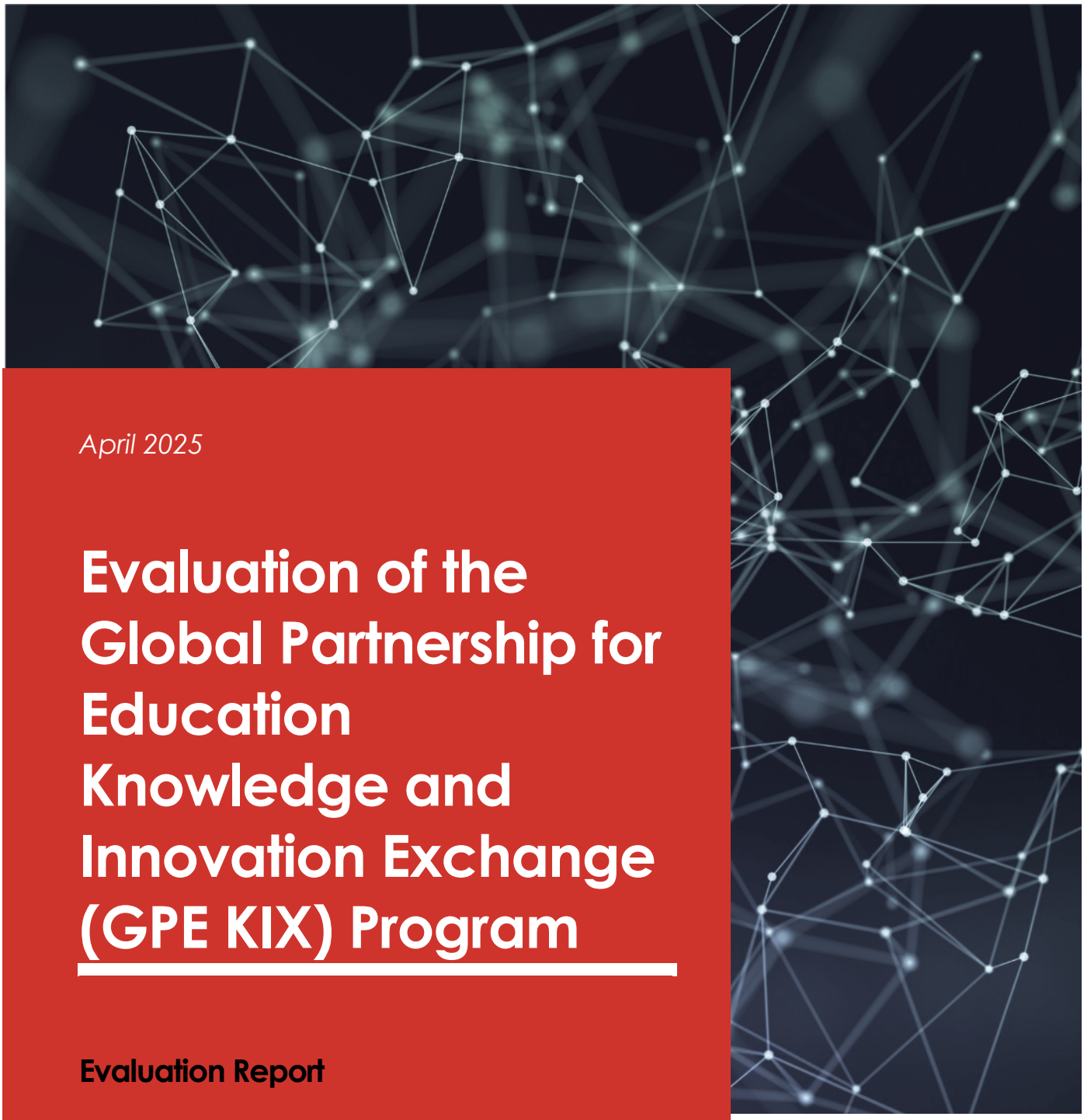
technopolis group



April 2025

Evaluation of the Global Partnership for Education Knowledge and Innovation Exchange (GPE KIX) Program

Evaluation Report

April 2025

Evaluation of the Global Partnership for Education Knowledge and Innovation Exchange (GPE KIX) Program

Evaluation Report

Rebecca Allinson, Lisa Nieth, Maria Stalla, Laura Rennie, Stéphanie Abogne, Mónica Salazar, Patricia Izquierdo, Camille Hennion

Table of Contents

Glossary iv

Executive Summary i

1 Introduction 1

2 Evaluation objectives, design and methodological approach 1

2.1 The KIX program 1

2.2 Evaluation objectives and target groups 3

2.3 Evaluation design: Theoretical foundation and evaluation matrix 3

2.4 Methodological approach of the evaluation 4

2.5 Limitations 6

2.6 Definitions 8

3 Empirical results and conclusions of the evaluation 10

3.1 Effectiveness 10

3.2 Efficiency 35

3.3 Relevance 42

3.4 Sustainability 50

4 Recommendations 57

4.1 Recommendations for the long-term development of KIX 58

4.2 Recommendations for the short-/ medium-term development of KIX 60

Appendix A Evaluation Matrix 63

Appendix B KIX Theory of Change 66

Appendix C Sources 67

Appendix D Data collection tools 69

Appendix E Supporting evidence: Further information on KIX 87

Appendix F Supporting evidence: Survey graphs 89

Appendix G Results of the AI-supported document analysis 109

Tables

Table 1 Evaluation questions and main data sources used 3
Table 2 Overview of the interview and focus group program 5
Table 3 Overview of number of participants and response rate per Hub 6
Table 4 Overview of achievement of output indicators relevant to knowledge generation 12
Table 5 Overview of achievement of immediate outcome indicators relevant to capacity strengthening 14
Table 6 Overview of achievement of uptake and use targets 22
Table 7 Progress on indicators relating to sustainability 51
Table 8 Documents and data analyzed 67
Table 9 Categories and definitions of patterns analyzed 83
Table 10 Overview response rates to evaluation survey per Hub region 89
Table 11 Overview survey participants 89
Table 12 Number of outcome cases per KIX activity 109
Table 13 Research projects with most outcome cases 109
Table 14 Countries with most cases (individual country cases only) 109
Table 15 Actor types affected in outcome cases 110
Table 16 Types of activities contributing to outcome 110
Table 17 Observed types of changes 111
Table 18 Observed types of changes per region 112
Table 19 Actor types affected per region 113
Table 20 Developed competences per actor type 114
Table 21 Developed competences per activity 115
Table 22 Areas in which skills or knowledge were strengthened 116
Table 23 Outcome cases that report on changes at political level 116
Table 24 Type of actions related to gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) 116

Figures

Figure 1 Presentation of the four regional Hubs of KIX 2
Figure 2 Updated Work Plan 4
Figure 3 Focused Inquiry 1: Skills and knowledge development/mobilization 15
Figure 4 Focused Inquiry 2: Changes of attitudes and relations between stakeholders 20
Figure 5 Focused Inquiry 3: Policymaking at the level of educational programs 24
Figure 6 Focused Inquiry 4: Policymaking at strategic level 25
Figure 7 Spotlight on Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) 41
Figure 8 KIX Theory of Change 66

Figure 9 Countries represented 90
Figure 10 Representation of regional KIX Hub regions 90
Figure 11 Representation of stakeholder groups per Hub 91
Figure 12 Recent participation per Hub 91
Figure 13 Recency of participation in general 92
Figure 14 Role distribution in stakeholder groups 92
Figure 15 Participation in Hub activity formats 93
Figure 16 Participation in Hub activity formats per stakeholder group 93
Figure 17 Improving topic-specific competences and knowledge 94
Figure 18 Outcomes of Hub participation 94
Figure 19 Outcomes of Hub participation according to government stakeholders 95
Figure 20 Inclusion of GESI in Hub activities 95
Figure 21 Coverage of different GESI aspects per Hub 96
Figure 22 Significance of exchange with different stakeholder types 96
Figure 23 Significance of exchange with different stakeholder types by stakeholder type 97
Figure 24 Impact on stakeholder exchange 97
Figure 25 Impact on stakeholder exchange per stakeholder group 98
Figure 26 Familiarity with applied research projects 98
Figure 27 Familiarity with applied research projects per Hub 99
Figure 28 Hub responsiveness to country needs and priorities 99
Figure 29 Topic priorities in education policy development 100
Figure 30 Importance of GESI for national education policy development per Hub 100
Figure 31 Adaptability of activities and formats per Hub 101
Figure 32 Hubs' reactiveness to feedback 101
Figure 33 Uptake of country support mechanism 102
Figure 34 Uptake of country support mechanism in absolute numbers 102
Figure 35 KIX effectivity 103
Figure 36 KIX effectivity per Hub 103
Figure 37 KIX effectivity per stakeholder group 104
Figure 38 Factors impeding participation per Hub 104
Figure 39 Factors impeding participation per Hub in absolute numbers 105
Figure 40 Factors impeding participation per stakeholder group 105
Figure 41 Sustainability of networks forged through KIX 106
Figure 42 Sustainability of networks forged through KIX by stakeholder types 106
Figure 43 Intention to disseminate knowledge 107
Figure 44 Intention to disseminate knowledge by stakeholder type 107
Figure 45 Intention to scale knowledge 108
Figure 46 Intention to scale knowledge by stakeholder type 108

Glossary

Acronym or Abbreviation	Meaning
Africa 19	Regional Hub for GPE partner countries in East, West, and Southern Africa
Africa 21	Regional Hub for GPE partner countries in West and Central Africa and the Indian Ocean
AIPC	Technopolis AI Policy Concierge
Compact	The compact is a road map to transformation. It articulates how a GPE partner country intends to work with others around a priority reform with the potential to catalyze systemwide change. The partner country leads and develops its compact with the support of an inclusive local education group.[1]
CoP	Communities of Practice are collaborative networks of education stakeholders from various countries that share knowledge, experiences, and best practices to address specific educational challenges and promote evidence-based decision-making.[2]
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
CSM	Country Support Mechanism
CSP	Country Strategic Plan
CUE	Center for Universal Education
DAC	Development Assistance Committee (OECD)
ECE/ECCE	Early Childhood (Care and) Education
EMAP	Europe, Middle East, Asia, and Pacific
EMIS	Education Management Information System
EOL	Education Out Loud
ESP	Education Sector Plan
FCDO	Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (UK)
GESI	Gender Equality and Social Inclusion
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
Intermediate outcomes	The changes or benefits resulting from outputs which occur before the ultimate outcomes. For example, improved knowledge, changes in practice, increased engagement.
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
IDRC	International Development Research Centre
KIX	Knowledge and Innovation Exchange

[1] GPE, Partnership Compact Guidelines, 2014.

[2] See, for instance, KIX 202: www.gpekix.org/news/kixstarted-kix-africa-hub-19-commences-first-six-community-practice-sessions-foundations; KIX 2023: www.gpekix.org/event/kix-lac-community-practice-launch-evidence-use-education.

LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean
Learning Cycle	Learning Cycles are professional development opportunities offered to national education experts from GPE partner countries. These cycles aim to enhance the capacity of these experts by providing them with the tools and knowledge to analyze, contextualize, and produce new insights on education policy and innovation. Each Learning Cycle focuses on a specific theme or challenge in education, such as teacher professional development, equitable access to education, or women's representation in school leadership.[3]
LEGs	Local Education Groups
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning
MICS-EAGLE	Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys-Education Analysis for Global Learning and Equity
MoE	Ministry of Education
MTE/MTR	2022 Mid-term Evaluation of KIX / Mid-term Review of KIX
National dialogues	KIX national dialogues are country-level learning and policy exchange events that bring together stakeholders to discuss specific education challenges that align with thematic areas of KIX. These dialogues aim to strengthen national education systems by promoting the exchange of knowledge, innovations, and best practices (see GPE Events).
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
OECS	Organization of Eastern Caribbean States
Outcomes / Outcome Indicators	The short-term and medium-term effects of an intervention's outputs. Outcome Indicators assess the effects or changes that occur as a result of the program's outputs, such as improvements in teacher performance or student learning outcomes.[4]
Outcome cases	Outcome cases are a monitoring tool used in KIX, based on the principles of outcome harvesting. Developed by RLPs, applied research grantees and ROSIE, each outcome case describes, in a short narrative, a significant change in an individual, group or organization who interacts directly with KIX (e.g., country representatives, project-relevant stakeholders). Each case rates the significance of the change and describes how the program contributed to the change. The number and content of outcome cases are one of the main indicators in the program-level results framework.[5]
Outputs / Output Indicators	The direct or tangible deliverables generated by an activity, project or intervention. Output Indicators measure the immediate, tangible products or services resulting from program activities. For example, the number of training sessions conducted or educational materials developed.[4]
PILC	Performance Impact and Learning Committee
POEV	Policy and Evaluation Division
Primary research outputs	Initial findings and contributions generated directly from research activities (e.g. research reports, scoping studies, synthesis reports)

[3] KIX, 2022. www.gpekix.org/news/call-applications-two-new-kix-eap-learning-cycles; NORRAG 2025: www.norrag.org/kix-emap-learning-cycles/

[4] OECD Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results-Based Management for Sustainable Development

[5] KIX monitoring, evaluation and learning guide

RLP	Regional Learning Partner
ROSIE	Research on Scaling the Impact of Innovations in Education
R&P	Results and Performance
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
Secondary knowledge products	Derived from primary research outputs in order to disseminate or communicate to broader audiences. May include videos, podcasts, newsletters, blog posts, policy briefs etc. or education materials that synthesize or translate the primary research.
TOC	Theory of Change
TPD	Teacher Professional Development
Ultimate outcomes	The long-term impacts or final goals an initiative, project or piece of research aims to achieve
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WB	World Bank

Executive Summary

Introduction

This evaluation assesses the Global Partnership for Education's (GPE) Knowledge and Innovation Exchange (KIX) Program, which was launched in 2019 as a joint initiative between GPE and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC). KIX aims to support GPE partner countries by facilitating evidence use, strengthening capacities, and promoting innovation to enhance equitable, inclusive, and resilient education systems. This evaluation, conducted by Technopolis Group, covers the period up to early 2025. It builds upon an external mid-term review ("MTR", 2022), an external desk review (2024), and an external evaluation of KIX's applied research portfolio (2023, 2024). The evaluation is designed to inform the GPE Board's future decisions on KIX, contributing to the GPE 2030 strategy and potential adaptations to KIX's design and operations.

The evaluation applies the OECD-DAC criteria, focusing on effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, coherence, and sustainability, with particular emphasis on effectiveness and relevance, in line with GPE's decision-making needs. It draws from extensive document analysis, interviews, surveys, focused inquiries and interviews as well as focus groups with diverse stakeholders, including KIX applied research projects, regional learning partners (Hubs), government representatives, and education practitioners (see Appendix D for details on the methods).

Overall effectiveness

The evaluation finds that KIX has made significant progress toward its overarching objective of helping GPE partner countries harness evidence and innovation to improve equitable education access, learning outcomes, and gender equality. KIX's dual structure—comprising globally supported applied research projects and regionally anchored knowledge exchange Hubs—has provided an effective platform/mechanism for generating evidence, strengthening capacities, and mobilizing knowledge to inform education policy and practice.

KIX has successfully exceeded several of its performance targets, particularly in knowledge generation and capacity strengthening. The program has contributed to meaningful capacity development among ministry officials, education practitioners, and researchers, while also fostering new and strengthened relationships between key education stakeholders across participating countries. Despite these gains, progress is uneven across regions, with contextual factors such as fragile political environments, institutional weaknesses, and disparities in digital infrastructure shaping the extent to which countries can engage with and benefit from KIX.

The evolving integration of KIX's core components remains a challenge. While interlinkages between applied research and Hubs have improved—particularly through coordination efforts initiated since 2023—they remain inconsistent across Hubs and projects. Strengthening collaboration earlier in the project lifecycle will be key to maximizing program impact.

Knowledge generation

KIX's applied research projects have produced a substantial body of knowledge spanning six thematic areas and more than 70 countries. The emphasis on applied, practice-oriented research has enabled KIX to generate not only academic outputs but also practical tools, learning materials, and resources directly applicable to country contexts. Applied research

projects have significantly exceeded their targets for primary research outputs, confirming the productivity of KIX-supported research.

Regional Hubs, while primarily focused on knowledge mobilization, have also contributed to knowledge generation through policy briefs, case studies, and targeted research aligned with regional policy needs. However, the approaches to knowledge generation across Hubs vary, with African Hubs, particularly Africa 21, producing fewer knowledge outputs compared to Hubs in other regions. This unevenness reflects both contextual challenges and differing capacities across Hubs.

Country representatives, who are primarily connected to the Hubs, often report difficulty distinguishing between research outputs produced by Hubs and those from applied research projects. This confusion underscores the need for clearer communication strategies and better integration across KIX core components to ensure that evidence is accessible, coherent, and actionable for country stakeholders.

Capacity strengthening

Capacity strengthening is a cross-cutting outcome of KIX, supported by both applied research and Hub activities. Research consortia have integrated capacity development through training, co-design, and mentoring, while Hubs have facilitated cross-country learning through Learning Cycles, Communities of Practice, and peer exchanges. KIX exceeded its target for outcome cases of strengthened capacities, with 138 cases documented compared to a target of 102.

Regional Hubs also play a critical role in capacity strengthening through Learning Cycles, Communities of Practice (CoPs), and peer exchanges.[6] These regionally tailored approaches have proven effective in building cross-country networks and strengthening technical and policy-related capacities among ministry staff, education practitioners, and civil society representatives. Across all four regions, between 80% and 95% of surveyed country representatives reported improved knowledge and skills as a result of participating in Hub activities.

Capacity strengthening has been most effective when learning opportunities are applied, participatory, and linked to concrete policy processes. For example, the Zambia-Ethiopia peer exchange on teacher policy contributed directly to capacity development for education officials in Zambia. The most successful approaches combine formal training with peer learning, ongoing mentoring, and hands-on engagement in research and policy development.

Evidence uptake and use in policy and practice

One of KIX's long-term aims is to promote sustained use of evidence in national education planning and policy. Although this process takes time, early evidence indicates that KIX is contributing meaningfully to more evidence-informed policymaking across partner countries.

Applied research projects have been particularly successful in integrating co-creation approaches, where research questions, methodologies, and outputs are developed collaboratively. This collaborative approach increases the relevance of research findings and makes it more likely that the knowledge generated will inform actual policies and programs. In several cases, such as Tanzania and Nigeria, research findings have been incorporated into

[6] See Glossary for definitions/formats.

education sector plans or informed new strategies for addressing out-of-school children and gender disparities in education.

The regional Hubs also play an important role in facilitating evidence uptake by providing platforms for peer learning and policy dialogue. These regional convenings help to surface relevant research findings and create direct linkages between researchers and policymakers. The Hubs also offer tailored support to individual countries through the Country Support Mechanism (CSM),[7] which has been used effectively in some contexts, such as Uganda and El Salvador, to provide targeted technical assistance on evidence-informed policy development. Despite these gains, challenges remain in achieving consistent uptake, particularly in politically unstable or resource-constrained contexts.

Survey data highlights that more than half of country representatives already perceive that their participation in KIX Hub activities has contributed to changes in policy design, education planning, or the prioritization of key policy agendas. These findings underscore the growing recognition of the importance of evidence-based decision-making, even though institutionalizing these processes across entire education systems will take time.

Several factors have emerged as critical to successful evidence uptake. First, the extent to which country representatives and policymakers are actively involved in the research process strongly influences whether findings are taken up and applied. Second, direct technical support—whether through applied research projects or through the Hubs' CSM—provides valuable opportunities for customizing evidence to specific policy contexts. Finally, the existence of trusted relationships between researchers, policymakers, and Hub facilitators greatly enhances the likelihood that evidence will be viewed as credible and actionable.

While KIX has successfully supported pockets of evidence-informed policymaking, scaling this approach across all participating countries will require ongoing support, further capacity development, and continued efforts to align research agendas with pressing policy challenges. Strengthening the links between applied research projects, Hubs, and country-level policy processes will be particularly important in sustaining and scaling the progress made so far.

Gender equality and social inclusion (GESI)

GESI has emerged as a consistently emphasized and partially institutionalized dimension across KIX's core components. While the initiative has surpassed performance targets related to GESI-relevant outcomes and successfully integrated gender and inclusion themes across research and Hub activities, gaps remain in translating intent into inclusive, context-sensitive implementation. Most notably, the program did not achieve gender parity in Hub participation, with only 36% of participants identified as women—highlighting persistent structural and cultural barriers in several country contexts.

Encouragingly, many KIX research projects and Hub-led initiatives have embedded gender-responsive pedagogy, promoted inclusive education approaches, and raised awareness of systemic inequities. However, more nuanced and intersectional approaches to inclusion (addressing, for example, disability, ethnicity, and geographic marginalization) are still nascent. Stakeholders—including country representatives and grantees—expressed uncertainty about how to operationalize intersectionality within KIX activities.

[7] This mechanism was introduced following the MTR (2022)

Overall, while KIX has laid a solid foundation for advancing gender equality and social inclusion, the full realization of this objective will require more robust operational guidance, systematic capacity-building, and clearer accountability mechanisms. Strengthening these elements will ensure that GESI is not only a cross-cutting principle but also a driver of transformative and sustainable change across education systems.

Overall conclusion

KIX has evolved into a dynamic platform for learning, innovation, and evidence use in education. Its dual-core structure has facilitated tangible improvements in knowledge generation, capacity development, and, to a lesser extent, evidence-informed policymaking. The program has demonstrated adaptability and responsiveness to country needs, although regional and contextual disparities persist.

To further increase impact, KIX must strengthen the integration between its components, ensure that outputs are visible and accessible, and deepen its engagement in fragile and underserved contexts. Sustaining outcomes beyond the program lifecycle will require stronger national ownership, better institutionalization of evidence-use practices, and expanded regional collaboration.

Recommendations

The evaluation of the KIX program identifies strategic and operational priorities to strengthen the program's effectiveness, sustainability, and integration within the broader GPE architecture. These recommendations are organized along two timelines: long-term strategic reforms to guide the next funding period, and short- to mid-term operational improvements to enhance current delivery.

Long-term strategic recommendations

Clarify GPE modalities and KIX integration through a unified communication strategy

A unified GPE-wide communication strategy is needed to clearly articulate how KIX fits within the broader ecosystem of GPE mechanisms, enabling partner countries to engage more effectively with available support.

Clarify positioning and mandates of Regional Learning Partners (RLPs) within the broader GPE architecture to ensure support for systematic reforms in partner countries

RLPs' roles should be more explicitly linked to GPE's processes, such as sector planning and compact development, with differentiated expectations based on regional and national contexts.

Clarify the positioning of applied research projects within GPE's country-level processes

Applied research projects should be positioned as strategic inputs into national education reform, with outputs tailored and actively promoted for use in GPE country-level processes.

Deepen integration of intersectional GESI approaches throughout the program life cycle

While gender equity has been addressed, more attention is needed on broader inclusion dimensions—disability, ethnicity, geography—through clearer operational guidance and intersectional strategies.

Establish a more integrated and adaptive governance model to steer KIX strategically and sustainably

Transition from a project-delivery model to a system-stewardship model, supporting adaptive management and joint strategic planning across KIX stakeholders.

Short- to mid-term operational recommendations

Design and implement a structured coordination mechanism between the two main KIX components (Hubs and research projects) to minimize fragmentation

A structured coordination mechanism should be created to reduce fragmentation and better align knowledge generation and policy engagement across components.

Further enhance cross-Hub learning mechanisms

Cross-regional learning should be systematized, including better peer-learning platforms and mechanisms for sharing successful practices across Hubs.

Institutionalize the Country Support Mechanism (CSM) as a core part of the Hub offering

The CSM should become a core function of the Hubs, with a focus on strengthening national capacities, especially in fragile contexts.

Simplify and enhance the MEL system to emphasize learning and adaptive management

KIX should evolve its Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) framework to support adaptive management, clearer tracking of GESI outcomes, and learning-driven decision-making.

Develop clear sustainability strategies for both Hubs and research projects and further support follow-up funding for promising innovations

Clear strategies should be developed to sustain innovations and evidence-use beyond KIX. This includes building national ownership, creating long-term networks, and enabling follow-up funding for promising innovations.

1 Introduction

This evaluation report presents the findings of the evaluation of the Global Partnership for Education's (GPE) Knowledge and Innovation Exchange (KIX) Program. The report reflects the analysis of secondary and primary data collected by Technopolis between November 2024 and March 2025.

The report is structured as follows:

- Chapter 2 provides an overview of the program, the evaluation objectives and conceptual considerations that informed the evaluation design and methodology. It also includes an overview of the limitations of this evaluation.
- Chapter 3 presents the empirical results and conclusions of the evaluation organized according to the evaluation questions that were jointly defined with IDRC and GPE.
- Chapter 4 concludes the report with the recommendations derived from the analysis.
- The appendices contain the evaluation matrix, the KIX Theory of Change, overviews of the data sources used for this evaluation, documentations of data collection and analysis tools, and further details of supporting evidence for Chapter 3 (overview of KIX and survey graphs).

2 Evaluation objectives, design and methodological approach

2.1 The KIX program

The GPE KIX program is a joint initiative between the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), launched in 2019. KIX aims to support more than 90 GPE partner countries by providing demand-driven evidence and innovation, strengthening capacities, and facilitating knowledge exchange to promote evidence-based policymaking for equitable, inclusive, and resilient education systems (see KIX Theory of Change for more details, Appendix B). IDRC serves as both a co-financing partner and the grant agent for KIX. KIX is implemented with a total budget of US$165.5 million.[8]

KIX operates through two core components:

- Regional KIX Hubs ("Hubs"), managed by Regional Learning Partners (RLPs) (see Figure 1).
- Competitively selected applied research projects, conducted by consortia of research institutions, universities, NGOs, and other education stakeholders, with 41 projects funded in the first cohort (2019-2023) and a second cohort launched in 2023.[9]

[8] In practice, in 2023-2024, the budget was primarily allocated to the following components: the learning exchange mechanism, i.e., the operation of regional Hubs (USD 3.67 million); the funding mechanism, including applied research grants and research calls (USD 15.1 million); supporting activities such as monitoring, evaluation, learning, communications, and the digital learning platform (USD 1.09 million); program management (USD 4.35 million); and external audit (USD 0.02 million) (KIX Annual Report 2023-2024; GPE 2025: www.globalpartnership.org/what-we-do/knowledge-innovation).

[9] The exact number and time frame of the second cohort of KIX applied research projects have not been fully consolidated in public reporting, though projects were launched in 2023 and are expected to run until 2027 under the program's extension.

Figure 1 Presentation of the four regional Hubs of KIX[10]

Presentation of the four KIX regional hubs

KIX EMAP Hub overview

Region: 37 countries in Europe, Middle East and North Africa, Central Asia, Asia-Pacific
RLP: The Network for International Policies & Cooperation in Education and Training (NORRAG), a global membership-based network
Regional context:
- Post-Soviet countries: Gender equity & universal access to primary & secondary education
- Yemen, Sudan & SE Asian countries: Large numbers of refugees, internally-displaced persons and out-of-school children and youth

EMAP Hub country membership statistics
Mean years of GPE membership: 10.5 years
Mean years of KIX funding: 4.1 years
Mean years of country representative presence: 2.5 years
Mean years of level 2 country engagement: 2.3 years

KIX LAC Hub overview

Region: 10 countries in Latin America & the Caribbean (LAC)
RLPs: Consortium of 2 organizations
- SUMMA, a LAC-based education research and innovation laboratory
- The Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), an an International Intergovernmental Organization dedicated to regional integration in the Eastern Caribbean

Regional context:
- A diversified, active & well consolidated research community
- Significant heterogeneity (language, population, economy)

LAC Hub country membership statistics
Mean years of GPE membership: 11.8 years
Mean years of KIX funding: 4.8 years
Mean years of country representative presence: 4.4 years
Mean years of level 2 country engagement: 4.2 years

KIX Africa 19 Hub overview

Region: 19 countries in East, South and West Africa
RLPs: Consortium of 3 organizations
- UNESCO International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa
- UNICEF Eastern and Southern Africa
- African Union

Regional context:
- Enrolment at pre-primary and secondary levels, education quality & learning achievement are all low
- Significant challenges in teacher recruitment, management & professional development
- Gender equity is a significant challenge

A19 Hub country membership statistics
Mean years of GPE membership: 15.5 years
Mean years of KIX funding: 5.5 years
Mean years of country representative presence: 4.6 years
Mean years of level 2 country engagement: 3.9 years

KIX Africa 21 Hub overview

Region: 21 countries in West and Central Africa & the Indian Ocean
RLPs: Consortium of 3 organizations
- Institut de la Francophonie pour l'éducation et la formation (IFEF)
- Conférence des ministres de l'Éducation des États et gouvernements de la Francophonie
- L'Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie (AUF)

Regional context:
- Universal access to education and gender equality remain significant challenges
- School abandonment is a particular challenge in the Sahel region, where conflict has resulted in population displacement

A21 Hub country membership statistics
Mean years of GPE membership: 16.9 years
Mean years of KIX funding: 6.0 years
Mean years of country representative presence: 3.7 years
Mean years of level 2 country engagement: 3.3 years

An external mid-term review (MTR) of KIX was conducted between November 2021 and March 2022. Based on the 2022 MTR findings, the GPE Board approved a costed extension of KIX to 2027, introducing a country support mechanism (CSM) and reinforcing its focus on gender equality, equity, and social inclusion (GESI).[11] An external evaluation focusing on KIX's Applied Research Portfolio ("applied research evaluation") was carried out between July 2023 and March 2024.

To inform the current evaluation, a preliminary desk review of KIX ("2024 review") was conducted between June and October 2024 by an external consultant. This current evaluation

[10] Note on Hub country membership statistics. All statistics are derived from country-level data provided by GPE. Statistics were calculated per country and then for each Hub, the average (mean) years across all its countries was calculated. Calculation of years of GPE membership: For each country, the number of years of membership was calculated by subtracting the year the country joined from the current year (2025). Calculation of years of KIX funding: For each country, the number of years of KIX funding was calculated by subtracting the year the country became eligible for KIX funding from the current year (2025). Calculation of years of country representative presence: Calculated by subtracting from the current year the year in which the country nominated a focal point and/or members of the national delegation to participate in hub activities. Calculation of years of level 2 country engagement: Calculated by subtracting from the current year (2025) the year in which the country's engagement was marked at level 2 or higher in the country engagement and ownership rubric for the first time by the regional learning partner.

[11] The evaluation takes the later introduction of the country support mechanism and the GESI focus into account to ensure a balanced assessment.

builds on these previous assessments, with particular attention to the findings from the 2024 desk review.

2.2 Evaluation objectives and target groups

This evaluation provides evidence to inform GPE's Board of Directors as it approaches decisions about future support and directions for KIX in June 2025. It informs adaptations to the design and operations of a successor KIX program and feeds into the GPE 2030 strategy to ensure alignment. The evaluation analyses the overall program, i.e. both KIX core components (Hubs and applied research) and their interactions. It investigates five key areas in line with the OECD-DAC criteria of effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, internal and external coherence, and sustainability.

In addition to the Board of Directors, the evaluation should also benefit the GPE Performance Impact Learning Committee (PILC), the GPE Secretariat, the GPE Secretariat and IDRC KIX implementation teams and RLPs, and the IDRC Board and Senior Management with suggestions for ongoing adaptations within the existing program timeframe to 2027.

2.3 Evaluation design: Theoretical foundation and evaluation matrix

The theoretical foundation of the evaluation was the Theory of Change of the KIX program (see Figure 8), which provided a comprehensive conceptual framework for the program's objectives, envisaged results and causal mechanisms. In addition, the evaluation was guided by specific evaluation questions on the above-mentioned OECD-DAC criteria. The evaluation matrix (see Appendix A) maps out the data collection methods used to gather evidence for each question (see next section for the detailed methodological approach). It also incorporates the assessment criteria and standards applied for each question.

In line with the scope of this evaluation and as agreed upon during the inception meeting, Questions 1A, 1B, (on effectiveness) and 3A (on relevance) were prioritized during the evaluation, which means that the data collection efforts concentrated on these questions that are most relevant to the decision-making of the GPE board (see Table 1). Other research questions were given a lower priority.

Table 1 Evaluation questions and main data sources used

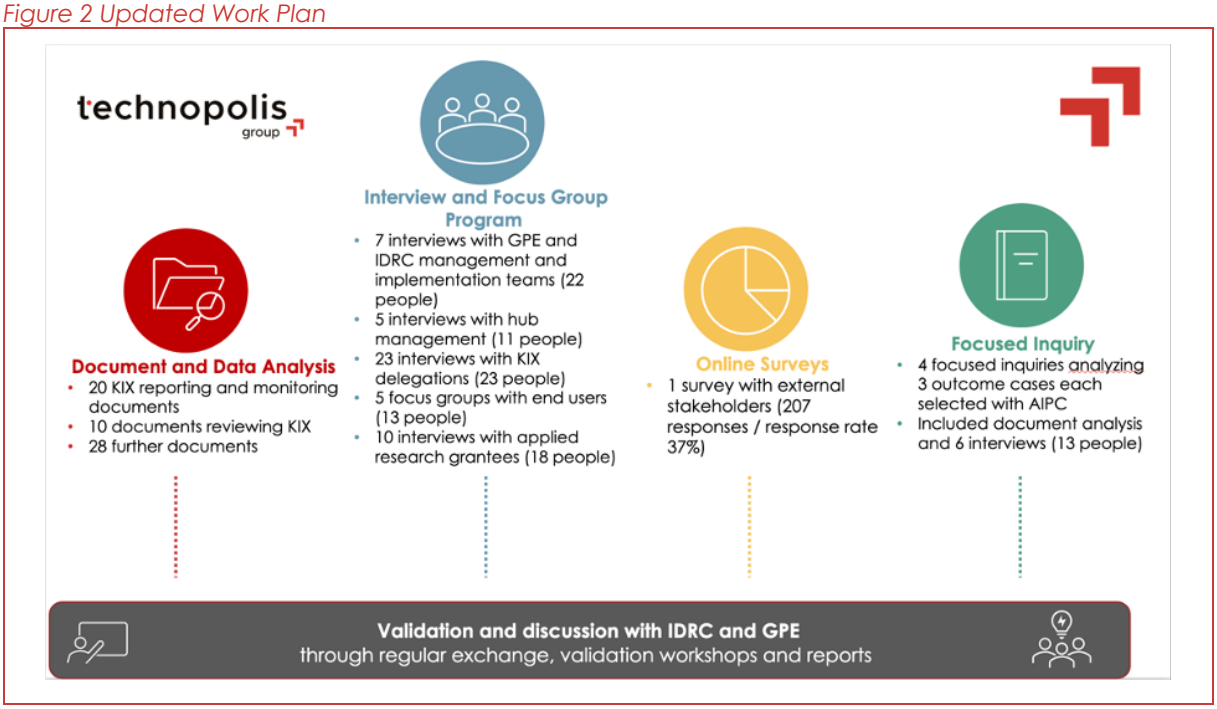
Evaluation question (Q)		**Main data source used to address**
Effectiveness	Q1A: Is KIX progressing towards its overall objective, i.e., supporting partner countries to have and use the evidence and innovation they need to accelerate access, learning outcomes, and gender equality through equitable, inclusive, and modern resilient education systems?	Document analysis, MEL data and documentation, survey, interviews with country reps, RLPs, research grantees, end users, IDRC/ GPE, focused inquiries
	Q1B: How well are the interlinkages between Hubs and the research portfolio working together and driving the objectives of KIX?	Document analysis, survey, interviews with country reps, RLPs, research grantees
Efficiency	Q2: How does KIX align with, and add value to, the broader evidence-based dialogue and knowledge exchange architecture (globally, regionally and at country level)?) (external coherence)?	Document analysis, interviews with country reps, research grantees
	Q4 How well have KIX partners implemented processes for efficient, timely and responsive grant management, planning, reporting, and program implementation?	Document analysis, survey, interviews with country reps, RLPs, research grantees

Relevance	Q3A: How well does KIX respond (and has it been able to adapt its approach) to countries' needs for evidence, knowledge mobilization and capacity strengthening?	Document analysis (in particular: KIX annual reports, KIX Hubs reports and annual evaluation surveys results), survey, interviews with country reps, RLPs, research grantees, and end users.
	Q3B: To what extent is KIX positioned to contribute to the IDRC's strategy 2030 as well as the GPE 2030 strategy and operating model?	Document analysis (strategies), interviews with IDRC/ GPE Secretariat
Sustainability	Q5: How are the immediate outcomes sustained and how has KIX contributed to that?	Document analysis, survey, interviews with country reps, RLPs, research grantees, interviews with end users, case studies

2.4 Methodological approach of the evaluation

To answer the evaluation questions, the **methodological approach** combined qualitative and quantitative data collection instruments for primary data, and the review and analysis of relevant secondary data sources. The data collection instruments included desk research and document analysis, an online survey as well as an interview and a focus group program.

Figure 2 Updated Work Plan



Technopolis

- **Desk research and document analysis**: Desk research and document analysis served as the foundation for the evaluation. A systematic review of the relevant documents provided a deeper understanding of the KIX infrastructure and the individual Hubs. The evaluation team conducted a qualitative analysis of KIX Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) data, previous reviews and reports, proposals, strategies, and key GPE documents. Additionally, an AI-supported document analysis of outcome cases was conducted using the Technopolis Policy Concierge, further details of which are provided in Appendix D. A

comprehensive list of documents and data sources examined during the evaluation is provided in Table 8.

- **Interview and focus group discussions:** To gain a deeper understanding of the program, the evaluation team conducted a series of qualitative interviews and focus groups structured in two phases. In the scoping phase, four **interviews** were conducted with the GPE R&P and POEV teams, the GPE KIX team, the IDRC KIX team and Simon Hearne (the external consultant of the 2024 review), to gain a deeper understanding of the program. In the data collection phase, the evaluation team organized **four group interviews** with **IDRC and GPE management**; **three group and individual interviews** with the **implementation teams**; **38 individual and group interviews with external stakeholders** including Hub management, country representatives, and applied research grantees; and **5 focus groups with end users**. The evaluation team conducted semi-open, virtual interviews (60 minutes each) and focus groups which were guided by specific **questionnaires** (see D.1) customized to the different types of interviews and focus group participants and focused on specific topics and evaluation questions (see evaluation matrices). The design and implementation of the interview and focus group program were closely **accompanied by the RLPs.**

Table 2 Overview of the interview and focus group program

Interview Partner Type	Interview format	# of interviews	# of interviewees
GPE Secretariat senior management, country teams and advisors	Group interviews	3	11
IDRC senior management	Group interview	1	2
GPE Secretariat KIX implementation team	Group interview	1	3
IDRC KIX implementation team	Group interviews	2	6
RLP	Group and individual interview	5 (1 interview per Hub + follow-up with EMAP)	11
Country representatives (stakeholder groups engaged with KIX Hubs)	Total interviews Government Academia Civil Society International Organizations	23 12 5 5 1	23
End users (e.g. administrators, teachers and students in schools, universities, educational NGOs)	Focus groups	5	13
Grantees of applied research projects	Group and individual interviews	10	18
Total		**50**	**87**

Technopolis

- **Online survey:** The evaluation team also conducted **an online survey** targeting different external KIX stakeholder groups across all Hubs. The survey collected experiences and perceived impact from the stakeholders on topics such as Hub ownership, barriers to participation, and sustainability. The survey questionnaire was developed and tested in close collaboration with KIX Hubs and IDRC. The final documents can be found in D.2. The table below provides the number of participants and response rate of each Hub.

Table 3 Overview of number of participants and response rate per Hub

Hubs	# responses	# participants contacted	Response rate	# of countries covered in the region
Africa 19	43	78	55%	14/19
Africa 21	19	n/a	n/a	14/21
EMAP	124	414	30%	25/36
LAC	24	63	38%	8/10
Total	210	555	34%[12]	61/86

Technopolis

- **Focused Inquiries** contribute to all evaluation questions, with particular attention to the overarching question on effectiveness. They aim to illustrate in greater detail KIX's main impact pathways (knowledge generation, knowledge mobilization and capacity strengthening). For each focused inquiry, 3 outcome cases were selected based on clear selection criteria. The data collection and analysis combined a review of outcome case documentation with qualitative data collection through interviews (see Appendix D4).

The data collected was **aggregated** and **triangulated** using specific analytical grids, aligned with the evaluation matrix, to link the data from each data source with the evaluation questions. That way the results could be compared across data sources (triangulation), and an assessment of the robustness (reliability and validity, depending on the number of data sources and concrete data points) of the evidence was added.

Based on the results, the evaluation team prepared **this in-depth evaluation report** covering the evaluation questions and providing Hub-specific insights. To facilitate broader stakeholder engagement, dissemination workshops will be organized through IDRC and GPE, with the evaluation team supporting the delivery of insights and presentation of findings.

2.5 Limitations

This evaluation was conducted within certain constraints that impacted the scope, depth, and comprehensiveness of the analysis. Below are the most significant limitations encountered during the evaluation process. A more detailed list of limitations is available in the Inception Report.

Overall Limitations

Limited differentiation between KIX and other GPE initiatives

Some grantees and country representatives demonstrated limited awareness of the distinctions between KIX and other components of the GPE architecture.[13] This occasionally led to confusion regarding the specific contributions of KIX and created challenges in attributing outcomes to the initiative.

[12] The total response rate is 34% when excluding Africa 21 due to missing data on participants contacted.

[13] This refers to instances where grantees and country representatives expressed limited awareness of the distinctions between KIX and other elements of the GPE architecture, including specific programs such as Education Out Loud (EOL) and the Technical Assistance and Implementation (TAI) mechanism, as well as GPE grants and operational model processes more broadly.

Uneven stakeholder engagement

Participation of country representatives in the evaluation was uneven across regions. This uneven distribution of data limits the representativeness of findings across all KIX regions.

Shift in case study approach

The initial plan to conduct comprehensive case studies was adapted into a more focused inquiry approach (see method section in Appendix D.4). This reduced the level of in-depth analysis possible for specific countries and projects.

Focus group limitations

In many cases, planned focus groups could not be conducted due to logistical challenges and were instead replaced by individual interviews. This limitation applied across all stakeholder groups, including Hubs, GPE representatives, grantees, and others. Scheduling group sessions proved particularly difficult due to the limited availability of participants and their reluctance to adjust to the timing constraints imposed by group formats. As a result, the evaluation was less able to capture group dynamics and collaborative insights.

Narrowed project sampling

The evaluators initially recommended including new applied research projects in data collection to better understand how their experiences might differ from the first cohort, particularly in relation to cooperation with the regional Hubs. However, data collection focused on projects receiving continuity grants, based on IDRC's recommendation to prioritize initiatives with more mature results, including those not covered by the applied research evaluation (2023, 2024). Newer projects were considered too early in their implementation to provide sufficient progress or outcomes.

Specific Limitations Related to Evaluation Questions

Q1A – Effectiveness across diverse country contexts

Assessing the effectiveness of KIX across all GPE partner countries is inherently challenging due to the wide diversity in national contexts — including differences in policy-making cultures, research capacities, and economic circumstances. The limited scope of this evaluation did not allow for systematic assessment of progress in each individual country. Instead, the evaluation relied on selected empirical evidence to construct plausible conclusions about overall progress at varying speeds across different contexts. Additionally, the ROSIE initiative could not be included in the in-depth analysis due to scope constraints.[14] Furthermore, the limited time that has passed since newer GPE partner countries joined the program, limits the evaluation's ability to fully assess outcomes and requires tempered expectations regarding the extent of observable results.

[14] The Research on Scaling the Impact of Innovations in Education (ROSIE) project is a KIX initiative which is implemented by the Center for Universal Education (CUE) at the Brookings Institute. It aims to support the scaling efforts of KIX grantees i.e. via CoPs and research conducted on the scaling process in education. The ROSIE support to research projects was analyzed in the Evaluation of the KIX Applied Research portfolio (2023, 2024) and is therefore not considered in detail in this evaluation. Additionally, the initial phase of the evaluation highlighted the relevance and promising potential impact of ROSIE (Review of the Global Partnership for Education Knowledge and Innovation Exchange, Simon Hearn, 2024). These findings suggest that a more in-depth analysis in the future would be both valuable and warranted.

