3RD GPE KIX CONTINENTAL SYMPOSIUM ON RESEARCH IN EDUCATION

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

REPORT

PREPARED FOR:

GESCI

GPE-KIX SYMPOSIUM REPORT

1. INTRODUCTION

The Global Partnership for Education (GPE) Knowledge and Innovation Exchange (KIX) Africa 19 and Africa 21 Hubs organised a joint inter-hub research symposium bringing together regional and national policymakers, researchers, academics, and practitioners to exchange critical knowledge on innovations, evidence, and good practices in improving learning outcomes in education in African countries. The Symposium theme was based on the African Union Year of Education on. Educate an African fit for the 21st Century: Building resilient education systems for increased access to inclusive, lifelong, quality, and relevant learning in Africa (AU 2024)

The symposium was organised by the consortium partners managing the Global Partnership for Education's (GPE's) Knowledge and Innovation Exchange (KIX) Africa 19 and 21 Hubs. The Knowledge and Innovation Exchange (KIX) Africa 19 and 21 Hubs. These Hubs were established by GPE with funding from the International Development and Research Centre (IDRC), and whose purpose is to collect, generate, exchange and facilitate the effective use of data, knowledge and innovation for education policy formulation and implementation.

Consortium partners for KIX Africa 19 Hub are UNESCO International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa (UNESCO IICBA); UNICEF Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office (UNICEF ESARO); and the African Union (AU). KIX Africa 21 Hub is coordinated by the Institut de la Francophonie pour l'éducation et la formation (IFEF); Conférence des ministres de l'Éducation des États et gouvernements de la Francophonie (CONFEMEN); and Agence universitaire de la Francophonie (AUF).

The KIX Africa 21 Hub includes the following 21 partner countries: Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Ivory Coast, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Republic of Congo, Senegal, Togo, and Sao Tome and Principe.

The KIX Africa 19 Hub includes the following partner countries: Eritrea, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

This symposium brought together participants from the KIX 19 and KIX 21, as well as other key stakeholders, including policymakers, researchers, and education leaders, to discuss strategies for improving education outcomes in Africa, based on research

findings. Of the 230 persons registered for the Symposium, representing 20 countries[1] from KIX Africa 21 and 19 from KIX Africa 19, some 43% of which were officials from Ministries of Education in these countries.

Among the researchers making presentations were those who work within or close to the challenges and opportunities in education in Africa, and others who have taken the trouble to approach the vicinity of the challenges in order to incorporate and reflect local and user perspectives. Many of the presenters are from ministries of Education and public institutions including teachers from schools. But private institutions and other organisations have also presented and they are important stakeholders.

These were selected from over 760 abstracts that were submitted in response to the Call for the Symposium.

The presentations were very well received by the participants, for being very informative, some provocative, some very innovative, and some emphasising or confirming some important well known truths.

Participants appreciated the support of IDRC, and the work that GPE is doing in managing the resources donated for education development. Although Public spending on education in Africa is on average over 4% of GDP - which is reasonable as prescribed by experts, it is still not enough (ranging from 1.7% in CAR to 17% in Namibia). External support is still valuable, especially when it is strategic and catalytic, strengthening the generation and use of knowledge towards building quality, resilience and inclusion in education in our countries.

The GPE KIX symposium has reaffirmed the importance of collaboration among governments, researchers, and education stakeholders in Africa and beyond. The shared commitment to improving education outcomes, addressing barriers to learning, and utilizing data and research in policymaking is vital for the continued progress of education across the continent.

This report presents the proceedings of the Symposium, the key findings and the policy take-aways drawn from the presentations and the insightful discussions that followed.

2. PURPOSE OF THE KIX SYMPOSIUM

In today's interconnected global landscape, knowledge and skill acquisition are central to economic and societal prosperity. African countries have made notable strides in expanding educational opportunities, however, sub-Saharan Africa has the highest rates of education exclusion. Over one-fifth of children between the ages of about 6 and 11 are out of school, followed by one-third of youth between the ages of about 12

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[1] Cape Verde dropped out enroute for health reasons. Source: GESCI. Registrations. Final List 4 Conference Package.

and 14. According to UIS data, almost 60% of youth between the ages of about 15 and 17 are not in school.(UIS 2019). The region has made significant strides in recent decades, but still grapples with challenges in education quality, exacerbated by several factors: insufficient teacher training, undervalued teaching profession, curricula and teaching methods that are not aligned with changing times and the demands of industry. These issues disproportionately affect girls and marginalised communities, leading to 88% of primary school aged children in Africa failing to meet minimum reading and mathematics proficiency by the end of primary education (UIS 2017).

In response, the focus has shifted internationally, regionally, and nationally from mere educational access to the enhancement of teaching quality and learner outcomes, promoting more inclusive education. This pursuit aligns with the vision of equitable, quality education as outlined in the SDG 4 – Education 2030 Framework for Action, the Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA) 2016–2025, and other regional and national policies.

The urgency to elevate learning outcomes, teaching efficacy, curricula, and assessments predates COVID-19, but the pandemic, which disrupted the education of roughly 297 million African learners, has intensified this need. The educational landscape has transformed, with significant impacts on both the quality of learning outcomes and the nature of the learning process.

There exists a significant gap in context-specific research and evidence regarding the efficacy of educational interventions in Africa, their methods, and implementation costs. Where evidence is available, its dissemination and the capacity to utilise such evidence remains limited, especially among the region's key educational stakeholders. Uncovering evidence that can scale innovations to enhance learning outcomes is crucial for achieving the continental goals in CESA and the education dependent goals of Agenda 2063 and SDGs. The AU IPED has had significant success in addressing the Data Challenge on the continent through a series of KIX learning webinars, peer learnings and national policy dialogues that have exposed the potential that innovations, research and knowledge sharing can unlock system blockages, and democratise information down to the lowest levels.

