
The Third GPE KIX Continental Symposium for Educational Research and Innovation

Theme: Building Resilient Systems for Increased Access to Inclusive Quality and Relevant Education in Africa

Organized by

KIX Africa 19 Hub

- ❖ The African Union (AU)
- ❖ UNESCO International Institute for Capacity
- ❖ Building in Africa (UNESCO IICBA)
- ❖ UNICEF Eastern and Southern Africa Regional (UNICEF ESARO)

KIX Africa 21 Hub

- ❖ Conférence des ministres de l'Éducation des États et
- ❖ gouvernements de la Francophonie (CONFEMEN)
- ❖ Agence universitaire de la Francophonie (AUF)
- ❖ Institut de la Francophonie pour l'éducation et la formation (IFEFF - OIF)



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Summary:

The Global Partnership for Education's (GPE) Knowledge and Innovation Exchange (KIX) Africa 19 and Africa 21 Hubs are organizing a joint inter-hub research symposium to bring together regional and national policymakers, researchers, academics, and practitioners to exchange critical knowledge about innovations, evidence, and good practices in enhancing access to as well as relevance and quality of education, while improving students' basic learning outcomes in GPE Partner Countries in Africa, especially after disruptions to education.

This is the third inter-hub symposium and is set in the context of the AU 2024 theme on Education

Date:

8th - 10th Oct 2024

Location:

African Union Conference Center and Office Complex, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The conference will be in-person and also virtually live-streamed on Zoom.

Organisers:

The symposium is being organised 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 African Union (AU) IPED.
- KIX Africa 21 Hub: Institut de la Francophonie pour l'éducation et la formation (IFEF-OIF); 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 21 Hubs:

The Knowledge and Innovation Exchange (KIX) Africa 19 Hub was established through the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) and the International Development and Research Centre (IDRC).

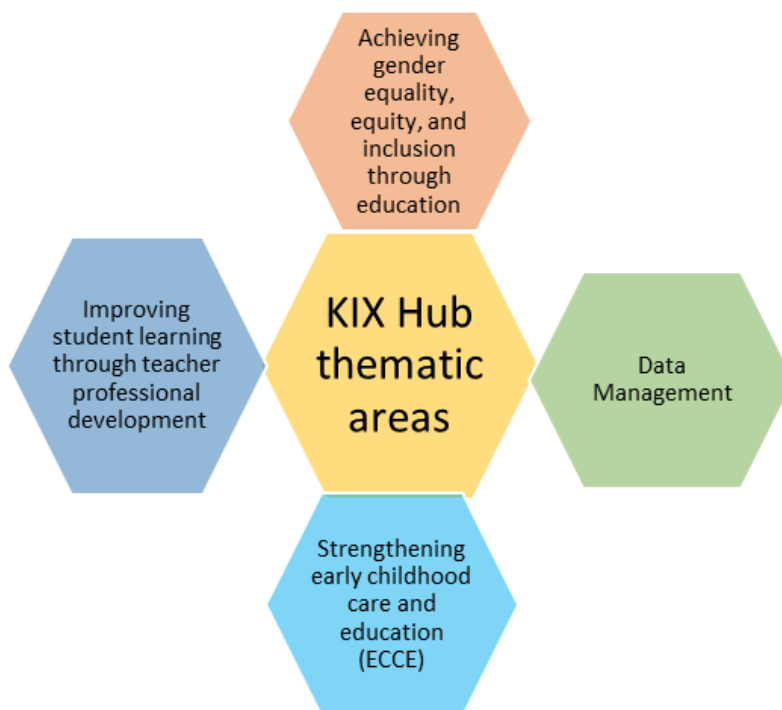


Figure 1: KIX Hub thematic areas.

The KIX Africa 19 Hub facilitates cross-country knowledge exchange and mobilization, learning, synthesis, and collaboration among national education stakeholders in 19 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 21 Hubs:

The KIX Africa 19 Hub includes the following 19 partner countries in Anglophone Africa: *Eritrea, Eswatini, 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.*

The KIX Africa 21 Hub includes the following 21 partner countries primarily in Francophone Africa, with 3 being Lusophone 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.