Q1B – Interlinkages among regional Hubs

The differences in how KIX regional Hubs operate and engage with stakeholders made it difficult to evaluate interlinkages at the overall program level. In addition, data on interpersonal exchanges and information coordination – such as unrecorded exchanges, informal collaboration, or ad-hoc coordination between Hubs and stakeholder – was limited, reducing the ability to assess the depth and quality of these collaborations.

Q3A – Relevance and adaptability

Educational priorities across GPE partner countries continue to evolve, making it difficult to assess the relevance of KIX interventions at a single point in time. As a result, the evaluation places greater emphasis on the adaptability and flexibility of KIX to respond to emerging priorities. However, assessing adaptability is constrained by the absence of longitudinal data, requiring a greater reliance on qualitative assessments provided by stakeholders.

Q3B – Alignment with GPE strategy

GPE's 2030 strategy remains under development, and the operational model is being adjusted.[15] As a result, this evaluation focuses on how KIX could contribute to GPE's evolving strategy in the coming years, rather than evaluating alignment against a finalized strategy.

Q4 – Efficiency

Due to time and resource constraints, the evaluation was not able to conduct in-depth assessments of the specific roles and processes. The analysis therefore focuses on identifying overall trends in the efficiency, timeliness, and responsiveness of the program rather than detailed process reviews. In particular, financial management and monitoring processes were not subjected to comprehensive auditing approaches.

Q5 – Sustainability

This evaluation is only able to capture early indications of sustainability. There is no consistent, long-term data available on how stakeholders continue to apply the knowledge, skills, and policies introduced through KIX. Furthermore, sustainability is influenced by many external factors beyond the scope of KIX's direct interventions, further limiting the ability to attribute long-term outcomes solely to the program.

2.6 Definitions

- **KIX implementation partners:** GPE Secretariat and KIX grant agent (IDRC)
- **KIX grantees**: RLPs, research project grantees
- **KIX target groups**: country representatives (for Hubs) and target groups of research grantees
- **KIX stakeholder:** Every group of people that is involved in KIX, including KIX implementation partners (GPE Secretariat, IDRC), KIX grantees (RLPs, research project grantees) and target groups (country representatives and target groups of research grantees).
- **Country representatives**: The definition of country representatives has changed over time and there are slightly different understandings by different KIX stakeholders. When KIX was initiated, each country government appointed a KIX Focal Point as the main interlocutor

[15] It is important to note that the original KIX program design was developed under the GPE 2020 strategy, prior to the introduction of the 2025 strategy and the current shift toward the 2030 strategy.

with the Hub. The focal point helped organize the selection of a 'KIX National Delegation' as the main group to interact with the Hub, serving as conduits to relay resources to and from the Hub. The delegations were proposed to be five individuals – two from the government and three from local education group member organizations (donors, multilaterals, civil society, others). The guidance to five people has since been relaxed. To avoid the challenge that the term "country representatives" is interpreted differently by different KIX partners, we define them for this report as representatives of their countries who participate in KIX Hub activities.

3 Empirical results and conclusions of the evaluation

This chapter presents the evaluation findings. It is structured according to the evaluation criteria: relevance, effectiveness and impact, efficiency, sustainability, and cross-cutting issues. Each sub-section introduces one or several evaluation questions and presents the respective empirical findings and conclusions.

3.1 Effectiveness

Q1A: Is KIX progressing towards its overall objective, i.e., supporting partner countries to have and use the evidence and innovation they need to accelerate access, learning outcomes, and gender equality through equitable, inclusive, and modern resilient education systems?

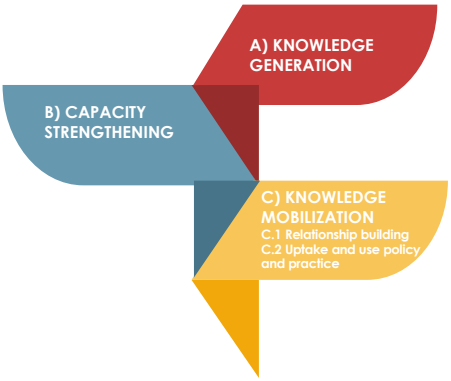
Data Sources	
	Document analysis, MEL data and documentation, survey, interviews with country reps, RLPs, research grantees, end users, IDRC/ GPE, focused inquiries
Strength of evidence	
High-Moderate	The findings are based on a broad range of primary and secondary sources (see data sources). Due to the limited scope of the evaluation, the ROSIE project could not be examined in-depth. Additionally, varying national contexts—such as differences in policy-making cultures, research capacities, and economic conditions—affect realistic expectations for outcomes. As a result, it is difficult to assess the program's effectiveness uniformly across all GPE partner countries. This evaluation also does not assess progress at the individual country level. Instead, overall progress towards KIX's objectives—albeit at differing speeds across countries—is supported by empirical evidence and reasonable assumptions.

The KIX initiative is making notable progress towards its overall objective of supporting partner countries in using evidence and innovation to accelerate equitable access to education, improve learning outcomes, and promote gender equality through resilient and inclusive education systems. Drawing on evidence from document analysis, interviews, surveys, and focused inquiries, this evaluation confirms that KIX is contributing significantly to knowledge generation, capacity strengthening, and knowledge mobilization. While progress varies across regions and is influenced by national contexts, overall findings indicate that KIX has exceeded key targets in both research outputs and capacity strengthening outcomes. However, challenges remain in ensuring clarity around the various sources of knowledge within the KIX platform. In some partner countries, complex political and socio-economic conditions have also limited the ability to support the generation and use of evidence and innovation.

The research question Q1A on effectiveness is directly related to tracing the progress made in KIX's Theory of Change (ToC, see Figure 8) and the results framework. In accordance with the ToC, the areas of inquiry can be subdivided into "knowledge generation", "capacity strengthening" and "knowledge mobilization". As KIX puts a strong emphasis on Gender, Equity, and Social Inclusion (GESI)[16], this report concentrates particularly on GESI in the fourth part of this section, recognizing that GESI is a cross-cutting theme that plays a role in every part of KIX.

[16] KIX documents refer to both GESI and GEI (Gender Equality and Inclusion). In this report the broader term of GESI is used. While GESI was already a central element of the project design, the first review led to a further strengthening and deepening of GESI considerations.

The subdivision serves to structure the analysis while acknowledging that the various areas are closely interconnected and often build on each other. For example, research (the knowledge) that is generated is strongly practice-oriented and frequently contributes to the development of skills (capacity strengthening). It is also important to recognize that the different impact paths within each area will vary in relevance across countries, depending on their specific needs.



A) Knowledge generation

The generation of knowledge through research is one of the core elements of KIX.[17] In the KIX context "research" encompasses not only academic outputs but practical applications and action research – including learning materials, capacity building resources, and, in some cases policy inputs – which are then put into practice.

Knowledge generation is the core task of the applied research projects.[18] KIX developed research projects through global grants, regional grants and country grants as an adaptation following the 2022 MTR. Most projects within these categories focus on generating knowledge aimed at scaling promising or proven innovations. Additionally, KIX supports targeted research on scaling educational innovations through the ROSIE project, providing resources and training opportunities to grantees. During the COVID-19 pandemic, KIX also initiated the "KIX Observatory on COVID-19 Responses in Africa's Educational Systems," though this initiative is not a specific focus of this evaluation.[19] The knowledge produced by some research projects of the first cohort is further consolidated and synthesized by IDRC into five comprehensive synthesis reports.

Although regional Hubs primarily focus on knowledge mobilization, they also engage in knowledge generation through targeted research and analytical activities. Typically, these activities address national education policies and initiatives. The mechanisms for knowledge generation by Hubs are less defined than for research projects and Hubs apply different approaches for knowledge generation. For instance, the EMAP Hub produces policy briefs, case studies and working papers in collaboration with country representatives (linked to their Learning Cycles) and the leading RLP of the LAC Hub (SUMMA) directly engages in research, supporting the other RLP (OECS) in designing the compacts[20] for four GPE partner country islands of the Eastern Caribbean. Generally, research conducted by Hubs is shorter in duration and more directly applicable to immediate national contexts compared to the longer-term approach of research projects.

Document and data analysis confirm substantial knowledge generation across the KIX ecosystem, encompassing global and regional research projects, regional learning partners

[17] To measure the progress towards KIX' goals regarding knowledge generation, this evaluation does not measure the quality of the knowledge produced. Instead, it is assessed in relation to the targets set by KIX and the evaluation by its target groups (see Q3A for the coverage of country needs).

[18] According to the 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 KIX Annual Reports, a total of 41 applied research projects were funded under the first cohort between 2020 and 2023, including 21 global grants and 20 regional grants. To date, there is no consolidated public data available on the number of applied research projects funded under the second cohort (see Chapter 1).

[19] The "KIX Observatory on COVID-19 Responses in Africa's Educational Systems" was already a focus of the MTR (2022) of KIX.

[20] See Glossary for definition.

(RLPs), the KIX Observatory, ROSIE, and KIX's research synthesis. Research spans six themes - teaching and learning, learning assessment, gender equality and inclusion, data systems, early childhood education, and equity – reflecting priorities identified by GPE partner countries to address key education system challenges. Looking at the achievement of output level targets, KIX has overachieved the numbers of primary research outputs[21] for research projects, but not for RLPs (see Table 4).

Table 4 Overview of achievement of output indicators relevant to knowledge generation

Indicator	KIX component	Target	Achieved
# new primary research outputs presenting new knowledge or innovation in KIX thematic areas and/or GPE partner country specific education needs and priorities.	All components	176	305
	RLPs	63	54
	Global Grants	58	90
	Regional Grants	55	117
	With GESI content	40%	59%
# new primary research outputs presenting insights on how to scale the impact of education innovations in developing contexts.	All components	108	94
	Global Grants	30	30
	Regional Grants	33	45
	ROSIE	5	7
	With GESI content	40%	54%

Technopolis, based on KIX MEL data and results framework

Interviews revealed challenges in differentiating and assessing the value of applied research results. Both end users and applied research grantees revealed that research results were (highly) valued by their target groups. However, interviewed country representatives[22] struggled to differentiate between research conducted by Hubs and by applied research projects, making it challenging for the evaluation team to accurately assess which research they valued and why. Additionally, limited awareness among country representatives about the specific research topics and findings hindered their ability to evaluate the relevance of the research to their country's needs.

Limited awareness of applied research products and synthesis efforts among interviewees highlights gaps in communication and outreach. While the original KIX program design included synthesis reports and targeted events to support broader learning across stakeholders, these efforts were not explicitly known/referenced by country representatives. This indicates a potential gap in dissemination, communication or outreach. Strengthening the

[21] In its targets, KIX differentiates between primary research outputs, which are direct results and findings of research, including situational analyses, scoping studies, synthesis reports and research reports and secondary knowledge products, that are relevant for knowledge mobilization as they disseminate and communicate research findings to broader audiences (like podcasts, newsletters, policy briefs). For the two output indicators that are relevant for knowledge generation, primary research outputs are relevant (see also 2024 desk review). Our analysis (see Table 4) aligns with the findings of the 2024 review regarding the overall target of the first indicator. However, it provides a more nuanced result when examining the component level.

[22] The group of interviewed country representatives itself comprised more than 50% government representatives (see Table 2).

connections between the regional Hubs (RLPs and country representatives) and the applied research portfolio and actively enhancing visibility and accessibility of research project outputs is an area of ongoing work by IDRC, GPE KIX team and the Hubs (see also Q1B on the ongoing efforts of strengthening interlinkages between Hubs and applied research projects).

Qualitative evidence on Hubs' knowledge generation activities is limited, primarily due to country representatives' tendency to reference events rather than specific knowledge products. This is expected given Hubs' primary focus on knowledge mobilization rather than generation. Nevertheless, two country representatives in the EMAP region positively highlighted their involvement in developing knowledge products. Document analysis reveals that African Hubs have produced fewer primary research outputs[23] than Hubs in other regions, which may be one of several factors contributing to lower awareness in these regions.

Significant difficulties in navigating and differentiating knowledge sources highlight the need for clearer delineation, improved coordination and better dissemination. Despite evidence of knowledge generation, interview partners – including country representatives, GPE representatives, and Hubs – consistently highlighted significant difficulties in navigating and differentiating among the multiple knowledge sources within KIX. In addition, one KIX national coordinator noted the broader complexity of aligning KIX with other GPE programs, which adds to the challenge of maintaining a clear overview of available knowledge. These findings point to the need for clearer delineation and improved coordination, directly linking to evaluation questions Q1B (effectiveness) and Q3B (relevance).

Good Practice for Project Management in Politically Unstable Contexts
Challenges reported by research projects include conducting research in politically unstable contexts and effectively managing multi-country and multi-partner projects. A good practice identified by interviewees and corroborated by the evaluation team in these challenging environments was the appointment of respected local education experts in each participating country, who were unaffiliated with political factions, thus facilitating smoother project implementation and local acceptance.

B) Capacity strengthening

KIX supports capacity strengthening through multiple mechanisms and for different target groups. While applied research projects' core function includes knowledge generation, most projects also contribute to capacity strengthening, as they often incorporate training and mentoring with and for education stakeholders.[24] They address different target groups with these instruments, depending on the focus of each project, such as teachers, school principals, or ministry officials. Also, via funding their research, KIX supports the capacity of the research grantees, who are often southern based[25], themselves. KIX regional Hubs strengthen capacities through various activities depending on each Hub, i.e. Communities of Practice (CoP), cross-national exchanges and Learning Cycles.[22] These opportunities involve country representatives, members of local education groups, and civil society representatives as well as others working in the respective education systems at the national level.

Overall, the KIX MEL data points to good progress towards KIX's capacity strengthening objectives (see Table 5):

- For research projects, the outcome indicator related to capacity strengthening (as defined in the KIX results framework) is overachieved with 138 outcome cases (102 targeted). The

[23] See Glossary for definitions.

[24] See Applied Research Evaluation (2023-2024).

[25] According to the costed extension proposal.

AIPC analysis[26] also shows that overall, most outcome cases reported by research grantees refer to capacities being strengthened. The knowledge and skills that were strengthened most often according to their self-reporting in outcome cases are teaching and pedagogical skills. Hubs have reported 18 cases that strengthen these kinds of skills and are comparatively seldomly targeting schoolteachers.[27]

- Hubs also exceeded their outcome target for outcome cases (indicator as defined in the KIX results framework) with country representatives reporting new knowledge and skills (63 cases achieved, 40 targeted). Disaggregated by Hub regions, it becomes clear that the EMAP Hub contributes most to the achievement of this indicator. The AIPC analysis shows that most outcome cases reported by Hubs relate to strengthened skills and knowledge. Most often, the outcome cases report on strengthened knowledge about other education policy innovations and evidence-based policy design.[32]

Table 5 Overview of achievement of immediate outcome indicators relevant to capacity strengthening

Indicator	KIX component	Target	Achieved
# of outcome cases of education stakeholders reporting new knowledge and skills, substantiated by the grantee projects	Research projects	102	138
	GESI related	50	105
# of outcome cases of country representatives reporting new knowledge and skills, including those related to GESI.	RLPs	40	63
	EMAP	/	37
	Africa 21	/	6
	Africa19	/	11
	LAC	/	9
	GESI related	20%	42%

Technopolis, based on KIX MEL data and results framework

Outcome cases

Outcome cases are a monitoring tool used in KIX, based on the principles of outcome harvesting. Developed by RLPs, applied research grantees and ROSIE, each outcome case describes, in a short narrative, a significant change in an individual, group or organization who interacts directly with KIX (e.g., country representatives, project-relevant stakeholders). Each case rates the significance of the change and describes how the program contributed to the change. The number and content of outcome cases are one of the main indicators in the program-level results framework[28].

The relevance of capacity strengthened through the research projects is also supported by qualitative evidence. Research grantees report on capacity strengthened at different levels – including, in some cases, ministry officials and researchers (e.g., in data collection and analysis) – but more frequently at the level of teachers, such as training senior teachers to deliver teacher professional development sessions. Teachers and school principals ("end users")

[26] This difference is in line with the primary target groups. Hubs primarily work with ministries of education and civil society representatives, not teachers, school leaders, or community members. More details and definition on the AIPC analysis can be found in Appendix G.

[27] Research project outcome cases that resulted in changes for schoolteachers: 65, Hub outcome cases that resulted in changes for schoolteachers: 3.

[28] KIX monitoring, evaluation and learning guide.

interviewed unanimously reported that engaging with the research findings had positive impacts on their skills and knowledge, e.g. in different gender inclusive pedagogies.

The relevance of KIX Hubs for capacity strengthening is also reflected in the evaluation survey results. Across all regions, between 80% and 95% of country representatives reported that they had (significantly) improved their skills and knowledge due to KIX Hub activities. Most frequently, improvements were reported in knowledge sharing skills and knowledge of education policy innovations (Figure 11). The percentage of respondents reporting skills and knowledge improvement was highest for Africa 21 (97%), followed by Africa 19 (91%), EMAP (90%) and LAC (87%). It should be noted, however, that the Africa 21 and LAC Hubs had the lowest numbers of respondents.

Among the exclusively positive interview statements regarding increased capacities on the side of country representatives, various types of skills were mentioned, including improved research skills (often for technical ministry staff) or GESI-related capacities. One notable example is the peer exchange facilitated by the KIX Africa 19 Hub between Zambia and Ethiopia, which helped Zambian officials develop a teacher policy by learning from Ethiopia's experience. The exchange contributed to training officers (e.g. advising them on stakeholders they should consult). Country representatives in the LAC Hub also highlighted the positive impact of the technical visits including, for example the visit of El Salvador to Chile concerning Early Childhood Education and of OECS countries to Latin America countries concerning the development and implementation of EMIS.

The demand for Hub-led capacity strengthening was consistently confirmed across all regions. In the EMAP region, representatives particularly valued Learning Cycles for their practical and hands-on approach. However, though one country representative noted that participants were initially skeptical about their usefulness, this perception changed once they experienced the concrete benefits. No significant hindering factors for capacity strengthening were identified in the available data. The following focused inquiry provides further insight into which approaches are particularly effective in strengthening capacities.

Figure 3 Focused Inquiry 1: Skills and knowledge development/mobilization[29]

Focused inquiry 1: How can KIX contribute to policymakers developing skills and knowledge on evidence-based policy making?

Context
This focused inquiry examines how KIX has contributed to strengthening the skills and knowledge of policymakers involved in education sector planning, policy dialogue, and related decision-making processes. It brings together three outcome cases that illustrate different pathways through which KIX supported capacity development among policymakers. The first case focuses on the Maldives and Kyrgyz Republic, where country representatives engaged with the Education Policy Toolbox. The second case highlights a country-led Knowledge and Innovation Exchange session with policymakers from Kenya and Sierra Leone. The third case describes how the applied research project "MICS-EAGLE"[30] in Tonga combined sector planning with national capacity-building efforts. Together, these cases illustrate how KIX has contributed to enhancing the capacities of policymakers across regions and through different types of activities, including peer learning, technical tools, and targeted capacity-building interventions.

[29] More details on the focused inquiry can be found in the methods section D.4. For this focused inquiry, only one interview with representative from the Africa 19 Hub was held as other interview partners did not respond to the interview requests. Accordingly, the analysis of the other two outcome cases is based on desk review only.

[30] The MICS-EAGLE initiative helps countries use household survey data to analyze key education indicators and inform equitable, evidence-based policy reforms. It focuses on areas such as learning outcomes, school participation, and early childhood education to improve education sector planning. (UNICEF, 2021)

Results observed and KIX' contribution

- Through a webinar organized by the KIX EMAP Hub on "Using Evidence in Educational Planning and Management" (May 2021), policymakers from Kyrgyz Republic and Maldives **strengthened their skills in applying research to education planning**. They learned to use UNESCO IIEP's Education Policy Toolbox to support evidence-based policymaking. Both highlighted how the toolbox would help them access relevant research and integrate new knowledge into their countries' education strategies, contributing to more informed and effective policy development.
- The Africa 19 Hub organized a country-led community of practice, workshops and trainings. All these formats allowed representatives from national policy institutions to develop, **strengthen and apply new skills in four areas**: improved understanding of how to design competence-based curricula, increased awareness and strategies to support teachers' well-being/ mental health, gender-transformative education (skills to promote gender-responsive practices in teaching and curriculum content), and skills on data collection, analysis, management and use. As reported by the interview partners, the latter skillset in particular has led to more informed decision-making and continuous improvement within educational systems in Kenya and Sierra Leone. The strengthened capacities are not only being **applied but are also disseminated** across institutions and different education stakeholders. For example, in Kenya, the analysis of curricula and identification of gaps, new additional capacity building for other departments and teachers, and knowledge transfer to different stakeholders (e.g. adjustment of schoolbooks to include gender responsive education) were applied. In Sierra Leone, the knowledge and skills were shared with direct colleagues and applied on a daily basis in curriculum implementation and in form of developing teacher trainings that based on new knowledge. Also, data is being used much more today than in the past (e.g. annual census) and a new tool to report gender issues (for students and teachers) was developed.
- As part of the respective applied research project, a MICS-EAGLE national workshop in Tonga was held in 2022. Policymakers and technical staff from various Ministry of Education departments—beyond the data team—gained **awareness and understanding of education data available** through MICS. Further, a capacity-building workshop attended by staff from the Ministry of Education and the National Statistical Office strengthened collaboration between the two agencies and **enhanced participants' skills in applying MICS indicators**, including concepts, definitions, and calculations. This capacity development is now being expanded as the **trained individuals prepare to disseminate their knowledge** through a follow-up workshop, supporting broader use of education data and informing the country's education sector plan with a stronger focus on equity.

Lessons learned

The described Hub activities and research grantee (MICS-EAGLE) have led to improvements in both technical knowledge and practical skills. The advancements are being actively applied and shared, creating ripple effects within the participating countries.
The evaluation team identified four key principles that guided the activities and contributed to notable improvements in both technical knowledge and practical skills:

(1) Focus on practical application of learning
In all cases, policymakers did not just receive information but engaged with the knowledge and concrete tools (such as the Education Policy Toolbox and MICS data) to inform decision-making or even ongoing education sector plans and strategies. This hands-on approach allowed them to apply newly acquired knowledge to real-world policy issues/processes, enhancing relevance and retention.

(2) Country-led participatory approach
Especially the community-of-practice model (but also the follow-up workshop in Tonga) empowered countries to lead activities, ensuring relevance and ownership. Local leadership facilitated contextualized solutions and greater stakeholder buy-in. Capacity-building efforts were closely linked to country-specific challenges/themes, allowing participants to test/apply new knowledge and skills. The ability to translate knowledge into concrete outputs, such as curriculum revisions and internal training, increased sustainability.

(3) Principle of peer learning
Participants from different departments and agencies, including education planners, curriculum specialists, statisticians, and consultants, exchanged knowledge and experiences during the different activities. This cross-sectoral engagement fostered learning not only from external facilitators but also from peers facing similar challenges. Involving a wide range of departments and agencies allowed policymakers to shape how new evidence and tools were integrated into their contexts. Finally, the offering of opportunities for peer-to-peer exchange enriched learning and built cross-country connections.

(4) Use of diverse engagement formats
A combination of webinars, national workshops, a community of practice and targeted capacity-building events created multiple entry points for learning. These varied formats allowed policymakers to build both their understanding of evidence sources and their capacity to apply them.

C) Knowledge mobilization

Through its activities and outputs, KIX aims to mobilize knowledge and evidence to contribute to education policy and practice in GPE partner countries. In practice, this means bringing relevant knowledge to the places where it can make a difference in policy and practice. The four regional Hubs play a key role in this, functioning as a regional forum to facilitate cross-country knowledge exchange and mobilization and collaboration among key national education stakeholders. Through knowledge mobilization, KIX progresses towards its goals by 1) building or strengthening relationships between different research and education stakeholders in the GPE partner countries and 2) informing education planning, policy and practice. Accordingly, the following sections address these two main knowledge mobilization elements.

Overall, KIX met all output indicator targets relating to knowledge mobilization as of the 2024 desk review, having produced 828 of a targeted 447 secondary knowledge products[31] since MEL recording began in April 2020 (of which 46% GESI-related) and organized 1229 of a targeted 345 events or meetings[32] where KIX research was presented, or knowledge exchange took place.

C.1) Relationship building

An essential component of knowledge mobilization is relationship building. By facilitating regional knowledge exchange between researchers, governments, and other education stakeholders, KIX aims to help enhance knowledge sharing, promote the identification of new policy and practice options, and foster a stronger culture of evidence-based decision-making. The Hubs play a central role in this work, with one of their core functions being to broker relationships and draw in expertise and evidence from within countries, regionally, and beyond.

KIX has significantly overachieved in this area. From the beginning of MEL recording in April 2020 to program end in 2024, KIX achieved a total of 36 documented outcome cases of country representatives who—through Hub activities—built new or stronger relationships with education stakeholders and mobilized knowledge to inform national education planning, policy, and practice. This far exceeded the target of 15.

Stakeholder interviews provided numerous positive examples of how Hubs have successfully fostered these connections. Events such as KIX national dialogues[33], CoPs, learning exchanges, and regional conferences were highlighted as particularly effective. Survey data further confirmed this success: 55% of respondents reported participating in networking and peer exchange events organized by the Hubs in the past five years. Additionally, 83% of respondents rated KIX as either "rather effective" (26%) or "very effective" (57%) at bringing together relevant stakeholders, and 87% said KIX was either "rather effective" or "very effective" at promoting dialogue (see Figure 35 for detailed data). The connections formed through these events enable stakeholders to share knowledge and best practices in education but there were also instances of sharing best practices in KIX processes. For example, stakeholders from

[31] Secondary knowledge products include outputs such as blog posts, policy briefs, infographics, videos and are contrasted with primary research outputs, which include traditional research reports, articles and analysis pieces.

[32] Events are defined as formal workshops, conferences, seminars, briefings where research is presented. Meetings are defined as significant informal meetings with potential research users.

[33] See Glossary for definition.

El Salvador shared their experiences with the CSM with other countries in the LAC Hub, thus enhancing access to this mechanism for other countries.

KIX has facilitated connections across a diverse range of stakeholders. According to online survey respondents (see Figure 24), KIX Hub activities contributed to increased exchanges with governmental stakeholders within respondents' region or country (90%), regional or national researchers (83%), international researchers (80%), civil society organizations within their region or country (79%), intergovernmental organizations (75%), government stakeholders from other regions (72%), international NGOs (70%), and civil society organizations from other countries (67%). Overall, respondents found exchanges within their own country or region slightly more valuable than those with international counterparts (see Figure 22). Respondents also placed greater importance on interactions with researchers and government stakeholders compared to intergovernmental organizations or civil society groups. These findings perhaps indicate that knowledge exchange is more effective when it is framed within regional similarities or shared policy challenges, rather than broad international platforms. Further, in their preference to connect with actors who are directly involved in generating evidence (researchers) and those who make or implement policy (government officials), respondents seem to be most interested in connections that can translate into tangible changes in policy and practice.

There were some differences between Hubs in their capacity to build relationships:

- The Africa 19 Hub demonstrated strong performance in holding impactful networking and peer exchange events. It organized 9 events over 2023-2024 that showcased research or facilitated knowledge exchange, including a KIX continental research symposium--jointly organized with the Africa 21 Hub--which convened more than 285 education stakeholders from more than 40 countries (no indicator targets defined)[34]. Events were well-attended — 79% of survey respondents reported participating in such networking and peer exchange opportunities. These events were also perceived as highly effective — nearly all survey respondents reported that the Hub was effective in bringing together relevant stakeholders (97%) and in promoting dialogue (100%) and 85% reported that the Hub's activities had contributed to increased exchange with a range of stakeholders. The Hub attributed this success to a human-centered approach that emphasized warmth, openness, empathy, and contextual sensitivity. The positive feedback from participants suggests this approach yielded meaningful results. In particular, many stakeholders mentioned in interviews that continental research symposium had been impactful. Additionally, the Hub capitalized on the strong convening power of its consortium—comprising UNESCO, UNICEF, and the African Union—enabling it to attract diverse stakeholders and facilitate access to key actors across the education ecosystem.
- The Africa 21 Hub achieved its target for the number of knowledge exchange events (13 of 13), with strong participation - 94% of survey respondents reported attending networking or peer exchange activities[35]. However, these events could have been more impactful. While 78% felt the Hub effectively brought together relevant stakeholders, only 65% reported increased exchange, and just 56% felt that Hub activities effectively promoted dialogue. In line with this, performance on relationship outcomes was below target, with only 3 of 5 expected cases of strengthened relationships reported. Interviews confirmed that while relationship-building was underway, tangible results were still emerging. Several factors may have contributed to these mixed results. Data provided by IDRC indicated that

[34] Fourth Annual Interim Technical Report, April 2023- March 2024, GPE KIX Africa 19 Hub.

[35] KIX Phase 2 - Rapport technique d'étape N° 2 consolidé, Octobre 2023 à Mars 2024, GPE KIX Africa 21 Hub.

although the countries in the Africa 21 Hub had been members of GPE, and benefiting the from KIX programmatic activities, for a long time relative to those of other Hubs, their active engagement with the Hub itself began more recently and had not matched that duration (see Hub country membership statistics in Figure 1). This could explain why relationships had not yet developed fully. Further, fragile national contexts could be limiting engagement with activities - 41% of respondents cited this as a barrier (vs. 20% or fewer in other Hubs). Additionally, connectivity challenges were pronounced, with 41% reporting internet or electricity constraints, similar to the Africa 19 Hub. Notably, the Africa 19 Hub implemented measures to address such barriers — including offline resources, YouTube recordings, and prioritizing high-need countries for in-person events. These practices could offer valuable lessons for the Africa 21 Hub.

- The LAC Hub was effective in fostering stakeholder relationships, organizing 11 networking events in 2023–2024 (no target set[36]), with 67% of survey respondents reporting participation. The events were seen as impactful: 75% rated the Hub as effective in bringing actors together and 95% in promoting dialogue and 74% reported increased exchange with stakeholders. Although the LAC Hub has the smallest number of member countries (10), the Hub had successfully enabled connections beyond its participating countries, expanding access to a broader pool of knowledge, experiences, and expertise. OECS had facilitated deeper relations between the Hub and government stakeholders, while SUMMA (a research and innovation laboratory) played a key role in shifting attitudes within the ministry toward evidence use — emphasizing timely, policy-relevant research. The LAC Hub contribution to fostering regional integration, trust-building, and collaboration between different stakeholders was highlighted in stakeholder interviews, especially for its role in breaking down the language barrier. The LAC Hub has also developed a very close and positive relationship with some Ministries of Education and other stakeholders, to the point that a country representative interviewed considers that the RLP has played a mentoring role for her. The Hub noted that political instability and turnover in the region can disrupt relationships, requiring continuous efforts to rebuild engagement with government stakeholders. They also noted that building relationships with government stakeholders was more difficult in countries with more authoritarian regimes.
- The EMAP Hub was very strong on relationship-building, overachieving on its indicators in this area: 19 of a targeted 6 events were organized in 2023-2024 and 4 out of a targeted 2 outcome cases achieved[37]. Interestingly, only 39% of survey respondents stated that they had attended networking events, indicating that attendance could be improved. Despite this, Hub activities were impactful: respondents reported that the Hub was effective in bringing together relevant stakeholders (78%) and in promoting dialogue (85%) and 77% of respondents reported that Hub activities had led to more exchange with various stakeholders. Of note, survey respondents from the EMAP Hub were far more likely to report that they had participated in capacity-strengthening activities (Learning Cycles, CoPs, workshops) than in networking events. Given the positive results in relationship-building, perhaps these events also contributed to this objective.

[36] 8th Interim technical report, April 2024, GPE KIX LAC Hub

[37] 4th Interim report, April 2023- March 2024, GPE KIX EMAP Hub

There were some factors that were critical in successful relationship building across all regions:

- A critical factor in successful relationship building has been the identification of effective country representatives. The 2022 mid-term evaluation recommended that KIX identify country representatives who are as close as possible to policy and decision-making processes to maximize impact. This recommendation also called for identifying the key characteristics needed for success in the role. Both IDRC and GPE implemented concrete actions in response to this recommendation, including working with Hubs to strengthen links with ministry stakeholders and expand engagement to other groups, such as faculties of education, teacher unions, local and subnational education authorities, and the research community. The 2024 KIX review found that this recommendation had been very well addressed, with Hubs demonstrating thoughtful approaches to tailoring engagement strategies by country and thematic focus.
- Trust emerged as another vital factor underpinning successful relationship building. KIX was widely perceived to have a strong and credible reputation that helped incite trust, thereby helping open doors to ministries and other key stakeholders. For example, a researcher in Pakistan noted that their involvement with KIX had enhanced their professional credibility and standing within the research community. Many stakeholders emphasized that without KIX, they would not have been able to establish direct engagement with ministry officials and other influential stakeholders. The value of KIX's broker role was particularly evident in the Africa 19 Hub, where applied research grantees noted that the Hub had successfully brokered relationships with high-profile organizations such as the African Union and ECOWAS—with whom they had independently tried to connect, without any success--which proved crucial to advancing their scaling efforts. The Hub organized conferences to allow them to showcase their research and coached them in how to network effectively, eventually resulting in widespread uptake for their education innovations.

  In a more human sense, the Hubs helped build trust between stakeholders, encouraging open exchange and helping build deeper and more lasting relationships. As noted above, the Africa 19 Hub explicitly expressed their aim to make the Hub a very human space, creating a welcoming, empathetic, and inclusive environment that was sensitive to stakeholders' operational challenges. As one country representative from the Africa 19 Hub observed, KIX struck a careful balance—while regional exchanges sometimes introduced an element of competition, this competition was largely perceived as healthy and motivating. Moreover, participants found reassurance in recognizing that many countries were grappling with similar challenges. In this way, the Africa 19 Hub successfully navigated the delicate balance between trust-building, peer competition, and collaborative learning.

Figure 4 Focused Inquiry 2: Changes of attitudes and relations between stakeholders[38]

Focused inquiry 2: How can KIX contribute to change of attitudes and relations between stakeholders?

Context
In this focused inquiry, two outcome cases of applied research projects, "ADAPT" in Tanzania and "Associates for Change" in Ghana and an outcome case by the KIX EMAP Hub in Vietnam are included.[39] The outcome cases differ from each other geographically, covering countries in three different regions. ADAPT and Associates for Change, which both describe regional grant projects, show how relationship building through activities achieved a specific goal (the generation and utilization of learning assessments, the uptake of evidence on the effectiveness

[38] More details on the focused inquiry can be found in the methods section D.4.

[39] In this draft report, only the interviews with Vietnam and Tanzania could be integrated, as the other interview partners did not respond to our interview request.

of accelerated learning, respectively). In contrast, the case from Vietnam shows how a variety of KIX Hub activities can lead to new and strengthened relationships between country representatives more broadly (academics, civil society organizations, government stakeholders).

Results observed and KIX' contribution

The ADAPT project, funded by KIX, established a structured collaboration mechanism that connects stakeholders involved in the development and use of learning assessments across three countries (Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania). This initiative aimed to enhance knowledge-sharing and information exchange, ultimately contributing to improved learning outcomes. The approach was informed by formative research—including social network analysis and an ecosystem diagnosis workshop—which revealed weak connections between examination and assessment authorities and key actors in the field across the 3 countries. In response, the ADAPT project identified these key actors and developed a strategic engagement plan to strengthen collaboration.

The Associates for Change project provided research evidence and a concept paper on the effectiveness of accelerated education projects (AEP). As a research and evidence partner of Ghana's Ministry of Education (as formalized in a memorandum of understanding between the 2 partners), Associate for Change's evidence has been used by the ministry to identify communities to be highlighted as communities of excellence. The Communities of Excellence Program is a Ministry of Education initiative which aims to enhance the resources available at school and community level focused on foundational literacy, increase community and parental engagement in basic education and ensure that teachers are delivering the curriculum as intended. Selecting beneficiary communities with the requisite foundational structures and commitment to educational improvement is essential to the initiative's success.

The EMAP Hub has conducted a series of activities including a team retreat (bringing together the EMAP team and 24 country representatives) and 2 Learning Cycles that have resulted in numerous relationships being formed and strengthened, within and between different stakeholder groups and countries. As a result of this, stakeholders were planning to collaborate on future research projects and conduct visits to each other's countries to share knowledge. For example, a government stakeholder from the Kyrgyz Republic shared that she has strengthened ties with a country representative from Nepal to launch a TVET-focused dialogue with their institution, academic stakeholders from Vietnam, Bhutan and Nepal had met and were planning to collaborate together on research activities and two civil society representatives were This shows that knowledge mobilization and exchange across partner developing countries, and the partnership at large are well underway, thanks to KIX Hub activities.

Lessons learned

- Providing stakeholders with multiple opportunities to engage—ideally through a variety of formats and different types of activities—helps transform initial connections into meaningful, long-term relationships. Repeated interactions build trust, facilitate knowledge exchange, and create a stronger foundation for collaboration. By diversifying engagement methods, stakeholders can connect in different contexts, reinforcing their commitment and fostering a more dynamic and impactful network.
- Effective relationship-building is most impactful and enduring when it is structured and formalized. For instance, Associates for Change successfully established a long-term partnership with the ministry as a research and evidence collaborator, formalized through a memorandum of understanding. Similarly, the ADAPT project adopted a highly structured approach by conducting a social network analysis and an ecosystem diagnosis workshop. This allowed them to identify gaps and opportunities for strategic connections, and these were detailed in a stakeholder engagement plan. Such a targeted approach ensures that relationships are relevant, mutually beneficial, and impactful.

C.2 Uptake and use in planning, policy and practice

Progress towards KIX's knowledge mobilization objectives is evident through positive examples of evidence uptake. Enhanced relationship and network building, including South-South connections and co-creation, has fostered a culture of knowledge sharing and use among countries. However, progress remains uneven across all regions, as countries joined KIX at different point in time, among other reasons.

In its result framework, KIX ultimately aims at a more routine integration of knowledge and innovation in policy and practice (ultimate outcome 1.2). As this is an ultimate outcome, the evaluation looks at how KIX could progress towards this goal by looking at instances in which evidence was taken up and used. As 'evidence uptake' and 'use' are terms that are used very differently and are very broad,[40] the evaluation concentrates on KIX' contribution (usage of

[40] OTT report 2024, p. 22.

KIX knowledge and innovation) to development and/or delivery of policies (corresponding to the intermediate outcome 2.2 and 2.4) to explore hindering and facilitating factors.

Many (not all) research projects potentially contribute to uptake and use of innovations in their projects as they integrate approaches of co-creation with or trainings for relevant education stakeholders like ministries. KIX Hubs maintain interactions with relevant stakeholders and facilitate South-South learning through webinars, roundtables and other events. Additionally, Hubs can directly support countries' governments and contribute to uptake and use of evidence and innovation via the newly introduced Country Support Mechanism (see Appendix "The Country Support Mechanism").

Table 6 Overview of achievement of uptake and use targets

Indicator	KIX Component	Target		Achieved
2.4.1 # of outcome cases of uptake of KIX-supported research by education stakeholders in DCPs and international development community (disaggregated by KIX component which produces the research)	All Components	56		55
	ROSIE	10		1
	Global Grants	24		31
	Regional Grants	22		23
2.4.2 # citations of KIX-supported research (disaggregated by KIX component which produces the research)	All Components	25		14
	ROSIE	5		0
	Global Grants	10		9
	Regional Grants	10		2
	Observatory	-		3
2.4.3 # mentions of KIX-supported research (disaggregated by KIX component which produces the research) 2.4.4 # endorsements of KIX-supported research (disaggregated by KIX component which produces the research)	KIX Component	Target 2.4.3	Target 2.4.4	Achieved 2.4.3 & 2.4.4[41]
	All Components	94	47	129
	ROSIE	14	10	11
	Global Grants	36	15	74
	Regional Grants	44	22	25
2.4.4 # endorsements of KIX-supported research (disaggregated by KIX component which produces the research)	Observatory	-	-	9

Technopolis, based on KIX MEL data and results framework

[41] The results framework presents a total target of 94 mentions and 47 endorsements of KIX-supported research. The MEL data monitors mentions and endorsements as one group, data points are not differentiated. It is therefore unclear whether the target was achieved for one of the two categories, however, the total was underscored. Notably, the achieved total includes nine mentions and endorsements for the KIX Observatory and 10 by Hubs, which were not included in the target numbers. Thus, while global grant projects met their total target, regional grant projects and ROSIE underachieved even more significantly.

Contributions of research projects

The expected targets for uptake and use are partially met by research projects (see Table 6). The number of outcome cases is slightly below target (55 of 56), the number of citations is below target (14 of 25 expected), despite including the citations achieved by the KIX observatory which did not have a target assigned for this indicator. Notably, ROSIE significantly underscored its targets. Whether the targets for mentions[42] and endorsements[43] of KIX-supported research were met separately cannot be discerned as the monitoring data groups mentions and endorsements together. Also not achieved is the target for citations by KIX grantees or education stakeholders in peer-reviewed publications. In the outcome cases that relate to uptake and use, research projects most often report on outcomes at the stage of policy implementation (41 cases by research projects, two by Hubs). Accordingly, they report mostly on policy-related changes for educational programs and curricula or training materials.

The contribution of research projects to policy uptake was also confirmed in interviews with research grantees.[44] Across all regions, interviewed grantees frequently reported instances of policy uptake. Multiple projects reported that their developed approaches were integrated into education sector plans or strategies, and in some cases, implemented as pilots. For instance, in Tanzania, the MoE is rolling out a secondary education improvement program that includes an accelerated learning component for girls, drawing partially on materials developed through a KIX project. In another case, in Nigeria, project results contributed to agenda-setting that led to the allocation of funding for out-of-school children. While these cases offer useful insights, they should be understood as illustrative examples, given the contextual specificity of the projects and confidentiality constraints that limit the level of detail that can be provided.

Contributions of Hubs

The KIX Hubs overachieved the target for the number of outcome cases in which country representatives identified new policy and practice options, including those related to GESI (60 outcome cases reported, 25 targeted). However, they fell short of another target, reporting 13 outcome cases of policy development and/or delivery (including those related to GESI, which use KIX knowledge and innovation) against a target of 20. The AI-supported analysis of outcome cases shows that most cases that were reported by Hubs relate to policy changes at the stage of data research and analysis (19 cases reported by Hubs, 12 cases by research projects) and policy agenda setting (17 Hub cases, 7 research project cases).[45] Most cases that relate to changes of policies reported on educational programs or strategic levels/ reforms.

Evaluation survey results confirm that KIX Hubs achieve notable results regarding uptake of evidence and innovation, with the highest average in the Africa 19 Hub and the lowest in LAC as more than 50% of survey respondents (country representatives) see that their participation in KIX Hub activities have already contributed to changes in implementation efforts, policy

[42] A KIX grantee or education stakeholder refers to research or insights from KIX (e.g. in a strategy) to support a point or a decision they are making.

[43] A KIX grantee or education stakeholder indicates intention or potential to use, recommend, build on, or advocate for KIX-funded research

[44] Here a potential selection bias hast to be considered, as only projects that received a so-called continuity grant were interviewed.

[45] In the analysis the different changes were assigned to different steps of the policy cycle. For this evaluation, the "data research and analysis" stage is to be understood as a hub or KIX project providing the government/ministries with data analysis and/or research on which they can build/adjust policies.

design or planning and public agendas or policy priorities (all three stages of policy development are represented almost equally). Out of the four Hubs, Africa 19 respondents are far more likely to perceive changes in policy design and planning and public agendas at an average of 71%, with EMAP and Africa 21 Hub respondents averaging at 56% and 52% and LAC respondents noticing changes in only 42% on average.

Qualitative data reveals that, while all Hubs contributed to country-level policy processes, the mechanisms and pathways varied across regions. For example, in the cases of Africa 19 and EMAP, several instances of country-level engagement linked to Hub activities were reported. In Africa 19, Uganda received support through the CSM, which facilitated a learning exchange visit to Kenya. According to interviewees, this exchange contributed to informing Uganda's efforts to mobilize additional funding for inclusive education. In another example, policy dialogue recommendations developed were reflected in Malawi's national education plan. Similarly, the EMAP Hub facilitated a Learning Cycle which resulted in a study that contributed to initiating policy processes and dialogues in Vietnam and the Maldives. The instances reported by the LAC Hub and its country representatives emphasize a different mode of engagement. Here, the RLPs provided direct technical assistance and are well connected to ministries in the region. For instance, through SUMMA and OECS (both RLPs), the Hub supported the Caribbean subregion to update educational sector plans. Similarly, The Africa 21 Hub also contributed to knowledge sharing and validation processes, such as supporting Togo in knowledge exchange activities and facilitating the validation of innovations for pilot implementation in Burkina Faso. These examples of early contributions notwithstanding, most country representatives interviewed perceived that it is still too early to observe substantive policy uptake in their contexts.