The 3rd GPE KIX Africa symposium is a strategic opportunity in this AU year that has put the spotlight on education. The outcome of the symposium will be able to contribute to charting the way into the next Decade of Education for Africa under the new CESA.

3. SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

The Symposium was organised into three days of sessions including plenary presentations, thematic parallel sessions where presenters and participants were able

to delve deeper into specific topics, and poster presentations where presenters presented their findings to standing audiences. The culmination of the Symposium, where participants split into three groups representing KIX Africa 21, KIX Africa 19 and a third group open to all researchers, was to identify the main lessons shared by the research presented and propose a call to action by governments and partners to adopt and implement associated strategies.

4. Day One: November 20, 2024

5. Opening Session

The symposium commenced with an introduction by Mr. Adoumtar Noubatour, Coordinator of the Pan-African Institute for Education for Development (AU). The primary objective was to officially inaugurate the symposium, present its goals, and emphasize the importance of partnership-based progress in African education.

Several distinguished speakers shared their insights and perspectives. Ms. Tricia Wind from GPE KIX, IDRC emphasized how the symposium exemplified KIX's vision, particularly highlighting the crucial involvement of researchers within ministries of education and the importance of generating research to inform policy and practice.

Dr. Margarita Licht, representing the Global Partnership for Education, outlined GPE's steadfast commitment to transforming education in low-income countries. She detailed their successful partnership with IDRC, which had resulted in funding for 70 research grants in 2020, and stressed the importance of collaboration with policymakers to ensure research directly influences decision-making processes.

UNESCO IICBA's Dr. Quentin Wodon provided a balanced perspective, acknowledging the limited progress of the past decade while highlighting effective strategies, particularly in improving foundational learning. He emphasized KIX's valuable role in fostering collaboration between researchers, ministries, and policymakers.

Professor Mohamed Belhocine, African Union Commissioner for ESTI, shared significant developments, including member states' approval of key ideas for the AU summit. He emphasized the crucial role of research-informed ideas in addressing African citizens' needs and aspirations. The Commissioner noted the impressive scope of research submissions from 52 countries, with Kenya and Cameroon leading the way. He outlined key focus areas including addressing barriers to lifelong learning, increasing access to rural education, and improving girls' education, while emphasizing the importance of holistic approaches and the vital connection between education and skills training.

Minister Khatri Addouh of Education Saharawi concluded the opening session by expressing optimism for enhanced educational partnerships and acknowledging GPE's crucial role in resource mobilization. The Minister highlighted their shared vision for 21st-century education and discussed notable progress in primary and secondary education access. Particular emphasis was placed on the importance of TVET and the potential of digital technology, along with calls for data-focused strategies and increased emphasis on STEM learning.

Throughout the opening session, speakers consistently emphasized themes of partnership, research-based decision making, and their shared commitment to improving African education through collaborative efforts between various international and regional organizations.

6. High Level Panel

The High-Level Panel on the theme "Educating the African Child for the 21st Century" brought together key education stakeholders and thought leaders to explore strategies for preparing African students to thrive in an increasingly complex world. Moderated by Dr. Quenton Wodon, Director of IICBA, and documented by Rapporteur Prof. Bolanle Akeredolu-Ale, Rector of the Pan-African University, the session encouraged open dialogue on impactful policies, necessary reforms, and the role of research in shaping education systems.

Panelists were first asked to suggest a single policy or intervention that could significantly improve education across Africa. Mr. Ousman Bah, Deputy Permanent Secretary representing the Ministry of Education in The Gambia, emphasized the critical need to prioritize STEM education, noting that countries like The Gambia face substantial gaps in this area. He highlighted the importance of targeted investment to build capacity in science and technology. Mr. Jerome Morrissey, CEO of the Global E-Schools and Communities Initiative (GESCI), focused on bridging the gap between theory and practice, advocating for the Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA) as a framework to align education with workforce demands, provided it receives adequate funding and support.

Dr. Kilemi Mwiria, a special advisor on education and policy expert, stressed the importance of teaching students critical thinking and civic engagement, proposing that education systems empower young people to question governance structures and actively participate in societal development. Hon. Minister Khatri Addouh from the Ministry of Education in Sahrawi emphasized teacher motivation, community involvement, and efficient school management as foundational elements for improving education. Prof. Mohamed Belhocine, Commissioner for Education, Science, Technology, and Innovation at the African Union, highlighted the need for free and accessible education, advocating for the removal of school fees and debt relief to redirect funds into education.

The discussion then turned to reconsidering existing policies or practices that may require reform. Mr. Ousman Bah called for better financial management in education, recommending that countries allocate at least 20% of their budgets to education and ensure efficient use of resources. Mr. Jerome Morrissey advocated for prioritizing foundational skills such as literacy, numeracy, and digital literacy, emphasizing the need for curriculum reforms to focus on these core competencies. Dr. Kilemi Mwiria urged African countries to reduce their dependence on foreign aid, instead advocating for domestic funding mechanisms and greater accountability in resource allocation. Hon. Minister Khatri Addouh suggested engaging African elites to contribute intellectually and financially to education systems, while also calling for more effective resource management. Prof. Mohamed Belhocine proposed reducing academic burdens in school curriculums and aligning them with relevant skills and scientific advancements to meet the demands of the modern world.

Finally, the panelists shared how research has influenced their perspectives on education. Mr. Ousman Bah highlighted the importance of data management and analysis in shaping evidence-based education policies. Dr. Kilemi Mwiria reflected on how research findings have reinforced the need for curriculum reforms tailored to students' and society's evolving needs. Hon. Minister Khatri Addouh emphasized the value of research in informing decision-making and driving meaningful change in education systems.

Throughout the session, additional insights emerged. Dr. Quenton Wodon raised the issue of inclusive education, particularly for children with disabilities, and advocated for accelerated learning programs to address the needs of out-of-school children. The panelists reached a consensus on the critical importance of teacher training, community involvement, and effective school management in advancing education across Africa. These discussions provided actionable recommendations to guide policymakers and stakeholders in addressing the challenges of 21st-century education for African students.

