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST	43 this year	114 since 2020
USE OR INTENDED USE	51 this year	86 since 2020
CITATIONS AND MENTIONS	32 this year	70 since 2020

- *Full indicator names
- Expressions of interest in using project research and interventions by educational stakeholders in GPE partner countries and international development actors
 - Use, or intention to use, project evidence in the education policy process by educational stakeholders in GPE partner countries
 - Citations and mentions of project interventions or evidence in policy documents, speeches and publications



APPLIED RESEARCH

14,884

PARTICIPANTS FROM GPE
PARTNER COUNTRIES

17,845

TOTAL PARTICIPANTS

479

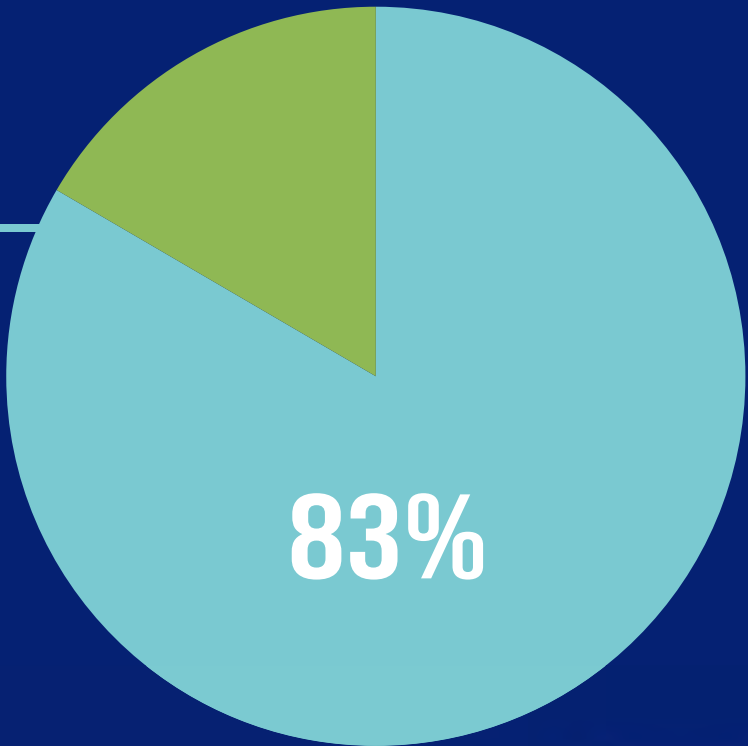
CAPACITY STRENGTHENING
AND KNOWLEDGE
MOBILIZATION EVENTS
(62% RELATED TO GEI)

251

SECONDARY
KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTS
(42% RELATED TO GEI)

85

GPE PARTNER
COUNTRIES
PARTICIPATING IN
ACTIVITIES



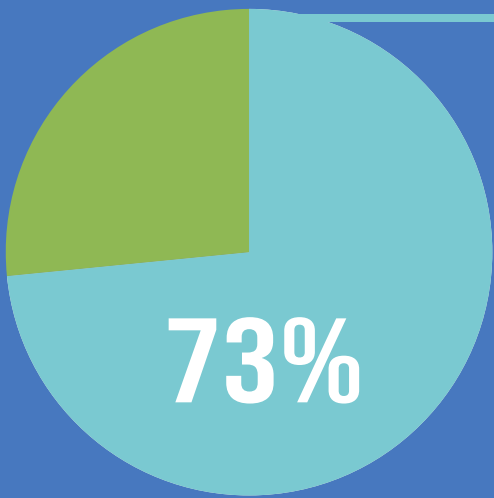
KIX HUBS

5,755

PARTICIPANTS FROM GPE
PARTNER COUNTRIES

7,837

TOTAL PARTICIPANTS



77

CAPACITY STRENGTHENING
AND KNOWLEDGE
MOBILIZATION EVENTS
(62% RELATED TO GEI)

122

SECONDARY
KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTS
(35% RELATED TO GEI)

85

GPE PARTNER
COUNTRIES
PARTICIPATING IN
ACTIVITIES





PROGRESS

Photo: GPE/ Federico Scoppa

KIX fuels education advancement by:

- 1. Generating knowledge through demand-driven research**
- 2. Mobilizing knowledge to increase impact, and**
- 3. Strengthening capacity to translate evidence into action**

KIX focuses on six themes identified in 2019 and further prioritized by education system stakeholder perspectives that have surfaced through KIX regional hubs since 2020. These themes include teacher professional development; early childhood education; gender equality, equity and inclusion (GEI); learning; out-of-school children and youth; and data use. Across the research, projects identify proven or promising innovative approaches to education system challenges and develop and mobilize evidence to scale positive impact. This section presents selected examples to showcase the variety of ways that KIX helps countries access and use the evidence and innovation they need to strengthen education systems.

1. Generating knowledge through research

This year saw significant strides in knowledge generation related to all KIX themes. As many research projects culminated, researchers documented a wealth of findings in an increased number of primary research outputs. These efforts are critical in addressing education priorities in GPE partner countries, and focus on the topics of scaling educational innovations, the impact of successful programs, how to ensure cost-effectiveness, and promoting GEI.

KIX grantees in 2023–2024 generated 164 primary research outputs, including 101 outputs focused on KIX themes and 63 outputs about scaling impact within those themes. Notably, 77% were related to GEI, underscoring the emphasis projects place on incorporating gender and inclusion into their research and dissemination efforts.