Even though the CSM is still developing, it was mentioned several times in interviews (in particular in the LAC region) and already 33% of survey respondents are using it (most coming from the EMAP region). The triangulated data match with the results of two focused inquiries on outcome cases that report on KIX' contribution to policymaking and stress the importance of well-established relationships with national authorities as enabling factors to facilitate policy uptake (see the following boxes).

Figure 5 Focused Inquiry 3: Policymaking at the level of educational programs[46]

Focused inquiry 3: How can KIX contribute to policymaking at the level of educational programs?

Context

The focused inquiry encompasses three distinct outcome cases, each situated within unique contextual frameworks that influence their implementation and scaling. The first case, centers on the introduction of the Learner Guide Program in Tanzania. The second case, tells the story of Chad's national-level commitment to scaling the *Can't Wait to Learn* program while the third case reflects a different approach, focusing on fostering collaboration between civil society and government bodies to enhance educational outcomes over the long term in Nicaragua. Each case differs geographically, covering three distinct Hub regions (Africa 19, Africa 21, LAC). They also vary in their strategic approach: Tanzania focuses on national policy alignment, Chad emphasizes scaling educational technology, and Nicaragua fosters collaboration between civil society and government to improve educational outcomes sustainably.

Results obtained

- In Chad, Educational programs utilizing ICT, radio, and TV have successfully reached children in fragile regions of the country participating in the KIX project. The positive learning outcomes observed among children benefiting from the War child interventions have effectively demonstrated to the Ministry the importance and impact of EdTech. The program has been publicly endorsed as the government's preferred EdTech solution,

[46] More details on the focused inquiry can be found int the methods section D.4.

marking a significant shift in the country's approach to educational technology. The evidence produced has led to the implementation of a digital teacher training program (IFADEM), aimed at training teachers, including community teachers to incorporate innovative pedagogical approaches and ICT into their primary school teaching. The success of these initiatives has been pivotal in advocating for the government's adoption of digital education, as reflected in the Interim Plan for Education in Chad (Law 16). Additionally, this momentum has contributed to the development of a broader program to strengthen education systems in Chad, which prioritizes digital education as a key component of its strategy.

- In Tanzania, The Learner Guide Program implemented by CAMFED has received formal endorsement from national authorities, reflecting its alignment with the country's educational priorities. Additionally, the national education policy currently being developed by the government is influenced by contributions from various stakeholders, including the insights derived from the Camfed Project. Furthermore, the country has adopted and is actively implementing a "Bring Girls Back to School" policy, which is also directly informed by the findings and recommendations of the project.
- In the case of Nicaragua ABACOenRed & FUPECG, civil society organizations have been funded to implement the project 'Strengthening skills in learning' in its two stages (research and school reinforcement). The development of the project in its two phases allowed for communication with both community leaders and education authorities (school principals, MINED advisors, MINED municipal delegate). The results of these phases have led the Ministry to considering integrating the project's design into long term training processes and reinforcement programs. However, the more tangible outcomes are that they were able to implement the initiatives in 4 additional municipalities and an evaluation of the quality of learning on a national scale is foreseen in 2025.

Lessons learned

The key lessons learned from these cases regarding context factors and program success is the importance of strong partnerships, effective collaboration, and alignment with local priorities, all of which played a pivotal role in the success of these initiatives.

A key takeaway from the CAMFED project in Tanzania is the effectiveness of the co-creation model. By working closely with the government, the project ensured that there were multiple layers of decision-making and operational involvement. This facilitated smoother implementation but also ensured that the program aligned with the government's priorities. The collaboration between government and civil society proved to be a significant success factor, highlighting the importance of structures that allow for ongoing dialogue and partnership as well as its alignment to local educational needs and policies.

In Chad, the Can't Wait To Learn (CWTL) program benefitted from the long-standing presence and deep relationships built by the research team and local partners within the educational sector. Their active involvement over the past two decades, combined with the trust and relationship established with key stakeholders, played a crucial role in the program's uptake. The local expertise, the established connections with educational authorities and communities and the embeddedness within the local context greatly facilitated the endorsement and scaling of the program.

In Nicaragua, a crucial success factor was the involvement of future teachers from the teacher training college, which ensured the project had a direct impact on the next generation of educators. Additionally, the coordination with community leaders and the support of municipal authorities, including both mayoral and ministerial levels during implementation, was critical for the smooth implementation and local buy-in. Additionally, the fact that the organization has been appointed by the Ministry itself to represent Nicaragua in the KIX LAC Hub provided an added layer of credibility and ensured the project's alignment with national educational goals.

In all the countries, the uptake of the research results was mainly facilitated by project teams who were able to build long and sustainable relationships with national authorities from existing interactions or the tangible results of their project. In the case of Nicaragua, the existing relationship with the Ministry who appointed the project team as representative in the KIX LAC Hub is the key contributing factor.

Figure 6 Focused Inquiry 4: Policymaking at strategic level[47]

Focused inquiry 4 How can KIX contribute to policymaking at the strategic level?

Context

The focused inquiry encompasses two sustained interventions and support in very different context, oriented to strengthening the **capacity of government officials** to **improve the use of evidence in policymaking at the strategic level,** through technical assistance, knowledge exchanges, applied research, and country support. The first case in Africa 19, "Developing South Sudan national Pre-primary policy Framework" (EN282), and the second case in LAC, "Strengthening the focus and design of education reform in El Salvador" (EN358). In both countries, government officials from the Ministries of Education were interviewed.

[47] More details on the focused inquiry can be found int the methods section D.4.

Results obtained

- El Salvador: The involvement of El Salvador with the LAC Hub began with the participation of staff from the MoE in a KIX event in Honduras. Then, the Minister of Education asked for their technical support for the compact elaboration, especially providing evidence (data) for the diagnostic. The technical support from the LAC Hub has not stopped since then (2022). Recently, El Salvador was able to use the CSM for getting support for the formulation of the action plan of the educational reform, continuing with the technical assistance provided by SUMMA. The final result of the project assessed (i.e. Strengthening the focus and design of education reform in El Salvador) was the Action plan of the educational reform, which has become (with some adjustments) the institutional strategic plan of the MoE, assuring that it will be implemented by the current government. The permanent support by the Hub – from 2022 till present – has been crucial for obtaining various "improved" documents developed by the MoE (diagnostic & challenges for the development of the compact, government proposal of the educational reform, new education model, and action plan for the implementation of the educational reform); all these documents are coherent thanks to KIX LAC support with the guidance of GPE staff, and are aligned with available funding (MoE, WB, IDB, international cooperation, etc.). Besides, El Salvador had initial GPE support on the development of the gender equity policy; as part of the KIX LAC support (the specific mechanism was not established by the interviewee), they discussed how to strengthen the inclusive and gender equity approach that was a central axis of the reform.

  Staff from the MoE of El Salvador have strengthened their capabilities in analysis and use of evidence and research results, via the regular interaction with the LAC Hub staff in the preparation of the various documents mentioned above.

- South Sudan: KIX, through one of the RLPs in Africa 19 (UNICEF) hired an expert to provide technical support for the development of a national ECE policy, which is a milestone in the education sector. According to a MoE official, without KIX, the policy would not have come into reality. The starting point was through the use of the ECE (Early childhood education) Accelerator Toolkit (specifically tool 2.2 that facilitates Pre-primary Subsector Analysis) and conducting a subsector analysis workshop. The accelerator tool helped the MoE to create the standard in the policy, the standard on the planning and budgeting, the standard about curriculum implementation, about workforce, about family and community engagement, about quality assurance, about enabling environment. Gender and inclusion have been addressed with the national ECE policy framework and these aspects were strengthened using the ECE Accelerator Toolkit.[48]

  In both countries, KIX supports national education system policies and strategies via different core components, such as developing evidence and mobilizing evidence into strategic discussions and debates.

Lessons learned

- Both countries acknowledge that without KIX and the technical support of the RLPs they could have not achieved those results. KIX serves as a crucial partner for both, offering valuable and pertinent knowledge and data. They maintain an ongoing relationship with the RLPs and are indifferent to the specific mechanism of support they have received. What matters most for the countries is to receive regular and relevant support.
- In the case of El Salvador, the MoE reached out directly SUMMA (LAC RLP) for support, so it is a country led approach. In the case of South Sudan, the World Bank approached the MoE and offered support, which was accepted by the Ministry. The latter constituted a technical working group to discuss the ECE policy and then created a community-of-practice in ECE, as a more permanent forum, with the participation of various stakeholders, including UNICEF (RLP). Despite the entry points were different, it worked well in both countries.
- A key factor that has contributed to the outcomes is that the teams in both MoEs have been stable, allowing for a better appropriation and use of the technical assistance received.

Gender equality and social inclusion (GESI)

In the KIX program, the principle of Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) is an integral part of its overall objective, i.e. promoting GESI in access to, within and through education in order to ensure equitable experiences of education for all children. GESI is therefore expected to be integrated in every component of KIX, which means both KIX core components, applied research projects and regional Hubs, are expected to consider GESI in all activities.

For research projects, KIX has defined GESI explicitly as one of the research themes. Also, GESI is mainstreamed in all research projects and research grantees are assessed according to their potential to contribute to GESI: 'All research projects shall consider GESI dimensions (with

[48] See www.ece-accelerator.org/

varying coverage and intensity).[49] For Hubs, GESI is part of knowledge mobilization and capacity strengthening efforts as well. For both, Hubs and research projects, the KIX MEL system ensures that the relation to GESI is reported on for most output and outcome indicators and a KIX GESI toolkit[50] has been developed.

The KIX results framework includes several indicator targets that measure their relationship to GESI[51]. All GESI-related indicator targets measured via outcome cases are overachieved, the only target that was not achieved is the goal of 50% of the total participants of Hub events being women (36%). The MEL data also shows that entries related to GESI increased over the course of KIX implementation.[52] However, the allocation of the GESI reference is not always substantiated by concrete or detailed explanations and remained largely generic.[53] To address this limitation, the data collection for this evaluation gathered additional qualitative insights on how GESI considerations were actually reflected upon by different stakeholders.

GESI is well-integrated into the applied research projects, with all projects explicitly addressing GESI dimensions.[54] In total, seven projects focused explicitly on GESI topics[55]. Research grantees frequently emphasized the central role of GESI in their projects during interviews and clearly recognized the relevance of GESI in KIX. Several end users also assessed the consideration of GESI-topics in the projects positively.

The relevance and integration of GESI in KIX were communicated clearly to research grantees through multiple mechanisms. Primarily, the MEL system effectively highlighted GESI priorities and expectations and was considered useful by research grantees. Some research grantees noted proactive guidance from the KIX team, encouraging them to maintain a strong GESI focus, incorporate the GESI framework explicitly in their research design or improve gender balance in their team. Interestingly, grantees did not explicitly mention using the GESI toolkit, suggesting it might require greater visibility or promotion.

Nevertheless, some research grantees encountered practical challenges in fully operationalizing GESI principles. For example, achieving exact gender balance in workshop participation proved difficult in certain contexts. Additionally, at least one grantee expressed uncertainty about the practical application of GESI principles within their project activities. Findings from both the AIPC analysis and the GESI MEL report align with the applied research evaluation (2023, 2024), indicating that most projects and their outputs primarily address gender issues, with fewer explicitly addressing broader inclusion dimensions such as disability or socio-economic status. This observation reinforces earlier recommendations from the applied

[49] Costed extension proposal, 2022

[50] The evaluators do not have access to the toolkit and cannot assess the extent to which it has been updated, as announced in the costed extension proposal.

[51] Such as the number of outcome cases of policy development and/ or delivery which use KIX knowledge and innovation, the number of country representatives participating in Hub events, the number of outcome cases of country representatives reporting new knowledge and skills and identifying new policy and practice options.

[52] See GESI MEL data analysis report.

[53] This assessment based on the qualitative analysis in the framework of the outcome case pattern analysis (AI-supported) and is mirrored in the GESI MEL data report and MTR (2022).

[54] See Applied Research Evaluation (2023, 2024).

[55] These are the projects marked as key thematic focus "Girls and gender equality" in the project report document provided by IDRC and the projects that were included in the GESI Synthesis reports (Acronyms: CAMFE, Dhaka U, CLADE, FAWE/ UNESCO, FAWE/LARTES/FPGL, FIT-ED, and Kyambogo University's project on Inclusive child to child learning approach).

research evaluation (2023, 2024) that future KIX frameworks should place greater emphasis on intersectionality to address broader inclusion beyond gender alone.

Similarly to research grantees, RLPs are also well aware of the importance of GESI in KIX and are initiating diverse GESI-related activities (e.g. community of practice, round tables, etc.). For three of the four Hubs, more than half of the activities registered in the MEL system are somewhat strongly related to GESI (55% for Africa 19, 66% for LAC, 72% for EMAP). In this case, the Africa 21 Hub shows fewer GESI-related entries compared to other Hubs, which IDRC attributes to the RLPs being more thorough in monitoring entries.[56] The Hubs' engagement for GESI is also recognized by country representatives. While country representatives rarely mentioned GESI explicitly during interviews, survey results indicate that the majority consider inclusive education – a key aspect of GESI – to be highly important (68%, see Figure 29). Inclusive education is considered highly or somewhat relevant to countries' education policy development in all Hubs, especially in the Africa 19 Hub (no disagreement), but also for EMAP (7% disagreement), LAC (14% disagreement), and Africa 21 (18% disagreement) (see Figure 30). The majority of Hubs organize their activities according to the needs of partner countries. More than 50% of survey respondents indicated that their Hub integrates GESI considerations - to a great or to some extent – across various GESI-related topics (see Figure 20).[57] Here, country representatives from the LAC Hub differ from the assessment of the other regions that gender-transformative pedagogies were most often addressed, and instead see the topic of gender-based violence as most often covered (see Figure 21). Hubs also seem to place greater emphasis on gender-related activities[58]. For instance, the LAC Hub provided direct support to strengthen its inclusive and gender equity approach, illustrating the common focus on gender. This was achieved, in part, by hiring a specialist in gender to support the country's ongoing education reform (see Focused Inquiry 4).

Contextual factors significantly influence the nature of and participation in GESI-related interventions across GPE partner countries. For example, varying views on gender – such as some degree of resistance to gender-focused education in parts of the EMAP region (mentioned in some interviews and the EMAP annual survey) – affect stakeholder participation and perceptions of GESI relevance.

Conclusion

The evaluation findings indicate that KIX is making substantial progress towards its overall objective of supporting partner countries to use evidence and innovation to accelerate equitable access to education, improve learning outcomes, and promote gender equality through inclusive and resilient education systems. Across its three key results areas—knowledge generation, capacity strengthening, and knowledge mobilization—KIX has exceeded many of its output targets and delivered tangible outcomes in terms of strengthened stakeholder capacities, increased cross-country collaboration, and enhanced evidence uptake into policy and practice.

The KIX model, which combines applied research projects with regionally anchored knowledge Hubs, has fostered dynamic multi-stakeholder collaboration and created opportunities for peer learning, South-South exchange, and tailored capacity development. Applied research projects, RLPs, and Hub activities have all contributed to building a more evidence-informed policy environment across diverse GPE partner countries.

However, progress is uneven across Hubs and regions, and some challenges persist. In particular, fragmentation between different KIX components (Hubs, research projects, and other GPE mechanisms) creates confusion among some stakeholders, limiting the visibility and coordinated use of research outputs. Contextual challenges, including

[56] See GESI MEL data analysis report.

[57] For the EMAP Hub this is also mirrored in their annual country representative survey which included several positive mentions of GESI.

[58] According to the survey results (see Figure 20), the promotion of inclusion and support for children of all genders, and gender-transformative pedagogies is the topic that is included to the greatest extent, the prevention of sexual and gender-based violence to the least.

fragile political environments, limited connectivity, and institutional capacity constraints, have also hampered engagement in some regions, particularly in the Africa 21 Hub. While KIX has taken steps to mitigate some of these challenges, including the establishment of the CSM and adaptation of communication channels, further streamlining and strengthening linkages between KIX components and customizing approaches to diverse local contexts will be critical to maximizing KIX's long-term effectiveness and impact

What worked well and why

- Ability to generate knowledge at scale. This success is largely due to the strong engagement of locally embedded research grantees, many of whom brought deep contextual understanding to their work. By aligning research projects closely with country priorities and emphasizing practical applications alongside academic outputs - such as research papers, and technical reports - KIX ensured that the knowledge generated was both relevant and actionable. Additionally, IDRC's role in synthesizing findings into accessible reports helped to distil lessons and amplify learning across the network.
- Progress in strengthening capacities across multiple levels, from ministry officials and researchers to teachers and school leaders. The embedded nature of capacity strengthening within applied research projects - where training, mentoring, and co-creation were integral elements - proved particularly effective. Hubs also played a key role, using approaches tailored to national and regional needs.
- Knowledge mobilization. Hubs have served as convening platforms, fostering peer exchange, policy dialogue, and cross-country learning. This success was driven by their proactive engagement with diverse stakeholders and their ability to foster trust and ownership through country-led, peer-to-peer approaches. The human-centered, adaptive methods employed by some Hubs, particularly Africa 19, further reinforced this success. Innovative adaptations, such as using WhatsApp for communication in areas with poor internet access, further demonstrated KIX's adaptability and commitment to inclusion.
- Thematic priorities: KIX also performed well in integrating GESI across research projects and Hub activities. GESI-related entries in the MEL system increased over time, reflecting growing awareness and deliberate efforts to embed GESI considerations across KIX's work. This was supported by clear messaging from IDRC and GPE.

What did not work well and why

- Fragmentation between different KIX components. The absence of a unified, user-friendly platform or process to help stakeholders navigate the full body of KIX-supported evidence further contributed to this challenge. Although IDRC's ongoing efforts to produce synthesis reports and disseminate research findings through events are positive steps, they have not yet fully addressed this fragmentation.
- Uneven progress across regions and Hubs. Hubs such as Africa 21, faced significant hurdles in establishing relationships and mobilizing knowledge. The limited time for engagement, coupled with fragile political contexts, weak institutional capacity, and insufficient connectivity, all contributed to slower progress in this region. Additionally, some country representatives faced internal constraints, including limited time and resources within their institutions to engage fully in KIX activities. These barriers were particularly pronounced in countries with authoritarian regimes or high levels of nepotism, where relationship building with government officials was more difficult.
- The integration of GESI was generally successful, though not without challenges. Although gender considerations were well covered, broader aspects of inclusion—such as addressing the needs of children with disabilities or those from marginalized ethnic groups—received less attention. Furthermore, some research grantees reported uncertainty about how to operationalize GESI principles in practice, particularly in contexts where gender norms and social inclusion remain sensitive or contested topics. Inconsistent depth and quality of GESI-related MEL entries further illustrate the need for clearer operational guidance and stronger qualitative verification.
- Practical barriers to participation significantly constrained engagement in some contexts. Even where Hubs implemented creative solutions, these adaptations could not fully overcome the broader infrastructure challenges. Combined with limited institutional capacity and competing demands on stakeholders' time, these constraints restricted some countries' ability to fully benefit from KIX opportunities.

Q1B: How well are the interlinkages between Hubs and the research portfolio working together and driving the objectives of KIX?

Data Sources	
	Document analysis, survey, interviews with country reps, RLPs, research grantees
Strength of evidence	
Moderate	Evidence of strategic, though less consistent, interaction between Hubs and the research portfolio. Some mutual influence is observed, but engagement varies based on specific country contexts and stages of project implementation. Research outputs contribute to Hub activities in select areas, although broader uptake may be constrained by local challenges or limited alignment in certain regions. It should be noted the following limitations for this question, already mentioned in the inception report: • Limited documentation/ data of "informal" interlinkages apart from shared documents or event participation • Additionally, we have not talked to new research projects, therefore, more updated data on the application of the planned changes for coordination is not available.

The interlinkages between Hubs and the research portfolio are progressively strengthening, though the degree of integration remains uneven across regions and project cycles. However, Hub involvement remains largely concentrated in the later stages of the research cycle, limiting their ability to influence initial research agendas and the overall relevance of research projects to national and regional priorities.[59] To better achieve the project's objectives, a more integrated approach across the entire research cycle, with clearer roles and enhanced strategic collaboration, would improve effectiveness and ensure more impactful outcomes.

3.1.1 Roles and mechanisms for interaction and coordination – Hubs and applied research projects

Since the inception of the KIX initiative, the roles and coordination mechanisms between Hubs and applied research projects have progressively evolved. In the initial phase (2020 cohort), these interlinkages were weaker and largely transactional, focused mainly on research teams sharing findings at occasional Hub events (which was viewed positively). The KIX mid-term review (2022) and applied research projects evaluations (2023, 2024) identified these early gaps in collaboration. Research grantees often expressed dissatisfaction, citing unclear roles, infrequent collaboration and a lack of meaningful engagement. Similarly, RLPs were still establishing their internal structures and had limited resources for active facilitation which further constrained collaboration.

To address these limitations, IDRC introduced a more structured model of collaboration for the 2023/24 research grantees cohort, guided by the concept note on "strengthening systematic interactions between GPE KIX Hubs and applied research projects". This document established expectations for early and sustained coordination between Hubs and research projects and outlined the responsibilities of the RLPs in supporting this collaboration. Under the new model RLPs were tasked with several responsibilities which included facilitating initial introductions

[59] While Hubs conducted regional priority identification processes in 2020 and 2023-2024, which informed calls for research proposals, interview partners did not recall, mention or highlight these processes as shaping the connection between the research projects, the Hubs and national policy processes. Conversely, interviews with RCs and national stakeholders repeatedly emphasized that the applied research projects were disconnected from national priorities and policy agendas.

between research projects and country focal points, supporting intra-project group formation, creating a space for mutual exchange and providing feedback mechanisms to guide the relevance and timing of research activities.

Evidence from the 2024 RLP self-reports indicate that this new model has begun to yield results. Notable progress since then has included onboarding of research projects, clearer communication protocols between RLPs and country representatives and new mechanisms for more consistent interactions. Another reason for this rise in engagement is that many projects were nearing completion in the respective time frame and shared their findings and outputs with the Hubs. Thus, a more systematic approach as well as the finalization of applied research projects, led to a total of 86 Hub-led events where research teams presented their work, including 12 workshops focused on evidence sharing and peer-learning. Additionally, 55 cases of applied research projects providing their findings to the Hubs for further dissemination to countries were documented. These improvements demonstrate a more systematic approach and coincide with the natural cycle of projects nearing completion and producing more outputs to share with the Hubs, as compared to when they started their research activities.

However, these advances have not yet translated into uniformly strong interactions across all Hubs, as evidenced by stakeholder feedback and grantee reports collected during the current evaluation exercise (in the quality and depth of the interactions). In regions such as EMAP and LAC, collaboration was relatively well established and RLPs have built more consistent processes for regular engagement, and their roles are better understood by research grantees and country representatives alike. In these cases, interaction has extended beyond presentations to include participation in national dialogues and collaborative agenda setting.

In contrast, RLPs in Africa 19 and Africa 21 reported more limited engagement. Interviews with both RLPs and grantees in the region highlighted that while the importance of coordination is recognized, structural constraints including a lack of budget provisions, varied regional capacities and differing interpretation of RLP roles have contributed towards continued gaps. In Africa 21, for example, the nature of facilitation between the Hub and research teams remained unclear, leading to inconsistencies in how these interactions unfold. This lack of clarity, while improving, still hampers the seamless collaboration that the system aims to foster.

The use of collaborative tools has also been a significant step forward, with digital platforms designed to centralize information and streamline communication. However, a more uniform adoption of these tools would greatly improve the flow of information and foster more effective collaboration.

Finally, there is no evidence of a consistent, formal feedback loop that facilitates mutual adaptation and learning between research teams, RLPs and country representatives. While some Hubs collected feedback through post-event surveys and feedback for example, these are not systematized or used consistently to adapt future activities. Survey data indicate significant differences in KIX research project knowledge and results uptake by participating countries, with highest familiarity noted for LAC Hub and highest uptake of results in Africa 19 and EMAP regions. A more formalized process for capturing feedback and integrating it into future Hub, countries and research teams activities would help ensuring continuous improvement.

Good Practice Example on interaction and coordination
The EMAP Hub provides a strong example of how structured, diverse engagement mechanisms can lead to greater relevance and uptake of research findings. Following guidance from the IDRC concept note, EMAP implemented a multi-channel strategy to enhance collaboration with research grantees. These included: • Hosting joint events such as webinars, thematic knowledge cafés, and Learning Cycles

- Organizing the Education Policy and Innovation Conference (EPIC)
- Producing videos and newsletters to highlight emerging findings
- Launching National Uptake Forums to promote dialogue between researchers, policymakers, and educators

Research grantees reported that EMAP was consistently responsive and provided valuable platforms for disseminating findings and accessing broader regional audiences. EMAP also facilitated participation of research teams in National Steering Committee (NSC) meetings, contributing to stronger alignment between project outputs and national planning processes.
EMAP's coordinated approach enabled it to exceed its own engagement targets and build lasting relationships with both research teams and national stakeholders. This good practice example demonstrates the potential for Hubs to serve not just as dissemination platforms, but as active knowledge brokers that foster two-way interaction and evidence-informed dialogue.

3.1.2 Roles and mechanisms for interaction and coordination - Alignment of research projects with country priorities

One of the key objectives of the KIX initiative is to ensure that applied research contributes to strengthening education systems by responding to national and regional priorities.

The importance of demand-driven, contextually relevant research was explicitly acknowledged in KIX's 2019-2020 Annual Report, which stated "in upcoming regional calls, KIX will re-emphasize the demand-driven nature of the initiative by organizing themes on shared inter-country priorities. Regional calls will closely link KIX' learning exchange and funding, with regional Hubs playing the central role in identifying those shared country priorities."

Hubs therefore play a critical role in this process as they are positions to identify country needs, facilitate dialogue with stakeholders and support the contextualization of research findings. However, evidence from the KIX mid-term review (2022), applied research evaluations (2023, 2024) and RLP self-reports indicates that these interlinkages remain uneven across regions and stages of the research cycle. While there are documented instances of successful collaboration, particularly in Africa 21 regarding the 2023-2024 research projects cohort, in EMAP, and in LAC, the overall pattern points to limited influence of Hubs on research design and insufficient mechanisms for ensuring that research outputs are contextually relevant and widely adopted.

This misalignment is largely attributable to the timing and structure of engagement between Hubs and research projects. In earlier cohorts, particularly those launched in 2020, Hubs were only marginally involved in the design phase of research calls. In these cases, research grantees reported limited engagement with Hubs, and there was no clear collaboration protocol in place. While agenda setting processes based on country consultations were used to inform the thematic priorities of the calls, there was limited interactions between research teams and Hubs until the later stages of implementation. Both Hubs and grantees also highlighted a lack of budget provisions to support interaction and coordination activities, creating additional operational strain.

Interview feedback from research grantees and RLPs from this evaluation confirms that when engagement with country representatives and Hubs begins early and continues through the project cycle, research is more likely to reflect real policy needs and contexts. In contrast later-stage interactions focused on dissemination often result in research findings that are either not timely or are perceived as too general to be actionable. The research outcomes sometimes lack relevance or applicability across countries contexts, leading to lower engagement and uptake by local stakeholders.

Despite these challenges, there are several noteworthy cases of improved alignment and stronger collaboration between research teams and Hubs for which are contributing to wider priorities. In the EMAP Hub, research grantees reported regular contact with the RLP, with participation in ongoing knowledge-sharing events and consistent updates about upcoming

activities. A particularly successful case involved a University of Dhaka project, which was formally introduced to the RLP, actively participated in knowledge-sharing events, and organized a three-day workshop attended by the Hub itself.[60] Through this process, the Hub helped convene high-level representatives from three countries, fostering a direct connection between research findings and national-level decision-makers. In Africa 19, participation to research projects dissemination activities has been shown to influence Hub activities. A series of webinars is planned to be organized for members countries on out of school children to present the findings of the research conducted in Ghana so other countries could learn from this. Another successful example is reported in LAC region, where awarded projects in early childhood education have already been incorporated by the Hub into discussions with the countries, enabling exchanges and learning from the innovation models that they bring. When possible, results are also shown and discussed by the Hub with national authorities to facilitate knowledge uptake. These cases demonstrate the potential of early engagement, co-development and sustained dialogue to improve the relevance and uptake of research. They also suggest that Hubs can serve as important connectors between research and policy communities, provided that they are actively involved throughout the research cycle.

These examples are not representative of the overall trend. The level of collaboration and coordination varied considerably across regions, as evidenced by stakeholder feedback and grantee reports collected during the current evaluation exercise. In many cases research projects continued to operate without connecting to the political and policy environments in which their findings would apply. National education actors often lacked the capacity or mechanisms to meaningfully engage with research teams (some national authorities have expressed interest in KIX innovations, but actual uptake remains low), and grantees struggled to establish contacts or maintain consistent communication with ministries.

The applied research evaluations (2023, 2024) note that research outputs were sometimes seen as theoretical or too generalized to be directly applied across different country contexts, limiting their relevance. The evaluations also noted that limited local capacity and weak links between grantees and policymakers further constrain research and evidence uptake.

There are, however, emerging examples of more localized research adaptation that demonstrate the potential of closer Hub-research project collaboration and engagement with national stakeholders. In Benin and Madagascar, two KIX projects affiliated with the Africa 21 Hub benefited from direct input from national delegations, facilitated by the RLPs (see good practice example below). This early engagement allowed the projects to refine their research focus and methodologies, ensuring that findings were not only relevant to national needs but also integrated into ongoing policy formulation processes. National stakeholders in these countries showed greater engagement and willingness to adopt research outcomes, in part because they had been directly involved in shaping the research process, creating a sense of ownership.

Coordination between research-led and Hub-led capacity building efforts remains limited. Greater intentional alignment could ensure that capacity development supports the application of research findings and helps embed new knowledge into systems change.

There is also limited evidence of formal feedback loops that allow country stakeholders or Hubs to influence the direction of research projects once underway. Survey responses suggest that while awareness of KIX research is relatively high in LAC, actual policy uptake has been more

[60] NORRAG 2024: www.norrag.org/event-highlights-kix-bangladesh-national-uptake-forum-2024/

evident in EMAP and Africa 19 pointing to the need for more deliberative mechanisms to translate awareness into action. Improving alignment requires more structured collaboration from the outset of the research cycle. Involving Hubs and national actors in the co-design of research, facilitating regular exchanges and aligning dissemination with policy planning windows are all essential for increasing the practical value of the research.

Good Practice Example of interaction between Hub and research project at early stages of the research project.

A KIX regional research project (STEM education for girls and women) benefited from input provided by national delegations to refine their research focus and methodologies. This project was introduced to the delegations in Benin and Madagascar by the Africa 21 Hub, and the delegations' inputs played a crucial role in tailoring the research to better align with the two countries' national priorities. National delegations provided inputs to refine research foci and methodologies. This collaborative approach not only enhanced the relevance of the project but also facilitated their integration into national policy formulation and existing gender equality programs in education. The successful incorporation of local expertise shows the value of early stakeholder engagement to ensure research is contextually relevant and impactful.

Conclusion

The interlinkages between the Hubs and the research portfolio under the GPE KIX initiative are evolving towards a more structured and intentional approach. However, significant gaps remain, particularly in ensuring that collaboration extends across the entire research cycle, rather than being concentrated at the final stages of dissemination.

The role of RLPs, while increasingly visible, requires further clarification and standardization across Hubs to ensure consistent understanding and application of their responsibilities vis-à-vis KIX research projects. Current interactions between Hubs and research teams often focus on information-sharing or status updates, rather than the strategic collaboration necessary to maximize the relevance, contextual adaptability, and impact of research outputs.

In particular, the late-stage nature of most Hub-research project interactions limits the ability of Hubs to influence the agenda-setting phase. As a result, research projects, while relevant to the country representatives directly involved, often lack the broader applicability necessary to address shared regional challenges across diverse contexts. This restricts both the scope and sustainability of knowledge uptake beyond the immediate circle of project participants.

Strengthening linkages across the entire research cycle, from agenda-setting through dissemination and uptake, will be critical to fostering more strategic, context-responsive collaboration. Such an approach would ensure that research activities and outputs are more closely aligned with regional priorities, more accessible to a broader set of stakeholders, and ultimately more impactful in supporting evidence-informed policy and practice across participating countries.

What worked well and why

- A key factor contributing to progress has been the flexibility and responsiveness of IDRC, which has actively incorporated feedback from Hubs and grantees. This has enabled the introduction of a more structured approach to collaboration between Hubs and applied research projects, including new mechanisms to systematize interactions between the two core components.
- A concept note developed[61] by IDRC was drafted to increase the interactions between the core components by increasing the awareness of and facilitate the use of GPE KIX-funded research at the national and regional levels the Hubs.
- The introduction and implementation of concept note aimed at strengthening systematic interactions between Hubs and research projects has been particularly successful, leading to a measurable increase in collaborative activities.

What did not work well and why

- While Hubs conducted regional priority identification processes in 2020 and 2023-2024 to inform the call for research proposal, the evaluation finds that, particularly in the early stages, research and Hubs often operated in parallel rather than in close coordination. This lack of structured collaboration significantly weakened opportunities for alignment between research agendas and country-level priorities, reducing the relevance, scope, and uptake of research outputs among national stakeholders. As a consequence, the opportunities for collaborative learning, cross-country knowledge exchange, and direct engagement with KIX country teams were significantly constrained during this early phase. In many cases, research projects and Hubs operated in parallel rather than in coordination, reducing the opportunities for applied research findings to inform Hub-led policy dialogues, capacity-building efforts, and broader regional learning processes.
- There were persistent challenges in communication and coordination, particularly with some Hubs such as Africa 19 and Africa 21. Despite efforts from grantees to

[61] Concept note interlinkage KIX Hubs and research

- The EMAP Hub reported exceeding its targets for Hub-research project interactions, demonstrating the potential of this structured approach. Collaboration was facilitated through a range of diverse channels. This enabled the Hub to engage a wide range of stakeholders and provide multiple avenues for knowledge exchange. This multi-channel strategy has fostered broader access to research findings and facilitated dialogue between researchers, policymakers, and practitioners—contributing to stronger linkages, greater visibility of research outputs, and more effective knowledge sharing across diverse audiences

initiate contact, some Hubs were perceived as unresponsive or unclear about their role in supporting applied research projects. This lack of proactive communication resulted in limited awareness among Hubs and KIX country teams about ongoing research projects and their potential contributions to regional and national education priorities.

3.2 Efficiency

Q2: How does KIX align with, and add value to, the broader evidence-based dialogue and knowledge exchange architecture (globally, regionally and at country level?) (external coherence)?

Data Sources	
	Document analysis, interviews with country reps, research grantees
Strength of evidence	
Low-Moderate	Findings were derived from two different data sources: interviews with external and internal stakeholders from all four Hub regions and desk reviews of KIX documentation and reviews. Due to the in-depth response to a similar research question by the 2024 review, the question was deprioritized in agreement with IDRC and GPE.

KIX continues to offer unique value to the broader evidence-based dialogue and knowledge exchange architecture through its large scale, the combination of producing research and ensuring its uptake in policy spaces, and by working in countries that are often overlooked by comparable programs.

The 2022 external comparator analysis, which reviewed nine comparable organizations and initiatives, highlighted several unique selling points that distinguish KIX from its peers. These include KIX's high global convening power, relationships with government, integration with civil society, capacity to synthesize (and curate) evidence for diverse audiences, the long-term presence of GPE in countries, reputation and its support for ethical, context-sensitive evidence generation, particularly with Global South researchers in leading roles.

At the global level, the 2024 desk review of KIX conducted an in-depth comparison of five similar global education evidence programs[62] and found that KIX shares many characteristics with its comparator programs, like the focus on southern-led research, the uptake of research, and high commitment to GESI, while also offering a unique addition to the knowledge exchange architecture ensured by a variety of factors which were mirrored by interview

[62] Five comparator Programs: Schools2030 Global Program by Aga Khan Foundation (KIX GRANTEE), FCDO What Works Hub for Global Education (WWGE), USAID SHARE, Learning for All Initiative by J-PAL, Knowing-Doing Network Leadership Coalition by Brookings

partners of phase 2 of the evaluation. Accordingly, KIX distinguishes itself from comparable programs through its large scale with respect to the number of countries it covers through GPE and the breadth of research, as well as the level it operates at – an interviewee mentioned a project similar to KIX but operating at country level, whereas KIX functions at the global level. Both Interviewees and the 2024 review highlighted KIX's unique combination of approaches and its interconnected design, which focuses on producing research and ensuring its uptake in policy dialogue. One respondent observed that other organizations such as FCDO and USAID mirrored this approach after the creation of KIX. As mentioned in the external comparator analysis from 2022, a variety of bilateral and foundation partners have indicated their interest in a partnership with KIX, reaffirming its value proposition due to strong relationships with stakeholders, access to and ability to synthesize research, flexibility in funding use, and it being Southern-focused. In combination with the Hubs and the ROSIE initiative as distinctive components of the program, KIX can respond to trends (2024 review) and has positioned itself as an essential and direct partner in improving the uptake of data and research in education policy through GPE (interviewees).

Our additional analysis of the 18 programs shortlisted for the comparator exercise in the 2024 review highlights KIX's distinct value addition in terms of program scale and country coverage. This value addition is largely derived from KIX's focus on GPE partner countries, as well as its deliberate consideration of the existing knowledge exchange architecture when expanding Hub membership to new countries. Of the 87 countries covered by KIX, 62 were not covered by any of the 18 comparator programs. Furthermore, all Hubs—with the exception of Africa 19—demonstrate a high unique coverage rate, meaning that between 78% and 100% of the countries they cover are not included in any of the 18 shortlisted comparator programs. This highlights KIX's role in extending knowledge exchange and education policy research support to countries that have historically received limited attention from other regional and global initiatives.

Interviews conducted during this evaluation further revealed that participants were generally unaware of other funding mechanisms at the country or regional level specifically supporting education policy research. This reinforces the view that KIX plays a critical role in addressing gaps in both funding and knowledge exchange infrastructure tailored to specific and unique country needs, particularly in relation to education policy research.

While KIX does engage in some countries that benefit from substantial support from comparator programs—such as Pakistan, Kenya, and Ghana, each of which is supported by seven comparator programs, and Tanzania and Sierra Leone, which are covered by six programs each—it does not cover countries with broader programmatic coverage as these are not GPE partner countries. Notable examples include India, covered by six comparator programs, and South Africa, covered by three. This targeted approach illustrates how KIX, through GPE's choice of partner countries, actively balances between working in countries with existing support structures and those that remain underserved, thereby promoting a more equitable distribution of knowledge exchange opportunities and funding for education policy research.

The broader global knowledge infrastructure within which KIX operates has also evolved in recent years. Historically, multilateral organizations such as UNICEF, the World Bank, and UNESCO played dominant roles in supporting education policy research and knowledge exchange in the Global South. While these organizations continue to play a major role, the landscape now includes a growing presence of philanthropic organizations, such as the Gates Foundation and others, particularly in health-adjacent education areas.

In parallel, there has been a shift in how research priorities are defined, as described in the 2024 desk review. Increasingly, actors in the Global South are shaping research agendas, ensuring that topics align more closely with local and regional needs rather than being exclusively driven by external partners. This shift has also contributed to the rise of co-produced knowledge, with stronger partnerships between Global South and Global North researchers, improving the contextual relevance and legitimacy of findings.

Another change in the knowledge infrastructure is the growth of specialist knowledge brokers such as think tanks, NGOs, and consultancies, who play an intermediary role in translating research into actionable insights for policymakers. Despite these positive shifts, however, the core challenges KIX set out to address remain present. Most notably, the uptake of evidence in policy processes remains limited, even when knowledge production and exchange have improved.

Together, these factors position KIX as a unique and valued contributor to the global education knowledge ecosystem, particularly in regions and countries that are underrepresented in other global programs.

Conclusion

KIX continues to offer a unique value to knowledge exchange architecture due to its large scale and interconnected design, as well as its focus on research production and policy uptake. Positioning itself as a strong partner in improving data and research uptake in education policy at the national, regional and global level, KIX benefits from GPE''s country partnerships, enabling it to cover countries that are commonly excluded from similar programs.

What worked well and why

- The selection of countries GPE partners with allows KIX to work in countries that are commonly overlooked or neglected in the knowledge exchange infrastructure, increasing KIX's added value.
- Its scale, focus and capabilities position KIX as a valued and trusted partner.

Q4 How well have KIX partners implemented processes for efficient, timely and responsive grant management, planning, reporting, and program implementation? (internal coherence)

Data Sources	
	Document analysis, survey, interviews with country reps, RLPs, research grantees
Strength of evidence	
Moderate	Findings were derived from multiple primary and secondary sources, including internal documents and concepts on processes and interviews with KIX partners and country representatives. As mentioned in the inception report, however, the available data and the limited scope of this evaluation do not allow a deeper examination/ audit of each partner's role (in particular regarding financial management and monitoring activities). The evaluation therefore focused aspects of efficiency (timeliness, coordination) rather than detailed process reviews.

The KIX implementing team at IDRC and GPE Secretariat have applied efficient and transparent processes regarding responsive grant management, program implementation and reporting. However, efficiency is somewhat limited by the many changes in context during the implementation of KIX, particularly on the part of the GPE architecture, which requires a lot of coordination. Despite these challenges, the various actors—including IDRC, RLPs, and applied research grantees—have generally responded with professionalism, flexibility, and a learning-oriented approach.

The KIX implementing partners and their roles

The implementing partners of KIX are the GPE Secretariat, the grant agent IDRC and the KIX grantees, RLPs and applied research grantees.[63]

The GPE Secretariat's main tasks are the oversight of the grant to IDRC and fiduciary oversight, the alignment and coordination with the GPE strategy, operations and mechanisms, and decision-makers (GPE Board and committees), as well as more operational tasks like providing technical inputs, participating in key events and reporting.

IDRC is the grant agent for the KIX program and is accountable for the KIX strategy and its implementation. [64] This includes, among other details, managing the selection and grants for KIX grantees (Hubs and research projects), reporting to the GPE Secretariat and Board, liaising with GPE to optimize KIX' contribution to the GPE strategy, delivering timely outputs and effective knowledge mobilization, and supporting high quality research and integration of GESI.

The RLPs play a pivotal role within the KIX architecture, acting as the primary conveners and facilitators of knowledge mobilization, peer learning, and capacity strengthening within their respective regional Hubs. Their role is outlined in the KIX extension proposal.[65]

Applied research grantees are responsible for conducting their research, strengthening capacities of the involved target groups and of themselves and mobilizing the knowledge via dissemination and in particular in cooperation with the KIX Hubs. They are obliged to participate in KIX communications, MEL and synthesis tasks.

GPE Secretariat

Empirical evidence from this evaluation, interviews and desk review, shows that as GPE contexts evolve, following increasing demand for adaptation from all the KIX partners, the GPE Secretariat increased coordination with the IDRC KIX team and RLPs. This includes engagement across all levels - senior management, KIX implementation team, GPE thematic and country leads. This led to steady improvements in coordination. However, both IDRC and the GPE Secretariat note that coordination between each other could still be more streamlined and systematized. At the same time, however, some processes are still adapting and there continue to be evolving expectations from KIX grantees and RLPs. This includes how to support the alignment of KIX Hub roles with partnership compact processes.

Grant Agent IDRC

IDRC's coordination with GPE has been described by interviewees as flexible and adaptive to GPE's evolving needs and expectations. However, the degree of coordination required—shaped by ongoing adaptations and evolving requirements—has at times led to inefficiencies. These efforts aimed to maintain strong alignment with GPE's changing priorities, particularly in relation to system transformation and country-level impact.

IDRC's grant management and reporting processes for applied research projects are widely seen as highly professional and effective, with multiple interviewees, including applied research grantees and GPE, highlighting IDRC's experience in managing large numbers of proposals

[63] For the most recent definition of KIX partners' roles see IDRC (2022): GPE Knowledge and Innovation Exchange. Proposal for extension. Annex 4: Roles of implementing partners.

[64] KIX proposal for extension, 2022.

[65] KIX proposal for extension, 2022.

and ensuring efficient processing of funding calls. Across the KIX program, IDRC has successfully handled nine initial calls for proposals, followed by seven additional calls, demonstrating both administrative capacity and procedural rigor.