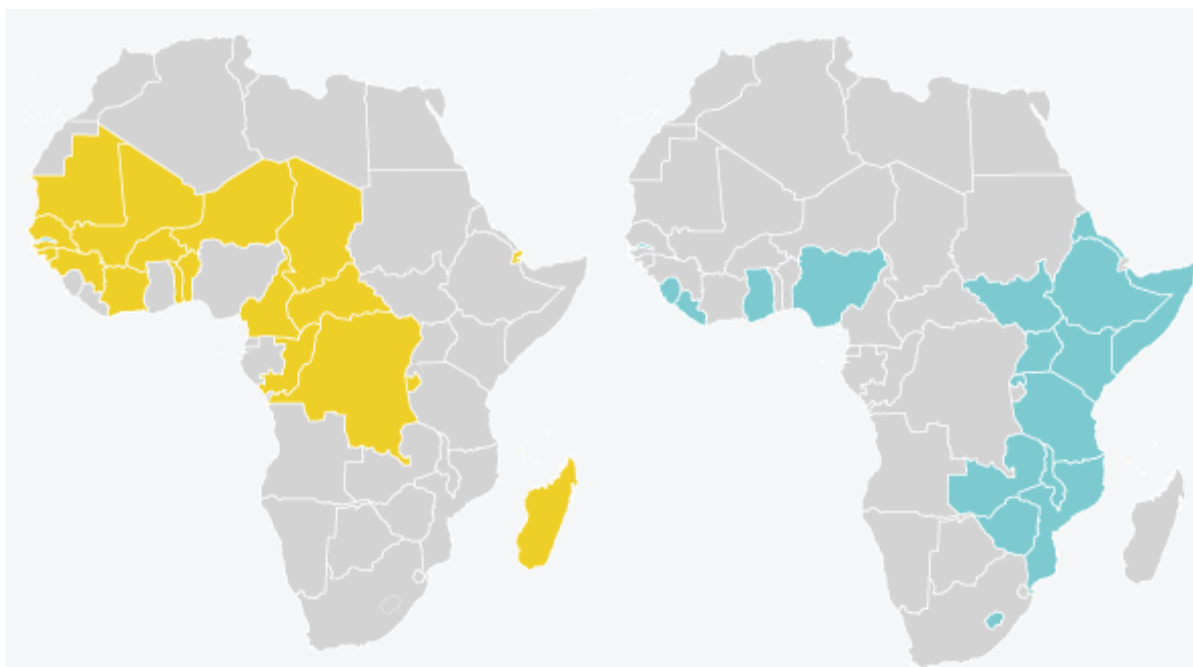


Figure 2: Member countries in the KIX Africa 21 Hub (left) and the KIX Africa 19 Hub (right).

Purpose of the KIX Continental Research Symposium

The symposia in Addis Ababa (2022) and Cote d'Ivoire (2023) effectively facilitated peer learning and the exchange of best practices. They also served as platforms for researchers to present findings directly to national policymakers, enhancing sector management.

The year 2024 has been designated as the "Year of Education in Africa," providing a unique opportunity for the African Union (AU) to reignite commitment among its member states towards achieving the targets of the Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA) and Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4). This initiative follows several key declarations and calls to action, including the STC-EST4, AU-HLSE Declarations, the Urgent Call for Action by the SDG4 High-level Steering Committee, and the UN Secretary General's Vision Statement on Transforming Education. It dovetails with the AU Commission's proposed framework to urge governments and development



partners to reevaluate educational and skills development models to create the future Africa desires in the 21st century.

The African Union underscores the crucial role of education and training in fostering personal, national, and global development. It warns that failures in Africa's education system could severely impact the continent's social and economic growth, with broader global repercussions. With Africa's youth projected to comprise 40% of the global youth population by 2030, it is imperative to equip them with knowledge and skills that meet the demands of the changing world, enhancing Africa's inclusive prosperity.

Significant progress has been made in improving educational access in Africa, with primary school enrollment rising to nearly 100% by 2022 and many governments mandating up to 12 years of free education. However, challenges persist, including rising numbers of out-of-school children, inadequate learning outcomes, and a shortage of 17 million teachers. To address these issues, efforts have shifted towards enhancing educational quality and inclusivity, aligning with SDG 4 and other frameworks. The COVID-19 pandemic has further emphasized the need for quality education and adaptive learning environments. Consequently, there's a critical demand for targeted research and better dissemination of findings to optimize educational practices across the continent, supported by initiatives like webinars and symposia.