Findings from research on scaling

Scaling has continued to be a major focus of KIX applied research, producing evidence that advances our understanding of how to scale educational innovations equitably and sustainably in GPE partner countries. Applied research projects produced findings in three main areas of knowledge about scaling: how to scale; impact and cost effectiveness considerations for scaling; and promoting GEI within scaling.

How to scale the impact of innovations. One group of studies delved into adapting and contextualizing promising or proven innovations in new settings. They explored the conditions needed for successful scaling and integration into education systems. For example, the project [Scaling a Youth-led Social Support and Mentorship Program to Improve Education Quality for Marginalized Girls](#) examined how to integrate a successful approach for keeping adolescent girls at school into the national education systems of [Tanzania](#), [Zambia](#) and [Zimbabwe](#). The project created country-specific briefs outlining relevant program components, what needs to be considered in scaling up the innovation into government systems, and strategies to support successful implementation.

The [Digital Adaptations for Effective and Inclusive Distance Education in Rural Communities of Honduras and Nicaragua](#) project tested and adapted low-tech methods and associated pedagogies for rural settings. Content was adapted to reflect multicultural and multilingual realities, and the models were further simplified due to the limited equipment and internet connectivity available. The resulting adapted models that were piloted had positive impacts on student learning. The project developed scalability models and roadmaps and is now working with the technical team of the Honduras Ministry of Education so it can adopt the model to support rural education.

Scaling new approaches to teacher training is also a priority within regional hubs. Participants of the Europe, Middle East and North Africa, Asia and Pacific (KIX EMAP) Hub's [learning cycle on teacher professional development at scale](#) published several country case studies focusing on scaling TPD approaches in [Bangladesh](#), [Bhutan](#), [Kyrgyz Republic](#), [Maldives](#) and [Vietnam](#).

Impact and cost-effectiveness. A second group of scaling studies provided evidence on the effectiveness and financial viability of innovations, which can inform decisions on scaling since approaches that work at a pilot level do not always work as effectively at scale. Costing studies are important, as policymakers and other stakeholders must be mindful of costing considerations when deciding about what innovations should be scaled and how.

Impact evaluations conducted by the [Adapting, Testing and Scaling a Proven Summer Pre-primary Education Model in Cambodia, Lao PDR and Tanzania \(LEARN Plus\)](#) project determined whether a summer pre-primary model adapted from Lao PDR is a compelling and cost-effective model to promote school readiness of preschoolers in Cambodia and [Tanzania](#). The analysis was also conducted to determine the full program costs, including hidden costs such as volunteer time and donated resources. Knowing these full costs helps in assessing program sustainability and future scaling.

The [Comparative Study of Accelerated Education Programs and Girls' Focused Education Models in Ghana, Nigeria, and Sierra Leone](#) assessed cost effectiveness and value-for-money regarding accelerated learning programs in [Ghana](#) and [Nigeria](#) for children who have been out of school. The programs were found to be both relatively low-cost and effective for education, which helps make the investment case for governments, including how Ghana might use its 1% budgetary pledge for complementary and accelerated education.

Promoting GEI within scaling. A third group of outputs focuses specifically on gender and inclusion considerations in adapting, piloting and scaling innovations. The [Back2School Project: Scaling an Accelerated Learning Model for Out-of-School Girls in Rural Communities in Ethiopia, Kenya and Tanzania](#) developed and piloted [Gender Equity and Social Inclusion Guidelines for the Scaling of Accelerated Learning Programs](#). These guidelines outline specific roles that teachers, principals, school leaders, parents and community members can play in promoting GEI. The team also made recommendations for scaling different aspects of the guidelines based on the lessons learned from their piloting, and notes the conditions needed for successful scaling. Implementing the LEARN Plus model in Tanzania provided crucial [evidence and recommendations for tailoring the program to the national context](#). These insights helped to ensure that the teaching materials and approaches to teacher training and parental involvement were gender-responsive and inclusive.

Alongside these individual project outputs, the [Research on Scaling the Impact of Innovations in Education project produced three briefs](#) summarizing learnings about scaling experiences from KIX projects. These briefs highlight critical aspects of research for and about scaling, equity considerations and the role of champions in the scaling process.

ROSIE also illuminated perspectives of national education decision-makers when they face decisions about scaling in [government decision-making in education in LMICs](#). This report adds another layer of insight into the practical aspects of scaling innovations. With an extension until 2027 announced this year, ROSIE will continue to support KIX applied research projects in their explorations of scaling and will further advance knowledge about scaling the impact of education innovations in GPE partner countries. Read more about the findings from ROSIE in the section [What we are learning](#).

Supporting new applied research

This year, KIX issued five calls for proposals to support new applied research, based on updated scoping studies that reflect the demands of those working in education systems. New projects have already started on [strengthening education data systems and data use](#), and promoting [gender equality and social inclusion at school](#). Other projects will start in 2024 based on calls related to [teacher professional development, agency and well-being, inclusive early learning and school readiness](#) and [education in emergencies and fragile and conflict-affected contexts](#).

2. Mobilizing knowledge to increase impact

Knowledge mobilization is a critical aspect of KIX's mission. It is not enough to generate new evidence — research needs to be effectively shared and used. In 2023–2024, applied research projects and regional hubs demonstrated significant progress in mobilizing knowledge.