6.1   Plenary 1 - Professional Development, Educational Data, and Accelerated Programs: Experiences in Innovation

The first plenary session focused on professional development, education data and accelerated programmes: experiences of innovation. It was led by Dr Hamidou Boukary (KIX Senior Programme Specialist, IDRC) as moderator and Ms Asterie Nyirahabimana (University of Rwanda, College of Education) as rapporteur. The session took place in the auditorium (11.30-13:00).

The first presentation, by Mr Thierry Gaillat, focused on the development of in-service teacher training. Using a heuristic approach based on the PERFORM project, the

author highlighted the need to ensure the professionalisation of post-basic education teachers through a continuing professional development programme based on a mixed mode of delivery. The second presentation focused on the use of data in GPE partner countries. On this topic, author Mr.Alpha Bah (UIS Regional Office for Africa) said that since 2018, GPE has launched initiatives to find solutions for education data system and the use of data to support policy, management and evaluation. He spoke about various data strategy innovations that Ministries are considering globally such as UNICEFs Data Must Speak, the MICs EAGLE, and learning assessment tools such as PAL ELANA and ALIVE, the former targeting literacy and numeracy and the later, life skills in secondary. The success of these innovations was depending on co-creation between Ministries and researchers.

Professor Efua Irène Amenyah Sarr (Gaston Berger University) addressed the challenges facing the teaching profession. The study found that the professional training programme for teachers appears to be mediocre and the amount of training time is insufficient for a professional career. The fourth presentation focused on the cost-effectiveness of accelerated education programmes. Leslie Casely-Hayford (Associates for Change) set out to demonstrate the adaptation of accelerated education programmes through three models, namely fast Track Schools, complementary Basic Education, girls' Empowerment Model to address out-of-school children in West Africa.

The last speaker was Mr. Wilder da Mota Viegas Dias (Ministry of Education, São Tomé and Príncipe). His contribution focused on the development of inclusive education in São Tomé and Príncipe. The author argues in favour of more accessible, high-quality inclusive education policies in São Tomé and Príncipe and throughout Africa. To this end, he stresses the importance of strengthening the allocation and management of resources dedicated to the development of inclusive education.

6.1.1 Parallel 1.1: Leadership and Educational Reforms for Inclusive Education in Africa

Mr. Shem Bodo, Senior Officer, Association of Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) and Professor Niane Boubacar (FASTEF-UCAD) chaired this session as moderator and rapporteur respectively.

The first presentation was made by Ms. Jessica Bergmann (UNICEF Innocenti). This comparative research highlighted the issues of leadership and effective teaching and learning, leadership and community engagement, and women's leadership in education. She highlighted the constraints on women's access to school leadership positions and the need to analyse the factors that explain the performance of female leaders. Ms. Mariama Fall's presentation addressed the lack of evidence-based knowledge about financial education, the inefficiency of young people in managing the financial resources provided, and the impact of religious and cultural attitudes in promoting financial education. To this end, she proposes a review of the curriculum, which could lead to a separate 'financial education' course or subject. Mr. Napthalin

Atanga's (NEXTGenu-ST) contribution focused on addressing early gaps in mathematics. For that purpose, he emphasised representations as a methodology to facilitate acquisition (mathematical mindset) and proposed a reform of basic mathematics education to strengthen basic skills. The last presentation was on school governance structures and inclusive leadership in Benin. In this summary study, the author, Mr. Akpo J. G. Dekpo (University of Abomey-Calavi), focuses on the establishment of inclusive school management bodies and school parliaments.

6.1.2 Parallel 1.2: Strengthening Education Management Information Systems (EMIS)

This session was led by Mr. Lukman Jaji (AU-IPED) as moderator, and Prof. Madoue F. Akouete Epse H. (CBRSI-Béni) as rapporteur.

Ms. Sophie Kousiakis (University of Oslo) focused on digitisation processes for education management systems. She proposed the development of an open-source digital platform solution. This platform could have a flexible, modular architecture that would allow the integration of all related education databases in a single data warehouse, school enrolment counts, unique learner IDs and greater engagement of different actors in the education sector working together effectively.

Mr. Adama Abdoul-Aziz (Innovations for Poverty Action) presented the use of integrated data systems in Côte d'Ivoire's education system through an Education Laboratory. This laboratory has as its main objectives of ensuring the coherence of data management in the education sector and supporting policy development.

The use of predictive analytics in Rwanda's EMIS was also one of the topics covered in this session. The author, Mr. Jean Paul Nizeyimana (University of Kigali), and this innovation focused on the critical challenge of identifying and supporting struggling students in the Rwandan education system.

Mr Nyashadzashe Mangozhe (Ministry of Education, Zimbabwe) presented Data Planning for Climate Change Adaptation in Education. This study addressed the critical need to integrate climate change adaptation and environmental sustainability into Zimbabwe's education sector plans, budgets and strategies given the country's predicted worsening climate change by 2050.

6.1.3 Parallel 1.3: Equitable Access to Education in Africa
This session was chaired by Ms. Fatimata Ba Diallo (PACTE-CONFEMEN) with Prof Jonathan Fletcher (University of Ghana) as rapporteur.

This session featured presentations by Ms. Namenda Malupande (CAMFED Zambia), Mr Mangawindin G. R. Ouedraogo (ENS de Koudougou), Mr. Patrick Walugembe (IDRC) and Mr. Araba G. Rock Floriant (Plan Media, University of Abomey-Calavi). The first presentation focused on the problems of girls' limited access to quality education. It highlights the need for community support such as involving stakeholders, especially governments, in identifying problems and co-designing intervention structures to improve girls' education outcomes. The second paper continues in the same vein, highlighting the persistent gender gap in mathematics achievement. The author notes that these disparities can be addressed by identifying the factors that contribute to girls' success in mathematics and by enhancing these factors through school-home collaboration in ways that build girls' confidence in studying mathematics. Mr. Patrick Walugembe (IDRC) as for him, to mobilise knowledge and awareness to prevent young people from dropping out of school and to help all boys and girls, especially the latter, to gain access to quality education. The last paper in this session focused on modern proximity education policies in Benin. The paper identified barriers and difficulties such as the lack of inclusive policies adapted to the specific needs of marginalised groups.

