



CONTINENTAL SYMPOSIUM
 FOR **EDUCATIONAL** RESEARCH
 AND INNOVATION
 04 - 06 October 2022 | Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

REIMAGINING EDUCATION FOR A BETTER IMPACT ON LEARNING OUTCOMES IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA





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Introduction

In an increasingly globalized world, knowledge and skills are the drivers of economic and social wellbeing. Many Sub-Saharan African (SSA) nations have made significant achievements in increasing access to education for many of their children and youth; over the past decade, access to education improved in SSA from 59 per cent to 78 per cent. [1] However, the quality of education has lagged far behind. Manifold complex and intersecting factors like inadequate teacher preparation and education; low support and regard for teachers and the teaching profession; outdated curriculum and pedagogical practices; and weak assessment practices and systems all contribute to a learning outcome crisis in many countries of the region, especially for girls and for economically and socially disadvantaged communities.

According to UNESCO statistics, 88% of children are not achieving minimum proficiency levels in reading and mathematics by the end of primary and lower secondary school.[2] To address this learning outcome crisis, there has been a shift in emphasis at the global, regional, and national levels from general access to education to the quality of teaching and learning outcomes, as well as more inclusive access to education. This vision of quality, inclusive, equitable education is anchored in several frameworks and vision statements, including SDG 4 – Education 2030 Framework for Action and the Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA) 2016–2025, as well as regional and national frameworks.

Moreover, the recent PASEC 2019 report [3] (Programme d'analyse des systèmes éducatifs de la CONFEMEN) which covered 14 countries in Francophone Africa, revealed that 52% of students assessed are below the threshold of competence in reading and 62% of students are below the threshold of competence in mathematics at the end of schooling. Therefore, these figures indicate that despite efforts, too many schools are failing to transmit basic knowledge.



The learning outcome crisis cannot be overcome unless policies, programs, and practices are developed to support teachers and improve learning among all learners. Improving learning outcomes, teaching effectiveness, curricula, and assessment were urgent needs before the COVID-19 era, but have become more pressing during the pandemic which has affected approximately 297 million learners in Africa alone. [4] For many learners, learning outcomes have been compromised and the learning process has changed dramatically.

To this end, in order to reflect on how governments can overcome the shocks caused by the pandemic while laying the foundations for more robust education systems, the KIX Africa 21 Hub has launched a major call for research projects in collaboration with the Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie (AUF). This call concerns the support of young French-speaking researchers to carry out work related to the regional priorities of the KIX Africa 21 Hub partner countries. The strategy of the KIX Africa 21 Hub is in line with a perspective of valorization and sharing of research results in the ministries in charge of education of the countries concerned, in particular to better inform policies and facilitate decision-making. It stimulates a certain dynamic between the academic world and the actors of education.

There is little available context-specific research on and evidence about what makes or does not make education interventions work about the methods and 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.

To address these educational challenges and the gap between research, policy, and practice in the region, the KIX Africa 19 and KIX Africa 21 Hubs are organizing a joint research symposium to highlight research and evidence on improving students' learning outcomes in their member states.





Theme

The symposium will focus on “**Reimagining education for a better impact on learning outcomes in sub-Saharan Africa**”. This crucial and foundational theme may be approached from multiple entry points, such as curriculum, assessment, pedagogy, teachers, inclusion, equity, policymaking, and practice. Papers for presentation will be based on the sub-themes below:

- Proven innovations in improving learning and teaching in Sub-Saharan African contexts;
- Quality teacher education and professional development programs and support mechanisms, as measured by learning outcomes;
- The quality of national curriculum and assessment (formative, diagnostic, and summative), as measured by student learning;
- Addressing diversity, inclusion, and equity through proven strategies that raise outcomes for marginalized learners such as girls, students with disabilities, and socially or economically disadvantaged students;
- The link between languages of instruction (mother tongues, minoritized languages, French, English, Portuguese, etc.) and learning outcomes;
- Remedial or alternative strategies that raise student learning outcomes after disruptions from emergencies, climate change, the COVID-19 pandemic, conflict, and other health and social crises;
- Research to inform leadership, governance, and policy on students’ learning outcomes.



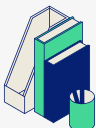
Objectives



Give increased visibility to recent and emerging national research, innovations, and good practices in raising learning outcomes in Sub-Saharan Africa;



Promote inter-Hub learning and discussion between national policy actors, researchers, and practitioners within and between the KIX Africa 19 Hub and KIX Africa 21 Hub, about evidence, research, and strategies to raise children's learning outcomes;



Promote the use of regional and national research in policymaking by national policy actors;



Strengthen the research, knowledge, and evidence bases of the KIX Africa 19 Hub and KIX Africa 21 Hub with research and knowledge from within and across countries, to bridge knowledge gaps;



Envision possibilities for raising learning outcomes in the face of contextual challenges, including but not limited to the COVID-19 pandemic, in Sub-Saharan Africa.





Expected outcomes

01

National and international education stakeholders will use KIX-supported research to frame debates about sustainable, inclusive, and equitable scaling in education in developing contexts.



02



Country representatives will strengthen their knowledge and skills, including those that consider GESI to strengthen national education systems.

03

Country representatives will actively participate in the hub, contributing to its governance and agenda, and share relevant knowledge from their context with their hub and other country representatives in the region, including GESI-related challenges.