In quantitative terms, this year, applied research projects conducted 346 knowledge mobilization events and produced an additional 251 secondary knowledge products (such as briefs and blogs) to further disseminate the findings captured through their primary research. These efforts produced nearly 50 documented instances of research and innovation uptake by stakeholders. KIX grantees also reported many instances of their work being recognized by explicit endorsement or through citation in publications. Through a blog series, KIX applied research projects further captured [insights about knowledge mobilization](#) strategies and their key role in moving research into action.

Regional hubs conducted 53 knowledge mobilization events and produced 98 secondary knowledge products — resources designed to facilitate further learning and exchange among countries. Country representatives have come together through hubs for bilateral and multilateral knowledge exchange, as well as in national dialogues, and have used these opportunities to inform their own policy discussions.

These efforts in promoting research uptake and fostering knowledge exchange among partner country stakeholders produced substantive results. These can be seen in how research findings are driving national education policies and strategies, and how innovative approaches proven successful in one context are being adopted into education systems at various levels. This section further highlights the importance of knowledge exchange across borders, with regional hubs facilitating discussions between countries on issues of mutual interest. Hubs also successfully hosted series of national dialogues addressing critical issues in individual countries.

The section [What we are learning](#) further details lessons from mobilizing evidence in GPE partner countries.

Informing national policy and planning

Education authorities used evidence generated or identified through KIX research or learning exchanges for policy development, education sector analyses and education–development strategic plans. In some instances, evidence from KIX-supported research contributed to national [partnership compact](#) processes and [GPE system capacity grants](#). For example:

- Vietnam's national assembly is using findings from the [Using Data for Improving Education Equity and Inclusion – MICS-EAGLE](#) project to inform its new education development plan. The project provides crucial data on foundational learning skills, early childhood development and disability.
- Maldives expanded higher secondary education nationwide after a [KIX EMAP learning cycle on equitable access to education with geospatial data](#). The study's findings informed a policy change, making higher secondary education available in all 20 atolls of the Maldives.
- Kyrgyzstan's Ministry of Education revised its national curriculum to remove bias, promoting more equitable interactions and learning materials. It tapped guidance on [tackling gender equality from the early years](#), produced by the [Integrating Early Child Education in Sectoral Planning](#) (BELDS) project.

- In a national policy dialogue supported through the KIX Africa 21 Hub, the Ministry of Education in Burkina Faso identified promising educational practices for wider implementation within the national system to promote teacher collaboration, emergency education curricula and inclusion strategies for children with disabilities.
- In Côte d'Ivoire, findings on female principals' impact on learning from the project [Data Must Speak about Positive Deviance Approaches to Learning](#) informed the national education compact. Similarly, Ghana used the project's research to bolster its GPE application, proposing methods to strengthen its data system for tracking educational progress.

Promoting innovation adoption at multiple levels

Authorities at local, regional and national levels have taken up innovative approaches identified through KIX and integrated them into their education processes and structures. For instance:

- In November 2023, government authorities in three Tanzanian districts officially endorsed an approach to helping adolescent girls stay in school thanks to research on how to adapt and scale it by the [Scaling a Youth-led Social Support and Mentorship Program](#) project. By February 2024, the program had been implemented in 71 new government-run secondary schools.
- The Ministry of Education in Togo started transitioning to a digitized and efficient monitoring system with support from the [Data Use Innovations for Education Management Information Systems project](#), which expands an open-source platform originally developed for the health sector. This transformative initiative replaces paper-based performance evaluation methods with computer tablets.
- E-courses for teachers developed by the [Distance Education to Improve Quality and Access to School Education in Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, and Tajikistan](#) project are scaling up in Mongolia and Kyrgyzstan, with courses now available on national e-learning platforms.

- Kathmandu University’s School of Education incorporated the [School Leaders as Agents of Change Towards Equity and Inclusion](#) project’s open course on inclusive education into their curriculum for school educators.
- Ethiopia’s Luminous Fund, a leader in alternative education programs, adopted a refined, age-appropriate classroom approach piloted by the [Back2School Project](#) in its second-chance program.

Facilitating inter-country learning

KIX regional hubs foster collaboration and knowledge exchange, creating space for national experts to learn from one another. For example, the [KIX EMAP Hub](#) launched a four-month [inter-country learning](#) process on inclusive education for children with disabilities. Education ministry and civil society representatives from Kyrgyzstan, Georgia, Moldova, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan participated in analytical work, study tours and knowledge sharing to identify best practices to improve the accessibility, equity and effectiveness of education for children with disabilities across the region. They also developed national databases of relevant resources.

As Uganda transitions to a competency-based curriculum for primary education, the KIX Africa 19 Hub facilitated a [knowledge-sharing exchange](#) with Kenya. Through a process that included an in-person visit, Ugandan ministry officials learned from the experiences and practices documented by senior Kenyan education officials. This exchange provided valuable insights for Uganda’s ongoing curriculum reform efforts under their new GPE partnership compact.

There are many other examples of hubs creating opportunities for inter-country exchange and learning and contributing to policy and practice development in GPE

partner countries. National representatives are using the hubs to identify areas for collaboration with other countries and to identify policy and practice approaches they could adapt to their contexts.

Sparkling national policy dialogues

Regional hubs also facilitated national policy dialogues on critical challenges and potential solutions within individual countries. Examples include dialogues held in [Cameroon](#), the [Democratic Republic of Congo](#), [The Gambia](#), [Nigeria](#), [South Sudan](#), [Uganda](#) and [Zambia](#), focusing on issues such as the concept of “leaving no one behind” and raising awareness of policies and practices that promote access to education for learners with disabilities.