6.2   Poster Presentations

The first round of poster presentations included ten posters by Mamosa Masia (Ministry of Education, Lesotho), Pacifique Nkundabanzi (University of Kigali), James Renner (Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education, Sierra Leone), Johnson Hinneh (Ministry of Education, Liberia), Seedy Jallow (Ministry of Education, The Gambia), Kemba Ranavela (Private School Les Colibris, Madagascar), Yasnoga Félicité Barro Coulibaly (ENS of Burkina Faso), Khadidiatou Sow (FAWE), Atsu Jerry Aziawa (HISP West and Central Africa, Togo), and Gninneyo S.-P. Niya (ENS-BF).

Findings from the poster presentations highlighted the importance of educational technology such as the importance of EMIS implementation for equity and efficiency in education. The relevance of In-service teacher training were also pointed out with the highlight on improving initial teacher training using virtual reality and the role of teachers in curriculum reform. Some contributors also raise the claim for the development of inclusive education with their addresses focusing on the importance of teacher training in inclusive education, the impact of equitable access to inclusive education in Africa, the resilience of local communities facing of security challenges. The issue of gender disparities in education was mentioned and the need of establishing a social support and mentoring programme to improve the quality of education for marginalised girls was raised.

6.3 Key Lessons learned from Day One

1. **Capacity building and certification of teachers**: support the generation of research evidence in teacher education programmes, professionalising the

teaching profession with a robust and effective continuous professional development, developing innovative policies in partnership and developing programmes to address teacher turnover and strengthen professionalism.

2. **Strengthening evidence-based decision making**: Invest in robust data systems to support policy for effective governance is key to an inclusive education environment. The use of shared leadership by education systems increases resilience and effectiveness in meeting the needs of children in an inclusive education environment. To this end, it appears that school governing bodies, such as school councils and parliaments contribute to the development of learners as confident leaders of tomorrow.

3. **The promotion of digital platforms to improve EMIS: develop an EMIS Policy to ensure coherence,** data protection strategies promote the use of open source technology, and consider the use of machine learning can be used for forecasting likely student outcomes so as to address risks preemptively. The importance of not using "off-the-shelf" systems but to consider using open source solutions that are modular and incremental in approach building local capacity such as DHIS2 for Education was a key focus,

4. **Addressing gender disparities**: establish focused structures that enable stakeholders to co-create interventions to address gender gaps in across all dimensions, specifically mathematics achievement, promoting strategies such as encouraging girls' enrolment, creating safe spaces, empowering girls, etc., should be at the heart of any gender-sensitive policy to address gender gaps in educational attainment.

5. **The promotion of inclusive education**: Create modern, formal community schools will help to promote the education of children with disabilities in Benin.

6. **Building long-term climate resilience capacity in the education sector.**

The first day ended with the welcome ceremony organised by GPE KIX at the AU Lobby. This ceremony was managed by Ms Angela Arnott who introduced the key VIPs who included, Dr. Aboubacar Kampo (UNICEF Representative in Ethiopia), Ms. Tricia Wind, Program Manager (GPE KIX, IDRC), Dr. Margarita Licht (Director of Partnerships, Global Partnership for Education), Prof. Madougou Saidou, Director of the African Union Department of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation (ESTI). It was noted that nearly half of all participants were from research organizations and the remainder government officials and development partners, which was a first for this series of Symposiums.

7. Day Two: November 21, 2024

The second day was launched by the Masters of Ceremony, Dr. Victoria Kisaakye, Coordinator of the KIX Africa 19 Hub, UNESCO IICBA, followed by two opening remarks by Ms. Helene Cron, Education Specialist, UNICEF ESARO, and Ms. Margarita Lopez,

Representative of CONFEM, both consortium partners of KIX Africa 19 Hub. These speeches emphasized the importance of international collaboration in fostering equitable education reforms across Africa.

This second day was marked by three main events: a plenary session, two series of parallel sessions, a poster session, and the celebration of the 25th anniversary of UNESCO-IICBA.

7.1 Plenary 2 - Scaling Reforms for Inclusive and Equitable Education in Africa

Moderated by **Dr. Pauline Essah** (Education Sub Saharan Africa - ESSA), with **Prof. Mathieu Lang** (Université de Moncton) as Rapporteur, this plenary explored successful strategies for scaling educational reforms to achieve inclusivity and equity across Africa.

The four papers for this session were presented by Ms. Rosa Mahdjoub (ONEF-France); Mr George Evans Owino (African Early Childhood Network, Kenya); Ms. Dela Sorsy (Université de Lomé); and Ms. Maya Elliot (Brookings Institute). This session provided a comprehensive overview of key aspects of early childhood and inclusive education in Africa. One paper presented data-driven insights on early childhood education outcomes in twelve West African countries, highlighting the long-term impact of preschool education. Another reviewed early learning initiative, focusing on best practices and challenges faced by GPE partner countries. A subsequent discussion explored the integration of culturally and linguistically inclusive approaches in Francophone African curricula, emphasizing the importance of adapting education systems to local contexts. Finally, the session addressed the need for equity-focused strategies when implementing large-scale educational programs, ensuring that reforms prioritize inclusivity and fairness. Unfortunately, due to technical problems, Ms. Maya Elliot was unable to make her virtual presentation. A robust Q&A session followed, with participants exploring the implications of these reforms for policy and practice across diverse African contexts.

7.2 The second series of parallel session

After the coffee break, participants split into three concurrent sessions on different topics: (1) Enhancing Teacher Professionalism and Effectiveness in Africa, (2) Leveraging Data for Improved Educational Outcomes and Sustainability, (3) Promoting Inclusive Education for Vulnerable Children.

