

KIX Africa 19 Hub

Consultancy Terms of Reference for an Assessment of ICT Needs among Member States' Education Sector Staff for Increased Engagement and Participation with the Africa 19 Hub

I. Background

Countries in Sub-Saharan African (SSA) are confronted with the formidable challenge of realizing quality, inclusive and equitable education for social transformation and development. This vision is anchored in several frameworks and vision statements, including the SDG 4 – Education 2030 Framework for Action¹ and the Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA) 2016–2025², as well as other global, regional and national frameworks.

Although access to education has improved in SSA from 59 per cent to 78 per cent over the past decade³, learning achievement and quality of education remain alarmingly low. Many countries face enormous challenges around teacher recruitment, management and professional development, enrolment at pre-primary and secondary levels, gender equity and quality of learning processes and outcomes.

Africa's education ambitions cannot be realized without building effective partnerships and fostering harmonized approaches to integrating SDG 4 – ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all – into national education policies and strategies. Crucially, this ambition requires innovation due to the scale, diversity and rapid changes of education needs amidst high rates of population growth and unemployment in most SSA countries⁴.

In addition, there is little available context-specific evidence about what makes or does not make education interventions work – whether innovative or not – or about the costs of implementing them, particularly in SSA. When evidence is available, dissemination and the capacity to use that evidence is often weak, especially among key education stakeholders in the region. Evidence about how to scale up innovations that improve learning outcomes is key to unlocking rapid and sustainable change towards meeting SDG 4.

The Global Partnership for Education (GPE) KIX Africa 19 Hub seeks to generate data; collate, disseminate and facilitate effective use of evidence-based knowledge and innovation for education policy formulation and implementation among education stakeholders in 18 SSA countries⁵. It will do so by creating a network of national partners committed to locate and harness robust, dynamic and emerging evidence and solutions to the most pressing issues in realising GPE's strategic goals and SDG 4 in the region. It is expected that at least 80 per cent of the 18 GPE member states (14 countries) will

¹ UNESCO is the only United Nations agency with a mandate to cover all aspects of education. It has been entrusted to lead the Global Education 2030 Agenda through Sustainable Development Goal 4. The roadmap to achieve this is the Education 2030 Framework for Action http://uis.unesco.org/sites/default/files/documents/education-2030-incheon-framework-for-actionimplementation-of-sdg4-2016-en_2.pdf

² http://www.education2030-africa.org/images/systeme_edu/docs/Final_Indicators_Manual.compressed.pdf

³ UNICEF Data (2018). *Primary Education*. <https://data.unicef.org/topic/education/primary-education/>

⁴ World Bank Report (2018). *The consequences of rapid population growth*. https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/5967/9780195204605_ch05.pdf?sequence=6&isAllowed=y

⁵ Eritrea, Ethiopia, Ghana, The Gambia, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe

engage with the KIX Africa 19 Hub and use the evidence generated and disseminated by the KIX Africa 19 Hub to improve policies and practice to strengthen their national education systems – helping to transform the education landscape in Africa.

The specific objectives of the regional KIX Africa 19 Hub are to:

1. Establish and manage the regional KIX Africa 19 Hub with an emphasis on GPE member state engagement, continuous learning and adaptive management;
2. Synthesize knowledge and set regional knowledge and innovation agendas for education policy formulation and implementation in support of realising quality, inclusive and equitable education through incorporation of gender responsive approaches; and
3. Support knowledge sharing and mobilization along cross cutting themes and innovation agendas throughout the project cycle in order to facilitate monitoring and sharing of good practices across the member states.

The KIX Africa 19 Hub is expected to provide a timely opportunity to catalyse the provision of quality education through facilitating evidence-based developments in policy and practice, fostering equitable partnerships and through identifying and contextualizing evidence in education agendas unique to the region.

One of the critical enablers to catalyse timely generation and access to information among member states is the creation of the KIX Digital Platform. The KIX Digital Platform is currently being built and will provide interactive and collaborative tools, including a document and multimedia library, online forums/communities of practice, Google suite tools and others. However, given the diversities and contrasts witnessed among member states regarding the use of ICT and other related tools, it becomes imperative to generate data and prepare recommendations on how the various ICT needs and competency gaps among countries can be addressed to allow them to utilize the KIX Digital Platform effectively.

II. Purpose of the Assignment

The ICT Needs Assessment among member states' Education Sector Staff aims to garner a clear understanding of ICT capacities and infrastructure of the KIX Africa 19 Hub member states' education sector staff (both in Ministries of Education and local partner organizations) with a view to responding to common gaps and challenges that may either prohibit or enhance their ability to participate in the KIX Africa 19 Hub. It is expected that the ICT Needs Assessment will lead to increased engagement of Africa 19 Hub member state's education sector staff with ICT tools, including the KIX Digital Platform.

It is expected that education sector staff in member states will use the KIX Digital Platform to facilitate sharing of policy, good practice and lessons learned to implement and/or scale up proven education policies and practices across the east, south and western Africa region.

III. Objectives of the ICT Needs Assessment

The objectives of the ICT Needs Assessment among Member States' Education Sector Staff are as follows:

- a) Collect data on ICT capacities and infrastructure among KIX Africa 19 member states' education sector staff that would promote or prevent their participation in the KIX Digital Platform. The capacity areas to assess include: the use of Google Suite, Microsoft Suite, virtual meeting tools (Teams, Zoom, Skype, etc.), social media (Twitter, Facebook),

- WhatsApp, SurveyMonkey and Google Forms. Infrastructure concerns related to internet access and reliability, professional email providers/services, availability of filesharing programs', bandwidth capacities and organizational publications libraries that exist in each Ministry of Education and local partner organization context should also be assessed.
- b) Identify and document capacity and infrastructure gaps among KIX Africa 19 member states' education sector staff and develop recommendation to bridge the identified gaps through training and capacity development in order to strengthen their participation in the KIX Africa 19 Hub and the KIX Digital Platform activities;
 - c) Validate findings and recommendations with KIX Africa 19 member states' education sector staff.