HOW KIX HUBS CONTRIBUTE TO GPE’S WORK WITH PARTNER COUNTRIES

GPE works with partner countries to help them chart their own pathway to education system transformation by identifying key challenges, implementing priority reforms and aligning all stakeholders to achieve results. KIX supports GPE aims and processes by helping partner countries identify national education priorities and assess relevant evidence and innovations. KIX hubs facilitate discussions on this evidence so countries can consider how best to scale up promising approaches.

This year, for example:



Kenya shared its experience implementing a competency-based curriculum for primary education with Ugandan officials. This knowledge exchange — facilitated by the **KIX Africa 19 Hub** — supported Uganda’s recent adoption of a similar curriculum.



Burkina Faso identified a promising curriculum approach for education in emergencies, through a national policy dialogue supported by the **KIX Africa 21 Hub**. In all, more than 100 innovations have been collected across countries on innovative initiatives related to access, quality of learning and governance systems.



Through the **KIX LAC Hub**, El Salvador has exemplified successful collaboration between KIX, GPE and the Ministry of Education by leveraging knowledge exchange and targeted support to drive education system transformation.



Tajikistan’s **KIX EMAP Hub** coordinator secured the inclusion of three KIX research projects in the country’s national education Joint Sector Review. Their findings and recommendations were presented during the review process.

HUBS’ ROLE IN EXTENDING THE REACH OF RESEARCH EVIDENCE

Regional hubs offer opportunities for national representatives to engage with relevant research, including research produced through KIX. This year, there were 56 instances of KIX applied research being shared through hub-facilitated workshops, presentations and annual conferences.

These connections can lead to real-world improvements, as when the Comoros Ministry of Education asked to make use of a project on improving science and math education, sparked after its findings were shared at the [Continental Research Symposium on Educational Research in Africa](#), hosted by the two African regional hubs.

The Symposium, which was attended by 280 education stakeholders from 40 countries, brought a wider audience to other projects as well. These included [Data Must Speak, A New Model of Bridging Classes to Improve Learning of Out-of-School Children and Youth](#), and [A Comparative Study of Accelerated Education Programs and Girls’ Focused Education Models in Ghana, Nigeria and Sierra Leone](#).

The KIX EMAP Hub’s online [Second Education Policy and Innovation Conference](#) also broadened the reach and influence of research projects, sharing evidence on key themes such as teacher professional development, equity and quality in education, and education in emergencies. It brought together some 1200 attendees and 80 presenters.



Photo: GPE/ Roun Ry

3. Strengthening capacity to translate evidence into action

Capacity strengthening remained a cornerstone for both applied research projects and regional hubs. Applied research projects focused on empowering stakeholders in GPE partner countries – from national education ministries to district officials, school leaders, teachers and community members – to utilize their innovations effectively. This paves the way for successful implementation and broader adoption. National representatives in KIX hubs took advantage of capacity strengthening related to evidence-based policy and practice and translating research into meaningful action.

Applied research projects organized 130 capacity-building activities this year and hubs organized 20. While targeted workshops and webinars remain available, hubs are increasingly facilitating longer-term processes such as communities of practice, learning cycles and knowledge mobilization cycles that deepen capacity strengthening results.

This section showcases how KIX has contributed to strengthening capacity for data-driven decision-making by helping countries build their capacity to collect, analyze and use data for education policy and planning. It demonstrates how teachers are empowered through professional development, and focuses on promoting gender equality and inclusion, with examples that demonstrate how KIX supports initiatives to create safer and more equitable learning environments. Finally, it shows how KIX facilitates knowledge exchange between countries through workshops, learning visits, and webinars.

Strengthening capacities for data systems and data use

Leveraging opportunities through KIX applied research and regional hubs, GPE partner countries have grown their human and system capacities for collecting, analyzing and using education data for policy, planning and adaptation. For example, The Gambia used KIX research from the [Data Use Innovations for Education Management Information](#)

[Systems in The Gambia, Uganda, and Togo](#) project, transforming the way regional education offices operate. Replacing cumbersome paper reports, The Gambia now uses an open-source platform, which allows stakeholders to access real-time, actionable data. Information technology personnel and planning teams now have skills to create and use data dashboards tailored to regional needs, empowering regional and school staff to make more informed decisions. Automatic attendance data further streamlines processes, providing teachers with instant access to attendance statistics. This marks a significant step forward for Gambian education, accelerating monitoring and support at the regional level.

Through the KIX Africa 19 Hub, the KIX Data Challenge has offered numerous learning and capacity-building opportunities for directors of planning and education management information systems (EMIS) staff at ministries of education. Countries have exchanged knowledge on challenges, lessons learned and strategies for improving their EMIS. Inspired by lessons from the Data Challenge, Zimbabwe and Lesotho requested the Hub's support for a [peer review of their EMIS systems](#), with the goal of aligning their systems with regional and international standards. The peer review was conducted by African Union-accredited EMIS experts from ministries of education in 10 GPE partner countries.

Through the [KIX LAC Hub](#), 20 representatives from Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, Saint Lucia and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines visited Guyana's Ministry of Education in 2023. This KIX LAC country support initiative facilitated knowledge exchange on Guyana's EMIS. The visit provided insights into EMIS development, resource requirements and strategies for mitigating challenges. This knowledge transfer enables participating countries to replicate successful practices in their own EMIS implementation.

Strengthening capacities for teachers and TPD systems

Teachers are the cornerstone of education systems, with the most influence on student learning at the school level. KIX supports the contextualization and scaling of teacher professional development approaches to strengthen their content knowledge

and pedagogical skills, while supporting their agency and well-being.