The applied research evaluation (2022) and interviews from this evaluation confirm that IDRC deploys a robust team to manage these processes, including:

- 10 grant management program officers,
- 3 central coordination staff,
- 3 grant officers handling financial processes, and
- ongoing involvement of senior leadership to ensure strategic alignment and quality control.

This comprehensive staffing structure supports strong communication with grantees, thorough review processes, and ongoing financial oversight.

Evidence from interviews and documentation, indicates that IDRC is effectively managing the KIX initiative, with strong delivery of outputs across its core components. Applied research grantees consistently described IDRC as responsive, supportive, and accessible, providing timely feedback and flexibility where necessary to accommodate contextual challenges or adaptation needs during implementation.

RLPs similarly described IDRC as responsive and supportive, with open communication channels that facilitate rapid problem-solving and adaptive management where required. IDRC is also recognized in the applied research evaluation (2023, 2024),[66] for pursuing an adaptive, learning-oriented approach to KIX management, continuously evolving the program in response to feedback, evaluation findings, and changing priorities within GPE. This adaptive approach is reported in the applied research evaluation (2023, 2024) to have been particularly important as IDRC works to align KIX more closely with GPE's focus on system transformation, while still maintaining flexibility to respond to country needs and regional contexts.

However, some RLPs expressed a need for even more context-sensitive management approaches, for example, recognizing the regional and linguistic diversity of the Hubs, and the culture and needs of the different organizations. This was especially noted in regions where operating conditions are fragile or where engagement with country-level stakeholders is highly variable.

RLPs

The four regional Hubs, which are managed by RLPs differ significantly in their approaches, reflecting not only the different institutional structures and approaches of the RLPs themselves, but also the diversity of the countries they serve. Some Hubs cover fewer countries with relatively homogenous needs, while others work across a much larger number of countries, each with very different policy priorities, institutional capacities, and levels of engagement with GPE processes. These contextual variations inevitably shape how each Hub designs its processes, develops outputs, and facilitates interaction between countries and research projects.

The specific responsibilities and mandates of RLPs—particularly in relation to their complementarity with GPE grants and other GPE processes—are not always fully clear to all stakeholders, including the RLPs themselves. One particular issue raised by the RLPs is how they

[66] KIX applied research evaluation Phase 1 final report (2023)

are expected to link with Local Education Groups (LEGs) and how to distinguish between KIX-supported research and research funded directly through GPE grants or other GPE mechanisms.[67] This lack of clarity contributes to a degree of fragmentation, with RLPs sometimes unsure how to position KIX knowledge products within broader national and regional policy dialogues. Some interview partners expressed a desire for greater guidance on how RLPs can act as more intentional and structured knowledge brokers, ensuring a more direct connection between the KIX evidence ecosystem and ongoing education sector planning and policy processes led by GPE and national governments.

The 2022 mid-term review of the KIX and interviews (with IDRC) indicate IDRC plays an active and flexible role in overseeing the Hubs, engaging in high-level strategic alignment and practical problem-solving, particularly in the face of contextual and logistical challenges. However, as raised by GPE, there is still room for improving effectiveness with respect to the coordination and management of the Hubs and evidence also indicates that IDRC is aware of the need for further internal coherence across the diverse Hubs and stakeholders and is actively working to strengthen it.

The surveys and interviews from this evaluation, and Hub reports (which are provided to the IDRC) provide valuable insight into how the RLPs are perceived by country representatives, research grantees, and other stakeholders. Overall, RLPs are generally considered responsive and accessible, with country representatives noting that RLPs play a critical role in fostering peer learning and surfacing relevant evidence. However, there is room for improvement across all Hubs in terms of how effectively they incorporate country feedback into Hub activities and formats. Survey data shows that the LAC Hub received the lowest responsiveness ratings, with 67% of country respondents indicating that they were unsure whether their feedback had been considered or had not observed any changes in the work of the Hub as a result of their input. This suggests a need for clearer feedback loops and more visible responsiveness mechanisms across all Hubs, particularly in the LAC region.

Applied research grantees and other stakeholders interviewed in the evaluation also emphasized the importance of further strengthening the connection between Hubs and research projects. Although some progress has been made, more systematic and structured interactions would allow research findings to be more effectively curated, adapted, and mobilized by the Hubs in ways that better respond to country needs and policy windows.

Interviews with key stakeholders, including IDRC representatives, highlighted the importance of cross-Hub exchange and learning as a mechanism for improving Hub performance and strengthening consistency across regions.[68] Inter-Hub exchange already takes place to some extent. However, stakeholders suggested that this cross-Hub learning process could be further formalized and expanded, with specific thematic exchanges on topics such as policy engagement strategies, GESI mainstreaming, and techniques for facilitating peer learning in politically sensitive contexts.

Applied research grantees

According to the evaluation of the applied research portfolio (2023, 2024) as well as interviews with research grantees as part of this evaluation, end users and the IDRC KIX team, research grantees were efficient in operational terms, responding to MEL obligations and managing consortia, which can however be challenging in cases of big multi-national projects

[67] There is no expectation that RLPs will work with all LEGs or all other GPE instruments.

[68] See effectiveness 3.1.1 for discussion on cross-Hub coordination

(according to one research grantee). Applied research grantees were also considered efficient in evidence generation and knowledge mobilization, and particularly effective in strengthening capacities of their target groups like teachers and school officials via trainings and involvement in research practice. They were less effective when it comes to the strengthening of grantees' capacity to engage with policymakers, which is also connected to the hindering factor of limited capacities of national policymakers to engage and frequent staff changes on the side of the ministries.

Figure 7 Spotlight on Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL)

The MEL system currently in place aimed to ensure comprehensive tracking of progress across all KIX core components (Hubs, applied research projects). It is well-established and has been adapted in response to feedback collected through the mid-term review in 2022 to improve relevance and usability. The MEL system was also generally considered to be useful and well-structured, allowing grantees to document and reflect on their progress in a structured manner. This also concurs with the findings from the applied research evaluation (2023, 2024) which generally found the MEL system fit-for-purpose, particularly in terms of capturing project-level outputs and 'immediate outcomes'.

However, grantees and RLPs alike recommended placing greater emphasis on tracking knowledge uptake, policy influence, and sustainability outcomes over the longer term. This would ensure the MEL system better captures the full spectrum of KIX's intended results—not just at project level, but also in terms of system transformation and policy change.

More specifically, some RLPs consider that 'progress markers' and reporting requirements could also benefit from further simplification. They recommended moving towards a more problem-solving-oriented MEL approach, one that focuses not just on documenting activities and outputs (as highlighted above) but also on identifying and addressing barriers to impact more proactively.

Also, from the perspective of the research grantees, if changes were to be introduced, some grantees noted the reporting burden could be considered to be high, in particular for smaller organizations.[69]

Conclusion

Overall, KIX partners have implemented generally efficient, timely, and responsive processes for grant management, planning, reporting, and program implementation. The IDRC and GPE Secretariat, in particular, have demonstrated professionalism, flexibility, and a commitment to learning throughout program delivery. IDRC's systems for grant and financial management are widely regarded as strong, while applied research grantees and RLPs have shown adaptability and responsiveness despite complex and evolving contexts.

However, several limitations persist. The dynamic nature of the GPE architecture has introduced coordination burdens and shifting expectations, especially for IDRC. Roles and expectations—particularly for RLPs—are sometimes unclear, and feedback mechanisms are inconsistently applied across regions. While monitoring and evaluation systems are solid, they still lean toward short-term results, with insufficient focus on longer-term policy uptake and system-level change. Addressing these gaps will be essential to improving internal coherence and driving KIX's strategic aims.

What worked well and why

- There is strong grant management and the systems for managing grants and reporting are professional, responsive and efficient. There are good support structures in place enabling timely disbursement and adaptive management
- RLPs were responsive and played a pivotal role in peer learning and surfacing evidence, contributing to knowledge sharing across countries
- IDRC and GPE demonstrated flexibility in responding to evolving GPE strategies. The adaptability ensured alignment with system transformation goals

What did not work well and why

- The level of effort and intensive coordination needed to accommodate ongoing adaptations placed additional demands on resources. Clearer and more structured processes could enhance operational efficiency
- There was inconsistent responsiveness across the Hubs and a need for stronger feedback loops and participatory mechanisms
- While grantees were effective in implementation and capacity building, they struggled to consistently engage policymakers, partially due to limited capacity and high staff turnover in ministries
- Although well-structured, the current MEL reporting requirements were seen as burdensome, especially for

[69] This finding corresponds with the results of the evaluation of the applied research portfolio (2023, 2024).

- The MEL system was well-structured and responsive to previous evaluation feedback, helping grantees reflect and adjust implementation

smaller grantees, potentially detracting from implementation and innovation efforts.

3.3 Relevance

Q3A: How well does KIX respond (and has it been able to adapt its approach) to countries' needs for evidence, knowledge mobilization and capacity strengthening?

Data Sources	
	Document analysis (in particular: KIX annual reports, KIX Hubs reports and annual evaluation surveys results), survey, interviews with country reps, RLPs, research grantees, and end users.
Strength of evidence	
High-Moderate	Findings were derived from a range of primary and secondary sources, including interviews with country representatives, Hubs, grantees, and GPE and IDRC staff. There are some limitations in the data available, as educational priorities of partner countries are continuously changing - challenging to assess the relevance of KIX's interventions over time, as evidence is limited to one point in time - therefore we consider that is more important the adaptability and flexibility of KIX, than just looking at relevance in a certain point of time.

KIX responds to countries' evolving needs for evidence, knowledge mobilization, and capacity strengthening through two core components: regional Hubs and applied research projects. The Hubs serve as the primary interface with country representatives, providing direct support, tailored knowledge exchange, and capacity-strengthening opportunities based on ongoing dialogue with Ministries of Education and other stakeholders. By identifying thematic priorities, curating relevant evidence, and fostering peer learning, Hubs ensure that their activities remain responsive to country needs, though the degree of responsiveness varies depending on the clarity and coherence of demand within individual countries. In contrast, applied research projects contribute to these goals indirectly by generating contextually relevant evidence on key educational national challenges and global educational priorities. Even if research projects cover relevant themes aligned with education priorities and have the potential to inform policy dialogues, in many cases results uptake by national education authorities can take a long period of time. In that sense, the role of the Hubs is key, supporting effective communications of findings and integrating them into Hub activities thus engaging education authorities. Together, Hubs and research projects contribute to KIX's overarching objective of supporting evidence-informed policy and practice but strengthening the linkages between these two components would further enhance their collective impact.

3.3.1 KIX Hubs: responsiveness to country needs

KIX Hubs continuously adapt their activities to align with the needs, priorities, and cultural contexts of key strategic stakeholders at varied levels, including Ministries of Education (MoEs) and supranational institutions. This responsiveness ensures that Hub activities remain relevant and timely, while also aligning with the GPE 2025 strategy and the IDRC 2030 strategy. Each Hub has developed distinct mechanisms for identifying and responding to country demands.

For instance, the EMAP Hub has a three-level strategy including open access events, tailored capacity strengthening events, and in-depth country-level assessment; the LAC Hub has established regional and subregional spaces (the Caribbean community and the Spanish-speaking subregion,) and bilateral spaces to enhance knowledge exchange; the Africa 21 Hub conduct initial country needs assessments and direct dialogues with strategic stakeholders

to inform its activities at both regional and country level; and the Africa 19 Hub conducts yearly and post-event surveys to assess and refine its engagement strategies.

According to stakeholder feedback from the EMAP Hub, KIX has adopted a country-led philosophy from its inception, allowing it to be more responsive to national needs than many other organizations. However, Hubs report that MoEs often prioritize short-term or narrowly defined needs, making it difficult to foster long-term strategic initiatives. Maintaining continuity in dialogue is particularly challenging in politically unstable countries or during government transitions, taking into consideration that the participation of GPE country members in KIX remains voluntary.

Most country representatives confirm that Hub activities are aligned with their needs and priorities. In the latest survey, more than 70% of respondents across most Hubs—though slightly lower in LAC (65%)—felt they could communicate their country's needs and priorities to their Hub (see Figure 28). Additionally, between 67% and 46% of respondents indicated they could influence Hub activities or formats (see Figure 31). However, interview feedback highlighted that some country-specific needs remain unaddressed, with representatives requesting greater emphasis on country-focused support and more in-person engagement formats. Country representatives from Africa 21 indicated that adaptation to country needs should be improved, particularly through increased face-to-face interactions.

The CSM was introduced in 2022 as a response to the need for more country-focused support activities, complementing other GPE programs, grants, and KIX core components (Hubs and applied research projects). The Hubs are already integrating the CSM into their activities to facilitate smoother transitions between current Hub initiatives and country-specific support. For example, the LAC Hub adapted its technical assistance to the Education Reform in El Salvador to continue under the CSM, and the Africa 19 Hub explored synergies between the CSM, the GPE country compact and other relevant funding to ensure complementarity between the CSM and GPE and allow countries to better coordinate their funding requests from different sources.

However, its implementation varies by region (i.e. EMAP Rapid Customized Country Support vs LAC deeper and long-term technical assistance). Currently, CSM is still in a pilot phase, even if this phase was supposed to be implemented during 2023, and its recognition among country representatives remains limited (around 40% of respondents to the survey do not know the CSM - except Africa 21 where the responses were very low - see Figure 34). Some Hubs (especially in the LAC and EMAP regions) have received demands for the mechanism, especially from the countries more engaged in the program, but their reach is limited by the available resources.

Generation of evidence through Hubs

Hubs primarily focus on generating and curating evidence to meet immediate policy and implementation needs, drawing from regional and non-regional research, including KIX-funded studies and publicly available research. This focus on immediate needs identified and updated using the mechanisms discussed before explains that country representatives find the Hubs knowledge products highly relevant and useful, particularly on topics such as Education Management Information Systems (EMIS), Teacher Professional Development (TPD), Early Childhood Education (ECE), and learning outcomes across all regions. Evidence of Hub knowledge influence is emerging; for example, an academic affiliated with the LAC Hub reported that students are increasingly citing Hub knowledge products in their theses, demonstrating growing research recognition.

Good Practice Example. Leveraging Hub's network to increase the relevance and appropriation of the research projects by education authorities

- Though research projects frequently do not aim to reach national scale, the lack of knowledge or involvement of government agencies could hinder their recognition and probability of being scale up.
- The research project TPD @Scale in Honduras engaged SUMMA, one of LAC's RLPs, as the implementation partner. The integration of SUMMA facilitated leveraging its networks and recognition in the country, increasing the adaptation of the project to the MoE needs, resources, and priorities, leading to greater engagement and sustainability of the project.
- Currently, the MoE staff trained during the project have continued developing teacher training and remedial education virtual resources, leveraging the previously underutilized ministry platform. SUMMA continues offering support to the MoE staff in developing the resources.
- Hubs' support leveraging its networks and recognition from the beginning of the implementation of the research projects could be decisive in the scaling process.

Knowledge mobilization and capacity strengthening through Hubs

Hubs facilitate knowledge exchange covering the priorities identified using the mechanisms discussed before through diverse channels, including webinars, conferences, CoPs, Learning Cycles, and technical visits.[70] Spaces open to a wider public (webinars and conferences)[71] are considered valuable, especially for enhancing networking and stakeholder engagement opportunities, but some country representatives consider the content too general. More targeted spaces (CoPs and Learning Cycles) are valued as more useful, but naturally they appeal to less country representatives. Concerning the formats, though the benefits of the virtual formats especially the opportunity to reach a wider public are valued, country representatives expressed a preference for more in person events. Finally, technical visits—both between countries and from Hub teams to national institutions—are highly valued as relevant by country representatives, as they provide firsthand insights into best practices in education reform and policy implementation targeted to their immediate needs.

3.3.2 *Applied research projects: responsiveness to country needs*

KIX research projects address education issues such as Teaching, Learning, and Learning assessment (30,3%), ECCE (19,1%), Gender equality (19,1%), Out of school children (14,6%), Data systems (14,6%), and Education system resilience (7,9%). These projects attend or are related to relevant education challenges for the KIX member countries such as the global learning crisis, the low quality and coverage of the ECCE that in some KIX country members is under half the global average (60,9% in 2020 according to the World Bank Databank), the need to integrate a gender perspective into the education process, and increase the efficiency, effectiveness, and adaptability of the education systems. Though the research projects could increase awareness and create insights to address these challenges, and their alignment with national policy priorities varies, which affects their scalability and policy influence.

Additionally research grantees self-report on efforts to adapt their projects' scope, formats and activities to local contextual and cultural realities. This flexibility contributes to enhance their relevance and acceptance of the project among final beneficiaries. Nevertheless, in many countries, grantees and their implementation partners have limited engagement with national

[70] See Glossary for definitions/formats.

[71] For example, spaces for sharing experiences and knowledge concerning widespread priorities like the impact of COVID-19 on education systems.

education authorities. As a result, several country representatives interviewed had low awareness of research projects being implemented in their regions. This suggests that despite thematic relevance, research projects are not always positioned effectively within national decision-making spaces.

Good Practice Example Hubs local teams can provide closer and better tailored technical support

- Hubs have identified that some countries are less engaged in KIX activities, with government turnover being a critical moment for maintaining country representatives' engagement, especially staff from ministries.
- Several RLPs have staff or local teams in several of the countries under their purview. This has allowed the Hubs to provide closer and better tailored technical assistance, research and evidence for the countries. These teams can also help to ensure that institutional memory is not lost, taking into account the rotation of members of national delegations.
- For instance, in the EMAP Hub, local teams employed by the Hub have ensured that country perspectives are well addressed, and they have developed many formats and activities, including the development of research studies. Similar is the case of the LAC Hub, where SUMMA local staff facilitate dialogue with government authorities and their involvement in Hub activities and research projects, increasing the relevance of KIX for GPE partner countries.
- If possible (based on security considerations), Hubs could consider the possibility of having local teams in countries where country representatives' engagement has proven difficult.

That said, the research projects are well-aligned with the GPE 2025 strategy and the IDRC 2030 strategy, and they address key educational challenges faced by partner countries across six core themes: improving teacher training, expanding access to and enhancing the quality of early childhood education, strengthening learning assessment systems, promoting greater use of data and evidence, and developing innovative strategies to reduce inequalities and reach out-of-school learners (KIX Annual Report 2022-2023). Generating relevant research findings with strong contextual grounding could help raise awareness and foster dialogue among stakeholders, ultimately increasing the likelihood that these issues are prioritized on national policy agendas.

Generation of evidence through applied research projects

The projects of the research grantees interviewed focused mainly on Teaching and learning, PD, Gender Equality, and Equity and Inclusion (GESI). During the proposal phase, applicant researchers must explicitly demonstrate how their project addresses country needs. Some research grantees also modify project implementation to reflect local priorities, capacities, and resources. However, barriers such as language, technical requirements, and digital infrastructure remain significant challenges for some research participants. An Africa 21 end-user reported that internet connectivity and technological requirements prevented full engagement with a research project.

Knowledge mobilization and capacity strengthening through applied research projects

Research projects have several knowledge mobilization strategies including dissemination of the projects results within their networks, preparation of workshops with implementation partners, (local) education authorities, and direct beneficiaries of the programs, and participation in the Hubs' activities. The last strategy includes dissemination of research findings through email newsletters and press releases, and workshops and webinars conducted by research grantees where country representatives are invited. However, research projects' integration into Hub-led knowledge-sharing spaces depends on resources and partner country priorities.

Research projects also contribute to capacity strengthening—particularly at the subnational level, working directly with schools, teachers, communities, and local implementation partners, which include researchers.

However, limited involvement of national education authorities in project selection and design of the projects reviewed during this evaluation limits the impact of applied research on knowledge mobilization to foster the sustainability and scalability of the research projects, their impact on capacity strengthening at the system, and their translation into public policy. This is compounded by the limited duration of the projects and the paucity of interactions or linkages between projects implemented in the same country.

Where research projects have incorporated rigorous impact evaluation (e.g., through ROSIE support), they have had greater success in attracting the attention of decision-makers, demonstrating the importance of evidence credibility and local adaptation for successful knowledge mobilization and policy influence.

Conclusion

KIX activities are highly relevant and responsive to the needs and priorities of most partner countries, particularly through the work of the regional Hubs, which provide tailored, adaptable support and facilitate knowledge mobilization and capacity strengthening. There is strong evidence that Hubs have been successful in creating platforms for dialogue, peer learning, and knowledge exchange, which align closely with specific country priorities and regional needs. Hubs have also demonstrated flexibility in adapting to shifting political and institutional contexts, ensuring continued engagement and responsiveness despite external challenges.

However, the applied research projects have had weaker alignment with national policy priorities and more limited involvement with national education authorities, reducing their visibility and policy influence at the country level. While research topics were generally relevant, their connection to specific country needs was often tenuous. The 2023/24 calls for proposals, which were more closely aligned with Hub-identified priorities and country input, represent a positive step towards improving the relevance and impact of future research projects. Strengthening linkages between Hubs and research projects, particularly by increasing collaboration during agenda-setting and dissemination, will further enhance KIX's ability to deliver contextually relevant evidence, strengthen capacity, and promote knowledge mobilization that informs national policy.

What worked well and why

- Hubs have successfully developed and applied strategies to assess and respond to the needs and priorities of participating countries. This has enabled most country representatives to feel they can communicate their needs to the Hubs and influence Hub activities, while also ensuring alignment with GPE 2025 and IDRC 2030 strategies. The flexibility and responsiveness of Hubs have contributed to their high perceived relevance and credibility.
- Hubs have adapted their engagement strategies to regional dynamics and institutional cultures. Sharing these experiences across Hubs could promote further learning and cross-regional improvements.
- Hubs have provided valuable spaces for knowledge exchange, peer learning, and regional dialogue, helping countries share experiences and access evidence from multiple sources. Formats such as webinars, CoPs, and technical visits have been particularly well-received, though demand for more in-person engagement persists.
- While earlier research projects were developed with limited Hub involvement[72], the 2023/24 calls have better integrated country and Hub input

What did not work well and why

- Most of the research projects reviewed in this evaluation emerged from the first round of calls, which were developed without formal engagement from the Hubs. As a result, these projects often reflected broad thematic relevance but were not always aligned with the immediate policy priorities of the countries where they were implemented. This weakened their recognition and reduced opportunities for engagement with Ministries of Education and other key stakeholders[73].
- Low awareness of many research projects being implemented in their own countries. This was particularly the case where grantees had limited direct engagement with the Ministries of Education or where projects lacked explicit endorsement or integration into national education processes. This limited visibility reduced opportunities for policy uptake and sustainability
- Systematic integration between research projects and Hubs remains uneven, particularly for projects that were not thematically aligned with Hub priorities. This fragmentation limits the potential for research findings to be amplified through Hub platforms and translated into policy-relevant insights. The lack of coordination between projects operating in the same country further reduces opportunities for synergy and cross-learning.

[72] Hubs conducted regional priority identification processes in 2020 and 2023-2024, which informed calls for research proposals.

[73] However, according to the IDRC some KIX 1.0 projects received continuity grants based on their relevance to national education priorities and greater engagement with ministries of education.

into the research agenda-setting process. This greater alignment is expected to increase the relevance of future research projects and improve linkages between research findings and country policy processes.	• Some research projects at KIX operate at local level having successfully engaged schools, teachers, and local communities. Though now their impact on national-level capacity strengthening and policy development is limited, their impact in communities and local implementor agencies could become a starting point in their scaling journey. Hubs' support positioning these projects could be decisive in the scaling process due to their links with national education authorities

Q3B: To what extent is KIX positioned to contribute to the IDRC's strategy 2030 as well as the GPE 2030 strategy and operating model?

Data Sources	
	Document analysis (strategies), interviews with IDRC/ GPE Secretariat
Strength of evidence	
Moderate	Findings were derived from the analysis of IDRC and GPE strategic documents and interviews with the IDRC and GPE KIX implementation team and senior management. This evaluation cannot exactly assess how KIX is contributing to GPE's 2030 strategy, as it is still under development. Therefore, the evaluation concentrates on the 2025 strategy, which remains the main reference point, while GPE 2030 introduces some incremental adjustments. Another challenge is that the GPE operating model underwent various changes during the KIX implementation (see timeline in Appendix E), making an ex-post assessment of a moving target more difficult. The evaluation focuses therefore on how KIX could contribute to GPE's evolving strategy and operating models in the coming years.

With its focus on supporting evidence and innovation in relevant education priority fields including GESI and the support of southern-based research, KIX is well positioned to contribute to the strategies of IDRC and GPE. In terms of organizational development, KIX supports IDRC's positioning in the international education sector and offers lessons learned for other programs. The products and learnings of KIX Hubs (and to a limited extent of research projects) offer opportunities for GPE to further develop its 2030 strategy and operating model, but a more coherent approach of strategic alignment, also with research projects, is needed.

To the funders of KIX - GPE and IDRC - it is important that the program aligns with their strategic orientations and plans. Nevertheless, the following analysis should also be viewed from the perspective that the program was not designed exclusively to support the IDRC and GPE architectures and operations, but to fill countries' evidence and knowledge needs.

Contribution to IDRC's Strategy 2030

The 10-year IDRC strategy "A more sustainable and inclusive world" (2021-2030) aims at investing in high-quality research and innovation, sharing knowledge for greater uptake and use, and mobilizing global alliances for impact (international funding partnerships). With its focus on supporting research and innovation and scaling, KIX contributes in particular to the first two objectives. As a GPE initiative, KIX is also central for mobilizing multilateral alliances. This strength, for instance, was demonstrated when the LEGO foundation joined KIX to fund a call ($3 million in targeted funds), which contributed to a second increase of the KIX budget.[74]

[74] See "Decision document of the board of directors to the costed extension proposal", 2022

Furthermore, KIX incorporates core principles of IDRC: the support of southern-led research and local capacity, which has gained importance in KIX over time, inclusion and equity, and scaling impact. In particular, gender equality is a central future of KIX (developing and sharing evidence on gender equality in education, see also the section on Effectiveness regarding GESI), as for instance, selected projects in 2021 showed a strong focus on gender equality. For IDRC it is also important that KIX does not only focus on scaling research projects, but, with ROSIE, also on research on scaling.

Thematically, KIX aligns with one of the five research priorities of IDRC ("education and science"). It is very well positioned to contribute to this priority area, as it is the biggest partnership at IDRC focusing on education, complementing initiatives that concentrate for instance on aspects like Edtech (e.g. the IDRC initiative EmpowerED). According to IDRC, KIX has strengthened IDRC's capacities in the education sector significantly. To IDRC, it is important that KIX supports the long-term vision of the strategy up to 2030 and provides continuity, creating a sustainable foundation for education systems to feed into the role of science and research. The program has also contributed lessons learned to other IDRC sectors that are transferred in cross-collaborations inside IDRC. In particular, the concept of Hubs is a model that contributes to other IDRC initiatives. Also, the direct engagement with policy makers is seen by IDRC as a distinctive and valuable feature of KIX. As KIX includes many countries that are unstable, it also provides opportunities for institutional learning on strategies on working in fragile contexts.

Contribution to GPE's 2025/2030 Strategy and Operating Model

GPE, with its 2025 strategy, aims to accelerate access, learning outcomes and gender equality through equitable, inclusive and resilient education systems fit for the 21st century, in alignment with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4. It focuses on eight priority areas, in which it seeks to have transformative impact: access, learning, gender equality, inclusion, early learning, quality teaching, volume, equity and efficiency of domestic financing, and strong organizational capacity. At the time of writing this report, GPE foresees to maintain the overall direction of GPE 2025 in the new strategy 2030 that is supposed to be approved in December 2025.

By incorporating GPE's priority areas in its activities (in particular in the calls for research proposals) and by playing an increased role in evidence-based policy making and partner countries' reform efforts, KIX aligns well with GPE's general priorities with both of its components. KIX has also showed a high degree of openness for continuous adaptation to changes in the GPE operating model, as increased exchange with different KIX components and changed processes, in particular for Hubs' roles, with the costed extension demonstrate. The evaluation agrees with the 2024 review that a strengthening of connections with GPE 2025 has taken place via 1) more communication at GPE secretariat level, 2) meetings between RLPs and GPE Secretariat Country Team Leads, 3) LEGs being invited to Hub events, 4) contribution to several partnership compacts, and 5) the CSM. Another example of this is the strengthening of systematic linkages between EOL and KIX. After multiple exchanges, concrete steps for improvement have been agreed on between KIX, EOL and the GPE Secretariat, such as more information exchange and involvement of EOL grantees in KIX Hub activities and research. The implementation of these steps is ongoing and was particularly apparent in interviews with the EMAP RLP that mentioned efforts of exchange with EOL.

However, the different timelines of KIX components (such as the calls for research proposals and the establishment of KIX Hubs) and key changes in GPE's operating model (e.g., the introduction of partnership compacts) has contributed to challenges in integrating KIX more systematically into GPE country-level processes (see timeline in Appendix E). Efforts to improve

this integration have primarily focused on strengthening the role of KIX Hubs and the exchange between all partners (GPE, IDRC, Hubs), while the contribution of research projects appears to be less prominent in these efforts. IDRC has documented 20 instances where KIX evidence has informed country processes, including the development of partnership compacts, ESP or multiplier grants. However, there is currently no clear guidance on how KIX outputs – whether from research or Hubs – should be systematically used to support GPE processes.

Also, interviews indicate that, while the Hubs have set up mechanisms to identify the priorities and needs of GPE partner countries, the strategic use of the compact processes for this purpose is not yet consistent and is currently limited to a few initial examples. At least from the countries' perspective the different GPE initiatives[75] are seldomly linked and seen as "parallel structures" or there is uncertainty about the differences, as several interviews show in which country representatives were not able to differentiate between KIX and other GPE initiatives.

The added value of KIX to GPE country-level processes should be more clearly communicated and, where possible, better integrated or standardized across contexts. At the same time, it is important to recognize that KIX contributes to GPE's goals not only at the country level, but also through its support for cross-country collaboration – particularly via peer-learning, exchange through Hub activities and global research projects. The importance of such exchange was highlighted in interviews with country representatives, especially those from the Africa 19 region.

Conclusion

KIX is well-positioned to contribute to both IDRC's Strategy 2030 and the emerging themes and strategic direction of GPE's 2030 strategy, with strong evidence of alignment and the capacity to support anticipated long-term objectives. To maintain KIX's added value, a holistic strategic approach should be developed to ensure complementarity with new GPE processes. While steps towards this have already begun, its success will depend on the willingness of stakeholders – including the Secretariat, partner countries and gran agents - to draw on the knowledge generated through KIX when making strategic decisions.

What worked well and why

- The alignment with core objectives of both, IDRC and GPE.
- KIX showed continuous adaptability to changing environments during its implementation and proved to be a "learning" program, as the example of expansions of countries shows.

What did not work well and why

- The development of the GPE operational model, including new compact processes, and the design and implementation of KIX evolved in parallel, with limited systemic coordination. Alignment has gradually improved but remains uneven. Making this alignment more transparent and predictable for all stakeholders (GPE, IDRC, grantees, partner countries) would enhance shared understanding of roles and contributions.
- The potential for KIX applied research projects to inform GPE country-level processes has so far been underutilized. In several cases, research findings were not sufficiently connected to policy dialogues or compact development processes – either due to limited integration mechanisms, unclear pathways for using research evidence, or varying engagement by national actors. While better alignment with GPE processes would increase the strategic us of research results, it is equally important to ensure that the added value of the projects extends beyond GPE processes.

[75] As outlined above, interview partners are often not aware of the different GPE grants, technical assistance initiatives, and Education Out Loud. Thus, they often were not able to differentiate which element they are referring to.

3.4 Sustainability

Q5: How are the immediate outcomes sustained and how has KIX contributed to that?

Data Sources	
	Document analysis, survey, interviews with country reps, RLPs, research grantees, interviews with end users, case studies
Strength of evidence	
Moderate	It should be noted that this evaluation may only capture early indications of sustainability. The evaluation does not have access to consistent, long-term data on how stakeholders continue to apply the knowledge, skills, and policies introduced through KIX. Also, many factors beyond KIX's interventions influence sustainability. Therefore, although the data drawn on for this section comes from a variety of different sources, there is a lack of evidence for the sustainability of impacts and so the strength of evidence is deemed as only moderate.

Sustainability is embedded within the design and ambition of the KIX initiative, reflected in its guiding principles, theory of change, and ultimate outcomes, which emphasize long-term transformation in how GPE partner countries generate, access, and apply knowledge to improve education systems. Evidence from KIX's performance indicators, stakeholder interviews, and survey data shows that progress is being made towards sustainable outcomes, particularly in strengthening knowledge, skills, and relationships across key stakeholders. However, the sustainability of policy influence, innovation scaling, and long-term institutional uptake remains a work in progress, with uneven results across regions, limited project durations, and persistent challenges in translating evidence into policy. Addressing these gaps requires a more deliberate focus on institutionalizing mechanisms for knowledge sharing, aligning innovations with existing structures, and fostering stronger government ownership.

Sustainability is a core guiding principle of KIX, with the program emphasizing long-term results "linking with GPE's longstanding relationships and commitment to education system transformation while sustaining knowledge mobilization and learning exchange beyond typical project timelines"[76]. KIX's theory of change identifies three 'ultimate outcomes' that frame its sustainability ambitions. These ultimate outcomes are:

- Improved understanding of what works in improving education systems and how these innovations can be scaled equitably and sustainably in GPE partner countries
- Strengthened capacity of GPE partner countries to integrate evidence into policy and practice that promote GESI
- More routine use of new knowledge and innovations by GPE partner countries in policy and practice

Although KIX has no explicit sustainability indicator, several performance indicators from the results framework (2.2.1, 2.3.2, 3.2.1, and 3.3.1, see Table 7) indirectly capture progress towards sustainability-related goals, particularly in knowledge and skill retention, identification of policy options, and the uptake of innovations. The most recent data shows strong performance in strengthening knowledge and skills (63 cases vs target of 40) and in identification of new policy options (60 cases vs target of 25), but lower-than-expected performance in policy

[76] KIX proposal for extension, 2022.

development and delivery (13 cases vs target of 20), highlighting the longer time horizon needed for sustained policy change.

Table 7 Progress on indicators relating to sustainability

Outcomes	Indicator	Target (end of program 2024)	Actual value at program end (2024)
Country representatives mobilize new knowledge and skills, including new policy and practice options and those related to GESI, in their countries to strengthen their national education systems	2.2.1 # of outcome cases of policy development and / or delivery, including those related to GESI, which use KIX knowledge and innovation (including GESI-related knowledge and innovation)	20	13
Global and regional grantees produce high-quality applied research resulting in adapted, contextually relevant, scalable educational innovations, including those that respond to GESI challenges and needs, for Partner Countries	2.3.2 Global and regional grantees advancing on a continuum of progress markers to indicate transformation in their research into use and scaling capacities. (disaggregated by ROSIE and non-ROSIE partner grantee)	20% of global and regional grants achieved progress in the 'would love to see' progress markers; 70% in the 'would like to see' progress markers; 10% in the 'expect to see' ones.	Data not available
Country representatives strengthen knowledge and skills, including those that consider GESI to strengthen national education systems	3.2.1 # outcome cases of country representatives reporting new knowledge and skills, including those related to GESI	40	63
Country representatives identify new policy and practice options in areas identified by Partner Countries as their needs and priorities (including those that consider GESI) to strengthen national education systems	3.3.1 # outcome cases of country representatives identifying new policy and practice options, including those related to GESI.	25	60

In this section we examine the potential sustainability of each of the main areas of inquiry: knowledge mobilization, knowledge generation and capacity strengthening.

3.4.1 Sustained relationship and networks

It is important that different stakeholders are not just brought together by the Hubs, but that they form durable relationships and partnerships that will last beyond the support of KIX, ensuring shared responsibility and long-term commitment to sustainable outcomes. In the online survey, most respondents said they had stayed in contact and followed up on exchanges with other stakeholders beyond the KIX Hub activities: 26% frequently, 42% occasionally, 20% rarely and 13% never. This result did not differ significantly by Hub. In interviews, several stakeholders[77] (country representatives, research grantees and other stakeholders) mentioned that they were confident that the relationships fostered by the KIX program would endure beyond the end of program support, and there were observations of stakeholders contacting each other outside of the Hub activities.

[77] Several stakeholders (>5) mentioned this spontaneously- this was not a specific question that was asked of them.

There were promising examples highlighting the potential for sustaining relationships forged through the program. In Vietnam, a civil society organization, through its involvement in KIX Hub activities, established a collaboration with the government. This connection proved valuable, as the government later engaged the organization for a project, with the Hub actively fostering and supporting the partnership. In Nigeria, a civil society organization connected with government stakeholders as a direct outcome of their engagement with KIX. The program influenced their approach to government relations, shifting their strategy from activism and street demonstrations—marked by one-way, confrontational communication—to a more constructive, two-way dialogue. This transformation fostered meaningful exchange and collaboration, leading to sustained and productive engagement with the government. An applied research grantee in the Africa 19 Hub region had been put in touch with key stakeholders such as the African Union and ECOWAS via the Hub, that were instrumental in their scaling their education innovation.

In these 3 cases, the relationships were relevant and mutually beneficial, and indicative of the kinds of connections that should be prioritized for long-term impact. With their deep understanding of the education ecosystem and ability to reach key stakeholders, KIX Hubs play a crucial role in identifying, facilitating, and strengthening such partnerships. Working towards identifying more relevant country representatives (identified in the 2022 mid-term review) is a step in the right direction in this process.

Some stakeholders expressed uncertainty about the long-term sustainability of the relationships built through KIX and suggested establishing formalized structures to help ensure their continuity, for example by setting up permanent working groups or committees, by placing designated focal points in key institutions such as ministries, or by establishing online knowledge platforms or communication forums.

Relationship-building is a gradual process. Stakeholders appreciate that the IDRC recognizes this reality. For example, a grantee from the Africa 19 Hub region reflected on their initial uncertainty about the value of engaging with the Hub, particularly as they had no prior experience with KIX. However, over time, they came to highly value the Hub's role in fostering coordination and facilitating meaningful exchanges. They described it as instrumental in providing access to the right forums and key stakeholders. The grantee also highlighted IDRC's hands-on approach, which they felt distinguished it from other funders, and welcomed IDRC's understanding that achieving meaningful, lasting change requires time and sustained engagement.

3.4.2 Sustained knowledge, skills and practices

For KIX to develop sustainable impact, knowledge and skills obtained through KIX should be applied in the mid- and long-term by the KIX target groups and disseminated or even institutionalized in ministries and relevant organizations. Beyond this, the KIX program aims at contributing to a culture of using and applying knowledge, evidence and innovations in ministries and other organizations (see ultimate outcomes). As shown in the table above, the outcome indicator relating to this is positive, with 63 outcome cases of country representatives reporting new knowledge and skills, out of a targeted 40.

In order to facilitate this, it is important that the knowledge and skills gained do not stay within the individual target groups trained but are shared more broadly within organizations. In the online survey, 80% of respondent stated that they would 'very probably' or 'definitely' share the knowledge gained through KIX with their ministry or organization, and a further 15% said they 'probably' would (see Figure 43). It is also important that the knowledge and skills gained are applicable in the work of the trained stakeholders. Indeed, 81% of online survey

respondents stated that they planned to apply the knowledge gained in their ministry or organization (15% said they probably would). For example, a country representative from Eswatini shared that while the Ministry recognized the importance of addressing gender issues in education, there was a lack of concrete actions to implement meaningful change. However, after receiving GESI training through the Africa 19 Hub, she became more effective in advocating for gender-sensitive education policies, supported by concrete evidence to strengthen her arguments. Applied research projects also resulted in the dissemination of knowledge and skills. For example, a teacher and municipal education officer in Uganda who was an end user of the innovations in education data management through the DHIS2 project described how the project had improved her understanding of the importance of education data. As a result of this, she had spoken to teachers and parents about the importance of education data and advocated for its increased use in education planning. This type of knowledge dissemination should foster a lasting culture change within the ministry, ensuring its impact continues even after KIX's involvement in the country ends.

To really ensure the sustainability of the knowledge, skills, and practices gained through participation in KIX, it is crucial that knowledge is systematically documented in accessible formats to those who need them (be that end users or other stakeholders). To this end, online Hub repositories make available a variety of different resources online (annual reports, event reports, research syntheses) but resource availability is not equivalent across Hubs and some stakeholders did report that they lacked a comprehensive overview of knowledge generated by KIX. Finally, ensuring that learnings are integrated into policy will provide the best opportunity for long-term impact (see the following section).

3.4.3 Sustainability of policy and practice

KIX's ultimate goal is for knowledge and innovation to feed into sustained policy change. Progress in this area has been slower than expected, with only 13 documented cases of policy development compared to a target of 20. Interviews reinforced the understanding that policy change takes time and is often influenced by external factors beyond KIX's control. For instance, grantees from the LAC region reported that their project results were being sustained through national and local authorities or communities—evident in knowledge transfer and shifts in practices. However, they also noted that the relatively short duration of the projects limited the ability to translate these results into formal policy.

In fact, policy change represents one of KIX's ultimate outcomes and serves as a key marker of sustainability. Institutionalizing change through policy ensures its longevity. Given the ambitious nature of this outcome, it is not surprising that there is less immediate evidence of success in this area. Rather than being discouraging, this should be seen as an acknowledgment of the complexity and long-term nature of policy influence.

Despite this, there were positive examples of policy change being brought about by KIX. For example:

- In Nigeria, a policy dialogue was organized by the Africa 19 Hub in 2023, bringing together a range of stakeholders including from the federal and state ministries of education and other ministries, development partners, civil society and non-governmental organizations, and researchers. A number of recommendations from the policy dialogue around

education data systems and gender equality were subsequently taken up in the education sector plan[78].

- In El Salvador, direct technical assistance was provided by the LAC Hub to the "My New School" reform, directly supported by evidence and internal discussion of different academic institutions, civil society and other organizations
- In the Maldives & Vietnam, a Learning Cycle facilitated by the Hub and respective studies on "21st-century skills in curricula" were carried out. Policy processes and dialogues in the countries were initiated ("how can we make sure that teaching guidelines are aligned in curriculum reform) and the results went into policy cycle and practices (e.g. teaching guidelines)

3.4.4 Sustainability of applied research and innovation scaling

It is important that the evidence and innovations created through KIX applied research projects are scaled as equitably and sustainably as possible, to ensure long-term impact beyond KIX' support. KIX focuses on scaling innovation in two ways. Firstly, most applied research projects funded through KIX focus on generating knowledge for and about scaling the impact of promising or proven innovations. Secondly, the ROSIE project—funded by KIX since 2020—produces knowledge and guidance on scaling. For example, the ROSIE project produced research into the factors that influence the decisions of governments to adopt innovations[79], and on the "ingredients" necessary for government adoption of education innovations[80]. They also provide individual support to research grantees to support their scaling efforts and bring together stakeholders in events such as workshops and conferences to facilitate knowledge sharing and networking. In this way, the ROSIE project acts as an accelerator, driving the effective and sustainable scaling of education innovations.[81] Indeed, the ROSIE annual interim technical report (2024) presents 5 outcome cases in which the ROSIE initiative contributed to change in scaling of education innovations. For example, the ROSIE team engaged with the TaRL Africa team to develop an innovative study design that would help capture and measure the long-term impact of their program and held a workshop with 6 KIX grantee teams working in Tanzania to share experiences in scaling.

Several other key factors emerged from the evaluation that were judged as important to ensuring the sustainability of applied research project results and enhancing their scalability. Firstly, the development of scaling plans or roadmaps creates structure and accountability for scaling efforts, increasing the likelihood of sustainable change. Evidence of this can be found in a number of applied research projects. For example[82], two KIX grantee teams—FKR and Connecting Learning for STEM (CL4STEM)—participated in a series of online workshops and meetings as part of the ROSIE initiative where they learned about the key components of scaling goals and pathways. With this support, they each developed their own scaling goals and pathways. FKR then advanced this work further by developing a full scaling plan, with guidance from ROSIE. In addition, CAMFED created roadmaps for scaling innovations in

[78] Education for Renewed Hope: Roadmap for the Nigerian Education Sector 2024-2027.

[79] www.brookings.edu/articles/government-decisionmaking-on-education-in-low-and-middle-income-countries/?utm_medium=email&utm_content=269351005&utm_source=hs_email

[80] www.brookings.edu/articles/how-do-government-decisionmakers-adopt-education-innovations-for-scale/

[81] The evaluation of the applied research portfolio (2023, 2024) gives further insights on how ROSIE could be improved regarding management and impact orientation.