IV. Target Groups

The target groups of the ICT Needs Assessment among Member States' Education Sector Staff are the Ministry of Education focal points and the local partner organization focal points from each of the 18 member states that have been nominated to participate in the KIX Africa 19 Hub. Each country has nominated five focal points. In addition to these nominated focal points, the assessment may cover other education sector staff from the Ministry of Education who work in one of the six thematic areas of the KIX Hub.⁶ Equity, inclusion and gender concerns will be considered throughout the assessment process to ensure that target groups are inclusive.

V. Scope of Work

The successful consultant(s), will be responsible for the following tasks:

Task 1: Collect data on ICT capacities and infrastructure among KIX Africa 19 member states' education sector staff that would promote or prevent their participation in the KIX Digital Platform

The key activities include:

- Creation of a sound methodology to conduct the needs assessment, including building qualitative and/or quantitative data collection tools, such as online surveys, virtual key informant interview and focus group protocols that will generate a clear understanding of each of the KIX Africa 19 Hub member states' education sector staff's ability to engage with and fully participate in the KIX Digital Platform's activities and other ICT tools employed by the KIX Africa 19 Hub;
- Validation of the methodology and tools with the Consortium Partners;
- Execution of the validated methodology.

Task 2: Identify and document capacity and infrastructure gaps among KIX Africa 19 member states' education sector staff and develop recommendations for training and capacity development in order to strengthen their participation in the KIX Africa 19 Hub and the KIX Digital Platform activities

The key activities include:

- Assessment of data on KIX Africa 19 member states' education sector staff's current ICT capacities and infrastructure to determine successful practices that will promote

⁶ 1) Strengthening learning assessment systems; 2) Improving teaching and learning; 3) Strengthening early childhood care and education; 4) Achieving gender equality in and through education; 5) Leaving no one behind; and 6) Meeting the data challenge in education

participation in the KIX Digital Platform, as well as common gaps or challenges that can prevent use of the KIX Digital Platform.

- Development of recommendations for training and capacity development to address the identified gaps.
- Written documentation (draft report) of data and analysis that supports findings.

Task 3: Validate findings and recommendations with KIX Africa 19 member states' education sector staff

The key activities include:

- Dissemination of key findings of the ICT Needs Assessment documentation (draft report) to KIX Africa 19 member states' education sector staff and other members of the KIX Africa 19 Hub;
- Facilitation of a validation workshop with KIX Africa 19 member states' education sector staff and other members of the KIX Africa 19 Hub to gain feedback on the draft report's findings and recommendations;
- Submission of a final report, which incorporates feedback from the validation workshop and final recommendations for training and capacity development.

VI. Expected Outputs (Deliverables) at the End of the ICT Needs Assessment

The consultant(s) will produce the following deliverables:

- Appropriate methodology and corresponding qualitative and/or quantitative data collection tools developed by the consultant(s) and validated by the Consortium partners;
- A draft report developed and shared which identifies capacity gaps among KIX Africa 19 member states' education sector staff and recommendations to address identified gaps through training and capacity development;
- Compiled data sets;
- Execution of a validation workshop facilitated with KIX Africa 19 member states' education sector staff and other members of the KIX Africa 19 Hub;
- Documentation of feedback on the draft report from the validation workshop;
- A final report developed and shared.

VII. Key Technical Skills of the Consultant(s)

- At least eight (8) years of professional experience in ICT and/or knowledge management, preferably for large, multi-country education projects in Africa;
- At least a Master's Degree in information technology, communications or a related field;
- Proven experience working with ICT, online survey tools, digital learning, online learning, website design and management in the Africa region with demonstrated results;
- Proven experience designing and conducting trainings on ICT capacity strengthening and training;
- Possess a strong background and working experience with current ICT tools (Qualtrics, KoBoToolbox, Google Suite, Microsoft Suite, Drupal, various web hosting services etc.);
- Experience in conducting needs assessments and developing recommendations;
- Excellent facilitation, organizational, ICT, communications and analytical skills;
- Excellent command of the English language (written and spoken);
- Deadline driven with a focus on results; and

- Experience within the UN system, the African Union and other large multilateral organizations is a plus.
- Female applicants are highly encouraged to apply.

VIII. Consortium Partners' Responsibility

The Consortium Partners will provide the successful consultant(s) with:

- Constant guidance and feedback in relation to ICT Needs Assessment;
- Support towards the convening of stakeholder interviews and consultative meetings to collect data and to validate the findings of the ICT Needs Assessment;
- Contacts and lists of relevant technical people to liaise with during the development of the ICT Needs Assessment.

IX. Time Frame and Tentative Work Plan

The duration of the consultancy is as follows:

Task	Time Frame	Deliverable
Task 1: Collect data on ICT capacities and infrastructure	9 working days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Methodology developed, validated and employed; • Qualitative and/or quantitative tools developed, validated and employed;
Task 2: Identify and document capacity and infrastructure gaps and recommendations	8 working days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compiled data sets delivered; • Draft report with findings and recommendations developed and shared;
Task 3: Validate findings	5 working days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Validation workshop facilitated; • Documentation of KIX Africa 19 member states' education sector staff feedback delivered; • Final report delivered.

X. Procedures and Deadlines

Those wishing to be considered for this consultancy should submit a technical and financial proposal, Institutional profile(s) – if applicable - and CV to info.iicba@unesco.org. All documents should be submitted by **Friday, December 4, 2020, midnight EAT/GMT+3 (Addis Ababa time)**.