The project [Distance Education to Improve Quality and Access to School Education in Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, and Tajikistan](#), for instance, equipped teachers in Kyrgyzstan and Mongolia with digital skills to enhance their teaching practices and transform their classrooms. At Kyrgyzstan's Naryn State University, training led to a 95% satisfaction rate and a significant boost in students' digital literacy. Teachers reported the training made their jobs easier, led to more student participation and improved teaching effectiveness. In Mongolia, 30 graduate students honed their ICT skills by collaborating on e-lesson development and learning best practices for remote learning. Five months later, half the students continued using the skills they had learned.

Countries in the [KIX Africa 21 Hub](#), meanwhile, are embracing the future of education through technology and teacher training. A workshop on artificial intelligence and education equipped country representatives with knowledge and skills to assess their readiness for AI integration. It addressed building policy interest in artificial intelligence, promoting digital technologies and establishing committees to oversee its implementation within education systems. Additionally, a roundtable discussion focused on adapting teacher training to the challenges of 21st-century education.

Increasing capacities to support GEI

Both hubs and applied research projects are actively advancing gender equality, equity and inclusion in and through education systems — removing barriers faced by girls, those with disabilities, and pregnant teens, among others.

The [Strategies to Prevent Sexual and Gender-Based Violence and Foster Equity in Rural Schools](#) project is creating safer and more equitable environments by promoting gender equity and safety in schools across Haiti, Nicaragua and Honduras. In Haiti, students now recognize situations such as bullying and sexual harassment as unacceptable forms of gender-based violence. Moreover, community leaders are actively working to prevent such violence within

schools. Nicaragua has seen a surge in collaboration between teachers, families and community leaders who have conducted surveillance in high-risk areas, advocated for improved school infrastructure — such as medical posts to address teen pregnancy — and hired security to enhance student safety during commutes. A cultural shift is underway as teachers are more proactive in preventing bullying and harassment, fostering a more positive learning environment. Honduras has seen a significant improvement in school safety thanks to measures such as improved bathroom facilities and the installation of security devices in schools.

KIX Africa 19 is supporting improvements in disability-inclusive education across member countries. A recent learning visit to Kenya allowed representatives from Lesotho, Malawi, Rwanda and Tanzania to explore the importance of dedicated funding and learning materials specifically designed for students with disabilities. Tanzania recognized the importance of financing to support the learning of children with disabilities. It also committed to producing and distributing inclusive learning materials — a crucial step towards ensuring all children have access to quality education. Lesotho highlighted the importance of a comprehensive and flexible curriculum that proactively prioritizes learners with disabilities. Rwanda emphasized the development of national assessment guidelines to ensure fair evaluation of students with special needs. The program not only boosted individual countries' capacity, but also fostered collaboration.

Capacity strengthening through country support

In addition to benefiting from inter-country capacity strengthening activities, individual countries have started to use the direct, tailored capacity strengthening support available through KIX's new country support mechanism. For example, the Maldives' National Institute of Education partnered with a KIX grantee to strengthen staff capacity on [integrating 21st-century skills](#) into the national curriculum. A three-day online training covered integration strategies, system-level considerations and curriculum audit techniques. This initiative equips Institute staff to better support schools in implementing the revised curriculum.

EXAMPLES OF KIX PROMOTING GEI

KIX-supported research and exchanges helped to promote many facets of gender equity and inclusion this year. They contributed to:



Promoting disability-inclusive education. A learning visit to Kenya empowered representatives from Lesotho, Malawi, Rwanda and Tanzania to identify new strategies for inclusive education.



Preventing gender-based violence. Projects in Haiti and Nicaragua empowered students to recognize and report violence — leading to better school safety measures and a shift in teacher behavior.




Creating safer schools. Through collaboration, schools in Honduras have implemented safety measures like improved bathrooms and security devices.



Enhancing inclusive education policies. Representatives from five countries in Europe and Central Asia identified new approaches to inclusive education after participating in learning visits and a symposium.





FEATURE THEME: FOSTERING INNOVATIONS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Photo: GPE/ Translieu/ Feruzi

Early childhood education (ECE) is the cornerstone of healthy individuals and thriving societies. During a child's first five years, when more than 90% of brain development occurs, high-quality ECE programs provide safe and stimulating environments. These programs nurture cognitive, socioemotional and physical development, leading to better academic readiness, improved social skills and greater resilience in children.

Access to high-quality ECE enables parents, especially mothers, to pursue education or work, strengthening families and communities. ECE programs can promote social mobility across generations, reduce child labor and advance gender equality, ultimately contributing to a more just society.

Global ECE enrollment has increased — from 30% in 1986 to 60% in 2019 — however, disparities in access to quality programs persist, particularly in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs). Moreover, while research has shown that play-based learning (PBL), especially in the early years, can improve children's cognitive, social and physical skills, many countries face challenges in adapting it to local contexts and equipping teachers with the skills to translate theory into practice.

Mobilizing evidence on ECE

Eight KIX projects have developed and mobilized evidence on early learning. The first five were generously financed with additional funding from the LEGO Foundation.