7.2.1 Parallel 2.1: Enhancing Teacher Professionalism and Effectiveness in Africa

Moderated by Mr. Remy Yameogo (IFEF-OIF) and reported by Prof. Jonathan Fletcher (University of Ghana), the first parallel session of Day 2 included four presenters: Mr

Mamadou Dia (ULSH-Bamako); Mr. Amanuel Araya (Ministry of Education, Eritrea); Mr. Nkemngong Atemnkeng (National Centre for Education, Cameroon); and Mr. Temechegn Engida (IICBA UNESCO). This highlighted diverse approaches and challenges in advancing the teaching profession across the continent. A case study from Mali showcased the pivotal role of learning communities in enhancing teacher professionalism through collaborative practices at the local level. Meanwhile, insights from Eritrea shed light on the unique challenges and scenarios for promoting teacher professionalism in a context marked by resource limitations and systemic barriers. From Cameroon, a study demonstrated the effectiveness of cooperative learning techniques in improving student comprehension, particularly in geography, underscoring the impact of pedagogical innovations. Additionally, the session explored progress and challenges in digitizing higher education institutions across Africa, emphasizing the need for systemic reforms to integrate digital tools that support teachers and improve their professional growth. Together, these presentations painted a comprehensive picture of the pathways to enhancing teacher effectiveness in diverse African contexts.

7.2.2 Parallel 2.2: Leveraging Data for Improved Educational Outcomes and Sustainability

The second session was chaired by Dr. Ian MacPherson (GPE) and Prof. Madoue F. Akouete Epse H. (CBRSI-Bénin). Four speakers presented their papers: Sani Gigo (AIN-eurêka); Mr. Mesele Araya (University of Cambridge); Ms. Huguette Rakotoarivony (CONAMEPT, Madagascar); and Mr. Adam Mohamed (EFASOM, Somalia). This session showcased diverse perspectives on how data can drive meaningful improvements in education systems across Africa. One presentation examined traditional success rate formulae used in schools, emphasizing their limitations and proposing more accurate methods for educational assessment. Another analyzed the role of school grants in Ethiopia, demonstrating how targeted funding can bridge equity gaps and improve learning outcomes in underserved regions. The integration of environmental education into Madagascar's curriculum was also highlighted, showcasing a commitment to sustainability and preparing learners for climate-conscious futures. Additionally, findings from a Knowledge, Attitude, and Practices survey conducted in Mogadishu revealed critical insights into public perceptions of education, offering actionable data to inform policy. Together, these studies underscored the transformative potential of leveraging data to enhance both equity and sustainability, ultimately reinforcing the need for data-driven decision-making in education systems across the continent.

7.2.3 Parallel 2.3: Promoting Inclusive Education for Vulnerable Children in Africa

The third parallel session of Day two was on "Promoting Inclusive Education for Vulnerable Children," chaired by Prof. Mathieu Lang (Université de Moncton) and

Prof. Betty Ezati (Makerere University). Mr. Mamadou A. Diallo (Le Karamokoein); Mr Prosper Hakizimana (Ministry of Education, Rwanda); Mr. Michel Sagbo (Instead), and Ms. Angella Bulumu (Cohere Malawi) were the four presenters. Their papers highlighted innovative approaches and critical challenges in ensuring equitable learning opportunities for marginalized groups. One presentation explored the role of extracurricular activities in fostering inclusion within African orphanages, emphasizing their impact on social integration and personal development for vulnerable children. Another analyzed the transformative role of assistive technologies in enabling inclusive education in Rwandan schools, showcasing how these tools empower students with disabilities to access quality learning. The session also examined the effects of functional disabilities on academic progression in Benin, particularly how these challenges contribute to higher repetition rates among affected students. Finally, Uganda's efforts in building inclusive education systems for refugee children with disabilities were discussed, demonstrating the importance of resilience-focused strategies to support some of the continent's most marginalized learners. Together, these discussions underscored the urgent need for holistic, context-specific approaches to promote inclusion across diverse African educational settings.

7.3 The third series of parallel sessions

After lunch, another series of parallel sessions was held, featuring three sessions focused on innovative practices for inclusive education, emotional resilience, and teacher development.

7.3.1 Parallel 2.4: Transforming Teacher Development in Africa

This session was chaired by Dr. Temegen Engida (UNESCO IICBA) and the rapportuer was Dr. Djiraro Mangue C. L. (University of Maroua, Cameroon). Four papers were presented by Ms. Hellen Inyega (University of Nairobi); Mr. Kossi Agbogan (DPIP-Togo); Mr. Lovemore Ndlovu (UNESCO, Zimbabwe); and Ms. Ernestine Tani Wirngo (Higher Teachers' Training College of Yaoundé). This session delved into innovative strategies for enhancing teacher development across Africa, emphasising inclusivity and continuous professional growth. They highlighted innovative and practical approaches to enhancing the effectiveness and inclusivity of teacher training across the continent. One presentation outlined transformative teacher training frameworks in Kenya, demonstrating how tailored approaches can significantly improve teaching effectiveness and professional growth. Another focused on leveraging Open Educational Resources (OER) in Togo, showcasing how online platforms are advancing continuous teacher development. A particularly innovative approach from Zimbabwe highlighted the use of WhatsApp as a low-tech solution to facilitate teacher training in resource-constrained communities, ensuring accessibility and impact. In Cameroon, the discussion explored how targeted teacher training significantly enhances the implementation of inclusive teaching practices in primary schools. Collectively, the session underscored the importance of integrating both

technological innovations and localised strategies to address the diverse and unique challenges faced by educators in Africa.