[82] "Supporting teams to develop scaling strategies and scaling pathways", one of five outcome cases outlined in the Annual interim technical report, The Centre for Universal Education at the Brookings Institution (April 2024).

Zambia and Zimbabwe, with some progress already underway.[83] Government ownership of the innovation was also seen as crucial—ideally from the outset—to support long-term integration. Numerous examples of this can be found in the sections on evidence uptake and use in policy. Securing ownership through civil society organizations and local communities in addition to this was considered even more effective in sustaining impact, particularly in countries with fragile political contexts. For example, Associates for Change had engaged the government, but also NGOs and made efforts to empower local communities to act without relying on the government. Connections with initiatives such as Education Out Loud could help facilitate this.

Finally, aligning innovations with existing structures, strategies, and priorities was viewed as essential for long-term success. Several KIX Hubs emphasized efforts to ensure that projects were closely aligned with GPE priorities and processes. Applied research grantees also highlighted the importance of integrating projects within national structures to enhance their relevance and sustainability. CAMFED was accredited as the grant agent for the GPE Girls' Accelerator Grant in Zimbabwe, underscoring the strong alignment of their project with GPE priorities. This accreditation reflects their trusted relationship with both the Ministry of Education and GPE, further enhancing the project's long-term sustainability.

However, challenges remain. The short duration of KIX applied research projects posed a significant challenge to both sustainability and scaling. Several interviewees emphasized that achieving lasting change takes time, and the limited project timelines did not allow sufficient opportunity for deep, long-term impact. Furthermore, it was reported that essential infrastructure was not in place to allow for sustained outcomes of projects – specifically, in the case of projects that aimed to reinforce education data systems, countries did not have sufficient IT equipment (computers, internet access, electricity access).

Conclusion

KIX has taken significant steps to embed sustainability into its activities, particularly through strengthening relationships, enhancing skills and knowledge, and fostering more collaborative policymaking processes. However, there is currently a lack of evidence pertaining to the sustainability of impacts. Some factors enabling sustainable change are highlighted, including scaling roadmaps, ownership (from the government to the community level) and alignment with existing structures and priorities. However, However, sustained policy change, institutionalization of knowledge, and scalable innovation uptake require longer timeframes, more formalized mechanisms for continued collaboration, and deeper integration with national systems and priorities.

What worked well and why

- Hubs fostered lasting relationships through deliberate networking efforts and multi-stakeholder engagement. These repeated, facilitated exchanges helped build trust, foster mutual understanding, and encourage cross-sectoral collaboration. By ensuring that different types of actors came together in the same spaces, Hubs provided a foundation for relationships to extend beyond the formal KIX activities themselves
- Knowledge and skills were effectively transferred through tailored training, peer learning, and targeted capacity strengthening efforts. Hubs designed multi-level learning opportunities. The design allowed for both broad outreach and deep, context-specific knowledge transfer. to broader organizational learning

What did not work well and why

- The limited duration of access to support for applied research projects restricted their ability to embed findings and innovations into national systems. Ministries and other government partners often needed more time to absorb, adapt, and institutionalize the innovations introduced through KIX projects.
- The absence of formal mechanisms to sustain relationships and networks after KIX reduces the likelihood of long-term collaboration. Suggestions such as formal working groups, permanent advisory committees, or ongoing knowledge platforms are potential ways to preserve and nurture these relationships in the long term.
- The translation of knowledge and evidence into policy was slower and more difficult than anticipated, particularly in countries with fragile political contexts. Even when KIX evidence was seen as valuable, it did not immediately lead to policy adoption because of

[83] www.gpekix.org/project/scaling-youth-led-social-support-and-mentorship-program-improve-quality-education

- KIX's flexibility and demand-driven approach gives Hubs the opportunity to adapt to local contexts and evolving needs. This adaptability is particularly important in fragile or rapidly changing political contexts, where flexibility ensured continued engagement despite government turnover or shifting education priorities.
- The ROSIE project provided essential technical support and practical tools for scaling innovations. ROSIE also created opportunities for peer learning across grantees, ensuring that lessons learned from scaling efforts in one context could inform similar efforts elsewhere. This technical and relational support was especially valuable for smaller grantees or those working in challenging operating environments.

competing political priorities, limited absorptive capacity, or misalignment with existing policy processes.

- In some cases, weak alignment between research projects and national policy priorities reduced their relevance and visibility. This limited their ability to engage with policymakers and build the case for sustained policy influence, especially in countries where education reform processes were already crowded with other donor initiatives.
- Infrastructure and resource limitations in some countries undermined the sustainability of technology-focused innovations. Without a supportive infrastructure, even well-designed innovations struggled to generate and sustain impact.
- The absence of dedicated sustainability strategies within research projects weakened long-term ownership and impact. In the absence of early government engagement, co-creation processes, and clear handover plans, some projects struggled to transition from pilot to institutionalized practice.

4 Recommendations

The evaluation confirms that the **KIX program has made significant progress** in strengthening knowledge mobilization, generating relevant evidence, and fostering capacity strengthening across GPE partner countries. However, there are areas requiring further attention to enhance the program's relevance, sustainability, and impact. In this section, we present a comprehensive set of recommendations that address those shortcomings.

The **recommendations are divided into two timelines**: long-term and short-term. Long-term recommendations, while they can be initiated early, are primarily aimed at the next program period (post 2027) if approved by the GPE Board and focus on more significant, strategic changes that will ensure sustainable progress and development. Short-term recommendations are intended for immediate implementation (up to 2027) to address urgent needs and improve current operations.

The evaluation acknowledges that there is **no one-size-fits-all model** for the KIX interventions. Each country has unique contexts and challenges, and it is crucial to tailor approaches (Hubs activities, research projects) to fit these specific needs. This is especially important for **fragile and low-capacity contexts**, where tailored strategies are essential to address the complexities and constraints. Our recommendations are designed to be adaptable, ensuring that they can be customized to suit the diverse environments in which the fund operates.

The following **recommendations are structured to provide clear and actionable guidance**. Each recommendation begins with a headline that offers a brief, clear summary. This is followed by a short explanation of the context and the evidence supporting the recommendation. Finally, the recommendation is broken down into specific priorities or steps, ensuring a practical and systematic approach to implementation.

Long Term

1. Clarify **GPE modalities and KIX integration** through a unified communication strategy
2. Clarify **positioning and mandates of Regional Learning Partners** (RLPs) within the broader GPE architecture to ensure support for systematic reforms in partner countries
3. Clarify the positioning of **applied research projects** within GPE's country-level processes
4. Deepen the integration of **intersectional GESI approaches** throughout the program life cycle
5. Establish a more **integrated and adaptive governance model** to steer KIX strategically and sustainably

Short-/Midterm

6. Design and implement a structured **coordination mechanism** between the two main KIX components (Hubs and research projects) to minimize fragmentation
7. Further enhance the **cross-Hub learning** mechanisms
8. Institutionalize the **Country Support Mechanism** (CSM) as a core part of the Hub offering
9. Simplify and enhance the **Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning** (MEL) system to emphasize learning and adaptive management
10. Develop clear **sustainability strategies** for both Hubs and research projects and further support follow-up funding for promising innovations

4.1 Recommendations for the long-term development of KIX

1. Clarify GPE modalities and KIX integration through a unified communication strategy

There is missing clarity (by definition and by communication) with respect to the different instruments and engagements being deployed through GPE in and with its partner countries.

⇒ **Design and implementation one GPE communication strategy (overall) in which KIX is clearly embedded**. Such an overall strategy includes the development of clear, accessible communication explaining the full suite of GPE instruments and engagements and would include how KIX fits and connects within the broader GPE offering.

⇒ **Streamline the information and communication** to allow KIX's country representatives as well as national stakeholders[84] and GPE's Local Education Groups (LEGs) to **understand** the activities, know how to **access** the different entry points into the GPE architecture and **identify** (joined) potential. This includes clarifying and highlighting the roles of the KIX components (Hubs and research projects) within the GPE architecture (see recommendation 2 and 3).

2. Clarify positioning and mandates of Regional Learning Partners (RLPs) within the broader GPE architecture to ensure support for systematic reforms in partner countries.

There is ambiguity around how RLPs complement, contribute and inform different GPE country processes (such as grants and compacts) and which roles RLPs have in interacting with Local Education Groups (LEGs). While the RLPs do not have the capacity to interact with the numerous LEGs in each country of their region, much uncertainty was voiced toward the expectations and structure of engaging with different parts of the GPE architecture (e.g. engagement via RLPs, via country representative or national stakeholders).

⇒ **Clear articulation of RLP's positioning and expectations** enhance coordination and ensure complementarity. The expectations must be tailored to fit the specific needs, demands, and capabilities of each context (varying capacities and contexts of different countries, regions, and RLPs) ensuring that they are realistic and achievable.

⇒ The **role of RLPs towards Local Education Groups (LEGs)** should be clarified (e.g. systematic coordinating of engagement via country representative or national stakeholders versus ad-hoc engagement when considered necessary/suitable).

3. Clarify the positioning of applied research projects within GPE's country-level processes.

There is currently a lack of clarity on how applied research projects (and the outputs/knowledge generated) is, can and should be used for and within GPE's country-level processes. While some promising practices are emerging in certain regions and Hubs, these efforts are still inconsistent and underdeveloped. IDRC, GPE, and the Hubs are beginning to address this challenge through new formats and more regular engagement, but further steps are needed to ensure the research is systematically applied and recognized as a strategic input into national reform processes.

[84] Both groups consisting of representatives from government, the education or research sector, NGOs, the private sector and civil society.

⇒ Position applied research projects (their outputs and knowledge generated) as policy-relevant evidence that can inform key GPE processes such as education sector planning, GPE compact development and national monitoring and evaluation frameworks (as is relevant).

⇒ Promote awareness and use of KIX applied research projects within Local Education Groups (LEGs) and other country level coordination mechanisms, ensuring stakeholders understand their value in developing compacts and informing reforms (see also recommendation 6 on an overarching dissemination strategy and centralized repository).

4. Deepen the integration of intersectional GESI approaches throughout the program life cycle.

Although gender considerations were well covered in KIX, broader aspects of inclusion - such as addressing the needs of children with disabilities or those from marginalized ethnic groups - received less attention.

⇒ Develop and implement **comprehensive strategies to address all elements of GESI**, approaching this intersectionally, contextually, and considering how different forms of marginalization overlap.

⇒ **Clearly define and communicate expectations, goals and benchmarks for inclusion from the outset.** Embed these in the design, implementation and monitoring processes of KIX activities. Tailor inclusion targets and expected performance ranges to reflect the specific contexts and capacities of each country and region. Ensure these expectations are transparent (see recommendation 9 on monitoring and adaptive learning).

5. Establish a more integrated and adaptive governance model to steer KIX strategically and sustainably

As KIX and its structures grow and adapt, there is a need to steer the evolution of its governance. This shift involves moving away from a project-centric approach towards a more overarching stewardship of the system. Evidence suggests that adaptive management, which recognizes regional differences and balances grant management, reporting, and strategic development, is essential for success.

⇒ Create a **new governance model** that is adaptable and can evolve with the KIX's developments and needs. This framework should support the transition from project delivery to system stewardship. System stewardship involves guiding and nurturing the system as a whole, rather than simply managing individual projects or components. It requires building capacity for shared leadership, fostering collaboration among diverse stakeholders, and maintaining a focus on learning and continuous improvement. The governance framework should therefore embed **adaptive management practices** that enable timely adjustments in response to evolving contexts, shifting priorities, or lessons learned through implementation. This ensures the initiative remains relevant, resilient, and aligned with its overarching goals.

⇒ Ensure that the governance model **balances the operational aspects (such as grant management and reporting) with strategic development goals**.[85] This balance is crucial for maintaining accountability while fostering innovation and growth.

4.2 Recommendations for the short-/ medium-term development of KIX

6. Design and implement a structured coordination mechanism between the two main KIX components (Hubs and research projects) to minimize fragmentation.

RLPs are effective at knowledge exchange and applied research projects at knowledge generation. However, they remain insufficiently connected and the generated knowledge needs to be further integrated into policy dialogue and country-level decision-making. Moreover, the knowledge generated is often dispersed and lacks a coherent dissemination strategy, which hinders its effective utilization.[86] *Also, while the* integration of RLPs, country representatives and *research projects is anticipated*[87]*, the evaluation evidence indicates that the different roles and involvement in this process can be unclear*[88] *and needs enhancement to ensure mutual benefits and synergies.*

⇒ Create a **regular coordination structure between research projects, RLPs and country representatives**[89] which supports the alignment of themes, timelines and learnings, the sharing of findings and insights and identification of further opportunities for collaboration. Examples could include structured exchanges along the complete research/project cycle, including systematic reflections on research findings to ensure alignment with emerging policy priorities or to share. Structured exchanges on capacity strengthening activities/learnings could also be valuable, even though the capacity strengthening efforts of projects and Hubs differ significantly.[90] Enhancing these connections will increase **relevance and ownership** and promote mutual reinforcement of objectives as well as more effective knowledge sharing and use.

⇒ **Define the role of RLPs as evidence brokers** in accordance with GPE decisions (see recommendation 2) and consider adjusting resources accordingly. This should also include the consideration of what is expected of country representatives and national stakeholders and how the RLPs refer to and interact with them.

---

[85] Other aspects might include, but are not limited to, institutionalizing joint planning and learning mechanisms and aligning MEL to include indicators on collaboration and responsiveness.

[86] While KIX partners have dissemination practices in place (the Hubs for instance newsletters, the KIX implementation team the KIX bulletin, presentation of synthesis reports) and developed not only primary but also secondary knowledge products , stakeholders (country representatives, but also research grantees) have reported challenges in accessing a comprehensive overview of knowledge generated by KIX due to different platforms being available (GPE KIX Website, Hub repositories etc.).

[87] Hubs and country representatives are involved in setting research agendas that inform calls for proposals. Also, research projects are asked to include letters of intent to their proposals.

[88] Especially country representatives voiced concern about not being included in or informed about the research project processes.

[89] All types of country representatives are relevant here (coming from academia, research, civil society or government). However, government stakeholders are particularly relevant, as they are the ones to transfer research results into policy decisions.

[90] While capacity strengthening efforts of projects are highly focused, Hubs have a broader scope. Nevertheless, informing about and inviting each other to capacities building activities (e.g. training, peer learning, mentoring) can lead to mutual learning (e.g. Hubs can leverage project expertise for tailored capacity building).

⇒ **Strategically align knowledge dissemination efforts across all components and stakeholders.** Ensure active communication on dissemination by clearly outlining available resources and how to access them. Additionally, enhance coherence and coordination by unifying the various dispersed knowledge products into a coherent knowledge offer. This unified approach should feed into cross-program learning and cross-practice uptake, supported by **one dedicated platform**.

7. Further enhance the cross-Hub learning mechanisms.

Hubs operate independently – a reflection of their diverse regional contexts and mandates – they face many common challenges and work on overlapping themes. The analysis shows alongside existing opportunities for learning and exchange,[91] additional value could be gained by strengthening mechanisms that facilitate voluntary and flexible cross-Hub learning, collaboration and sharing of practices.

⇒ Hubs should **meet more regularly and in a more formalized manner** with a focus on areas that need improvement like responsiveness to country needs, capacity building, GESI integration, evidence mobilization, and scaling approaches, fostering cross-regional learning. The KIX implementation team should take a leading role in this and ensure that good practices are adopted in all Hubs and synergies are utilized. Recommendation 5 on system stewardship and recommendation 2 on more clarity on expectations for RLPs will contribute to the improvement of harmonization and efficiency.

8. Institutionalize the Country Support Mechanism (CSM) as a core part of the Hub offering.

The CSM is highly valued in pilot implementations, with Hubs already integrating it into their activities. However, it is not yet sufficiently known.

⇒ Hubs should **better integrate CSM into their core activities**, proactively promote it to country representatives, and align it with ongoing GPE processes such as partnership compacts.

⇒ Institutionalizing the CSM will enhance feedback loops and amplify the voices of participating countries. This mechanism can be of **particular value for fragile countries**, offering an opportunity to strengthen KIX support and address their unique challenges.

9. Simplify and enhance the Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) system to emphasize learning and adaptive management.

While IDRC's grant management is well-regarded and there has been work done on the Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) framework based on the MTR recommendations (2022), there is still room for further simplification of the system. There is an opportunity to increase understanding of KIX's reach relevance and influence on policy and capacity.

⇒ Shift MEL emphasis towards **adaptive learning**, allowing Hubs and research projects to capture, reflect on, and act upon emerging lessons in real time, including lessons related to GESI integration (e.g. by developing concrete action points annually based on outcome cases). This is directly **in line with the new governance model of strategic stewardship**

[91] RLPs meet once a quarter for exchange.

(recommendation 5), focusing on rationalizing and enhancing the MEL system while also monitoring the new governance setup.

⇒ An adapted MEL system would be able to **take into account the recommendations from this evaluation and support strengthened tracking** of contributions to country level reform, GESI (see Box below), cross-Hub learning, coordination and sustainability.

GESI-related Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning

Research projects and Hubs already demonstrate that they address gender equality and social inclusion from research design to policy recommendations and track GESI-related outcomes. However, the quality of reporting is varying and for grantees the expectations by IDRC/ GPE remain unclear (e.g. for regional contexts that are hostile to GESI-topics or for operations generally). ⇒ Require applied research projects and Hubs to report more rigorously about GESI considerations in project design and results. This could be enhanced by the KIX team giving clearer and transparent guidance on when which categories and dimensions of GESI relation apply where (differentiated by GESI as a research/ policy topic and GESI considered in operations, by gender and other inclusion dimensions) and more rigorous feedback on reporting. As highlighted in recommendation 4, especially the different aspects of intersectionality (and expectations regarding those) should be considered.

10. Develop clear sustainability strategies for both Hubs and research projects and further support follow-up funding for promising innovations.

As the KIX program is progressing, both, KIX Hubs and research projects should concentrate on the sustainability of their activities.

⇒ Sustainability strategies for **Hubs** should include plans for fostering long-term networks and CoPs by supporting the formation new or strengthening of existing regional and thematic knowledge networks that persist beyond KIX, including GESI-focused learning communities. Hubs could also embed capacity strengthening within national systems and institutions, encouraging local ownership and long-term sustainability. Promote collaboration between KIX Hubs and other education programs (e.g., LAI, Schools2030) to enhance synergies and ensure sustained use of evidence and innovations. Encouraging local stakeholders to take ownership of projects can enhance the sustainability of outcomes.

⇒ For **applied research projects** sustainability strategies should also include efforts to find other funding opportunities or national support for technical support and strategic policy engagement assistance if innovations identified are promising for further scaling.[92]

⇒ To make sure that sustainability strategies are implemented, and good practices are identified, **tracking of long-term policy influence and system change** should be enhanced by introducing light-touch follow-up evaluations (1-3 years after project completion) to track whether project/ Hub results are sustained, adapted, or scaled within national systems to ensure recalibration is still possible during program implementation.

[92] KIX has already supported such cases in the past via continuity grants and should continue with this approach if strong potential for scale and lack of funding is identified.

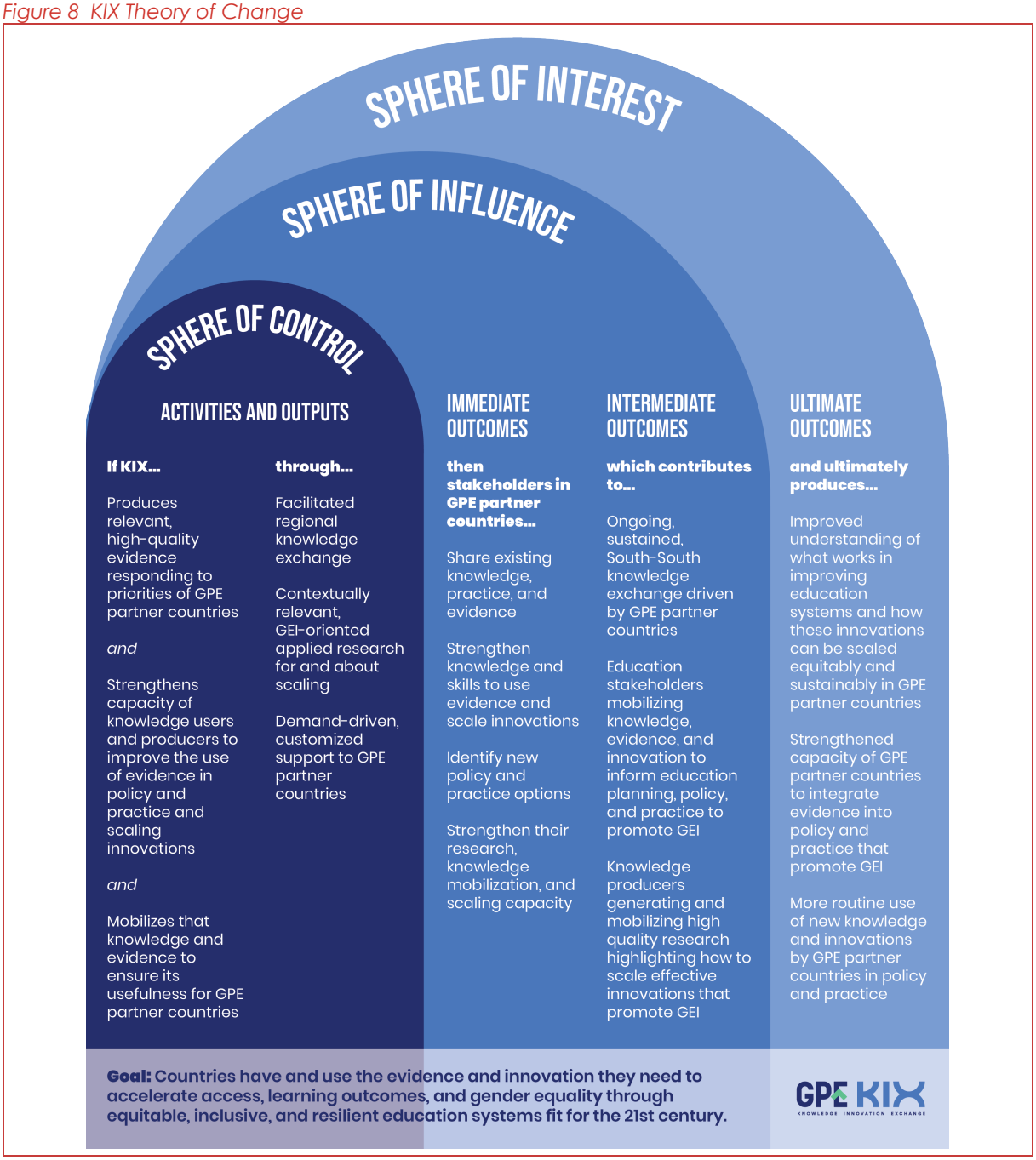
Appendix A Evaluation Matrix

	#	Evaluation question (finalised Version)	Main Areas of Enquiry	Criteria and standards for answering the evaluation question	Data & Documents	Interviews & FGs	Outcome Cases	Online Survey
Effectiveness	1a	Is KIX **progressing towards its overall objective**, i.e., supporting partner countries to have and use the **evidence** and **innovation** they need to accelerate access, learning outcomes, and gender equality through equitable, inclusive, and modern resilient education systems?	A. Evidence Generation and Use: • Quality, relevance, and accessibility of the evidence generated • Practical application of this evidence in policymaking and educational reforms • Capacity of stakeholders to use evidence in a meaningful way B. Innovation in Education: • Introduction of new or improved educational tools, methodologies, and technologies • Adoption and Scaling of Innovations in different contexts	High: Evidence demonstrates substantial progress towards KIX's objectives, with stakeholders in a significant number of partner countries actively using evidence and innovations to address educational challenges. There is clear evidence of improved access, learning outcomes, or gender equality in many contexts, with consideration of country-specific limitations. Moderate: Evidence shows progress towards KIX's objectives in some partner countries, with noticeable but partial adoption of evidence and innovations. While uptake varies due to contextual and institutional challenges, there is progress in specific areas such as access, learning outcomes, or gender equality, though scaling may be limited. Low: Limited progress is observed in achieving KIX's objectives, with minimal evidence of stakeholders using innovations or evidence in partner countries. In most cases, uptake is constrained by contextual, political, or institutional factors.				
Effectiveness	1b	How well are the **interlinkages** between hubs and the research portfolio working together and driving the objectives of KIX?	A. Collaboration and Synergy Between Hubs and Research Portfolio • Understanding of Roles • Interaction and Coordination • Knowledge Exchange B. Impact of Interlinkages on driving KIX Objectives • Influence of Research on Hub Activities • Integration of Research into Policy and Practice	High: Clear evidence of strategic interaction and synergy between hubs and the research portfolio, with hubs informing applied research and research outputs contributing effectively to hub activities. Knowledge exchange is robust and adaptable, demonstrating alignment with KIX's objectives while recognizing diverse contexts. This strategic connection supports uptake and application of evidence in areas where conditions are conducive. Moderate: Evidence of strategic, though less consistent, interaction between hubs and the research portfolio. Some mutual influence is observed, but engagement varies based on specific country contexts and stages of project implementation. Research outputs contribute to hub activities in select areas, although broader uptake may be constrained by local challenges or limited alignment in certain regions. Low: Minimal evidence of strategic interaction between hubs and the research portfolio, with limited contribution of research outputs to hub activities. Interlinkages are weak or infrequent, and contextual or institutional barriers inhibit the effective integration of evidence into hub activities, limiting the achievement of KIX's objectives in most contexts.				
Efficiency	2	How does KIX align with, and add value to, the broader evidence-based dialogue and knowledge exchange architecture (globally, regionally and at country level)?						
Relevance	3a	How well does KIX **respond** (and has it been able to **adapt** its approach) to **countries' needs** for evidence, knowledge mobilization and capacity strengthening?	A. Relevance/Appropriateness of Evidence, Knowledge Mobilization, and Capacity Strengthening • Relevance of Evidence Provided • Appropriateness of Knowledge Mobilization Strategies • Appropriateness of Capacity Strengthening Initiatives B. Tailoring/Adaptation of Evidence, Knowledge Mobilization, and Capacity Strengthening • Adaptation of Evidence Generation • Flexibility of Knowledge Mobilization Strategies • Tailoring of Capacity Strengthening Efforts	High: KIX activities are highly relevant and responsive to most partner countries' needs, with strong evidence of capacity strengthening and knowledge mobilization that addresses specific country priorities. KIX demonstrates flexibility in adapting to evolving needs, including in complex political or institutional contexts, effectively supporting diverse educational goals across various regions. Moderate: KIX responds to some country needs, but has missed important opportunities to integrate its activities or adapt to evolving needs in certain contexts. There is some evidence of capacity building and knowledge mobilization that aligns with country priorities, but gaps remain in effectively reaching or supporting certain countries where contextual challenges are significant. Low: KIX is not sufficiently responsive to the needs of partner countries, with limited evidence of capacity building, knowledge mobilization, or adaptation to specific country contexts. The relevance of its activities is questioned by stakeholders, and there is minimal alignment with local priorities or responsiveness to shifting political or institutional landscapes.				

	#	Evaluation question (finalised Version)	Main Areas of Enquiry	Criteria and standards for answering the evaluation question	Data & Documents	Interviews & FGs	Outcome Cases	Online Survey
Relevance	3b	To what extent is KIX positioned to contribute to the **IDRC's strategy 2030** as well as the **GPE 2030 strategy** and **operating model**?	A. Positioning to Contribute to IDRC's Strategy 2030 • Alignment with IDRC's Strategic Goals and Global Priorities • Capacity to Support IDRC's Long-Term Objectives B. Positioning to Contribute to GPE's 2030 Strategy and Operating Model • Alignment with GPE's Strategic Goals and Cross-Cutting Themes • Integration into GPE's Operating Model • Adaptability to GPE's Evolving Strategy	High: KIX is well-positioned to contribute to both IDRC's Strategy 2030 and the emerging themes and strategic direction of GPE's 2030 strategy, with strong evidence of alignment and the capacity to support anticipated long-term objectives. Moderate: KIX is partially aligned with IDRC's Strategy 2030 and shows some responsiveness to the emerging direction of GPE's evolving strategy, but its contribution is not fully realized. Low: KIX's position is weak or unclear in terms of its ability to contribute to IDRC's Strategy 2030 and the anticipated themes of GPE's 2030 strategy.				
Efficiency (internal coherence)	4	How well have KIX partners (GPE Secretariat, grant agent, regional learning partners and research grantees) implemented **processes for efficient, timely and responsive grant management, planning, reporting, and program implementation**?	A. GPE Secretariat: Coordination, Oversight, and Responsiveness B. Grant Agent IDRC: Grant Management and Monitoring Efficiency C. Regional Learning Partners: Efficiency in Program Implementation and Reporting D. Research Grantees: Efficiency in Research and Reporting	High: KIX partners have implemented efficient and timely processes, with clear evidence of responsive grant management, planning, and program implementation. Reports and financial processes are well-coordinated and transparent. Moderate: Grant management and implementation processes are generally in place but with some inefficiencies or delays. Reporting is timely but could be improved in quality or detail. Low: Significant inefficiencies or delays in grant management and implementation. Reporting is inadequate, and there are major gaps in coordination between partners.				
Sustainability	5	How are the immediate outcomes **sustained** and how has KIX contributed to that?	A. Sustainability of Stakeholder Participation and Knowledge Sharing (incl. Mechnisms)	High: Strong evidence that stakeholders from GPE partner countries are actively participating in hub activities and consistently sustaining knowledge production and sharing. Mechanisms are firmly in place to support ongoing engagement, with clear contributions to governance and agenda-setting. KIX's role in fostering a supportive environment for continuous participation and knowledge sharing is evident and effective. Moderate: Stakeholders continue to participate in hub activities and engage in knowledge-sharing to some extent, but participation or knowledge production may be inconsistent. Mechanisms exist to support engagement, but they may not be fully effective or universally applied. KIX has contributed to sustaining participation, but additional support is needed to ensure continuous engagement and knowledge-sharing. Low: Limited evidence of ongoing stakeholder participation in hub activities or knowledge-sharing. Mechanisms to support engagement are minimal or ineffective, resulting in sporadic or limited contributions to governance and agenda-setting. KIX's role in promoting sustained participation and knowledge-sharing appears minimal, with little evidence of long-term impact.				

Appendix B KIX Theory of Change

Figure 8 KIX Theory of Change



KIX ToC (2.0)

Appendix C Sources

C.1 List of documents and secondary data

Table 8 Documents and data analyzed

Type of Document	Document
KIX proposal documents	• Original KIX 'market' analysis (slide deck) • KIX original proposal • KIX extension proposal
General KIX background documents	• KIX theory of change and results framework: Summary of changes • Country support mechanism guidelines • Inter-Hub meeting on the country support mechanism • KIX contributions to GPE's operating model • KIX contributions to GPE partner countries' priorities • Concept note interlinkage KIX Hubs and research • 2024 Evaluation KIX Program Management
GPE documents	• GPE Annual Report 2023 • SIC-2018-07 DOC 03- KIX-Design Blueprint • GPE 2030 strategy • GPE 2025 strategic plan • Potential linkages between KIX and EOL • GPE Results Report 2020 • GPE Results Report 2021 • GPE Results Report 2022 • GPE Results Report 2023 • GPE Annual Report 2021 • GPE Annual Report 2022
KIX strategies	• Connecting projects same cohort • KIX Annual Workplan 2024 • KIX comms and outreach strategy • Scoping study_ToR_KIX
Reviews of KIX	• External comparator analysis • What does the evidence about evidence uptake in education tell us April 2024 FINAL (1) • Phase 1 report of the KIX applied research evaluation • Phase 2 report of the KIX applied research evaluation • IDRC applied research evaluation management response • KIX 2022 mid-term evaluation report • IDRC MTE management response • GPE MTE Management response • KIX MTE status update/GPE MOPAN assessment information • KIX review 2024 - final report
KIX Reporting and Monitoring	• Analysis of GESI MEL data • KIX annual MEL report applied research 2021-2022 • KIX Annual Report 2023-2024 • KIX Knowledge Synthesis Report_Gender Equality in and Through Education • KIX Knowledge Synthesis Report_Data Systems and Data Use (Draft) • KIX Knowledge Synthesis Report_Early Learning • KIX Knowledge Synthesis Report_Out-of-School Children • KIX Knowledge Synthesis Report_Teacher Professional Development • KIX Annual Report 2019-2020 • KIX Annual Report 2020-2021 • KIX Annual Report 2021-2022 • KIX Annual Report 2022-2023 • EMAP Y4 Annual Evaluation Survey Results • Africa 19 Annual Evaluation Survey Results ("pulse survey 2024") • KIX EMAP Hub April 2023-March 2024 report • KIX Africa 19 Hub April 2023- March 2024 report • KIX Africa 21 Hub October 2023-March 2024 report • KIX LAC Hub May 2023-April 2024 report • ROSIE Report 2024

	• ROSIE proposal
Further reports	• Strategic Review: Improving the Use of Evidence for Education Policy, Planning and Implementation • Chapter 6_Lessons Learned about Promoting Knowledge Production
IDRC Strategy	• IDRC strategy 2030
Further background documents	• KIX 2.0 calls for applied research projects • Announcements of newly funded research projects as part of KIX 2.0 calls • Annual country representatives pulse survey • Evaluation at IDRC • GPE evaluation policy • KIX monitoring data navigation tips • KIX Africa 19 Hub costed extension proposal • KIX Africa 21 Hub costed extension proposal • KIX Africa 21 Workplan • KIX Africa19 Hub Draft Workplan • KIX EMAP Hub costed extension proposal • KIX EMAP Hub Draft Workplan • KIX LAC Hub costed extension proposal • KIX LAC Hub Workplan • KIX 1.0 theory of change • KIX 2.0 theory of change • KIX 1.0 results framework • KIX 2.0 results framework • 3 KIX results framework_EN • KIX impact pathway_EN • KIX portfolio (master spreadsheet 2020-2027) • Article: 3 outcomes of evidence co-creation • Article: UNICEF co-creation research • Blog series on knowledge mobilization • Article: It's past time to fix the broken international architecture for education • Article: The pathway to progress on SDG 4 requires the global education architecture to focus on foundational learning and to hold ourselves accountable for achieving it • GPE Partnership Compact Guidelines, 2024 • UNICEF, MICS – EAGLE, 2021: https://data.unicef.org/resources/mics-education-analysis-for-global-learning-and-equity/

Appendix D Data collection tools

D.1 Interview guides

The interviews are designed as semi-standardized interviews. The guidelines served as a reference point for the topics to be covered, but individual priorities could also be set. The interview results are anonymized and treated confidentially and are included in the evaluation report in aggregated form.

D.1.1 Interview guide for country representatives

I. Introduction

- Introduction of interviewer & Technopolis
- Introduction of the interview participants: Since when and how have you been in contact with KIX?
- Purpose of the interview and its role in evaluating KIX

II. KIX's Contributions to your Country

- What concrete **added value** do KIX activities have for your work? Has this changed over time? (prompt: competency development, gaining new knowledge, network, changes in education policy or practice?)
- What **KIX activities** were relevant here (e.g. webinars, workshops, conferences etc.)? (prompt: ask specifically for examples that contribute to GESI if not mentioned)
- Can you provide specific **examples** where evidence or innovations from KIX Hub activities have influenced your competencies/ knowledge, educational policy or practice in your country?
- **Network building with other countries:** Have you had contact with **education stakeholders from other countries** before you participated in KIX or have you gained new contacts? What is the added value of these contacts for you? Can you provide examples in which you/ your country shared knowledge and experiences that benefitted educational stakeholders from other countries?
- **Network building among sectors:**
  - For interviewees from ministries: Has your **connection** to researchers or civil society stakeholders in the education sector changed thanks to KIX?
  - For interviewees from civil society/ researchers: Has your **connection** to governmental stakeholders changed thanks to KIX?
- **Relevance of topics:** Are there examples of evidence or innovations from KIX Hub activities that were **particularly relevant** for your organization/ ministry? Did you come across KIX activities that promoted innovations/ evidence that was **less applicable to your country's context**? What factors made them more or less suitable?[93]
- What would be different if KIX activities would not be available to you?

[93] This refinement acknowledges that not all ideas will be relevant to every context and allows respondents to discuss both the applicability and challenges of transferring evidence and innovations.

- How well does KIX respond to the specific **needs of your country** in terms of **topics**?
  - (How) Has KIX **adapted** its approach to better meet your (ministry's/ organization's) evolving needs?
  - Are there **specific areas** where KIX could better support your ministry or adapt to meet emerging needs? (prompt: ask specifically for GESI if not mentioned)
  - Are there specific **formats/ resources/ funding schemes** that you would like to see KIX providing to you? Which existing formats are particularly relevant to you? (prompt: e.g. Learning Cycles, conferences, uptake forums, webinars, KIX Hub research, podcasts, videos, publications etc.)

III. KIX Hubs and KIX research projects

Background: The KIX program consists of two core components: the KIX Hubs on the one hand (providing space for exchange and training) and KIX applied research projects (regional researchers conducting research projects on particular topics in the countries).

- Do you have **contact with/ knowledge of KIX applied research projects** (in your region)?
- Have you observed if and how well the **KIX Hubs and research projects** are working together in your country to drive educational reforms and support evidence-based decision-making in your country?[94]
  - Are the innovations and knowledge shared through the Hubs being backed by research outputs?
  - Can you provide an example of how research from KIX projects has directly supported the Hubs' work or vice versa in shaping policies or practices?[95]
  - What concrete suggestions do you have for improving the interconnection between KIX Hubs and research projects in your country?
- How do you see KIX contributing to your country's education system in the **future**?
- Are there **other support mechanisms/ funding programs** (comparator programs) for the development of and research on education policy in your country or region available to you? (like UNESCO etc.) If yes, how do they differ from KIX? Do they complement KIX?

IV. Coordination and Implementation

- How **effective** (regarding timeliness and responsiveness) do you find the support and processes provided by KIX in managing projects and implementing programs in your country/ coordinating with your ministry/ organization?
  - Have there been any challenges in the **timeliness or responsiveness** of KIX's activities (the Hubs) that affected your work? Possibly regarding the coordination between the Hubs and research projects?
  - Do you have suggestions what could be improved?

[95] Experienced interviewers will tailor the questions based on the interview partner's expertise and familiarity with the topics. Questions may be adjusted or skipped if the interview partner is unable to provide relevant information.

- How would you describe the communication and coordination between your ministry/ organization and the KIX Hub(s)? Do you find it effective?[96]

V. Sustainability

- How **sustainable** are the discussed outcomes generated through KIX Hubs and research projects in your country?
  - Is the cooperation/ exchange with other stakeholders also maintained beyond Hub activities?
  - Do you have plans to scale up or disseminate the knowledge gained in your ministry?
  - Do you believe that the capacity and knowledge gained will continue to be applied over time? How?
- **How do you ensure** that research, innovations or policies introduced through KIX continue to be used? (prompt: e.g. workshops in the ministry)

VI. Wrap-up & Open Questions / Discussion Points

- Is there anything else you would like to share with us?
- Have you received the **online survey for this evaluation**? If yes, please fill it out! It will complement this interview and is important for the evaluation. If not, we will send you the link after this interview.

[96] This refinement focuses on the communication and coordination between the ministry and the KIX Hub(s), as suggested, making it more relevant to the country representatives' direct experience.

D.1.2 Interview guide for RLPs

I. Introduction

- Introduction of Technopolis
- Purpose of the interview and its role in evaluating KIX
- Introduction of the interview participants

II. KIX's progress towards its overall objective

- In your opinion, how well is KIX progressing toward its overall objective of **supporting the GPE countries of your region in using evidence and innovation to address educational challenges**?
- **Evidence Generation & Use, Scaling of Innovations**: Can you provide specific examples where evidence (on innovations) from KIX Hub activities and resources has influenced the countries' (1) competences/knowledge, (2) educational policy/strategies/reforms or (3) practices?
  - What KIX activities were relevant here (e.g. webinars, workshops, conferences etc.)? (prompt: ask specifically for examples that contribute to GESI if not mentioned)
  - What is the quality, relevance and accessibility of the KIX evidence for national stakeholders?
  - Do you consider the different stakeholders (please differentiate if possible) capable of using the evidence?
  - (How) Have innovations been adopted and scaled?
- Can you provide examples in which countries shared knowledge and experiences that benefitted educational stakeholders from other countries?
- Are there examples of topics, evidence, innovations or exchange activities that were particularly relevant or less applicable to your countries' contexts? What factors made them more or less suitable?[97]
- What would be different if KIX activities were not available to the countries?

III. KIX's response to country needs (10 minutes)

- How do you as KIX Hub (and KIX overall) collect information on the specific **needs of the different countries** regarding evidence, knowledge mobilization, and capacity strengthening?
- (How) Have you as KIX Hub (and KIX overall) **adapted** to better meet new/ evolving needs and to different countries? Are there specific areas where KIX could better support the countries or adapt to meet emerging needs? (prompt: ask specifically for GESI if not mentioned)
- **CSM**:
  - What does the demand for the CSM look like so far?
  - Could you please explain (with examples) how the process works?

[97] This refinement acknowledges that not all ideas will be relevant to every context and allows respondents to discuss both the applicability and challenges of transferring evidence and innovations.

- What kind of results could be achieved so far?

IV. Collaboration between Hubs and Research Portfolio

- How would you describe the **different roles** of the **KIX Hubs and applied research projects** (and their understanding of each other / their roles)?
- How (well) are the **KIX Hubs and applied research projects** working together in the respective countries to drive educational reforms and support evidence-based decision-making in your ministry?
  - Do you also **give input to applied research projects** on national needs?
- Can you provide an **example of how research from KIX projects** has directly supported the Hubs' work or vice versa in shaping policies or practices?
  - **Are country representatives aware** of the research projects and the resources (that you share) by research projects?
  - If there are differences between countries regarding awareness – what factors play a role here?
- Are the innovations and knowledge shared through the Hubs being backed by research outputs?
- What **concrete suggestions** do you have for improving the interconnection between KIX Hubs and research projects in the countries?

V. Efficiency

- How effective do you consider the different KIX partners (GPE Secretariat, IDRC, Learning Partners) in **coordinating** with each other? And with the different ministries and other stakeholders at the national/local level? (prompt: ask for each partner separately, if difficult to answer)
- As an RLP, what are your strengths and challenges in program implementation and reporting?

VI. Strategic Alignment

- Are you aware of the GPE 2030 strategy (process) or the IDRC 2030 strategy? How do these align with your/ KIX activities and objectives?

VII. Sustainability

- How sustainable do you consider stakeholder participation from the countries of your Hub?
- What mechanisms are in place to support ongoing engagement? Do these mechanisms have a clear contribution to governance and agenda setting?
- Do you have insights into the long-term effects of KIX Hub participation of country reps? Do they disseminate knowledge, scale up solutions etc.?

VIII. Wrap-up & Open Questions / Discussion Points

- Is there anything else you would like to share with us?

D.1.3 Interview guide for applied research projects

Prompt for interviewers (before the interview):

As preparation for the interview, please look at the latest report and / or the website of the project (you can find it in this Excel), to have an overview of the project's research question, activities, and progress (involved institutions, countries, target groups).

I. Introduction

- Introduction of Technopolis and the interview participants
  - Please introduce yourself, including your role in the research project and since when you are involved with KIX
- Purpose of the interview and its role in evaluating KIX

II. KIX's progress towards its overall objective: project's contribution

- How have you identified the needs of the country(ies) you are working with? How has your project contributed to addressing national education priorities in the country(ies) of focus? What would be different if KIX activities were not available to the countries?
- Has (or will) the project's evidence or innovation already been **used** by the target groups? In what way? (prompt: by informing education policies, practices, and reforms etc.) What enables or impedes the uptake of evidence or innovation?
- How has your project improved **gender equality and social inclusion**? What **support** has KIX provided to help you focus on these areas?
- Has (or will) your project contribute(d) to **strengthening the capacity** of the **target groups** to generate, interpret, and apply educational evidence?
- Has it contributed to **strengthening** your **organization's capacities/competencies or contacts (e.g. relations with governments)**? In what way?
- Has (or will) your project support(ed) stakeholders in **scaling innovations**? How?
- Which **challenges** have you faced generally during **project implementation**? What worked particularly well? (prompt: pay particular attention to regional contextual factors)
  - If further explanation of question needed: Are there examples of aspects of the project that were particularly relevant or less applicable to your target groups/ country/ies? What factors make them more or less suitable?