1. [The Inclusive Child-to-Child Learning Approach: Scaling up Inclusive Play-based Learning for Smooth Transition from Pre-primary to Primary School](#) (Ethiopia, Malawi, Uganda)
2. [Promoting Positive Early Learning Outcomes Through Strengthened Capacity in Learning Through Play](#) (Nigeria, the Gambia, Kenya)
3. [Gender-responsive Education and Transformation in Early Childhood Education through Play](#) (GREAT-ECE) (Mozambique, Rwanda)
4. [The Scaling the School Readiness Initiative: Strengthening School and Community Capacities for Adoption of Play-based Learning](#) (Uganda, Zambia)
5. [Teacher Capacity Building for Play-based Early Learning](#) (Ghana, Sierra Leone)
6. [Adapting, Testing and Scaling a Proven Summer Pre-primary Education Model](#) (LEARN Plus) (Cambodia, Laos, Tanzania)
7. [Integrating Early Childhood Education in Sectoral Planning](#) (BELDS) (South Sudan, Sierra Leone, Tajikistan, Lesotho, Kyrgyzstan)
8. [The Inclusive Home-based Early Learning Project](#) (IHELP) (Uganda, Kenya, Zimbabwe)

What we're finding

Eight innovative KIX projects have developed and mobilized evidence to strengthen learning in the early years. They developed tailored evidence on play-based learning, including ways to strengthen teacher capacity, strategies for dismantling barriers to equity and inclusion, ways to promote the sustainability and scalability of programs, and the power of collaboration in sustaining and implementing ECE programs at different scales.

Building teacher capacity for early learning

Highly qualified teachers are the bedrock of a strong ECE system. Their skills directly impact how much children learn across all areas of development. However, research has found that many teachers lack the necessary skills, knowledge and confidence, particularly for play-based learning.

Research projects explored various ways to support teachers and strengthen their capacity. For example, in the BELDS project, stakeholders in Lesotho used online training to build the capacity of its national ECE workforce in play-based pedagogy. In Kenya, Uganda and Zimbabwe, the IHELP project built teachers' capacity by using ECE teachers to train young facilitators who could then train others.

Some key findings:

- Ongoing support for teachers is important — including through mentorship, coaching and supervision. Reflective supervisory visits that provide teachers with practical feedback on their skills are especially helpful. Approaches such as training the trainers, continuous support, peer-to-peer learning and communities of practice are effective in building teacher capacity and confidence for facilitating learning through play.
- Ongoing discussions between ECE teachers and early primary school teachers about children's progress and readiness can strengthen play-based pedagogy in the early grades and enhance school readiness and transition.

- Hands-on learning opportunities play a crucial role in training and skills acquisition for both pre-service and in-service teachers.

Dismantling barriers

Findings across projects investigating how to make ECE more equitable and inclusive show that these early learning years present opportunities to tackle stigma and stereotypes. Research has shown that including people of different genders and backgrounds is essential to inform policy improvement, such as ensuring ECE curricula and resource allocation reflect a commitment to equity and inclusion.

The LEARN Plus project ensured that teaching and learning materials used in classrooms were gender-responsive and inclusive, such as by ensuring that materials used gender-equitable language, had equal representation of girls and boys and showed children with disabilities in illustrations. The Child-to-Child project incorporated livelihood activities that motivated fathers to become more involved in ECE centers and take a more active role in supporting their children's early learning. The IHELP project addressed stigma often ascribed to children with special needs through continued community engagement targeting fathers, mothers, communities, teachers, and policy makers. This changed communities' perspectives on children with special needs. The GREAT ECE project tackled the same stigma through teacher training activities. Teachers who had previously perceived children with learning difficulties as disruptive developed an understanding that all children have unique needs that should be considered in their teaching practices.

Some key findings:

- It is important to raise awareness in communities about stereotypes while also addressing root causes and issues such as poverty that hinder children's learning.
- Collaboration with policymakers can clarify how policies and programs can be strengthened to encourage involvement by all parents and address

issues such as enrollment, retention and inclusion of all children, including those with disabilities.

- Involving fathers in parenting sessions fosters shared parenting responsibilities and promotes more equitable power relationships. Training parents on gender-responsive and inclusive parenting skills supports more equitable learning opportunities for boys and girls.
- Conducting GEI assessments at the beginning of research projects provides a more inclusive and nuanced understanding of gender dynamics, identifying gender gaps and ways to strengthen interventions.

Paving the way for sustainable and scalable ECE programs

Ensuring sustainable improvements to ECE is complex. It requires political support, collaboration, workforce development, multi-level and multi-sectoral approaches, partnerships with communities and civil society organizations, evidence-based advocacy, adaptation, the use of local resources and secure public funding. Scalability demands flexibility to adapt to innovations to different contexts and stakeholder needs. Understanding program costs is crucial for assessing efficiency. For the LEARN Plus model, cost and feasibility analyses informed educational departments about scaling the 10-week program in remote communities, by examining implementation costs and resources at all stages.

KIX projects achieved some significant results towards sustaining and scaling successful ECE approaches. For example, some governments are now investing more heavily in ECE, with South Sudan now allocating 13.6% of its education budget to this area. The research has also spurred the replication of successful models. Programs that have demonstrated effectiveness have been adopted by other organizations, leading to wider reach and impact.

Some key findings:

- Early childhood education must be seamlessly integrated into national education plans. The BELDS project helped equip national officers with the skills needed to mainstream ECE in their education sector planning processes by developing the global ECE Accelerator Toolkit.
- Contextually relevant and culturally appropriate content should be used to sustain ECE at community and subnational levels. For example, local games were used to implement projects in communities within Uganda and materials were developed in local languages in Ethiopia.
- Active involvement of parents, community leaders and local stakeholders in the planning and implementation phases fosters a sense of ownership and ensures program continuation beyond initial funding periods. Parenting sessions conducted in Laos through the LEARN Plus model are just one example.