7.3.2 Parallel 2.5: Emotional Resilience and Interactive Approaches for Child Development

Moderated by Mr. Segueda B. Bonaventure (MENAPLN, Burkina Faso) and reported by Prof. Antony Ndungu (University of Nairobi), the fifth session of Day Two was on "Emotional Resilience and Interactive Approaches in Educational Contexts," and presented by Mr. Emmanuel Wepngong (KIX STEPS Project); Mr.Niyomukiza Willy (Institut de Formation et de Recherche Démographiques); Ms. Priyanka Upreti (Global Schools Forum); and Mr.Pascal A. Bamalembuko (Institut Supérieur Pédagogique de Bukavu). This session examined creative approaches to bolster emotional resilience and interactive learning for African children. Key presentations highlighted innovative strategies for fostering emotional strength and interactive learning in young learners. One presentation showcased a hands-on mathematics program for preschool children, demonstrating its effectiveness in enhancing early numeracy skills and building confidence in foundational learning. Another analyzed early childhood factors that shape literacy and numeracy development in Burundi, emphasizing the importance of addressing these determinants to improve educational outcomes. A dual-generation approach focused on holistic child development by addressing the interconnected needs of both parents and children in refugee settings, providing a supportive framework for emotional resilience. Additionally, the session introduced "AKBAL," a digital platform designed to aid early learning and revision for preschoolers, showcasing the potential of technology to transform interactive education. Collectively, these discussions underscored the critical role of innovative programs and technologies in improving learning outcomes while nurturing emotional resilience among vulnerable children.

7.3.3 Parallel 2.6: Innovative Practices for Inclusive Education for Vulnerable Children

The last parallel session of Day two "Innovative Practices and Policies for Inclusive and Equitable Education" was led by Mme Sophie Cerbelle (Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie) and Prof. Mendisu B. Sisay (The Africa Institute). Three presentations were discussed[2]: Mr. Kennedy Monari (PEER Network); Gninneyo S.-P. Niya (ENS-BF); and Ms. Mary Goretti Nakabugo (UWEZO Uganda). Key findings showcased transformative strategies to support vulnerable learners and promote inclusivity in education. One presentation discussed policymakers' perceptions of

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[2] Presenter: Dr CHADHOULI Bastoine IGEN des Comores / Université de Toliara Madagascar was unable to participate in the Symposium.

Uganda's progressive education approach for children affected by conflict, highlighting its potential as a model for addressing the unique needs of displaced and marginalised students. Another advocated for more inclusive evaluation methods to tackle persistent inequalities in mainstream schools, ensuring that all learners are assessed fairly and equitably. Additionally, contextualised tools for measuring life skills and values were presented, emphasising the importance of collaboration and innovation in designing assessment frameworks tailored to diverse cultural and educational contexts. The session underscored the critical need for targeted interventions and adaptive policies that prioritise equity and inclusivity, paving the way for sustainable educational reform across Africa.

7.4 Poster Presentations 2

The last Posters Session of the symposium included thirteen presentations by the following presenters: Mr Ephrem Tuyisenge (Open University of Tanzania); Mr: Fredrick Kanobe (Kyambogo University, Uganda); Ms. Raviro Mawarire (Joshua Nkomo Polytech); Ms. Hawa Mohamed (University of Woldia); Ms.Lydie Shima (Laterite); Ms.Maimbolwa Namuchana (University of Zambia); Mr.Nebgniga L. Lankoande O. (Ministère de l'Éducation, Burkina Faso); Ms. Miriam Chickering (NextGenU.org/STEPS); Mr. Ndzié Pierrette A. M. N. (Ministry of Secondary Education, Cameroun); Mr. Marius F. Faitchou (Université de N'Djaména); Ms.Tcheundjio Rosaline (Université de Yaoundé 1); Mr.Constantin Ntiranyibagira (Université du Burundi); and Mr. A.B. Reine Bossa Epse Hounguevou (Association des Personnes Rénovatrices des Technologies Traditionnelles, Bénin).

The findings from the poster presentations revealed significant advancements and persistent challenges in various aspects of education across Africa. In technology, the integration of robotics into classrooms in Rwanda demonstrated strong potential for engaging students in complex STEM concepts, while AI applications in Chad were found to address gaps in teaching quality. Conversely, a Ugandan study highlighted critical barriers to educational technology adoption, including insufficient infrastructure and inadequate user training. Teacher development programs showcased the efficacy of low-tech solutions, such as WhatsApp in Zimbabwe and Open Educational Resources (OER) in Togo, in empowering educators and enhancing teaching practices. In Cameroon, structured training programs have fostered more inclusive pedagogical approaches. Inclusivity was further advanced by bilingual education using sign language in Burkina Faso, which improved accessibility for hearing-impaired students, and self-regulation techniques in Cameroon, which supported learners with autism. Gender equity initiatives in Benin and Burundi achieved progress by addressing disparities through targeted audits and reforms. Meanwhile, in Rwanda, evidence highlighted the importance of quality teaching practices in boosting student outcomes, complemented by the successful application of OER in STEM education across East Africa to reduce equity gaps.

Innovative ideas showcased during the sessions underscored the transformative potential of technology and localised approaches. Robotics and AI emerged as groundbreaking tools for enhancing STEM education, setting new standards for teaching and learning experiences across the continent. Scalable, cost-effective solutions, such as WhatsApp and OER, provided innovative methods for advancing teacher training, particularly in resource-limited settings. Inclusivity efforts were strengthened by contextualised practices like sign language integration and self-regulation strategies for learners with disabilities, serving as replicable models across diverse educational contexts. Gender-sensitive audits in policy and program design offered actionable strategies to combat systemic inequalities and promote equitable access to education. The STEPS Initiative's use of OER in STEM education stood out as a significant advancement, addressing resource scarcity while ensuring inclusivity and equity in science education. These innovations highlight the potential for Africa to lead with context-specific, technology-driven solutions that prioritise inclusivity and equity in education.

The second day ended with a celebration of UNESCO IICBA's 25 years of contributions to African education. Remarks were made by esteemed guests, including Dr. Quentin Wodon (UNESCO) and H.E. Birhanu Nega (Minister of Education, Ethiopia). A reception thereafter offered further networking opportunities.