2024 Symposium

The KIX Symposium 2024 is poised to convene educational experts, policymakers, and stakeholders across the KIX GPE member countries. The critical focus of the symposium is to delve into the intricate challenges and develop strategies to address the learning challenge in Africa using data, data systems and the use of data to address inefficiencies, inequities and bottlenecks in various areas of the education system. The KIX Africa 19, through the AU IPED, has had significant success in addressing the Data Challenge on the continent through a series of learning webinars, peer learnings and national policy dialogues that have exposed the potential that innovations, research and knowledge sharing can unlock system blockages, democratize information down to the lowest levels. The symposium will emphasize gender, equity, and social inclusion in data reporting and utilization.

The first KIX Continental Research Symposium, held in October 2022 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, gathered 285 participants from 51 countries (including 41 African countries). Following this, the

second Symposium took place on October 3-5, 2023, in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, ahead of the 2024 African Union's Year of Education. Themed "Strengthening Data Generation and Analysis for Resilient, Inclusive, and Better Performing Education Systems in Sub-Saharan Africa," it brought together more than 280 education stakeholders from 40 African countries and featured over 90 presentations.

To bridge the divide between research, policy, and practice, and to underscore the importance of data in improving student learning outcomes, the KIX Africa 19 and 21 Hubs are convening a joint research symposium dedicated to this mission within their member states.

Theme of the symposium:

The symposium will focus on ***"Building Resilient Systems for Increased Access to Inclusive Quality and Relevant Education in Africa"*** to address contextual issues impacting learning outcomes in the countries of the KIX Africa 19 and 21 Hub regions 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. TVET, STEM Education, and issues around financing and strategic partnerships will also be included. Papers for presentation will be considered based on the sub-themes below:

- i. Proven innovations in improving equitable access to education and inclusive education for all learners, especially girls, differently abled students, and marginalized learners, in African contexts
- ii. Quality teacher education and professional development programs and support mechanisms, such as school assessments or inspections supported by data systems for improved learner outcomes
- iii. Planning, budgeting and implementing quality ECE models and their impact on children and communities.

- iv. Best Practices and Cost Efficiencies of re-imagining EMIS for more effective data use in driving equity
- v. Development, and implementation of curriculum reforms concerning textbooks, teacher support, professional development, and information management.
- vi. Teacher management, deployment and utilization supported by integrated management information systems targeting equity and social inclusion.
- vii. Research to inform school leadership, quality assurance, and whole school development impact on students' learning outcomes.
- viii. Best and emerging practices for increasing access to and quality of TVET, STEM Education and Higher Education for the 21st century
- ix. Optimizing access to and benefits of digitisation and 4IR

Objectives of the research symposium:

The objectives of the symposium are to:

1. Give increased visibility to recent and emerging national research, innovations, and good practices in raising learning outcomes in Sub-Saharan Africa;
2. Promote inter-hub learning and discussion between national policy actors, researchers, and practitioners within and between the KIX Africa 19 and 21 Hubs, about evidence, research, and strategies to raise children's learning outcomes;
3. Promote the use of regional and national research in policymaking by national policy actors;
4. Strengthen the research, knowledge, and evidence bases of the KIX Africa 19 and 21 Hubs with research and knowledge from within and across countries, to bridge knowledge gaps;
5. 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:

As a result of the research symposium, it is expected that:

- National and international education stakeholders will use KIX-supported research to frame debates about sustainable, inclusive, and equitable scaling in education in developing contexts.
- Country representatives will strengthen their knowledge and skills, including those that consider (gender equity and social inclusion) GESI to strengthen national education systems.

- 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.

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. The total number of in-person participants will be under 150. An unlimited number of guests from the countries of the two hubs will be welcome 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 8th - 10th 2024 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. Portuguese translation will also be available for some presentations and sessions.

Paper submissions:

Candidates from the countries of the KIX Africa 19 and 21 Hubs will be invited to submit abstracts for presentations and papers to the chairperson of the internal technical committee for paper submission. The abstracts will be evaluated against criteria determined by the technical committee and made known to prospective presenters during the call for abstracts.

Submissions will open on April 22nd, 2024. The last day for the submission of research abstracts will be June 6th, 2024. Accepted presenters will be notified by July 26, 2024. The last day for the submission of accepted papers and presentations will be September 3rd, 2024, a month before the conference.