Harnessing the power of collaboration

Because collaboration is key to sustaining successful ECE innovations, KIX projects took measures to actively involve and work with stakeholders at all levels. Projects engaged communities in a range of ways. Research projects in Uganda, for example, directly involved parents in setting up new centers in rural areas previously lacking such facilities. Residents volunteered for leadership roles and project activities, even contributing local teaching materials and financial or in-kind support. The LEARN Plus project, meanwhile, held workshops followed by reflection meetings with government partners and education stakeholders.

Countries also learned ways to enhance ECE from each other, thanks to opportunities created by KIX regional hubs. Sierra Leone, for example, benefitted from learning about Ghana's successful ECE technical working group toolkit through one such exchange.

Both research and knowledge sharing on ECE have yielded valuable insights that emphasize the power of collaboration.

Some key findings:

- Brief, easy-to-read, local language versions of research reports can be an accessible and user-friendly resource for decision-makers and education stakeholders.
- Partnerships with universities and NGOs provide vital training and support. Government officials, teachers and community leaders all gained valuable skills through these collaborative efforts, leading to a more robust and well-equipped ECE workforce.
- Communities play a crucial role in the long-term success of ECE programs. Parents are able to set up and sustain new centers in rural areas previously lacking such facilities when well supported. Their active participation supports long-term success.

Looking ahead, inclusive early learning continues to be a central theme for KIX. A synthesis report from maturing research on this topic will be published in 2024, when a new set of related projects will also start.



WHAT WE ARE LEARNING

Photo: GPE/ Kelley Lynch

KIX is producing and mobilizing evidence about working with national stakeholders and scaling impact in education, both of which are crucial for driving systems transformation, fostering innovation and ensuring equitable access to high-quality learning.

This year, ROSIE revealed important lessons about scaling — specifically, how to understand and connect with national decision-making about scaling, and the continuing need to consider gender equality, equity and inclusion in scaling processes. KIX applied research projects also gained valuable insights on connecting with national decision-making from their experience in engaging with policymakers and other education stakeholders on the ground.

Understanding national decision-making on scaling

Most scaling research is produced from the perspective of those who try to scale their innovations and integrate them into education systems; little is known about scaling from the perspective of officials who make decisions about the adoption of innovations into national education systems. KIX Research on Scaling the Impact of Innovations in Education has been addressing this limited knowledge. It found that while evidence about a program's effectiveness is important, decision-makers also consider a wider web of factors. ROSIE identifies five key dimensions that exert influence on how governments decide to adopt innovations for scaling:

- **National politics**, including which groups in society exert the most influence over educational decision-making
- **Donor priorities and influence**
- **The practices of educational transfer and contextualization**, and the need to move beyond a one-size-fits-all approach and consider specific local contexts
- **The rise of education technology**, with decision-makers taking great interest in innovations but having little access to research that would help them make decisions
- **The absence of meaningful data** alongside a global push for such data, with most education specialists thinking there is too little evidence for use in education decision-making

The research also emphasizes the importance of building strong relationships with local champions and conducting in-depth research throughout the scaling process. Understanding the specific context where an innovation will be implemented is also crucial. Effective scaling requires engaging all stakeholders — including teachers, school leaders and the broader community — as collaborators, not passive recipients.

Considerations for gender equality, equity and inclusion

ROSIE research also highlighted the importance of considering GEI in the process of scaling innovations. Its [Equity Considerations When Scaling for Impact](#) brief concludes that equity research is essential, not just for understanding the impact of innovations on vulnerable learners, but also for transforming educational practices and achieving better life outcomes for all. It acknowledges that equity research has benefits and challenges:

- **Benefits** include increased awareness and greater likelihood that innovations will benefit marginalized groups as they scale.
- **Challenges** include a lack of data on equity in many countries, the cost and time needed to collect data, the difficulties of challenging entrenched practices and the complexity of defining and measuring equity.

ROSIE's report on [government decision-making on education](#) tells us that homegrown innovations may inherently address GEI. Locally developed solutions, such as those focused on rural needs or girls' education, are more likely to consider equity issues from the beginning. The report also points out that scaling can be at odds with efforts to promote GEI. The pressure for rapid, cost-effective scaling can lead to prioritizing easily adaptable innovations over those that require deeper contextualization to ensure they address GEI effectively in new contexts.

Connecting applied research with education decision-making

As KIX applied research projects have been engaging with relevant stakeholders in GPE partner countries,

they have been generating insights about how to connect with policymakers and other education stakeholders. Projects that successfully linked their activities to education system plans highlighted the importance of two things: **alignment**, whereby capacity-building efforts complement rather than compete with education priorities; and **sustainability**, whereby activities contribute to long-term strengthening of education systems. They also note that the following factors contribute to stakeholder engagement and the uptake of innovation:

- **Policymaker engagement.** Taking time to build mutual understanding between policymakers and researchers is crucial for [creating an environment](#) where policymakers actively seek out and implement promising locally developed ideas for education reform.
- **Co-creation for project success.** Research projects designed collaboratively with ministries and other stakeholders are more likely to be relevant and achieve impact. [Co-creation](#) ensures that research addresses local needs and that policymakers and educators are invested in the process, increasing the likelihood that findings will be used for practical improvements. This can be achieved through partnerships between universities and government ministries, or through action research that links researchers and practitioners to jointly identify problems and solutions.
- **Building capacity through knowledge exchange.** [Opportunities for knowledge exchange](#), such as dialogue, learning visits and communities of practice, strengthen the capacity of ministries and other key actors in education systems. This allows countries to learn from each other's experiences and develop effective solutions based on shared knowledge.