III. Coordination and efficiency

- Ask this only if the interview partners are referring to the IDRC/ GPE strategy themselves: Are you aware of the GPE 2030 strategy (process) or the IDRC 2030 strategy? How do these align with your project and the project's objectives? (prompt: explain key strategic objectives if necessary)
- Could you share any insights or experiences regarding the level of **communication**, **timeliness**, or **responsiveness** in your interactions with IDRC?
- How useful do you find their support in the application process, grant management process, ROSIE (if applicable), communications support, MEL?
- Have you also had to do with **GPE** in the framework of your project? If so, in what instances, how useful was this to you?

- Are you aware of the **KIX Hub(s) in your region(s)**?
  - If yes: Do you have contact with the KIX Hub(s)?
  - If yes: How have you established initial connections? How are you collaborating? Prompt: Are you participating in Hub events, using them for dissemination purposes, sharing or receiving information on country needs, establishing contact with country representatives?
    - Can you provide an example of how research from your project has directly supported the Hubs' work or vice versa in shaping policies or practices?
  - If not: Why have you not been in contact/ collaborating, yet? (Prompt: explore if the specific regional context, topic or other factors played a role)
- What **suggestions** do you have for improving the interconnection between KIX Hubs and research projects?

IV. Sustainability

- What do you expect to happen with **project results** and their **impacts** after the project has ended?
  - If capacity developed/ knowledge gained: Do you believe that the capacity and knowledge gained will continue to be applied over time? How?
  - If scaling approaches are part of the project: Do you have indications for successful scaling? Are project relevant stakeholders interested in further using the innovation?
- How is a continued utilization of the results or engagement of the target groups ensured?
- How do you expect the project will **impact** you/ your organization in the long term?

V. Wrap-up & Open Questions / Discussion Points

- Is there anything else you would like to share with us?
  - If end users were mentioned in the interview before (do not ask if the project has only worked with governmental stakeholders): Have you had contact with end users of education policies in your project (teachers, school representatives etc.)? Could you please recommend 1-2 of them for follow-up interviews?

D.1.4 Interview guide for end users

I. Introduction

- Introduction of interviewer & Technopolis
- Introduction of the interview participants: Since when and how have you been in contact with the KIX applied research project [name]?
- Purpose of the interview and its role in evaluating KIX

II. Involvement in the research project

- How relevant do you find the topic of the project that you have been involved with?
- What other topics are currently relevant in the education sector in your country and should be addressed by research and policy?
- How have you come into contact with the research project? What motivated you to participate, what were your expectations?
- How have you been involved exactly? (e.g. participating in trainings, piloting an innovation, giving feedback to the researchers to refine the methodology/ project design etc.)
- Are you satisfied with the way you were involved (e.g. regarding communication, and coordination)?
- What were the results of the project (for you)?
- What could have been improved in the implementation and presentation of the results?

III. Effect of the Involvement

- What concrete added value has the participation in the project and its results for your work? What aspect of the project was most relevant to you? Please provide examples.
- Were you able to improve skills or knowledge thanks to the project? What kind of skills and how?
- Have you made new contacts (e.g. to researchers, to the government, to other stakeholders) because of the project?
- Has the project contributed to systematic/ structural changes in the education system in your region/ country? What exactly has changed and how?

IV. Outlook

- Do you expect that you will be using the results of the project in the future? What needs to be done to make this possible (by the researchers, the government etc.)? What are the necessary context factors that this will be possible to you?
- How could a program like KIX contribute to your country's education system in the future?
- Is there anything else you would like to share with us?

Thank you very much for your participation!

D.2 Survey questionnaire

#	Question	Question type, answer options
	Basic information	
1.1	Which country do you represent?	Single choice List of all GPE countries (Excel in SharePoint Survey Folder)
1.2	What entity are you representing?	Single choice Government (e.g., Ministry of Education, government-affiliated institution) Academia (e.g., Universities, think tanks, teacher training institute) Civil society (e.g., NGO, teacher association) International Organization (e.g., UNESCO, World Bank) and other agencies (National Educational Councils, specialized age Private sector (e.g., Law firm, Consultancy, philanthropies)
1.3	Have you participated in activities of one of the KIX Hubs (Africa 19, Africa 21, EMAP, LAC) in the last six months?	Single choice Yes, I participated in KIX Hub activities in the last 6 months I have participated in KIX Hub activities in the past, but have not participated more recently
1.4	What is your role in your KIX Hub?	Single choice Formally appointed country representative / national team member Participant of (past) Hub activities
1.5	In which kind of KIX Hub activities have you participated between 2019 and now?	Multiple choice Knowledge sharing webinars Capacity strengthening activities (e.g., Learning Cycles, communities of practice, workshops, etc.) Networking and peer-exchange events (e.g., conferences, symposiums, roundtables, inter-country visits etc.) One-on-one meetings with the KIX Hub team, country consultations, KIX national team meetings National events (e.g., national policy dialogues, National Uptake Forums)
Contribution of KIX to country needs		
2.1.1	To what extent do you feel you have opportunities to communicate your country's (thematic) needs and priorities to the KIX Hub?	Single choice To a great extent To some extent To a moderate extent To a small extent I do not know Not at all
2.1.2	FILTER Cneeds = "Not at all"(1) or "To a small extent" (2) What difficulties have you encountered when communicating your country's needs and priorities? How could the KIX Hub improve in this regard? Please describe. (optional)	Text Box
2.1.3	FILTER Cneeds = "To some extent" (3), "To a moderate extent" (4), To a great extent"(5)" Please describe how exactly you provided input. (optional)	Text Box
2.2	To what extent do you feel you have opportunities to shape or influence Hub activities and formats?	Single choice To a great extent To some extent To a moderate extent To a small extent Not at all I do not know / I am not sure
2.3	How has the KIX Hub reacted to your feedback on topics or formats?	Single choice I do not know whether the KIX Hub has taken my feedback into account

		The KIX Hub adapted its support (e.g. took up a new thematic focus in its offers) The KIX Hub adapted its modes of operations My feedback was taken up by the KIX Hub, but no changes are visible to me
2.4	To what extent are the following topics currently important for your country's education policy (development)?	Array (randomized order) Teacher professional development and recruitment, school leadership Innovative pedagogies Early childhood education Inclusive education (gender equality, equity and inclusion) Digital education/ mobile learning Education for sustainable development Curriculum development, literacy and numeracy, learning assessments Data systems and data use Education governance and financing Education in emergencies Answer options To a great extent To some extent To a moderate extent To a small extent Not at all Cannot answer
2.5.1	To what extent do you feel the Hub has integrated the following aspects of gender equality, equity and inclusion in its activities?	Array Promotion of inclusion and support for children of all genders, and gender-transformative pedagogies Inclusiveness regarding disabilities Inclusiveness regarding socio-economic status, ethnicity and class Prevention of sexual and gender-based violence in school Answer options To a great extent To some extent To a moderate extent To a small extent Not at all Cannot answer
2.5.2	FILTER do not show this question if all options of evgengesi were only responded to with "Not at all" or "Cannot answer" Can you give an example of specific KIX Hub activities that integrated issues of gender equality, equity and / or inclusion? How useful was this to you? (optional)	Text box
2.6.1	How important is the exchange with the following stakeholder types for your work?	Array Researchers from my region/ country Governmental stakeholders from my region / country International researchers Intergovernmental organizations (e.g., the UN, African Union) Civil society from my region/ country International NGOs (e.g., Save the Children) Governmental stakeholders from other regions / countries Civil society from other countries Answer options Very important Rather important Moderately important Rather not important Not important

2.6.2	Have KIX Hub activities contributed to more exchange with the following stakeholder types?	Array Governmental stakeholders from my region / country Researchers from my region/ country international researchers Civil society from my region/ country Intergovernmental organizations (e.g., the UN, African Union) Governmental stakeholders from other regions / countries International NGOs (e.g., Save the Children) Civil society from other countries Answer options Absolutely Rather yes Rather no Not at all Not applicable
2.7	Has your participation in KIX Hub activities improved your competences and knowledge regarding...	Array Skills in knowledge sharing Knowledge of real education policy innovations Skills in relationship building or collaborating with other stakeholders Skills in understanding and handling research and data analysis Knowledge for making informed decisions on scaling innovative initiatives Knowledge on gender, equity and inclusion in the context of education policy Skills in evidence-based policy design Skills in scaling innovative initiatives/ strategic planning for scaling Skills in mainstreaming gender, equity and inclusion in education policy Answer options Improved a lot Improved No effect Not applicable
2.8.1	Has your participation in KIX Hub activities contributed in your country to concrete changes in … Note: By contribution we mean that your participation in KIX Hub activities influenced in some way your work on the following aspects.	Array Implementation efforts Policy design / planning Public agendas or policy priorities Answer options Yes No Cannot assess
2.8.2	FILTER Outc == yes (for any of the items) Could you please provide an example of such a change and how your participation influenced it? (optional)	Text Box
2.9.1	What factors (if any) affected your participation in Hub activities?	Multiple choice Limited collaboration possibilities (time, funding) provided by KIX for exchange Limited time/ resources on my institution's side Limited internet connectivity, technology, and / or electricity None of these factors affected my participation in Hub activities Insufficient fit of topics/ resources to my regional context Not enough participatory approaches Fragile national context COVID Information provided by the Hub are not accessible/ insufficient
2.9.2	What factors (if any) affected your participation in Hub activities?	Text box

2.10	What factors supported your participation in Hub activities/ outcomes of your participation positively? (optional)	Text box
2.11	Can you think of activities or measures that the KIX Hub should additionally implement or that you personally have missed? (optional)	Text box
Coordination and Implementation		
3.1	How effective is KIX in terms of...?	Array Communication Event organization Promoting dialogue Facilitating learning Bringing together relevant stakeholders Responding to country support requests Answer options Very effective Rather effective Moderately effective Rather not effective Not effective I do not know / I am not sure
3.2.1	Do you know of KIX applied research projects that are taking place in your country/ region?	Single choice I have used results of (a) KIX applied research project(s) I support/ am engaged with (a) KIX applied research project(s) I know (a) specific KIX applied research project(s) and its/their content I heard about KIX applied research projects in general I have not heard of KIX applied research projects in my country / region I don't know
3.2.2	FILTER aplres == "I know specific"/ "I have used"/ "I support" How have you come into contact with the research project(s)? Please describe. (optional)	Text field
3.2.3	FILTER aplres == "I support/ am engaged with.." In what ways are you engaged? (optional)	Text field
3.3.1	Have you/ has your country made use of Hub support for particular needs and opportunities in your country? Note: This Hubs support is also called "country support mechanism" or "Rapid Customized Country Support". The country support mechanism is a new offer by KIX Hubs, which was introduced in 2023. In contrast to the other activities by KIX Hubs, which are multi-country initiatives, the country support mechanism provides support to individual countries with demand-driven research and knowledge mobilization assistance tailored to specific policy processes and reform agendas.	Single choice Yes, we are using this offer for country support Yes, we are in the process of using this offer for country support (currently under negotiation/ in conversation/ MoU development) Yes, we have used this offer for country support in the past No I don't know
3.3.2	FILTER suppomec == Yes How have you used or will you use the country support mechanism exactly? Please describe shortly. (optional)	Text box
Sustainability		
4.1	How often have you stayed in contact and followed up on exchanges with other stakeholders beyond the KIX Hub activities?	Single choice Never Rarely Occasionally Frequently

4.2	Do you have plans to share the knowledge gained through KIX with your ministry or organization?	Single choice Definitively Very probably Probably Unlikely Definitively not
4.3	Do you have plans to apply the knowledge gained via KIX Hub activities in your ministry/ organization?	Single choice Definitively Very probably Probably Unlikely Definitively not
Conclusion		
5.1	Do you have any suggestions for further improvements or changes to KIX (Hubs)? (optional)	Text box
5.2	If there is anything else you would like to tell us as part of the evaluation or as feedback on this survey, please use the following text box. (optional)	Text box

D.3 Approach of the AI-supported document analysis

The AI-supported document analysis pursued two objectives. Firstly, it enabled a structured analysis of the extensive qualitative data available to IDRC through outcome cases, allowing for the identification of trends related to the outcomes of KIX (**"mining of outcome cases" and "pattern recognition"**). Secondly, the results of the AI-supported analysis facilitated the systematic selection of outcome cases, which were subsequently examined as part of the **focused inquiries** (see focused inquiries in chapter 3.1).

The documents analyzed using AI were **outcome cases** – short reports (typically half a page in length) prepared by KIX grantees, including RLPs and applied research grantees. These reports describe how grantee activities contributed to changes that correspond with the indicators defined in the KIX results framework. At the time of analysis, a total of 422 outcome cases had been submitted to the evaluators.

To be able to process all 422 cases, the evaluation team made use of the **Technopolis AI Policy Concierge** (AIPC), an internal tool developed by Technopolis' Data Science Unit to customize generative AI capabilities for individual projects and specifically for policy applications. The tool allows to enhance the efficiency, accuracy and systematization of processing large document set. The tool automates topic detection over large quantities of documents regardless of language, complexity or size, explaining such detection and providing sources for its choice. Moreover, it answers project-relevant questions about every single document or summarizes and synthesizes groups of documents solely based on the information they contain, **providing the relevant sources and explaining the reasoning behind each answer, assuring transparency and accountability**.

For the analysis of outcome cases, the evaluation team followed the following steps:

1. First, the team **devised research questions** to support pattern recognition in the outcome cases. These questions aim to identify the actors who experienced change, the activities that contributed to the change, the nature of the changes, the policy areas affected, the competences developed, and the improvements achieved regarding Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI).
2. Next, the AIPC developed categories based on research questions to each case. The identified AIPC patterns were then assessed qualitatively to inductively **develop categories**.
3. In the third step, the **AIPC assigns outcome cases to these categories combined with quality assurance provided by consultants**. This means that all classifications and answers of the AI Policy Concierge are transparent and explainable because the classification outputs are linked with their source text and justification in the AIPC output. This element enabled the qualitative evaluation team to cross-validate and sense-check the results. By having qualitative analysts filter the results, a "human" was kept in the loop and thoroughly explore the synergies between artificial intelligence tools and our thematic policy expertise. Potential biases or "hallucinations" can be controlled this way.
4. The final step is the **qualitative interpretation** of the results and patterns, including cross-occurrence analysis among categories and MEL data.

The result of this approach is a **comprehensive database** that maps all outcome cases and matches them with Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) data. This database facilitates pattern analysis regarding various aspects such as actors, outcome types

(complementing/testing outcome indicators), activities, policy areas, competences, and GESI improvements.

The results of this combined approach of AI-supported categorization and qualitative control by consultants however face **limitations**, as the analysis can only be "as good as" the quality of the data available. Manual analyses show that indeed outcome cases vary regarding their quality. The interviews conducted for the focused inquiries also showed that in some cases the reporting was too ambiguous or exaggerated KIX' impact. This limitation should be considered when looking at the analysis results (see next chapter).

The following table provides the categories and definitions that were developed for each pattern that was considered in the AIPC analysis. They were included in the queries posed to the AIPC.

Table 9 Categories and definitions of patterns analyzed

Pattern	Categories and definitions	Filter
Change Categories shall describe the type of change that occurred as a result of the project activities.	a) Change in attitudes, awareness, and/or perception b) Knowledge and skill development c) Changed relations between stakeholders d) Uptake of collaborative approaches e) Introduction of new teaching content f) Policy changes / uptake at the stage of issue identification and definition / agenda setting (actors have identified an issue that requires political action) g) Policy changes / uptake at the stage of data research and analysis (actors gather and/ or analyze data or improve the system of data research and analysis to have improved evidence that informs policy formulation) h) Policy changes / uptake at the stage of policy formulation (concrete decisions are made about specific measures or priorities for political action and are codified) i) Policy changes / uptake at the stage of policy implementation (new policy measures are implemented in practice or piloted (usually by administrative bodies)) j) Policy changes / uptake at the stage of monitoring and evaluation (the success of new measures is checked and evaluated)	No multiple choice
Policy formats The AIPC first checks if a policy change occurred as a result of KIX activities. If yes, categories are assigned that shall best describe the type of newly developed or updated policies, political strategies, or instruments that the case describes.	a) Changes at the strategic level or reforms (concerning the whole educational sector, like education sector plans or laws) b) Changes at the level of educational programs (concerning a particular aspect in education policy that does not strategically affect the whole education sector) c) New standards d) Uptaking curriculum or training material e) Other Policy Formats (only assigned as a last resort if no other category fits at all)	Multiple choice applicable Two different filters were tested: Filter 1: applies categories only to cases that were assigned to the category "change = h)" Filter 2: applied categories only to cases that were assigned to relevant indicators (from MEL data)
Skills and knowledge types	a) Financial Analysis	Multiple choice applicable

The AIPC first checks if skills were developed or knowledge acquired as a result of KIX activities. If yes, categories are assigned that shall best describe the area in which skills or knowledge were strengthened.	b) Digital Skills c) Evaluation Strategies d) Education Sector Analysis e) Evidence-based policy design f) Understanding and handling research and data analysis g) Planning scaling processes h) Teaching/ pedagogical skills (e.g. on Inclusive Teaching, Reflective Teaching, Student-Centered Pedagogy, Educational Scripting) i) Gender Equity and Social Inclusion j) Knowledge about other education policy innovations k) Other competences (only assigned as a last resort if no other category fits at all)	Two different filters were tested: Filter 1: applies categories only to cases that were assigned to the category "change = b)" Filter 2: applied categories only to cases that were assigned to relevant indicators (from MEL data)
Actor types Categories shall describe best the type actors that have been impacted by and experienced changes as a result of the KIX activities.	a) Ministry of Education Officials b) Other Government Officials c) Researchers/ Research Institutions d) NGOs e) School Principals and Administrators f) School Teachers g) Educational Counsellors h) Local Communities i) Intergovernmental Organizations j) Students k) KIX Hubs l) KIX research grantees m) Other actors (only assigned as a last resort if no other category fits at all)	No multiple choice applicable
GESI The AIPC first checks whether any actions related to GESI were taken within the scope of the KIX-activity described. If yes, categories are assigned that shall best describe the type of actions related to gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) that were taken within the scope of the KIX-activity.	a) Disaggregated Data Collection b) Distribution of Learning Devices c) Professional Development for Remote Teachers d) Gender Representation in Training e) Bias-Free Assessment Development f) Awareness and Stereotype Change g) Inclusive Language and Teaching Strategies h) Digital Equity in Education i) Improvements for Out of School Children j) Gender-transformative pedagogies k) Addressing gender norms in education l) Inclusiveness regarding disabilities m) Inclusiveness regarding socio-economic status, ethnicity and class n) Other GESI action (only assigned as a last resort if no other category fits at all)	Multiple choice applicable
KIX activities Categories shall describe best the KIX activities (i.e. activities that were explicitly undertaken within the scope of the KIX project) that have directly contributed to the changes reported on in the case reports.	*Hub activities* a) Evidence generation/ research results (Hub): case studies and working papers b) Evidence generation/ research results (Hub): podcasts, newsletters, blogposts, videos c) Knowledge exchange: conference, roundtable d) Knowledge exchange: national uptake forums	Multiple choice applicable For outcome cases by Hubs, only Hub activities were applied, for outcome cases by research projects (including ROSIE and

	e) Knowledge exchange: webinars f) Capacity Strengthening: One-on-one meetings with the KIX Hub team g) Capacity Strengthening: Learning Cycle h) Capacity Strengthening: Workshops i) Other KIX activities (only assigned as a last resort if no other category fits at all) *Research project activities* a) Evidence generation / research results (research projects): general findings (e.g. models, recommendations) b) Knowledge exchange: meeting with KIX research grantees c) Capacity Strengthening: Trainings d) Other KIX activities (only assigned as a last resort if no other category fits at all)	observatory), only projects activities were applied.

D.4 Focused Inquiries

The focused inquiries were designed to **contribute to all evaluation questions**, with particular attention to the overarching question on effectiveness. Beyond supporting the general assessment, the focused inquiries aimed to illustrate in greater detail the different impact pathways through which KIX contributes to change. Four specific pathways were examined:

- (1) How KIX supports policymakers in developing skills and knowledge for evidence-based policymaking;
- (2) How KIX contributes to changes in attitudes and relationships among stakeholders;
- (3) How KIX informs policymaking at the level of educational programs;
- (4) How KIX influences policymaking at the strategic level.

For each pathway, **three appropriate outcome cases** were selected in accordance with IDRC and GPE and based on clear selection criteria. The criteria included regional representation, diversity of grant types, actor constellations, and policy areas addressed. The **analysis** combined a review of outcome case documentation with qualitative data collection through focus groups (originally planned) or individual interviews (as implemented in practice) with key stakeholders involved in the selected cases. Finally, a comprehensive **synthesis of the findings** was carried out for each inquiry, contributing both to the overall evaluation and to a deeper understanding of the program's impact mechanisms.

D.5 Methodological limitations

While this evaluation draws on a diverse set of data sources and methods, there are several limitations that may affect the interpretation of findings:

- The survey, although valuable in capturing perspectives across a wide range of stakeholders, is subject to certain constraints. The representativeness of responses may be limited by the number and type of respondents (e.g. an over-representation of government officials), the timing of its administration, and non-response bias. These factors have shaped the overall findings and were considered when interpreting aggregated results.

- The AI-assisted analysis of outcome cases supported the review of a substantial body of qualitative data but also introduced limitations. While AI helped identify themes and patterns efficiently, the tool's ability to capture contextual nuances or the interplay of multiple contributing factors—particularly in complex policy environments—was limited. As such, the AI findings were triangulated with other data sources (and some findings analyzed in more depth via the focused inquiries). Nevertheless, AI data cannot fully reflect the richness of individual experiences or cases.
- In some instances, the interviews faced limitations due to the diverse knowledge backgrounds of interview partners, encompassing varying levels of familiarity with the program itself, and the involved parties. Additionally, logistical challenges arose from interview partners residing in different countries, which introduced complexities related to time zone coordination and language barriers. However, these challenges were mitigated by conducting numerous individual interviews instead of group interviews, thereby enhancing the consistency and depth of the data collected and improving the reliability and validity of the findings.

Recognizing these limitations (and mitigation measures) is important for understanding the scope of the evidence presented, and we have aimed to mitigate their impact through triangulation and transparency in our reporting.

Appendix E Supporting evidence: Further information on KIX

E.1 The Country Support Mechanism

The KIX CSM was developed in 2022 as a response to the feedback from the MTR (2022). It aims at providing direct and rapid responses to national needs for evidence, policy support and capacity strengthening to individual GPE partner countries linked to specific political windows of opportunities. These needs are voiced in form of requests by Ministries of Education (MoE), e.g. for assisting GPE compact processes or short-term implementation research associated with specific policy challenges in the country. Non-eligible interventions are i.e. direct transfers of funds to MoEs or niche projects without links to priority areas (see KIX Country Support Mechanism Guidelines for Hub proposals). The Hubs are processing the requests and are supporting the funded responses/ interventions. Funds (originally CAD 300,000 per Hub) can disburse payments for consultants, service providers and expenses associated with interventions requested by Ministries of Education.

In the EMAP region, the CSM is called "Rapid Customized Country Support" (RCCS). At the time of reporting, the CSM was/is applied or is being considered as a pilot in 12 instances (EMAP: four RCCS conducted, first started in May 2023, last one ended in September 2024. Africa 19: three significant CSM initiatives according to Hub Report 23-24. Africa 21: two options currently being considered according to Hub report 23-24. LAC: three are being initiated according to Hub report 23-24, one of them seems to have been completed and is presented on the website).

E.2 Timeline KIX program

This timeline provides an overview of the development of the key components of the KIX program as well as key changes in the GPE architecture. Its understanding is relevant in order to be able to appropriately interpret the evaluations of the current state of development of KIX and its context.

Year	KIX program	GPE architecture
2019	• April: Launch KIX Phase 1 (2019-2024) - budget $76.8 million • RLPs and global projects selected	
2020	• April: Launch of 12 global grant projects & RLPs begin building KIX Hubs • July: Launch of ROSIE • **CfP:** July-August: 4 regional calls for proposals • November: Start of Covid Observatory	• **Expansion of the partner countries:** 7 new partner countries, total of 76 countries • December: GPE 2025 operating model is approved – based on country-owned partnership compacts
2021	• KIX is funding 36 projects and 4 Hubs in 70 GPE partner countries • March: Completion of KIX Digital platform & first set of regional grant projects begin • June: Second set of regional grant projects begins & call for proposals on early learning in East, West & Southern Africa • 2021-2022: Inception phase of second cohort of 22 regional projects, initiation of work in 38 countries	• January: Partnership compact cohort 1 (pilot) with 6 countries • October: Partnership compact cohort 2 with 14 countries

2022	• **Review/ evaluation:** Midterm Review (MTR), including recommendations on further integration of Hubs and research projects • **Review/ evaluation:** September: External Comparator Analysis • December: Costed extension / KIX phase 2 approved	• **Expansion of the partner countries:** 9 new GPE partner countries • January: Partnership compact cohort 3: 16 countries • July: Partnership compact cohort 4: 10 countries
2023	• KIX has supported 41 applied research grants involving 53 countries and 104 organizations • **CfP:** May: call for proposals on strengthening education data systems and data use • **CfP:** June-August: call for proposals on Knowledge and innovation for achieving gender equality and social inclusion at school • August: KIX regional Hubs are extended to June 2027 • **CSM:** Three CSMs started in EMAP region. • **Review/ evaluation:** November: Phase 1 Applied Research Portfolio Evaluation • **CfP:** November-January 2024: call for proposals on Knowledge and innovation for inclusive early learning and school readiness and for supporting teacher professional development, agency and wellbeing	• Operationalization of CSM with RLPs - rollout in selected GPE partner countries • **Expansion of the partner countries:** 4 new GPE partner countries • 33 partnership compacts are finalized • January: Partnership compact cohort 5: 31 countries • July: Board of directors suggests 2022 mid-term review of partnership compact will serve as basis for subsequent funding period 2026-2030
2024	• KIX phase 2 (costed extension) begins: 2024-2027 • February: ROSIE is extended • **Review/ evaluation:** May: Phase 2 Applied Research Portfolio Evaluation • **CfP:** July: call for proposals on GPE KIX regional observatories on education system resilience • **Review/ evaluation:** October: KIX Review 2024	• June: 57 partnership compacts, midterm reviews start
2025	• **CSM:** CSM to be evaluated, IDRC to create a straightforward process for MoEs to request support	• **Expansion of the partner countries:** 90 GPE partner countries

Appendix F Supporting evidence: Survey graphs

F.1 Overview of survey participants

Table 10 Overview response rates to evaluation survey per Hub region

Hubs	# responses	% of total responses	# participants contacted	response rate	# of countries covered/ in the region
Africa 19	43	20 %	78	55%	14/19
Africa 21	19	9 %	n/a	n/a	14/21
EMAP	124	59 %	414	30%	25/36
LAC	24	11 %	63	38%	8/10
Total	**210**	**100 %**	**555**	**37%**	**61/86**

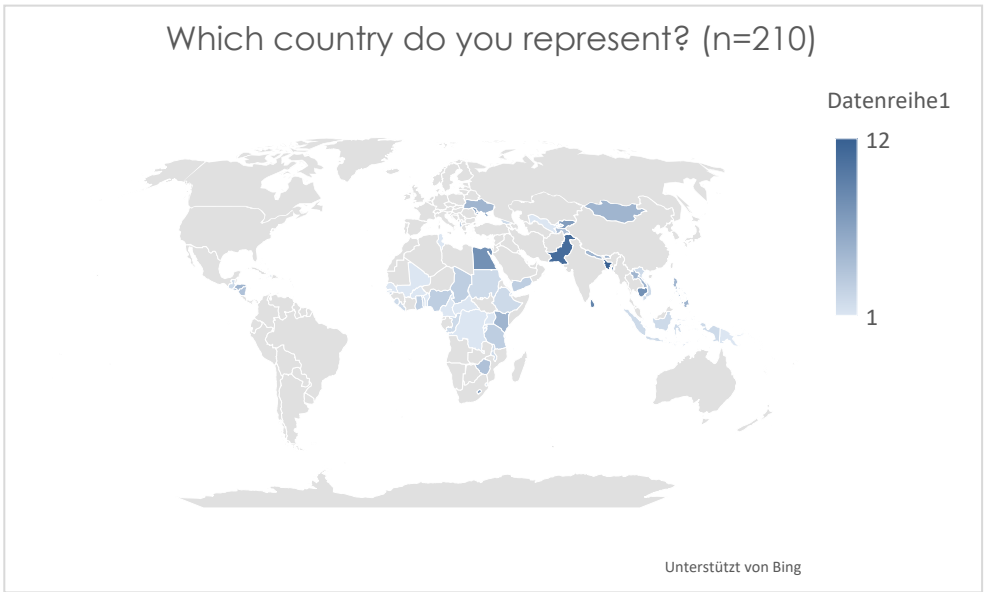
Technopolis

Table 11 Overview survey participants

Type	Stakeholder type	# participants	% of total
Stakeholder	Government	106	50
	International Organization	14	7
	Civil Society	39	19
	Private sector	7	3
	Academia	44	21
Status	Participated in last 6 months	154	73
	Participated before	56	27
Role	Formally appointed country representative / national team member	110	53
	Participant of (past) Hub activities	98	47

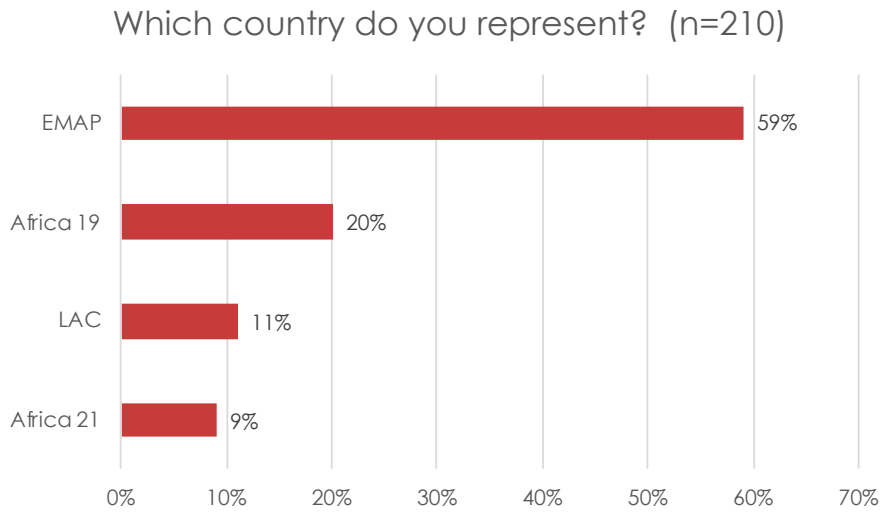
Technopolis

Figure 9 Countries represented



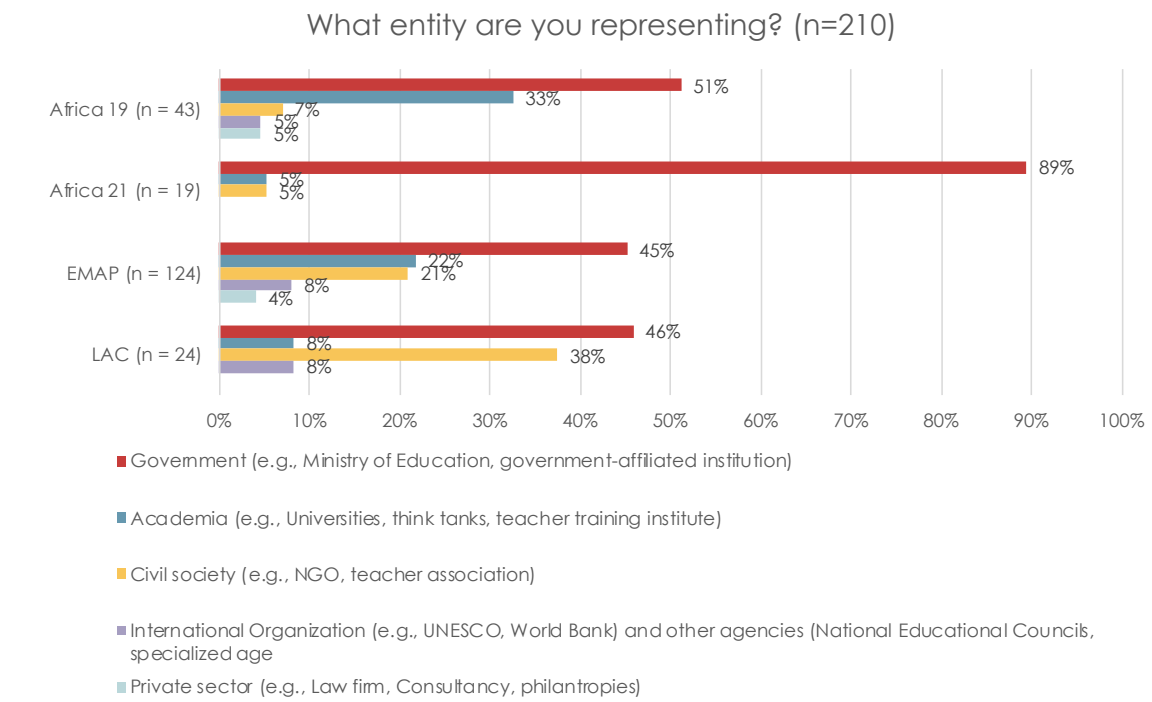
Technopolis, 2025. Single choice question.

Figure 10 Representation of regional KIX Hub regions



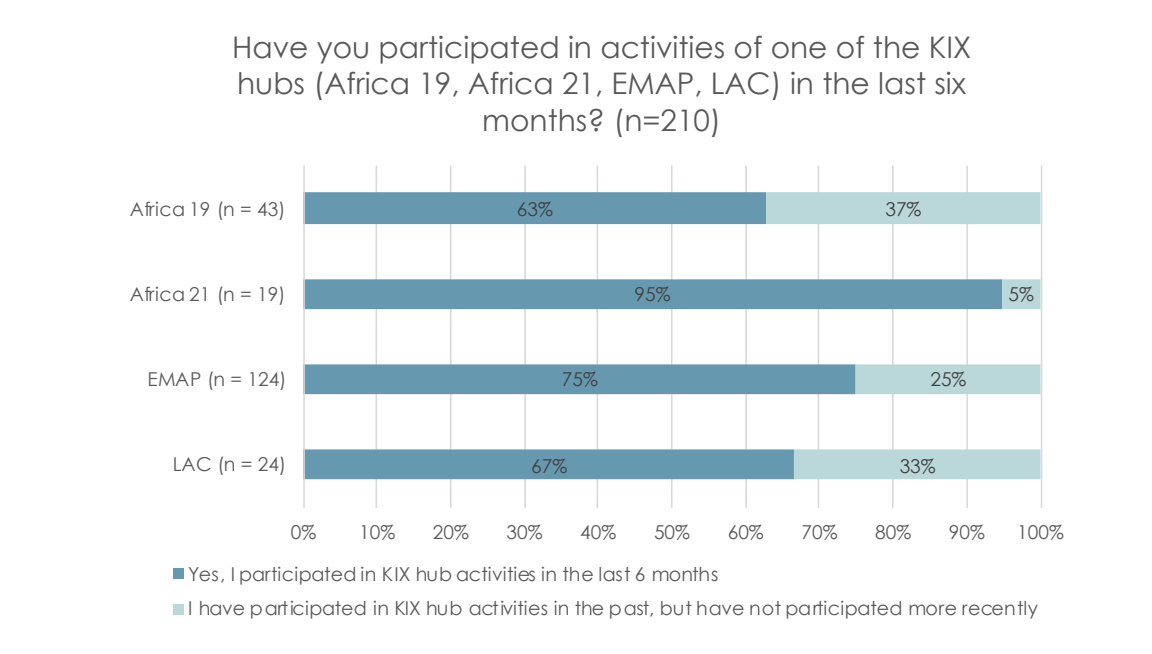
Technopolis, 2025. Single choice question.

Figure 11 Representation of stakeholder groups per Hub



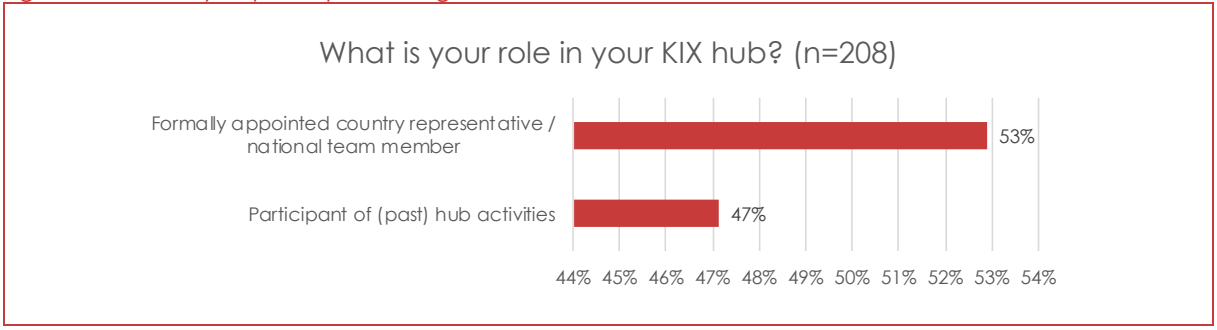
Technopolis, 2025. Single choice question.

Figure 12 Recent participation per Hub



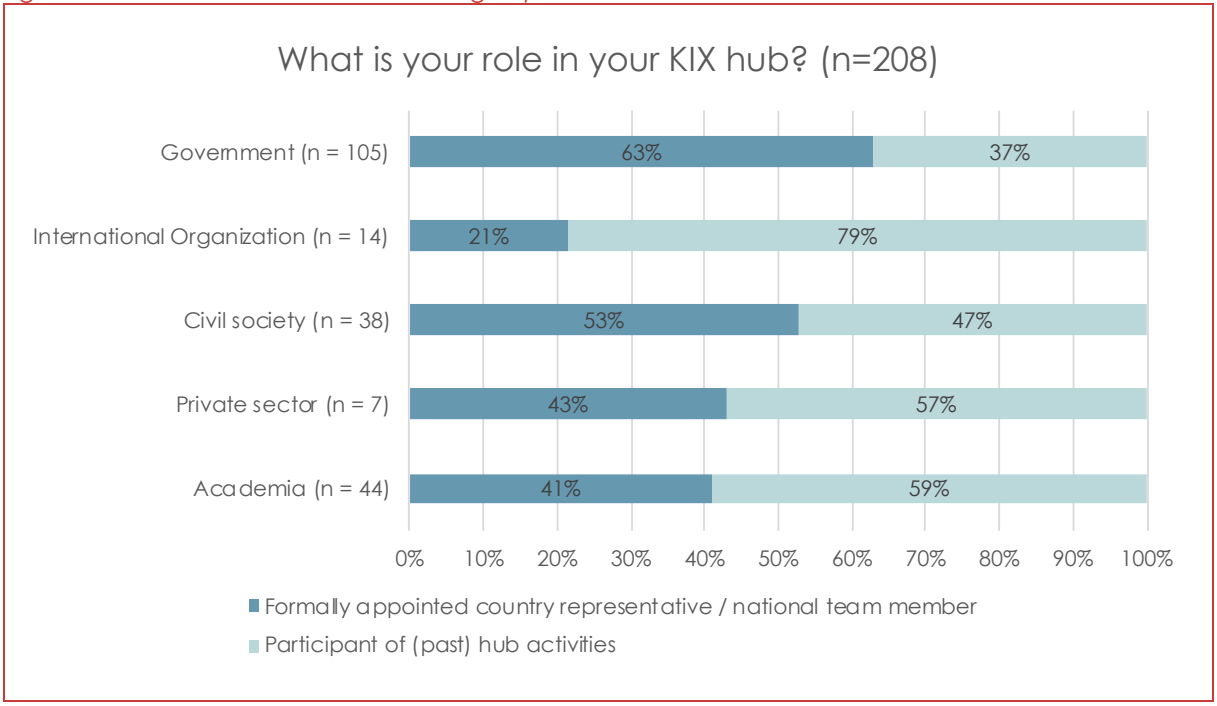
Technopolis, 2025. Single choice question.

Figure 13 Recency of participation in general



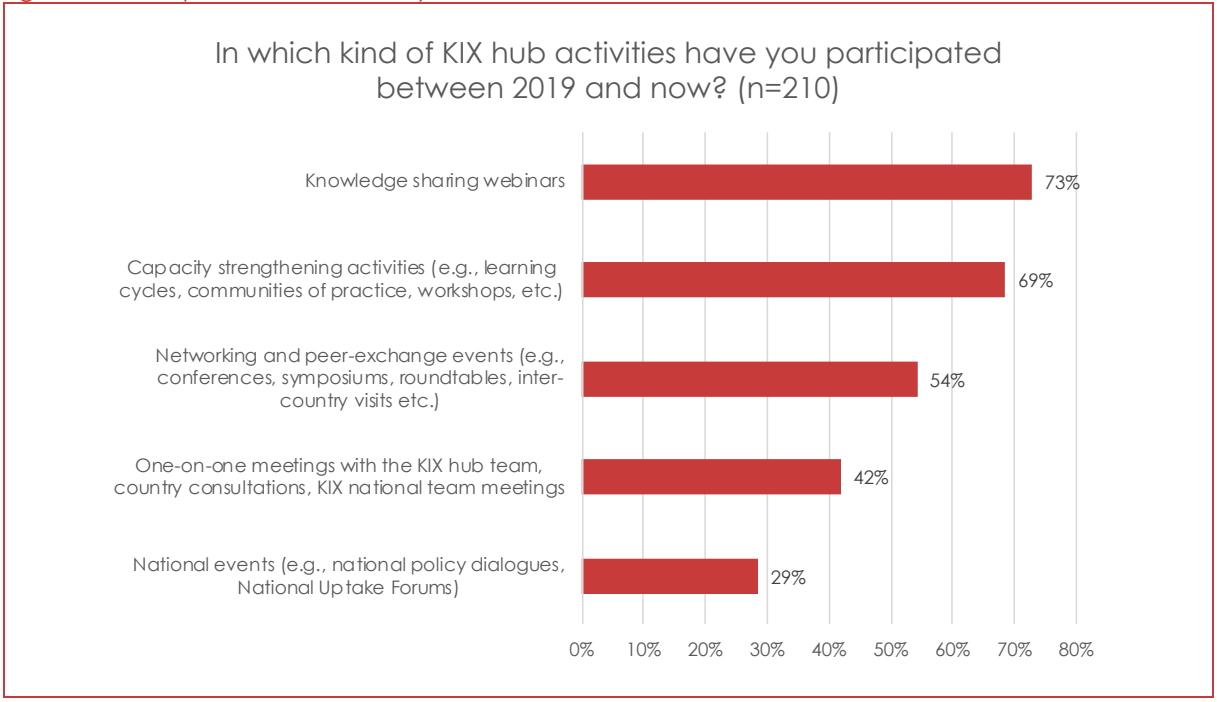
Technopolis, 2025. Single choice question.