7.5 Key lessons learned from Day Two

1. **Scaling reforms for inclusive and equitable education:** Invest in preschool education and culturally inclusive curricula, alongside equity-focused scaling strategies, is essential for achieving sustainable educational reforms in Africa.
2. **Teacher professionalism and development:** Empower educators requires systemic investments in localised models, low-tech solutions, and structured training programs tailored to diverse educational contexts.
3. **Leveraging data for improved outcomes:** Accurate data metrics and robust systems are critical for evidence-based policymaking, equitable resource allocation, and sustainability in education.
4. **Promoting inclusive education for vulnerable groups:** Holistic and adaptive approaches, including assistive technologies and extracurricular programs, are vital for addressing the unique needs of marginalised learners.
5. **Innovative practices in education:** Cutting-edge technologies like robotics and AI, combined with Open Educational Resources, are revolutionising teaching quality and equity in education.
6. **Building emotional resilience in learners:** Interactive programs and emotional support models are crucial for enhancing learning outcomes and resilience among vulnerable children.
7. **Gender equity in education:** Targeted audits and collaborative initiatives address systemic disparities and foster gender equity across various educational settings.

8. **Enhancing the impact of preschool education:** Early childhood development must address both supply and demand by raising awareness among parents through targeted parental education programs.
9. **Promoting bilingualism:** Strengthening policies that encourage bilingual education is essential for fostering linguistic inclusivity and equity in African schools.
10. **Investing in teacher training:** Increased investments in both initial and continuous teacher training programs are crucial for improving teaching quality and student outcomes.
11. **Developing localised teaching materials:** Producing teaching resources in local languages ensures cultural relevance and accessibility for diverse learner populations.
12. **Reducing regional disparities:** Harmonising education reforms across regions is key to addressing inequities and promoting balanced educational development.
13. **Targeted training programs:** Providing context-specific initial and in-service training for teachers equips them with the skills to meet the needs of diverse learners effectively.
14. **Decolonizing African education systems:** Transforming the educational paradigm by prioritising national languages is critical for fostering a science-driven and culturally relevant educational framework.

8. Day Three: November 22, 2024

The activities of the last day of the Symposium were opened at 9:00 AM by the Master of Ceremonies, Mrs. Fatimata Ba Diallo (Coordinator of PACTE, CONFEMEN). This was followed by introductory remarks by Dr. Maïmouna Sissoko Touré (Coordinator of the KIX Africa 21 Centre, IFEF-OIF) and Mr. Shem Bodo (Senior Programmes Officer, Association for the Development of Education in Africa).

The last day was structured around four main activities: the plenary session, the three parallel sessions, feedback on the lessons learnt during the three days of the symposium and the round tables organised for KIX 19 participants, KIX 21 participants and researchers.

8.1 Plenary 3 - Strengthening Education in Africa: Management, Inclusion, Data, and Research for a Sustainable Future

The third plenary session on "Strengthening Education in Africa: Governance, Inclusion, Data and Research for a Sustainable Future, began at 9:30. Prof. Erica Frank (University of British Columbia) was the moderator and Prof. Mathieu Lang (University of Moncton) the rapporteur. The session took place in the auditorium.

During this session, Dr.Richard Charron (EduGestion, Canada) and Dr.Pauline Essah (Education Sub-Saharan Africa-ESSA) presented their respective papers on the quality of management as a key to the resilience of education systems and the visibility of education data and evidence in Africa. Ms. Émilie Martin (UNESCO-IIEP) and Dr. Liesel Ebersohn (President, World Education Research Association, South Africa) presented their papers virtually online. Their contributions focused on using data for climate adaptation planning in education and developing an appropriate education research framework for the Global South.

The first presentation shows that better management leads to better education. The development of management skills must become a priority, given the role that administrators can play as a lever for educational success. The second presentation tells us that to better manage education systems, including schools, administrators need evidence. The African Education Research Database (AERD) was created to address this challenge. The third presentation shows an effective way to use data in a crisis situation. Good data at all times makes it possible to know the groups and populations at risk, the progress of initiatives on the ground and the implementation of services. The final presentation presented an analytical framework for publishing and assessing the quality of research across the spectrum of 7 filters. This innovation has the potential to improve the quality of research in terms of its design, implementation and publication, particularly for the Global South.

8.1.1 Parallel 3.1: Educational Reforms and Teacher Support for Sustainable Development in Africa

Professor Niane Boubacar (FASTEF-UCAD) chaired this session as moderator and Prof. Antony Ndungu (University of Nairobi) was the rapporteur.

Ms.Tamara Jacod (Paul Gérin-Lajoie Foundation), Mr. Ochieng Benedict Ouma (Ministry of Education, Kenya), Mr.Kouassi Ange Aristide Molou (FHB University-Abidjan), Mr. Valentino Zimpita (Ministry of Education, Malawi) presented their papers in turn. The various speakers successively emphasised the issues of quality, inclusion and equity, with trainers and learners at the centre of the reflection on each of these concepts. In the same perspective, the importance of digital platforms to ensure continuity in out-of-school learning policy recommendations was also raised. One of the contributions also addressed the need to integrate cross-age peer tutoring into the school system and the need to support students in their process of acquiring cognitive and affective skills.

8.1.2 Parallel 3.2: Strategies for Equity and Quality in Early Childhood Development and Education in Africa

Mr. Saliou Sall (UNESCO IICBA) and Professor Jean-Pierre CHEVALIER (University of Paris CY CERGY) acted as moderator and rapporteur respectively.

Four papers were discussed during this session. They were by Mr.Constantin Ntiranyibagira (University of Burundi), Mr. Mwimbu Ngoma (VVOB), Ms. Sena Sourou Urielle Jacqueline Adode Houssa (Institute for Demographic Training and Research), Ms. Kasirye Elizabeth Kisakye (Ministry of Education, Focal Point Officer Kix19, Uganda). Key lessons learned from this session included the need to educate children on equality, not just gender equality, through the development of gender equality teacher training programmes. The importance of increasing funding for public pre-school education was discussed in order to train and support early childhood educators to improve teaching practices. With regard to educational reforms, it would be interesting to develop a specific supervision programme for primary school teachers to ensure a better geographical coverage of childcare facilities and the inclusion of children with disabilities (functional difficulties).