By prioritizing these strategies, KIX applied research projects have managed to enhance the uptake of their generated evidence and innovation, ultimately contributing to better education outcomes.





UPCOMING PRIORITIES

Photo: GPE/ Paul Martinez

KIX enters 2024–2025 with many opportunities for knowledge exchange, translating evidence from new and maturing applied research into meaningful action, and collaborating more closely with GPE partner countries to provide tailored support.

Knowledge mobilization

Four regional hubs will continue to serve as dynamic platforms for knowledge mobilization across Africa (KIX Africa 19 and KIX Africa 21), Europe, the Middle East and North Africa, Asia and the Pacific (KIX EMAP), and Latin America and the Caribbean (KIX LAC). The hubs will prioritize agendas that reflect their member countries' interests and demands, facilitating tailored solutions that address the specific needs of each region. Key annual events such as the joint KIX Continental Symposium for Educational Research in Africa (Africa 19 and Africa 21) and the annual stakeholder meeting in LAC will provide valuable opportunities for knowledge mobilization, regional dialogue and the cross-pollination of best practices.

The effective translation and uptake of research findings into tangible improvements for education practice at the policy level will remain a core focus. As 19 applied research projects conclude in 2024, KIX will support their knowledge mobilization strategies to ensure their research outputs and findings reach key decision-makers and practitioners in education. A refreshed KIX Communications and Engagement Strategy will amplify these efforts and support the dissemination of synthesis findings that consolidate evidence from KIX projects across critical themes such as out-of-school children and youth, teacher professional development, early childhood care and education, data systems and data use, and gender equality, equity and inclusion. The Fifth Annual KIX Symposium will highlight these findings to a global audience of education policymakers, practitioners and research funders.

Generating new knowledge

Furthermore, KIX is launching three new cohorts of applied research on these same themes, with two projects already launched in early 2024. Projects on gender equality, equity and inclusion and data systems have already been initiated, with projects on teacher professional development, early childhood care and education, and out-of-school children in emergencies and fragile contexts planned to launch in the upcoming year. To maximize the impact of these new projects, KIX will provide targeted support and capacity strengthening to ensure they can best integrate key elements such as ROSIE's support for scaling impact, GEI integration, knowledge mobilization, and robust monitoring and evaluation frameworks. Much work needs to be done to improve scaling, including understanding more about how systems adapt and change as scaling happens, and how scaling affects the financial dimensions of projects.

Tailored country support

KIX will continue to refine and consolidate the country support mechanism. This mechanism was developed in response to recommendations from the KIX midterm evaluation and constituency feedback that highlighted a need for tailored support to meet individual country needs. Through targeted initiatives in areas such as evidence generation through short-term implementation research, knowledge exchange in response to specific policy challenges, and focused stakeholder capacity strengthening, KIX will continue to collaborate with ministries to address their specific priorities. This will allow us to continue to strengthen and evaluate connections between KIX research and intercountry learning and the processes GPE supports in partner countries.

KIX remains dedicated to demonstrating results that inform the future trajectory of the program. An evaluation will be commissioned to inform GPE Board decision-making about whether and how KIX might continue as a part of GPE's strategy and budget to 2030.



FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Photo: GPE/ Mugithi David

Overall, KIX expenses were within 3% of projections.

The majority of KIX funds were dedicated to the four regional hubs (through the learning exchange mechanism) and to applied research (through the funding mechanism). Expenses for the regional hubs, global grants and regional grants were on track against budgeted amounts. Some of the projects funded through the early learning grants were offered no-cost extensions, so their payments will be processed in the fiscal year. Exchange rate gains and an adjusted payment schedule for the extension to the research on scaling led to a smaller payment than projected. Payment projections for the new calls for proposals in 2023-2024 had been based on an average project size and institutional risk rating prior to grantee selection; actual payments were made based on the types of grants, budgets and institutional risk assessments once grants were awarded.

Program activities include functions such as monitoring, evaluation and learning, and communications and knowledge translation. The Opportunity and Adaptive Management (OAM) fund financed the COVID-19 Observatory project and scoping studies to inform thematic priorities for KIX extension. The Learning Exchange Platform budget pays for the KIX website and collaborative electronic workspace.

Direct costs relate to program staff, travel and office costs.

USD	BUDGET	ACTUALS	VARIANCE
PROGRAM ACTIVITIES			
1. Learning exchange mechanism			
Regional hubs	3,775,629	3,672,848	102,781
2. Funding mechanism			
Global grants	2,662,194	2,630,502	31,692
Regional grants	3,832,553	3,551,001	281,552
Early learning grants	1,391,936	1,149,343	242,593
Research on scaling	993,798	444,015	549,783
Research calls of 2023-2024	6,627,907	8,540,844	(1,912,937)
Country support	307,172	294,543	12,629
3. Supporting activities			
Program activities	756,935	680,921	76,014
OAM fund	197,668	192,544	5,124
Learning Exchange Platform	224,858	213,620	11,238
4. EXTERNAL AUDIT	19,799	20,052	(253)
PROGRAM MANAGEMENT			
5. Direct costs	2,503,801	2,670,543	(166,742)
6. Indirect costs (7%)	1,630,598	1,684,254	(53,656)
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	24,924,849	25,745,030	(820,181)