Figure 14 Role distribution in stakeholder groups



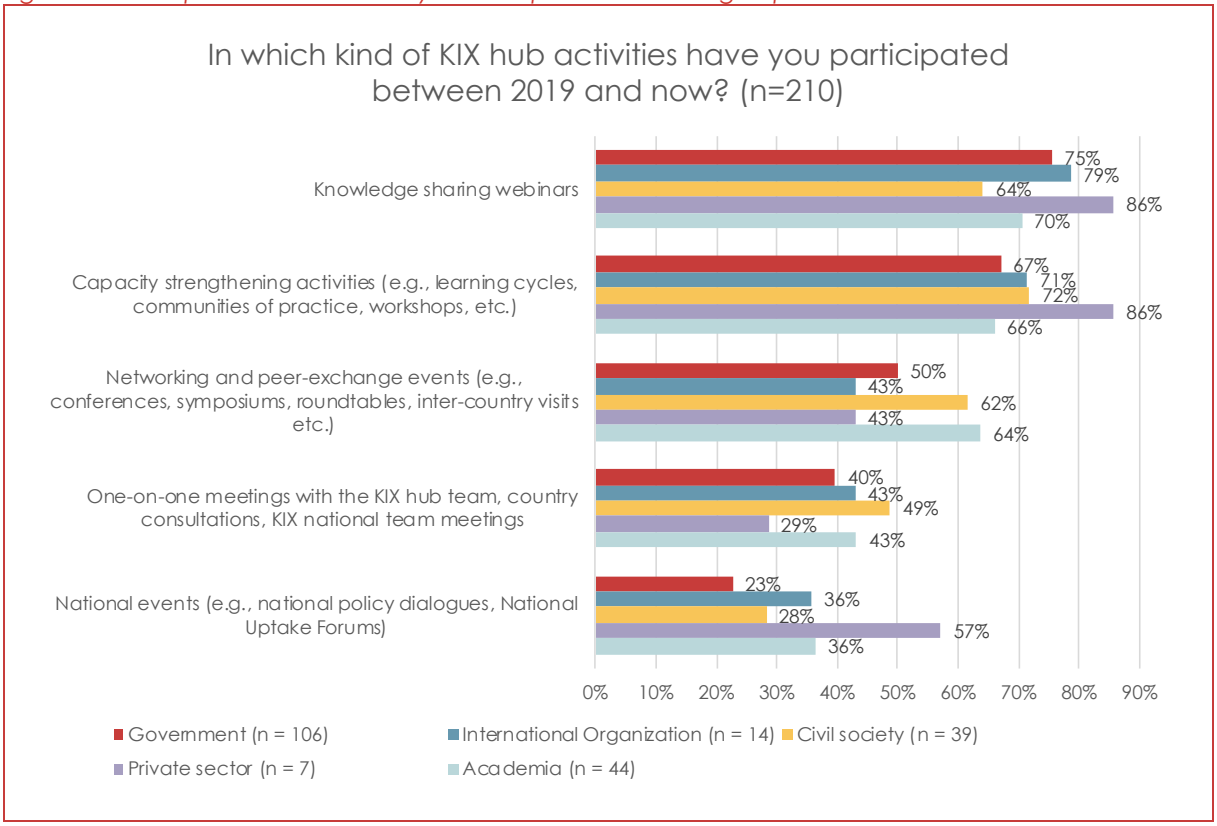
Technopolis, 2025. Single choice question.

Figure 15 Participation in Hub activity formats



Technopolis, 2025. Multiple choice question.

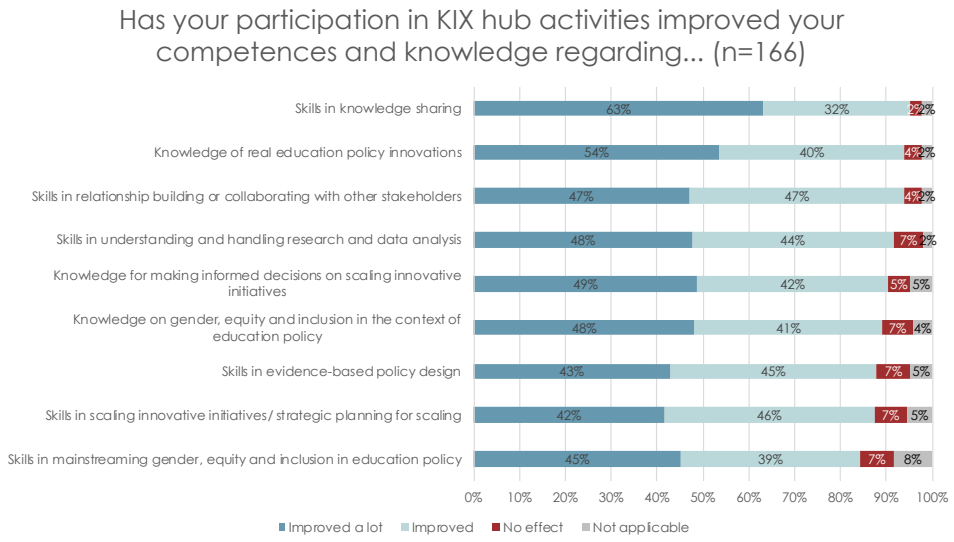
Figure 16 Participation in Hub activity formats per stakeholder group



Technopolis, 2025. Multiple choice question.

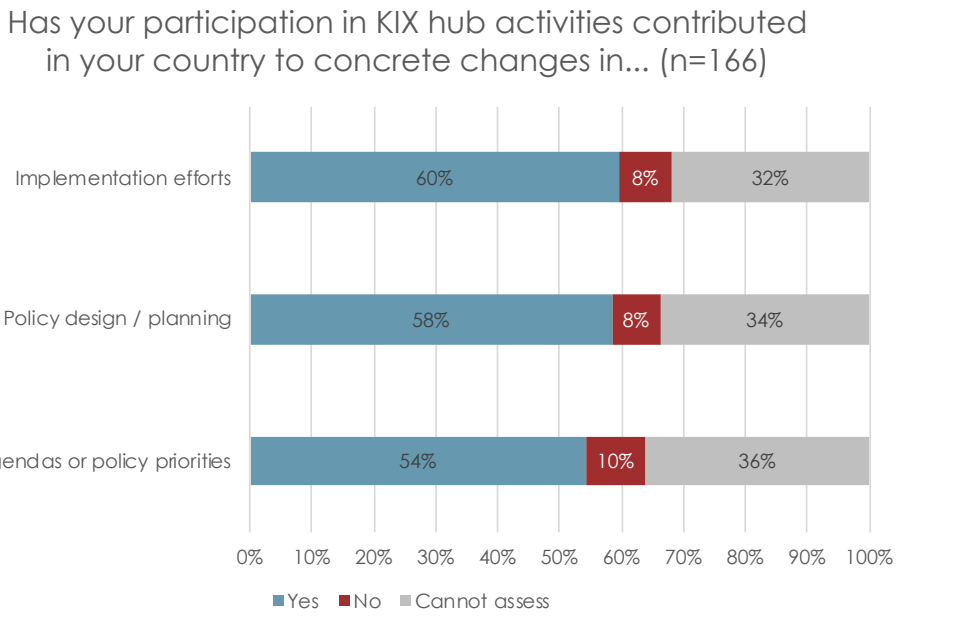
F.2 Effectiveness Q1A

Figure 17 Improving topic-specific competences and knowledge



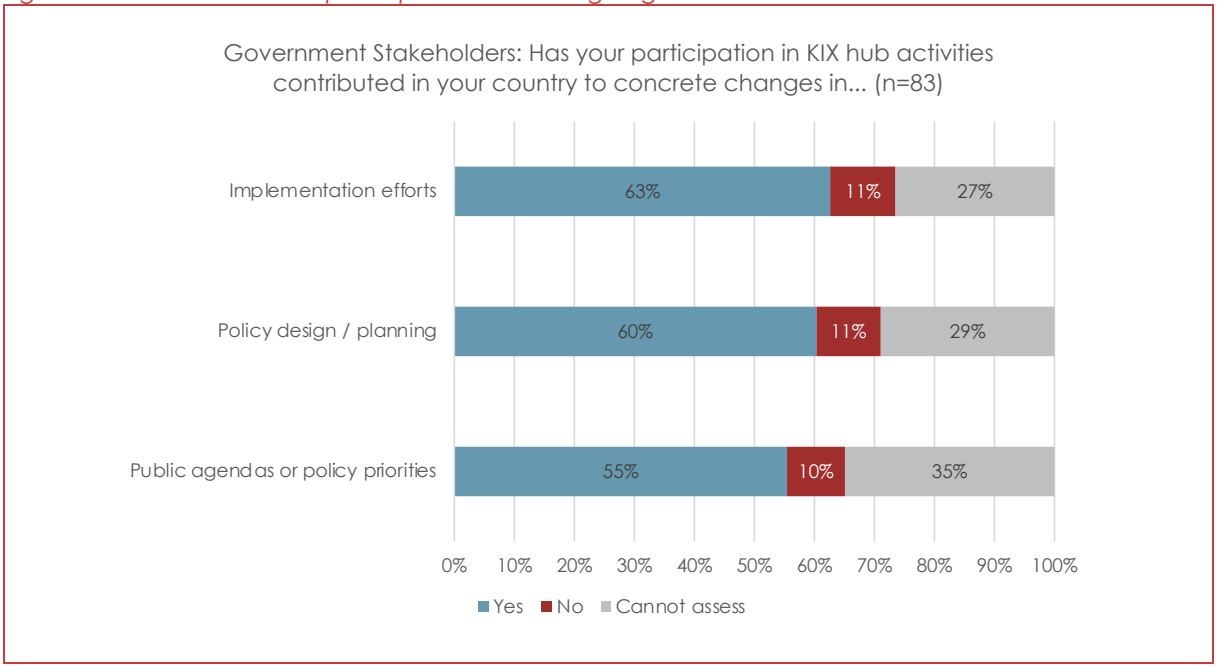
Technopolis, 2025. Matrix question.

Figure 18 Outcomes of Hub participation



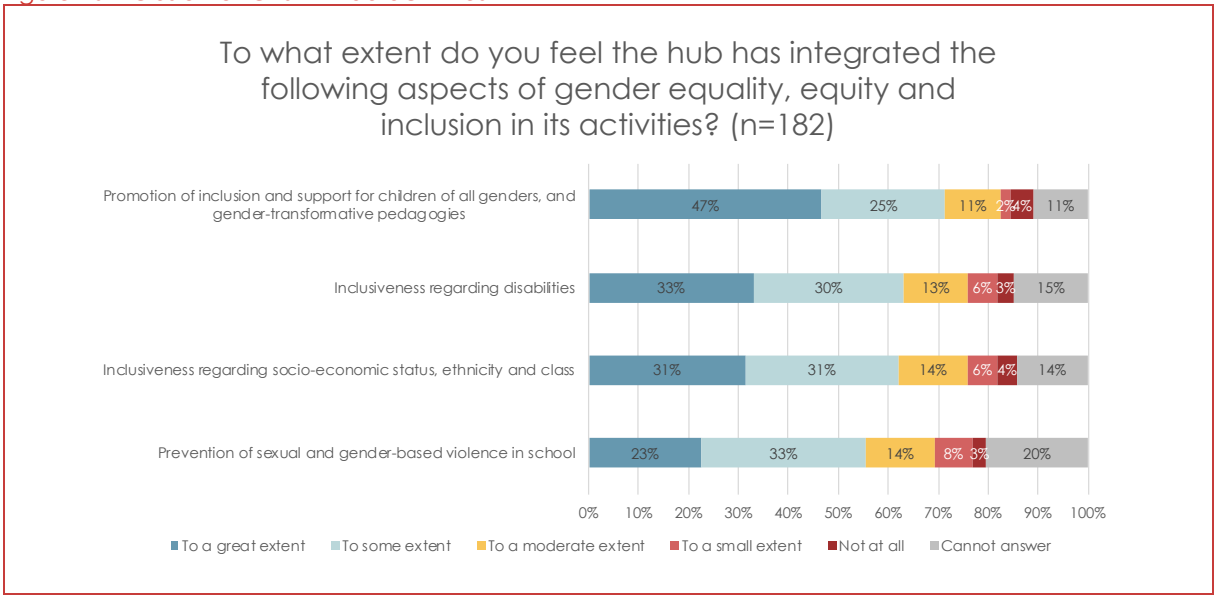
Technopolis, 2025. Single choice question.

Figure 19 Outcomes of Hub participation according to government stakeholders



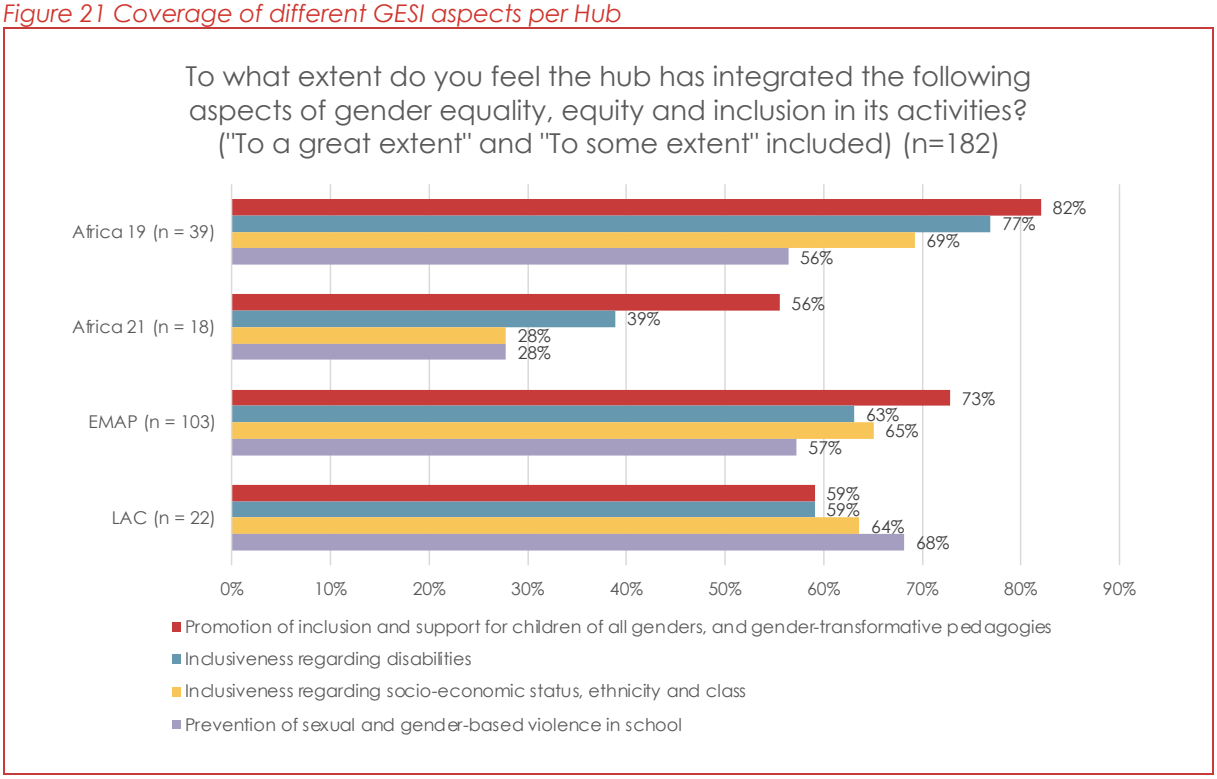
Technopolis, 2025. Single choice question.

Figure 20 Inclusion of GESI in Hub activities



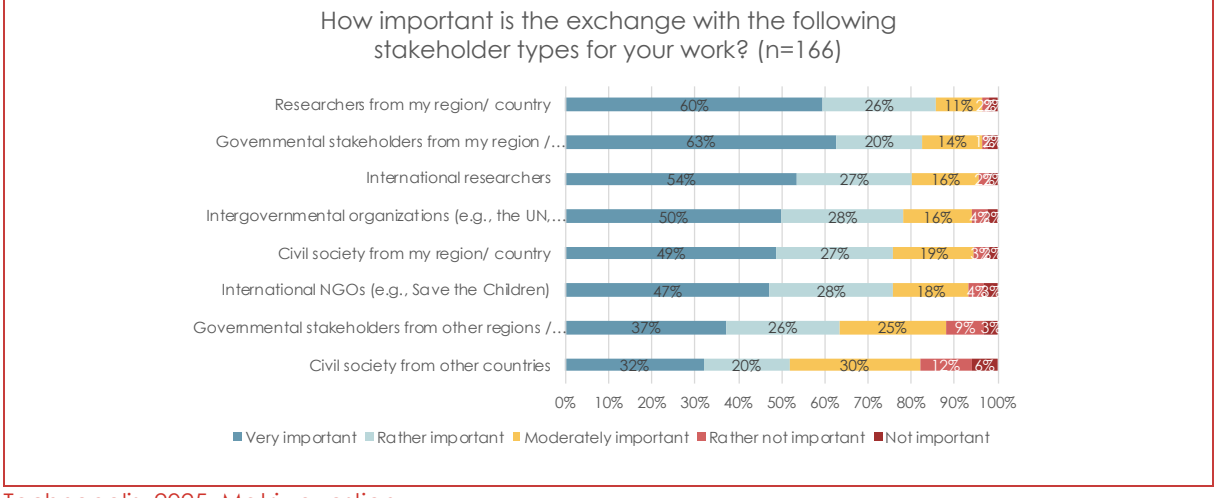
Technopolis, 2025. Single choice question.

Figure 21 Coverage of different GESI aspects per Hub



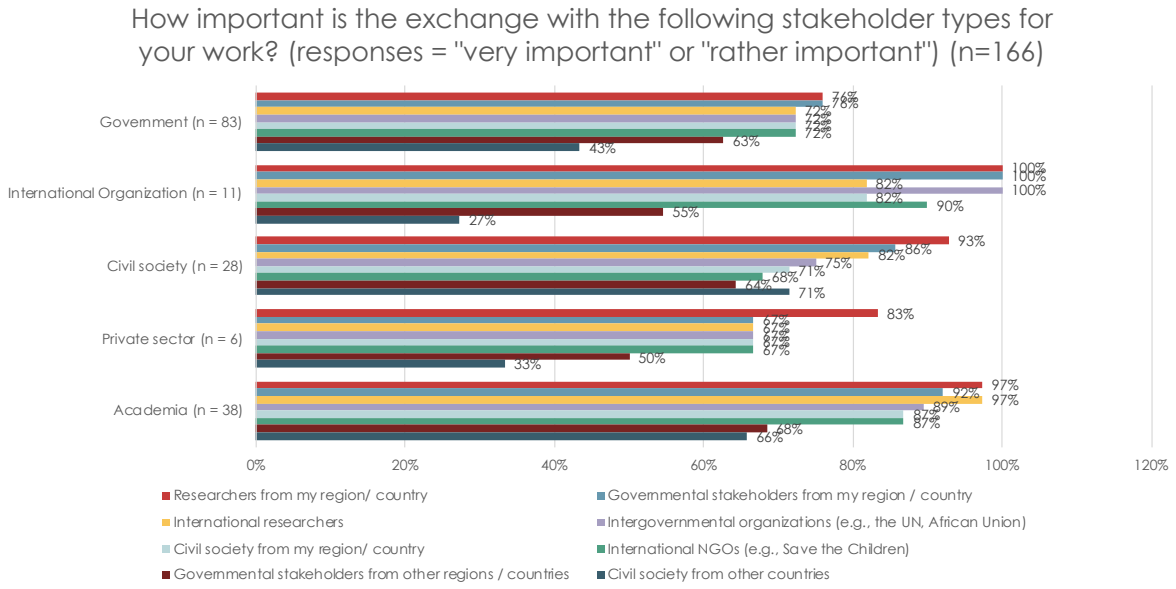
Technopolis, 2025. Single choice question.

Figure 22 Significance of exchange with different stakeholder types



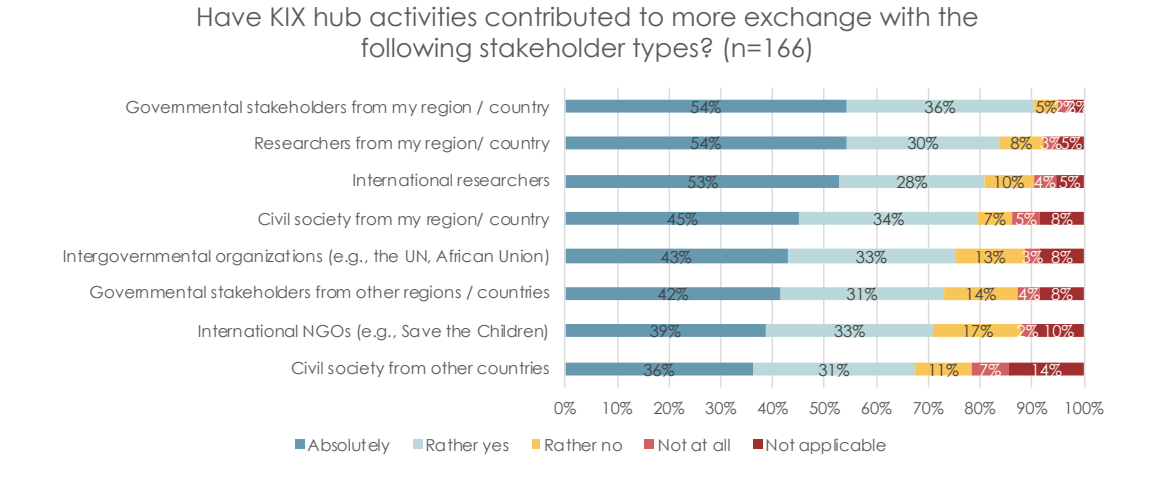
Technopolis, 2025. Matrix question.

Figure 23 Significance of exchange with different stakeholder types by stakeholder type



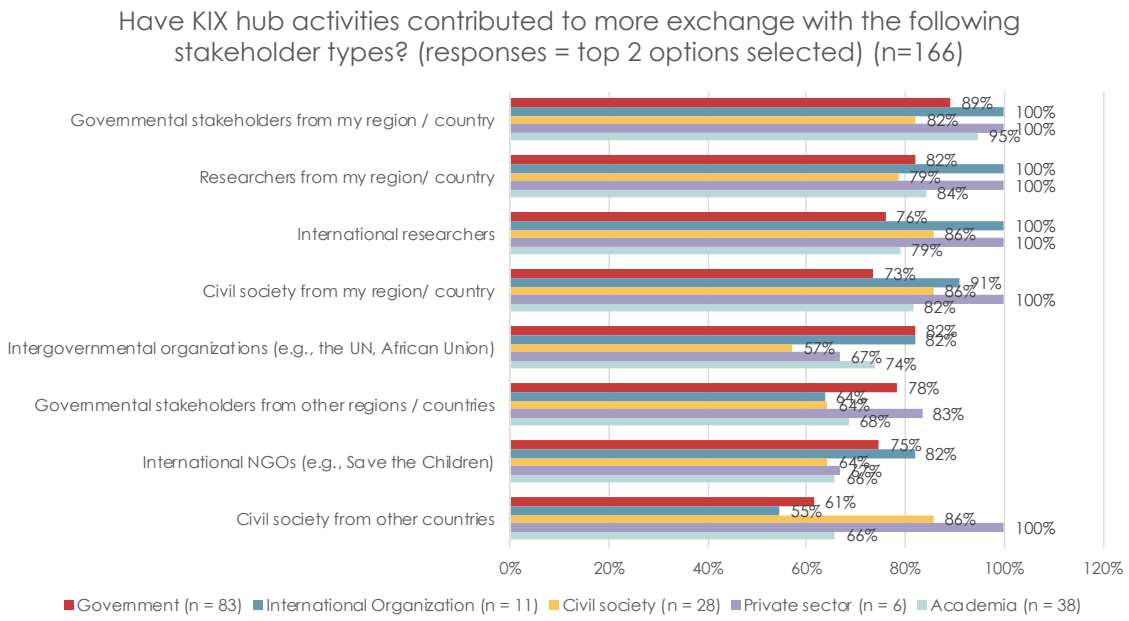
Technopolis, 2025. Matrix question.

Figure 24 Impact on stakeholder exchange



Technopolis, 2025. Matrix question.

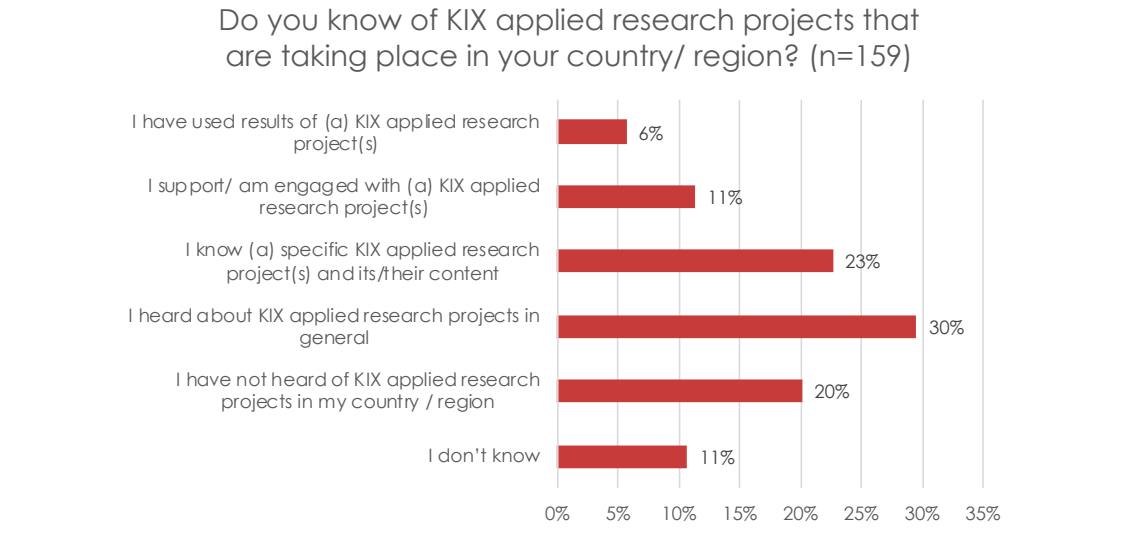
Figure 25 Impact on stakeholder exchange per stakeholder group



Technopolis, 2025. Matrix question.

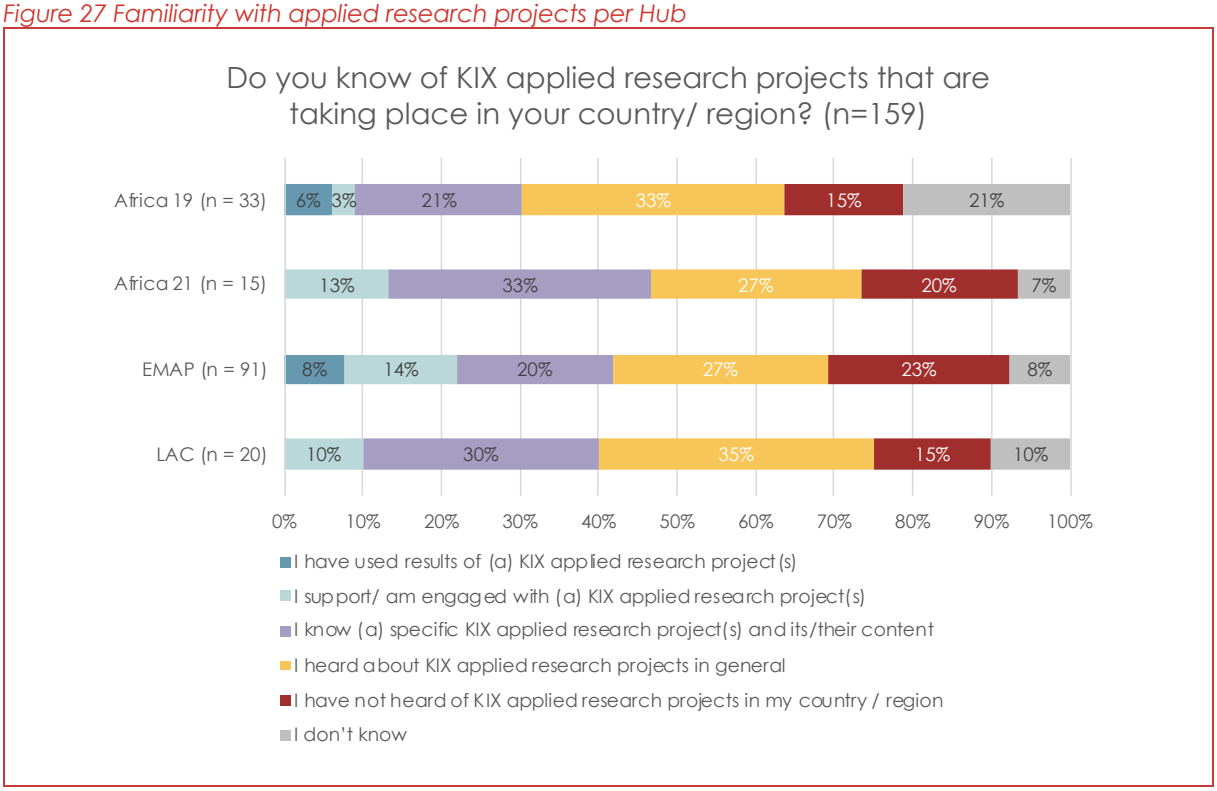
F.3 Effectiveness Q1B

Figure 26 Familiarity with applied research projects



Technopolis, 2025. Single choice question.

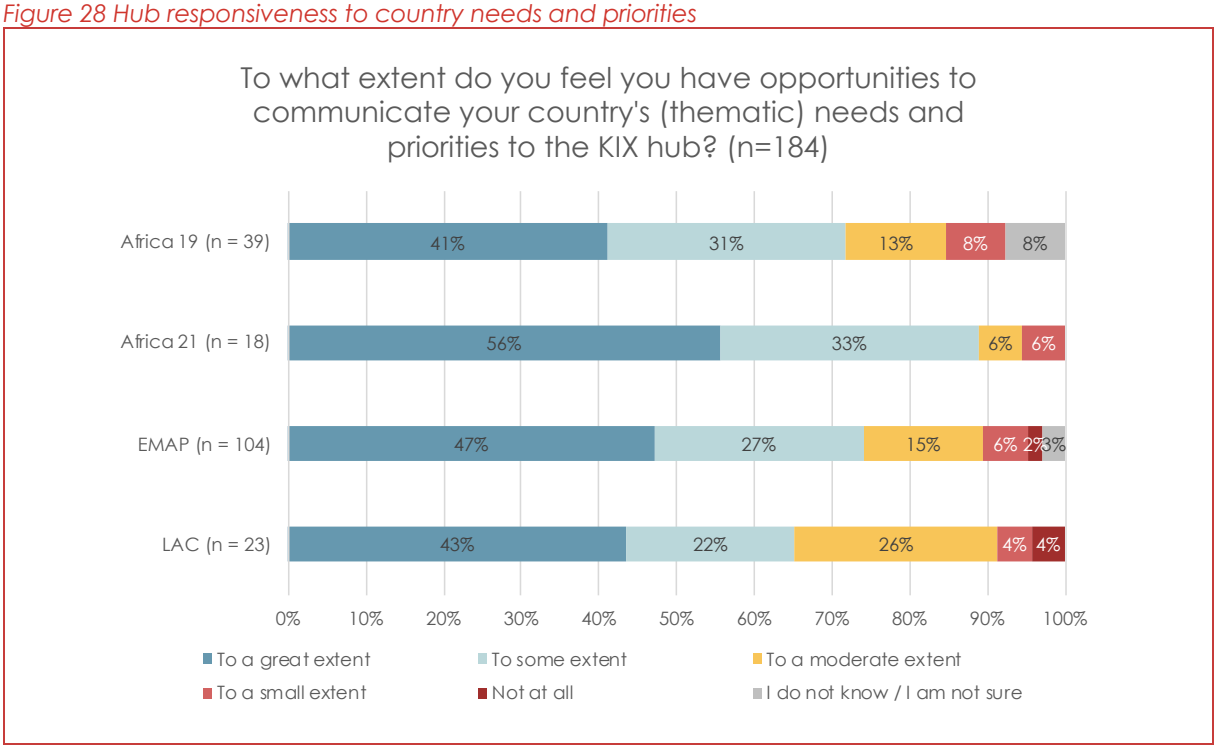
Figure 27 Familiarity with applied research projects per Hub



Technopolis, 2025. Single choice question.

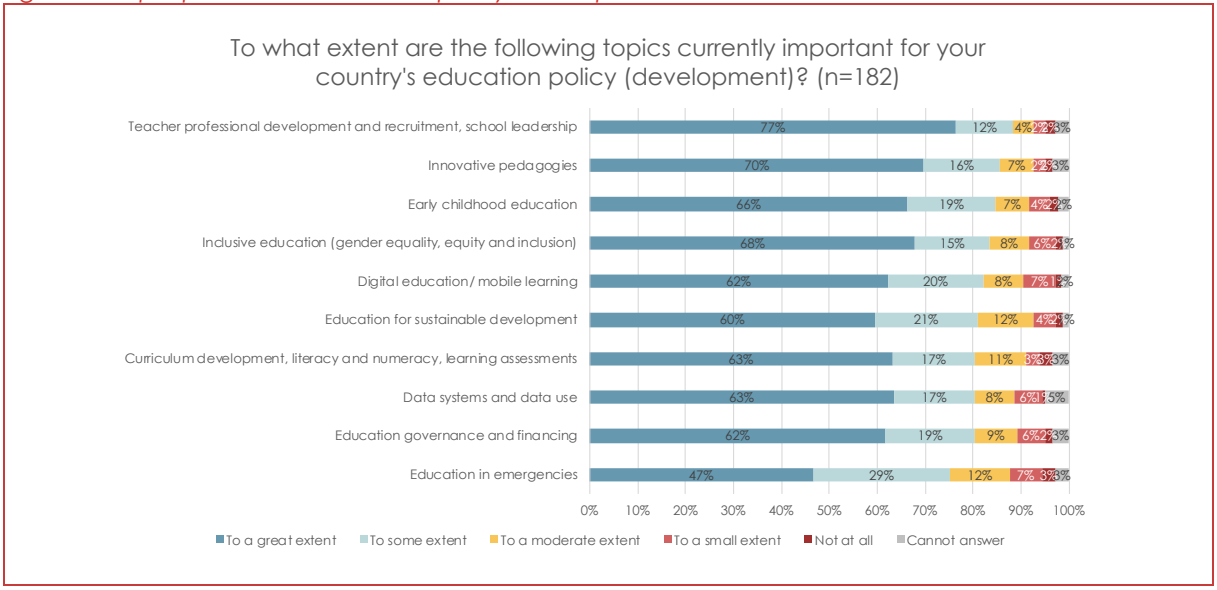
F.4 Relevance Q3A

Figure 28 Hub responsiveness to country needs and priorities



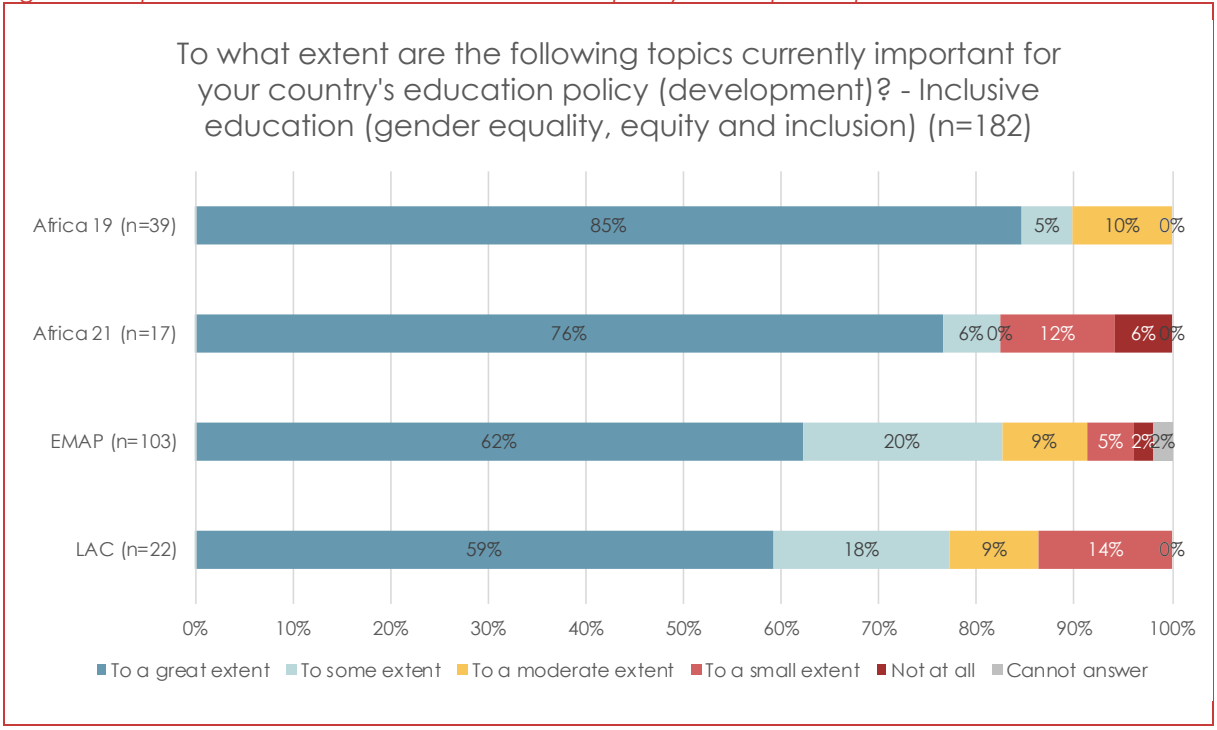
Technopolis, 2025. Single choice question.

Figure 29 Topic priorities in education policy development



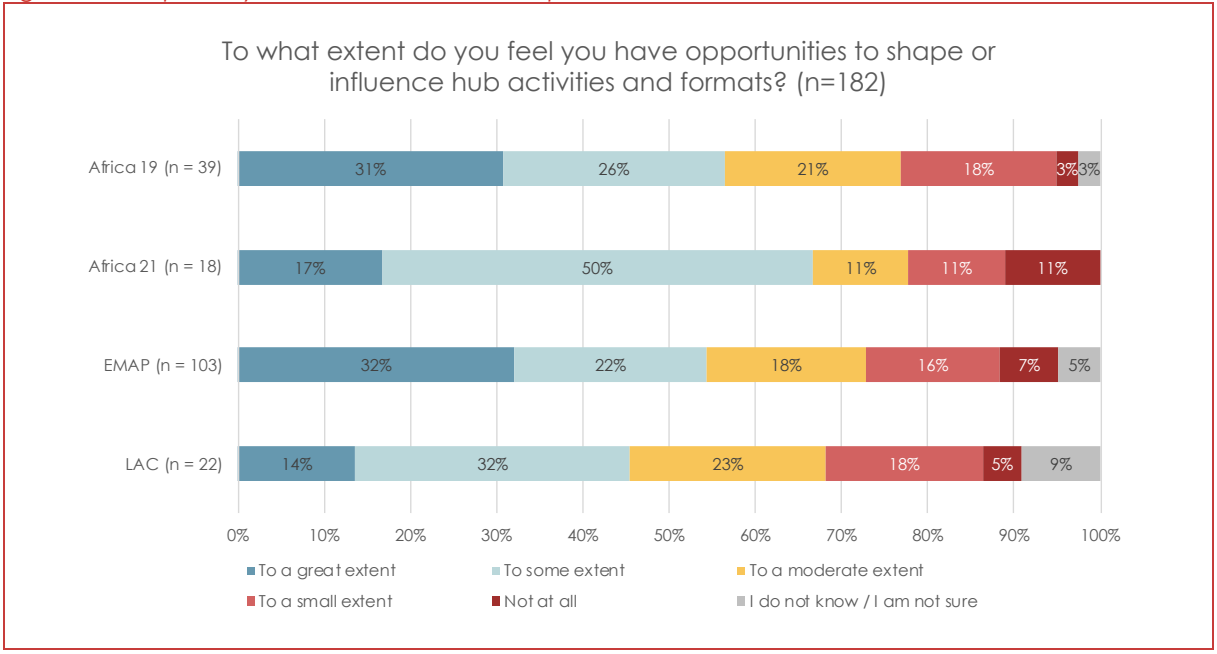
Technopolis, 2025. Matrix question.

Figure 30 Importance of GESI for national education policy development per Hub



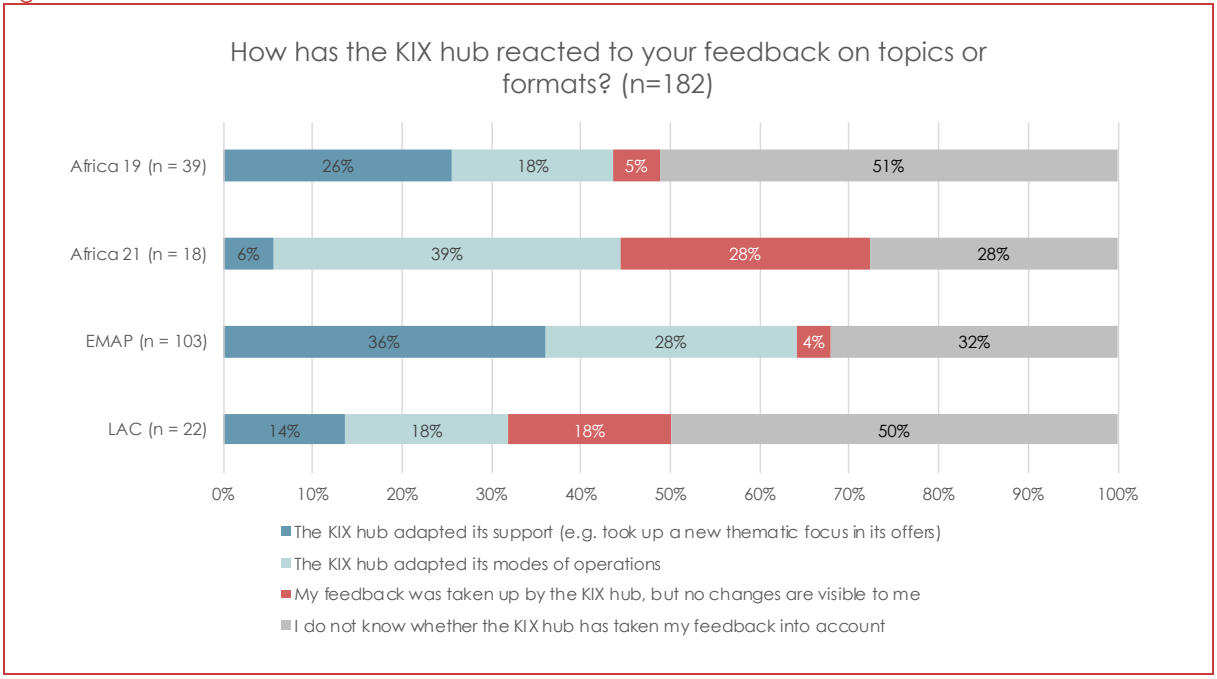
Technopolis, 2025. Matrix question.

Figure 31 Adaptability of activities and formats per Hub



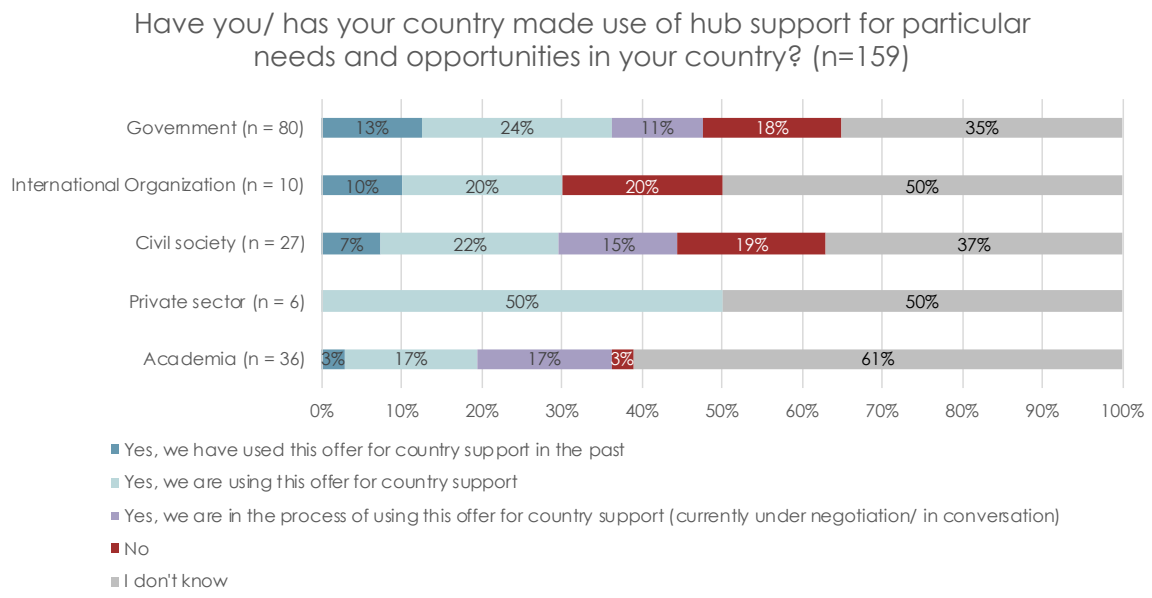
Technopolis, 2025. Single choice question.