General information

Participants

The invited in-person presenters and participants will be ministry of education focal points, local educational researchers, local education group policy actors, and GPE KIX researchers from the regions of the KIX Africa 19 and 21 Hubs.

An unlimited number of guests from the countries of the two hubs will be welcomed to join virtually.

In line with KIX's goal of mainstreaming gender equity and parity in education, women researchers and leaders will be particularly encouraged to participate.

Date, venue, and languages:

The symposium will take place from **October 4th through 6th, 2022**, in person at the African Union Conference Center and Office Complex in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Simultaneous live streaming will take place on Zoom to allow more participants to join.

Speakers of both English and French will be presenting throughout the event; therefore, simultaneous translation from English to French and from French to English will be provided to participants.





About

Organizers

The symposium is being organized by the consortium partners managing the Global Partnership for Education's (GPE's) Knowledge and Innovation Exchange (KIX) Africa 19 and 21 Hubs. The consortium partners are:



KIX Africa 19 Hub: UNESCO International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa (UNESCO IICBA); UNICEF Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office (UNICEF ESARO); and the Pan African Institute for Education for Development (IPED) of the African Union (AU)



KIX Africa 21 Hub: Institut de la Francophonie pour l'éducation et la formation (IFEFF); Conférence des ministres de l'Éducation des États et gouvernements de la Francophonie (CONFEMEN); and Agence universitaire de la Francophonie (AUF)



Role of the KIX Africa 19 and KIX Africa 21 Hubs:

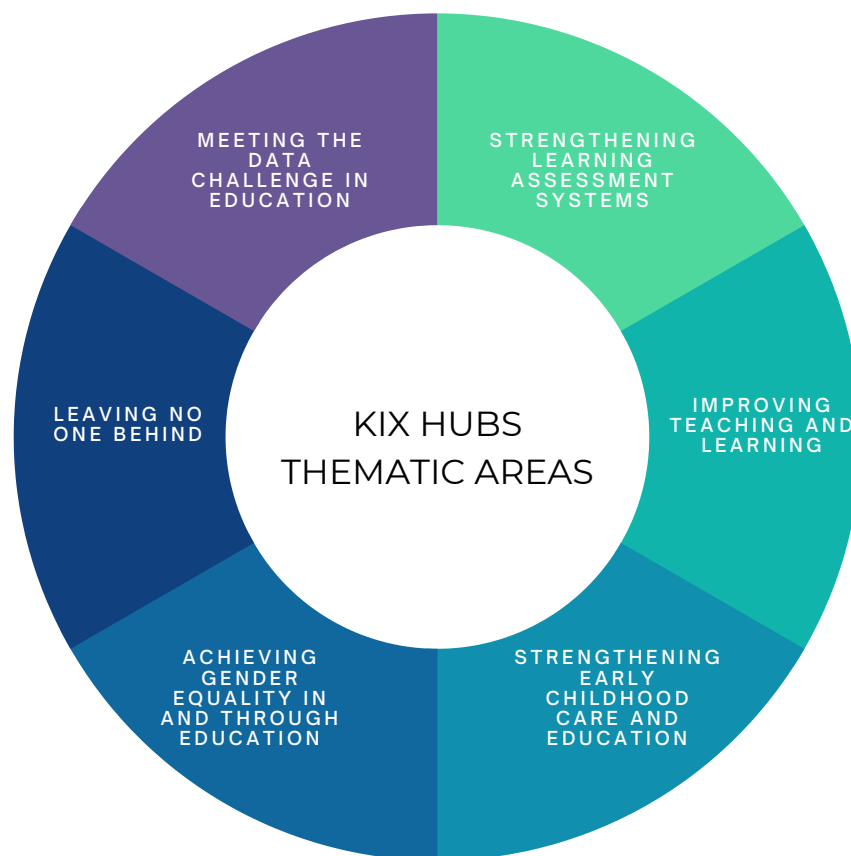
The Knowledge and Innovation Exchange (KIX) Africa 19 Hub has been established through the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) and with funding from the International Development and Research Centre (IDRC) whose purpose is to collect, generate, exchange and facilitate the effective use of data, knowledge and innovation for education policy formulation and implementation among 18 Anglophone African countries in six thematic areas:



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These include: (i) strengthening learning assessment systems, (ii) improving teaching and learning, (iii) strengthening early childhood care and education, (iv) achieving gender equality in and through education, (v) leaving no one behind, and (vi) meeting the data challenge in education.



The KIX Africa 19 Hub facilitates cross-country knowledge exchange and mobilization, learning, synthesis, and collaboration among national education stakeholders in 18 Global Partnership for Education partner countries in Eastern, Southern, and Western Africa.

Likewise, the KIX Africa 21 Hub facilitates cross-country knowledge exchange and mobilization, learning, synthesis, and collaboration among national education stakeholders in GPE partner countries primarily located in West and Central Africa and the Indian Ocean.

Both hubs function as regional forums within the KIX project to bring together countries with similar educational, socioeconomic, and linguistic characteristics.

Countries participating in the KIX Africa 19 and KIX Africa 21 Hubs:



18 PARTNERS COUNTRIES

Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia (Somaliland and Puntland), South Sudan, Tanzania (mainland and Zanzibar), Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.



21 PARTNERS COUNTRIES

Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Ivory Coast, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Republic of Congo, Senegal, Togo, and Sao Tome and Principe.