Figure 32 Hubs' reactiveness to feedback



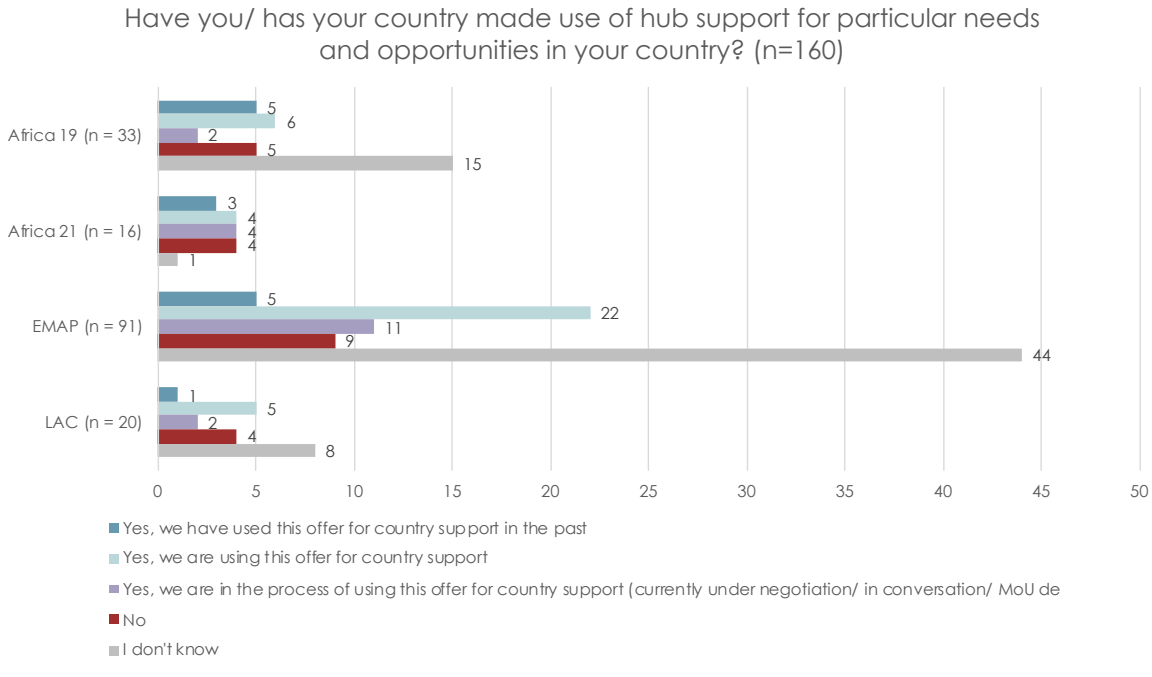
Technopolis, 2025. Single choice question.

Figure 33 Uptake of country support mechanism



Technopolis, 2025. Single choice question.

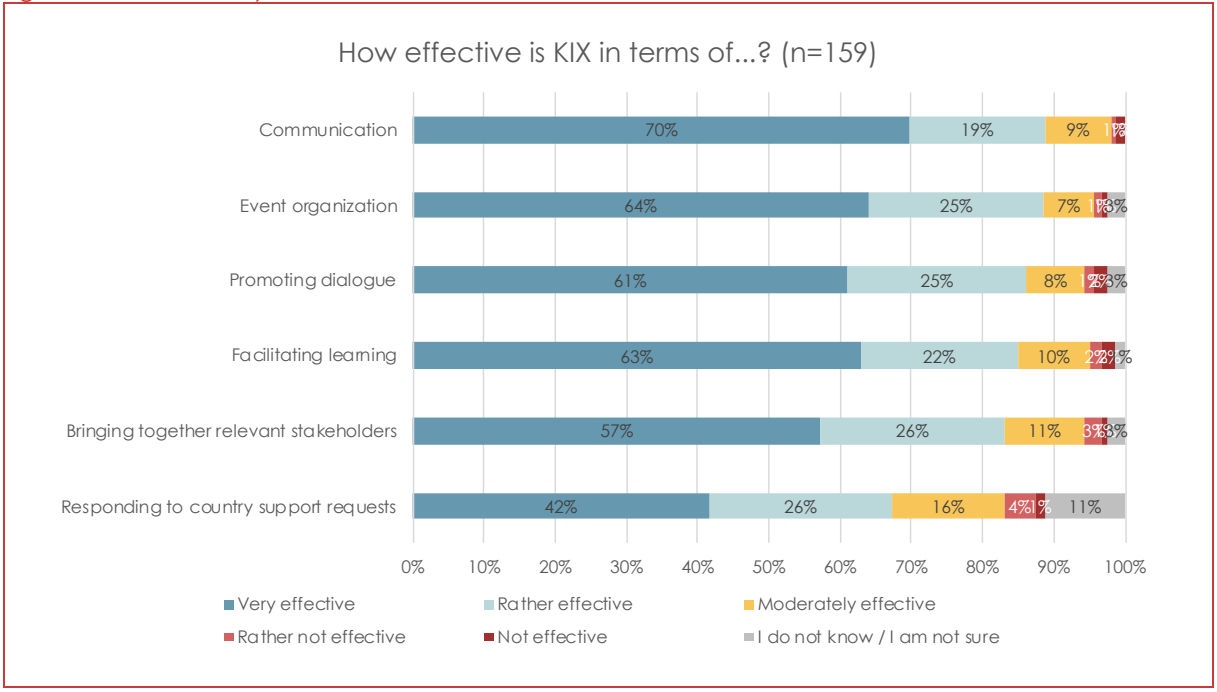
Figure 34 Uptake of country support mechanism in absolute numbers



Technopolis, 2025. Single choice question.

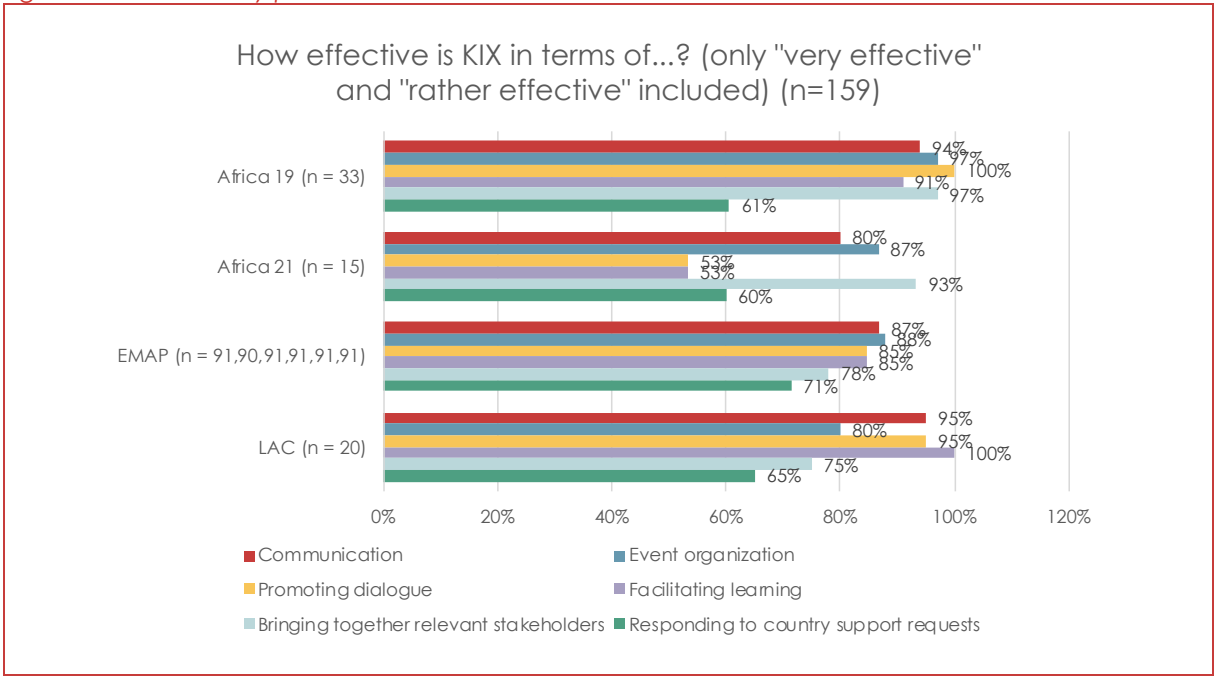
F.5 Efficiency Q4

Figure 35 KIX effectivity



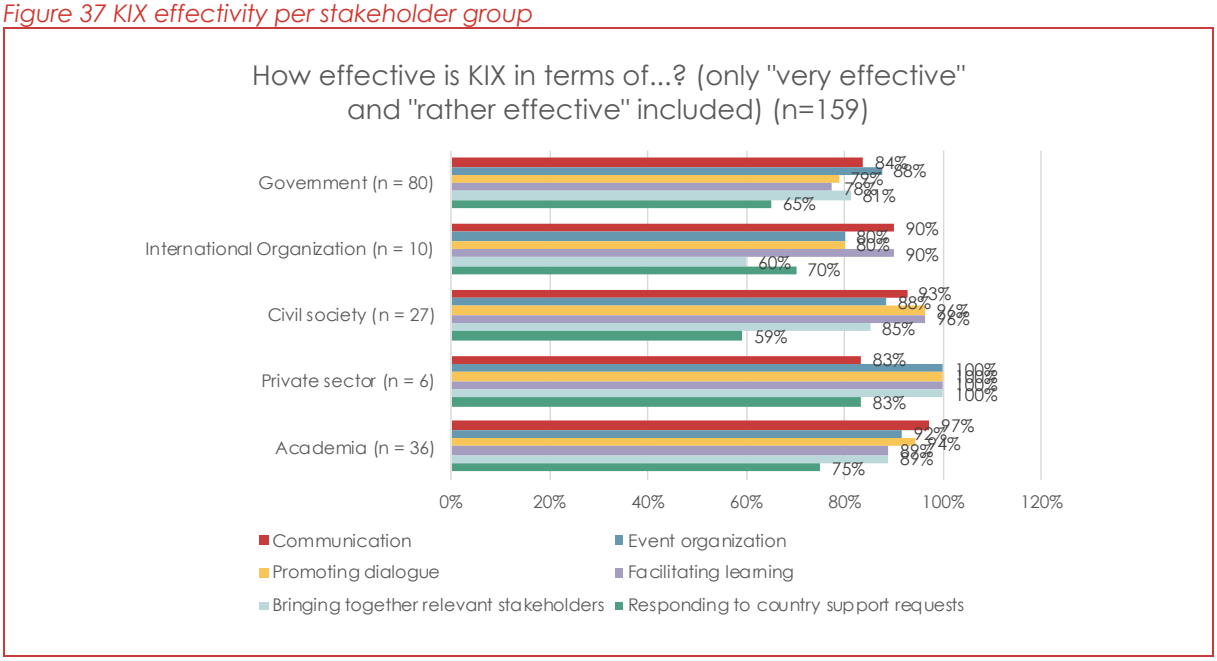
Technopolis, 2025. Single choice question.

Figure 36 KIX effectivity per Hub



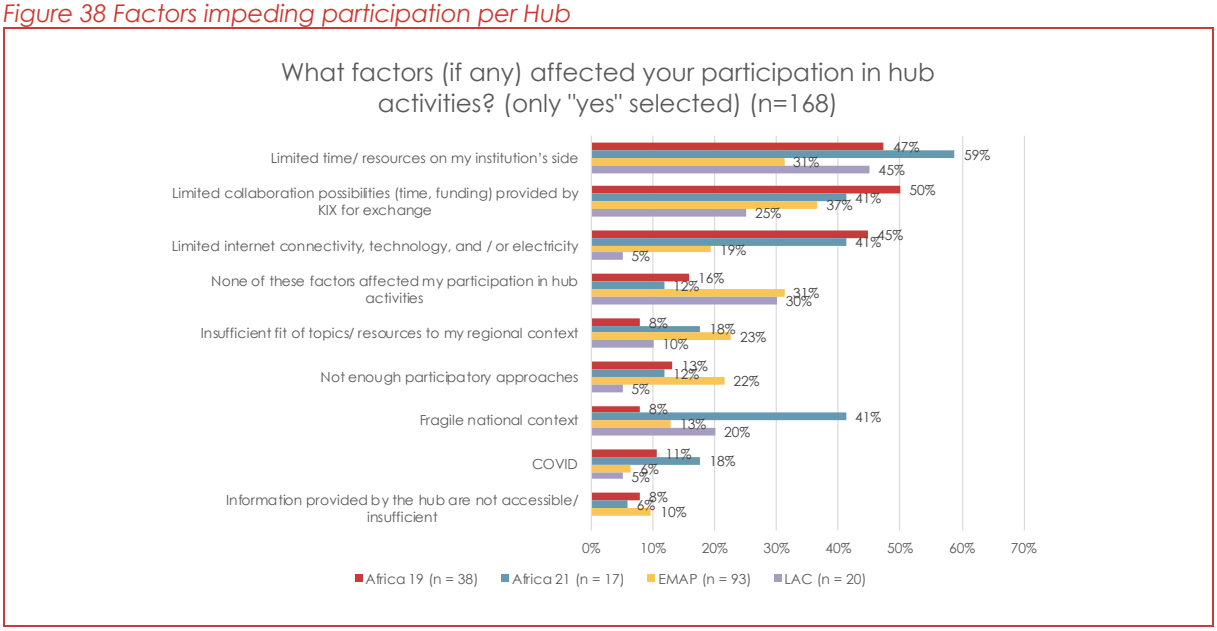
Technopolis, 2025. Single choice question.

Figure 37 KIX effectivity per stakeholder group



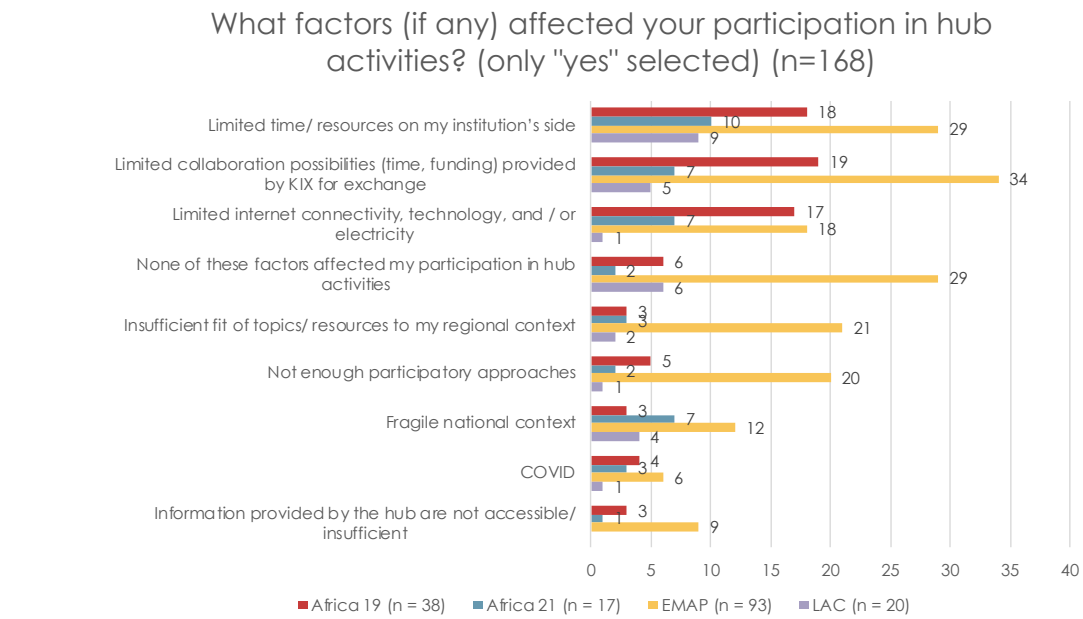
Technopolis, 2025. Single choice question.

Figure 38 Factors impeding participation per Hub



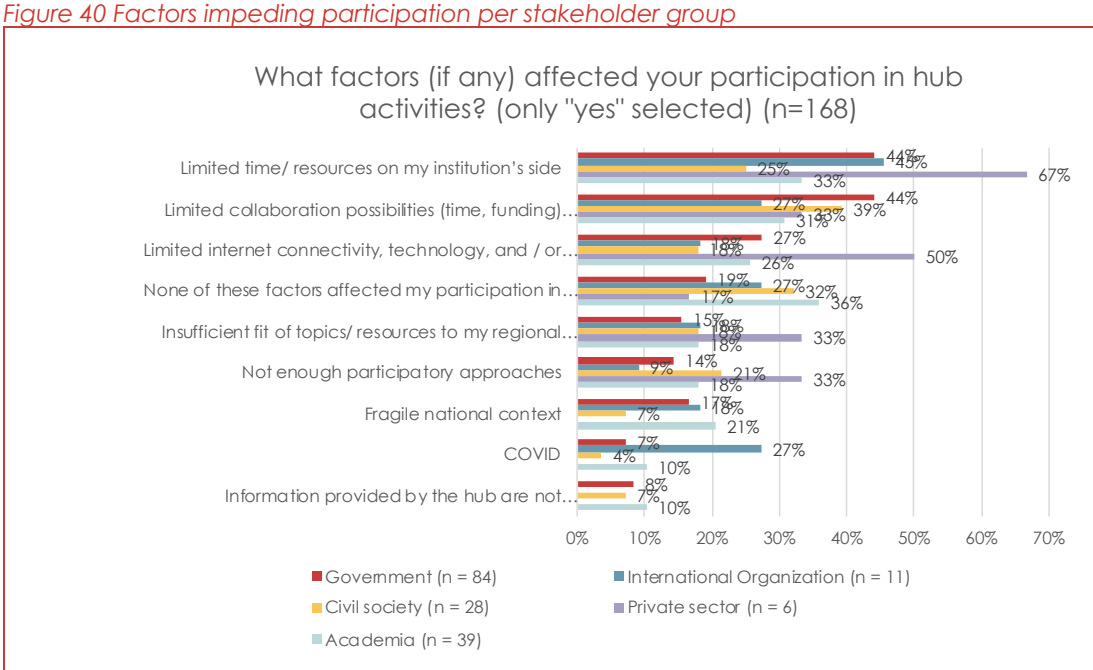
Technopolis, 2025. Multiple choice question.

Figure 39 Factors impeding participation per Hub in absolute numbers



Technopolis, 2025. Multiple choice question.

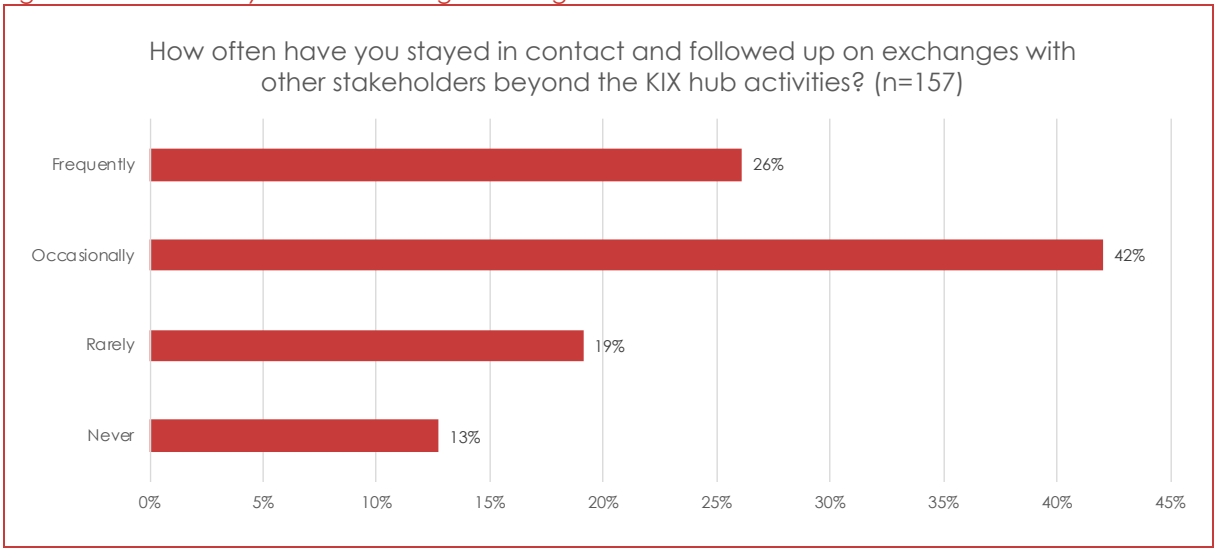
Figure 40 Factors impeding participation per stakeholder group



Technopolis, 2025. Multiple choice question.

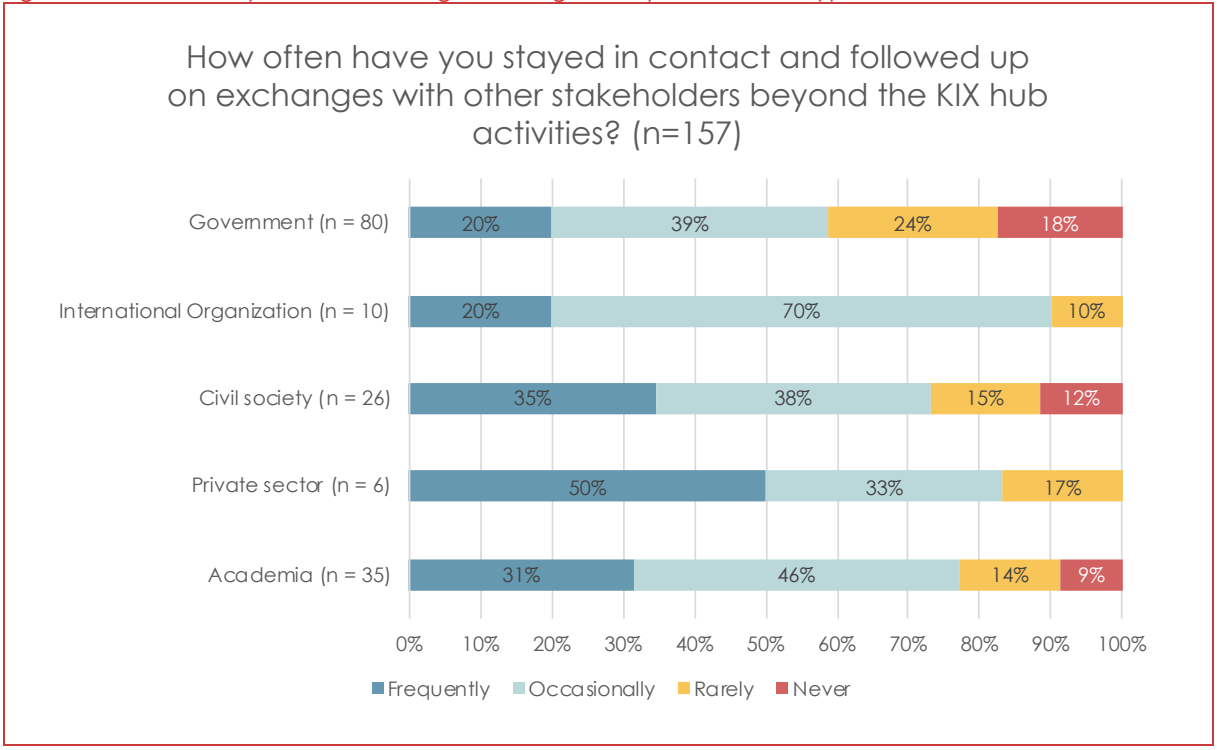
F.6 Sustainability Q5

Figure 41 Sustainability of networks forged through KIX



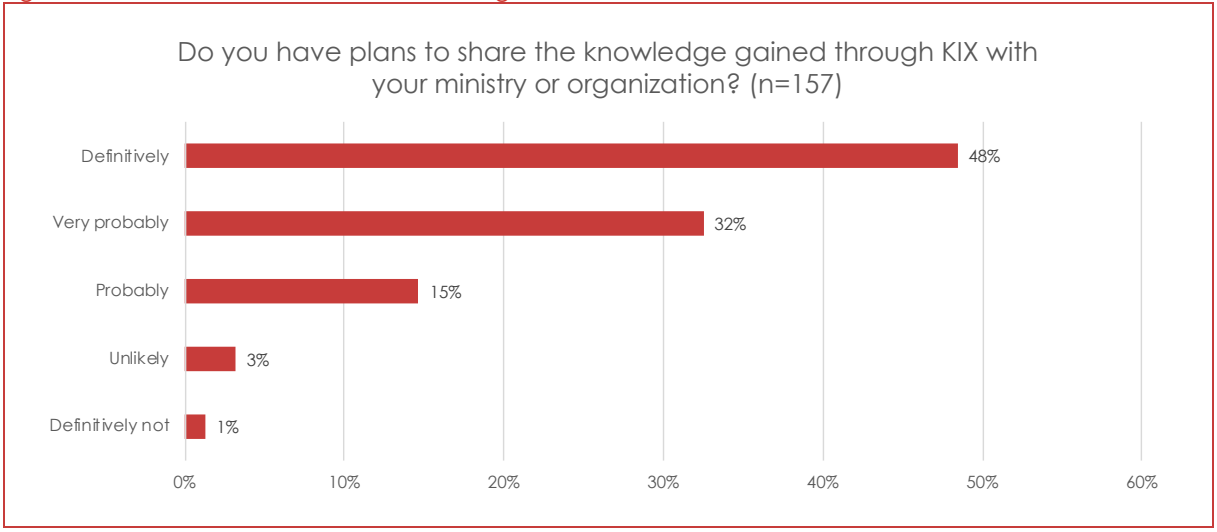
Technopolis, 2025. Single choice question.

Figure 42 Sustainability of networks forged through KIX by stakeholder types



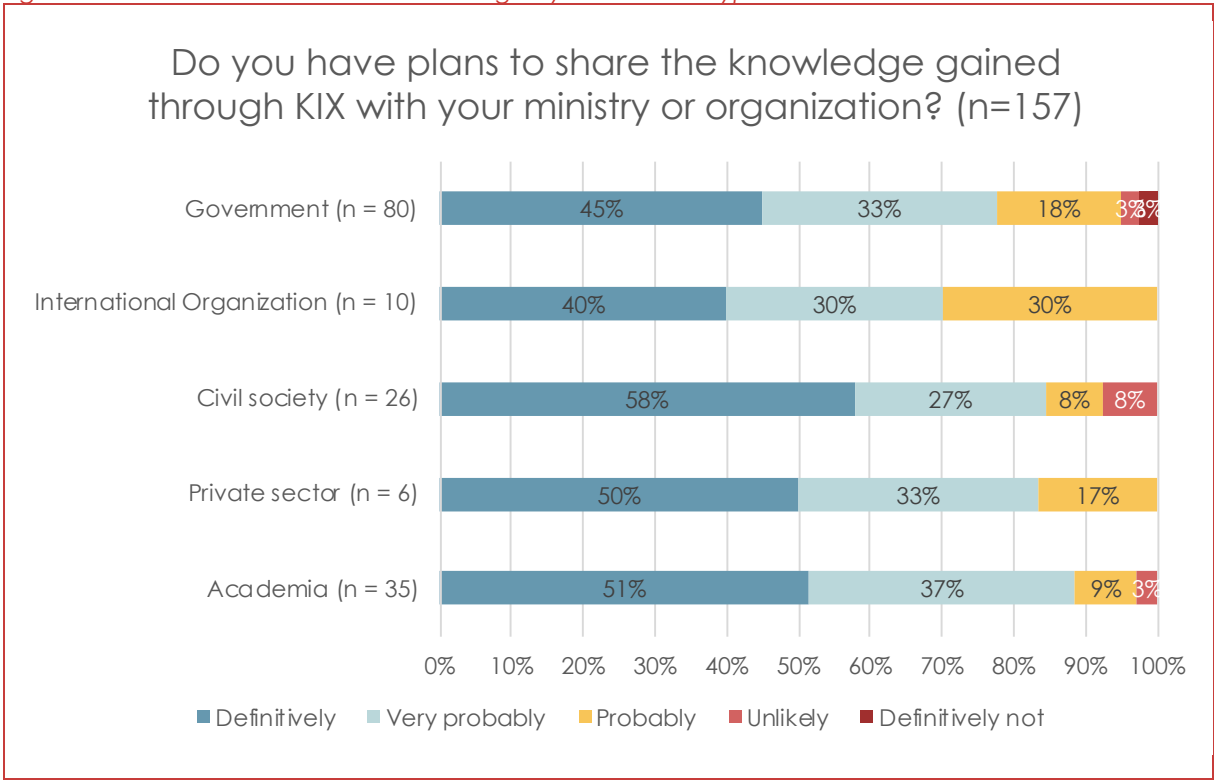
Technopolis, 2025. Single choice question.

Figure 43 Intention to disseminate knowledge



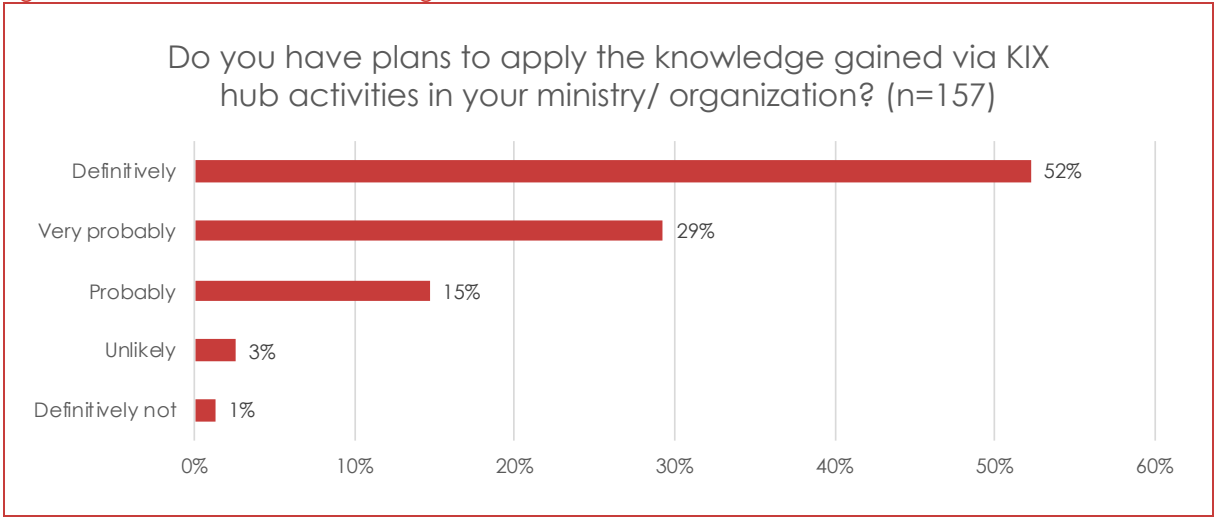
Technopolis, 2025. Single choice question.

Figure 44 Intention to disseminate knowledge by stakeholder type



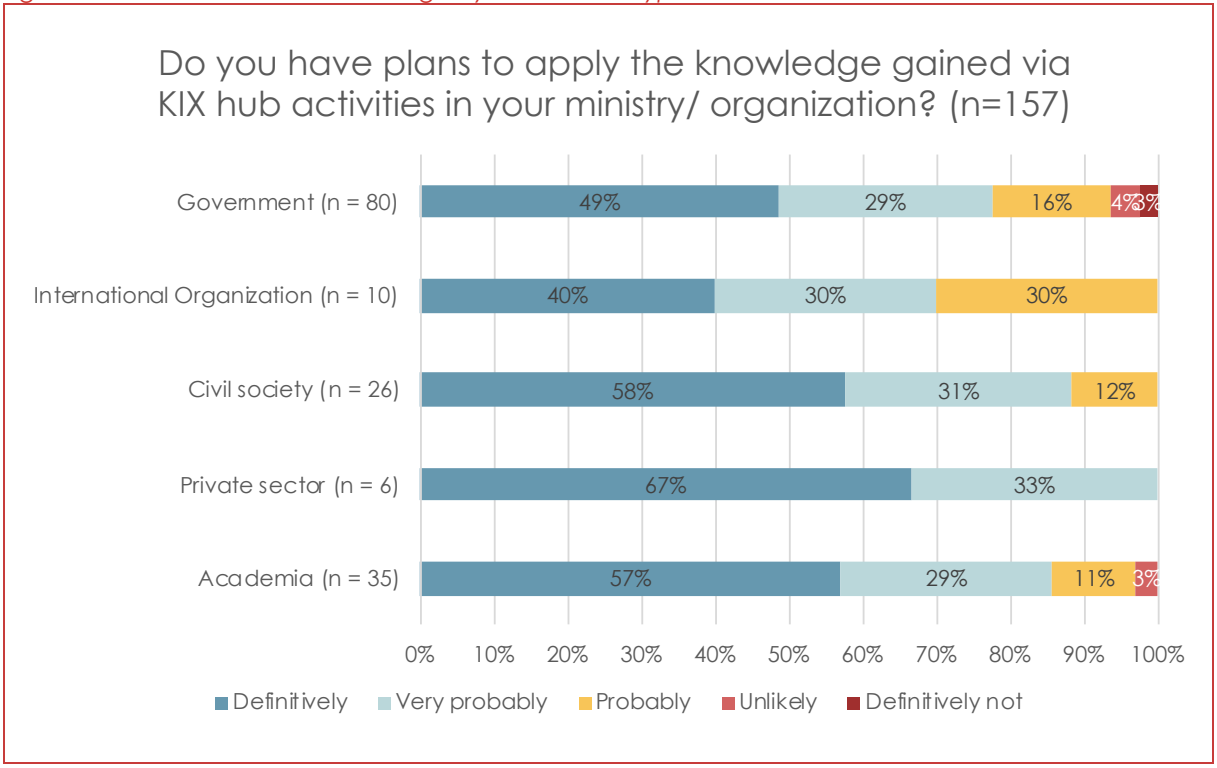
Technopolis, 2025. Single choice question.

Figure 45 Intention to scale knowledge



Technopolis, 2025. Single choice question.

Figure 46 Intention to scale knowledge by stakeholder type



Technopolis, 2025. Single choice question.

Appendix G Results of the AI-supported document analysis

G.1.1 Overview of MEL data of all outcome cases

Table 12 Number of outcome cases per KIX activity

KIX Activity	# outcome cases	%
ROSIE	7	2%
LAC Hub	21	5%
Africa 21 Hub	22	5%
Africa 19 Hub	37	9%
EMAP Hub	88	21%
Global grant project	118	28%
Regional grant project	129	31%
Total	422	100%

Technopolis based on MEL data

Table 13 Research projects with most outcome cases

Applied research project	# outcome cases	%
TaRL	10	2%
MICS-EAGLE	12	3%
GMT	12	3%
STEPS/Project-Cameroon Baptist Covention/NextGenU	13	3%
Villa College	13	3%
BELDS	14	3%
TPD@Scale	14	3%
CLADE	17	4%
LEARN Plus	20	5%

Technopolis based on MEL data

Table 14 Countries with most cases (individual country cases only)

Countries	# outcome cases
Tanzania (mainland and Zanzibar)	19
Honduras	19
Uganda	18
Kyrgyz Republic	18
Nepal	15
Ghana	14
Nicaragua	12
Cambodia	11
Nigeria	10

Technopolis based on MEL data

G.1.2 AIPC analysis of outcome cases

Table 15 Actor types affected in outcome cases

Categories	Hubs	Research Projects	Total Count
Ministry of Education Officials	120	98 (+1 ROSIE)	219
School Teachers	3	65	68
Researchers/ Research Institutions	23	7 (+3 ROSIE)	33
Other Government Officials	11	14	25
Local Communities	1	23	24
Students	0	17	17
School Principals and Administrators	3	13	16
NGOs	7	8	15
KIX research grantees	1	3	4
Intergovernmental Organizations	0	1	1
Total	**169**	**253**	**422**

Technopolis based on AI-supported document analysis, no multiple choice applicable *note: In multiple occasions the case did not specify to which group the country representatives that experienced change could be allocated. In these cases, the AIPC allocated them to MoE officials, as these were the highest proportion of country representatives.

Table 16 Types of activities contributing to outcome

KIX core component	Categories	Count
Hubs	Knowledge exchange: conference, roundtable	72
	Capacity Strengthening: Learning Cycle	67
	Capacity Strengthening: workshops	48
	Knowledge exchange: webinars	28
	Knowledge exchange: national uptake forums	18
	Evidence generation/ research results: case studies and working papers	15
	Capacity Strengthening: One-on-one meetings with the KIX Hub team	7
	Other KIX activities	6
	Evidence generation/ research results: podcasts, newsletters, blogposts, videos	1
Applied research projects	Evidence generation / research results	200
	Capacity Strengthening: Trainings	187
	Knowledge exchange: meeting with KIX research grantees	107
	Other KIX activities	2

Technopolis based on AI-supported document analysis, multiple choice applicable

Table 17 Observed types of changes

Categories	Hubs	Research Projects	Total Count
Knowledge and skill development	70	98	168
Uptake of collaborative approaches	13	42	55
Policy changes/uptake at the stage of policy implementation	2	41	43
Changed relations between stakeholders	28	9	37
Policy changes/uptake at the stage of data research and analysis	19	12	31
Change in attitudes, awareness, and/or perception	3	24	27
Policy changes/uptake at the stage of issue identification and definition/agenda setting	17	7	24
Policy changes/uptake at the stage of policy formulation	12	10	22
Introduction of new teaching content	4	11	15
Total	**168**	**254**	**422**

Technopolis based on AI-supported document analysis

Table 18 Observed types of changes per region

Types of changes_regions	Caribbean	Central Africa	Central America	East Africa	Southern Africa	West Africa	ECA	Pacific (PAC)	SAMENA	Southeast Asia (SEA)	Multiple Regions	Unknown
Change in attitudes, awareness, and/or perception	0	2	10	8	0	2	1	0	3	0	0	1
Knowledge and skill development	2	3	13	25	3	22	14	1	8	20	56	1
Changed relations between stakeholders	0	0	4	5	3	7	8	0	1	2	6	1
Uptake of collaborative approaches	1	2	10	13	0	2	5	0	6	9	7	0
Introduction of new teaching content	0	1	3	5	0	1	2	0	1	2	0	0
Policy changes / uptake at the stage of issue identification and definition / agenda setting	0	0	4	2	2	2	4	0	3	2	5	0
Policy changes / uptake at the stage of data research and analysis	0	1	1	6	2	4	4	1	1	5	6	0
Policy changes / uptake at the stage of policy formulation	0	0	2	3	1	3	2	0	4	5	2	0
Policy changes / uptake at the stage of policy implementation	0	0	2	13	1	15	6	0	1	2	1	2

Technopolis based on AI-supported document analysis. Note: ECA = Europe and Central Asia; SAMENA = South Asia, Middle East and North Africa.

Table 19 Actor types affected per region

Actors_regions	Caribbean	Central Africa	Central America	East Africa	Southern Africa	West Africa	ECA	Pacific (PAC)	SAMENA	Southeast Asia (SEA)	Multiple Regions	Unknown
a) Ministry of Education Officials	1	3	18	41	12	38	20	2	9	19	52	4
b) Other Government Officials	0	0	0	8	0	1	2	0	3	4	7	0
c) Researchers/ Research Institutions	0	0	2	1	0	2	9	0	2	2	14	1
d) NGOs	0	0	3	2	0	2	3	0	2	2	1	0
e) School Principals and Administrators	0	2	2	2	0	3	2	0	1	2	2	0
f) School Teachers	2	3	7	17	0	10	8	0	8	11	2	0
h) Local Communities	0	1	11	6	0	1	0	0	1	4	0	0
i) Intergovernmental Organizations	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
j) Students	0	0	5	3	0	1	2	0	2	2	2	0
l) KIX research grantees	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0

Technopolis based on AI-supported document analysis. Note: ECA = Europe and Central Asia; SAMENA = South Asia, Middle East and North Africa.

Table 20 Developed competences per actor type

competences_actors	Ministry of Education Officials	Other Government Officials	Researchers / Research Institutions	NGOs	School Principals and Administrators	School Teachers	Local Communities	Intergovernmental Organizations	Students	KIX research grantees
Financial Analysis	5	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Digital Skills	14	4	3	0	1	13	3	0	3	0
Evaluation Strategies	9	1	8	1	0	3	3	0	2	1
Education Sector Analysis	27	0	1	0	0	1	3	0	0	1
Evidence-based policy design	31	4	12	1	0	0	1	0	1	1
Understanding and handling research and data analysis	33	6	14	0	2	7	4	0	1	2
Planning scaling processes	7	0	11	2	0	1	0	0	2	3
Teacher Training (e.g. on Inclusive Teaching, Reflective Teaching, Student-Centered Pedagogy, Educational Scripting)	20	7	5	2	3	53	9	0	11	1
Gender Equity and Social Inclusion	19	4	2	3	4	22	14	0	7	0
Knowledge about other education policy innovations	38	6	9	1	2	12	8	0	2	0
NAN	143	12	10	11	9	8	5	1	2	0

Technopolis based on AI-supported document analysis

Table 21 Developed competences per activity

Hub_or_research_activity / KIX Activity	**Research project**				**Regional Hub**								
competences_activities	research results: general findings	Meeting with KIX research grantees	Trainings	Other KIX activities	Case studies and working papers	Podcasts, newsletters, blogposts, videos	Conference, roundtable	National uptake forums	Webinars	One-on-one meetings with the KIX Hub team	Learning Cycle	Workshops	i) Other KIX activities
a) Financial Analysis	1	2	3	0	0	0	2	0	3	0	1	3	0
b) Digital Skills	24	7	28	0	1	0	7	1	2	0	2	4	1
c) Evaluation Strategies	9	3	14	0	0	0	2	0	4	0	4	6	0
d) Education Sector Analysis	7	5	15	0	0	0	9	0	3	1	4	7	0
e) Evidence-based policy design	11	5	15	0	0	0	7	0	14	1	10	10	0
f) Understanding and handling research and data analysis	25	8	37	0	0	0	11	0	9	0	11	12	0
g) Planning scaling processes	9	8	12	0	0	0	1	0	4	0	6	5	0
h) Teacher Training (e.g. on Inclusive Teaching, Reflective Teaching, Student-Centered Pedagogy, Educational Scripting)	60	15	90	0	2	0	11	1	6	0	3	7	1
i) Gender Equity and Social Inclusion	35	11	54	0	1	0	11	2	9	1	4	7	0
j) Knowledge about other education policy innovations	24	11	31	0	3	0	24	5	14	0	8	15	1
NAN	104	77	48	2	12	1	40	13	3	6	50	20	5

Technopolis based on AI-supported document analysis

Table 22 Areas in which skills or knowledge were strengthened

Categories	Hubs	Research Projects	Total Count
Teaching/ pedagogical skills (e.g. on Inclusive Teaching, Reflective Teaching, Student-Centered Pedagogy, Educational Scripting)	18	93	111
Knowledge about other education policy innovations	43	35	78
Gender Equity and Social Inclusion	19	56	75
Understanding and handling research and data analysis	32	37	69
Evidence-based policy design	34	17	51
Digital Skills	11	30	41
Education Sector Analysis	16	17	33
Evaluation Strategies	13	15	28
Planning scaling processes	13	13	26
Financial Analysis	3	6	9

Technopolis based on AI-supported document analysis, multiple choice applicable

Table 23 Outcome cases that report on changes at political level

Categories	Hubs	Research Projects	Total Count
Changes at the level of educational programs	15	74	89
Uptaking curriculum or training material	8	50	58
Changes at the strategic level or reforms	12	37	49
New standards	2	3	5
Other Policy Formats	0	1	1
Total	**37**	**165**	**202**

Technopolis based on AI-supported document analysis, multiple choice applicable

Table 24 Type of actions related to gender equality and social inclusion (GESI)

Categories	Hubs	Research Projects	Total Count
Inclusiveness regarding socio-economic status, ethnicity and class	38	73	111
Addressing gender norms in education	25	56	81
Disaggregated Data Collection	9	51	60
Awareness and Stereotype Change	17	43	60
Inclusiveness regarding disabilities	24	28	52
Improvements for Out of School Children	8	31	39
Gender-transformative Pedagogies	15	24	39
Digital Equity in Education	16	17	33
Gender Representation in Training	1	29	30

Inclusive Language and Teaching Strategies	3	22	25
Professional Development for Remote Teachers	7	10	17
Other GESI-related actions	2	3	5
Bias-Free Assessment Development	1	3	4
Distribution of Learning Devices	0	3	3

Technopolis based on AI-supported document analysis, multiple choice applicable

technopolis group

www.technopolis-group.com