8.1.3 Parallel 3.3: Innovations for Equitable Education in Africa: Access and Support for Vulnerable Learners

This session was chaired by Prof. Madougou Saidou (AU ESTI), as well as Prof. Mendisu Binyam Sisay (The Africa Institute), as rapporteur.

Contributions were made by Ms. Ramatoulaye Coly (Ministry of Vocational Training), Ms. Asterie Nyirahabimana (University of Rwanda), Ms. Rosaline Tcheundjio (University of Yaoundé 1) and Mr. Obed Obutu Ombuna, Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS). From the issues discussed in the various papers, it is clear that the involvement and commitment of community members is key to engaging marginalised learners. The key contribution of teachers in supporting children with special needs was also highlighted, as the issues of inclusive education are many. The integration of refugee children into mainstream education systems was raised as a long-term goal of such programmes. Participants felt that the funding of secondary education for refugee pupils is a major obstacle, as it is always project-based and difficult to plan properly.

8.2 Key Lessons learned from Day Three

1. **Better management leads to better education**: It is clear that management plays a critical role in improving educational outcomes. For this purpose, it is necessary to make policies sustainable. In the face of outdated education policies, the use of evidence by decision-makers is critical to addressing Africa's learning crisis and achieving SDG 4.The improvement of the political environment seems to be compulsory. It also includes the need for a framework for designing, publishing and evaluating the quality of research.
2. **The development of appropriate strategies for inclusive education**: the key contribution of teachers in facilitating children with special needs was highlighted, if they are properly trained. The contributors emphasise the need

to develop and share with teachers, school administrators and policymakers, best practice on how to meet the needs of autistic children; and the integration of refugee children into mainstream education systems as long-term goals of such programmes.

3. **The effective use of data in a crisis situation.**
4. **The need of reviewing curricula with the aim of enabling learners in general, and pre-school learners in particular, to embrace the notion of gender equality.**
5. **The effective integration of digital tools and the use of free online resources**

Feedback From Dr Beatrice Khamati Njenga (International Leadership University)

After lunch (13:30-14:00), Dr Beatrice Khamati Njenga (International Leadership University) presented a reflection based on the experiences of the three days of the symposium. She highlighted the various themes and recommendations raised by the participants such as policy and practice, community engagement, gender equity in education, teachers' training. Dr. Njenga ended by calling for integration of values such as integrity, responsible citizenship and team work within the education system in order for students to become leaders of integrity to transform our societies. The summary is presented next.

9. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND POLICY TAKE-AWAYS FROM THE SYMPOSIUM

The High Level Panel which opened the Symposium deliberations focused on the need for education in Africa to address 21st century challenges, take advantage of emerging knowledge and technology, while ensuring equity, quality and contextual relevance. They focused on the following:

1. **Rethinking Education:** Develop and adopt innovative teaching methods and curricula that foster critical thinking and problem-solving skills; and leverage technology to enhance teaching and learning.
2. **STEM Education:** Prioritise STEM education as crucial for driving technological advancement and innovation.
3. **Strengthen Governance and Policy:** including investing in education as a human right and prioritising teacher welfare as key components.

4. **Teacher Development:** Improving initial and continuing teacher development, empowering them to use innovative methodologies is crucial for enhancing learning.
5. **Data-Driven Decision Making:** Strengthen data systems- generation, management and use of data to inform educational policies and interventions for better education outcomes

The following policy recommendations are deduced from the session:
1. **Early Childhood Education-** enhance investments for long term benefits
2. **Parental Involvement-** should be strengthened for improved learning outcomes.
3. **Homegrown Solutions-** there's need for more Africa led solutions
4. **Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving-** are essential for future success.
5. **Policy Coherence-** is necessary to align Educational policies with broader development goals.
6. **Curriculum and Teaching Methods Reform:** Develop relevant, engaging, and 21st-century-aligned curricula and teaching methods
7. **Teacher Training:** Invest in high-quality teacher training programs.
8. **Data-Driven Decision Making:** Utilize data to inform policies.
9. **Partnerships and Collaboration:** Collaborate with stakeholders to address challenges.
10. **Empowering Girls and Women:** Promote gender equality in education.

The following is a summary of emerging themes and related recommendations that emanated from the presentations and discussions.

9.1 Theme 1: Research-Informed Policy making

1. Evidence-Based Policymaking
The symposium underscored the importance of using rigorous research to inform policy decisions. Participants discussed the potential benefits of evidence-based policymaking, such as improved educational outcomes, efficient resource allocation, and reduced inequality.

2. Strengthening Research Capacity
Participants emphasised the need to invest in research infrastructure, capacity building for African researchers, and fostering collaboration between researchers, policymakers, and practitioners.

9.2 Theme 2: Equity and Inclusion

1. Gender Equality
Strategies to address the challenges faced by girls and women in accessing education were called for, such as providing scholarships and challenging harmful gender stereotypes.

2. Inclusive Education

Participants emphasised the importance of inclusive education for children with disabilities. Strategies to provide appropriate accommodations and support services were discussed.

3. Marginalised Groups

The challenges faced by marginalised groups, such as rural children, indigenous peoples, and refugee children, were highlighted, and innovative approaches to reaching these groups were called for.

9.3 Theme 3: Quality Education

1. Teacher Quality

The importance of effective teacher training, professional development and welfare were discussed, with strategies to attract and retain high-quality teachers.

2. Curriculum Development

Participants emphasised the need to develop curricula that are aligned with 21st-century skills and local contexts.

3. Early Childhood Education

The importance of early childhood education in promoting cognitive, social, and emotional development was highlighted, as were strategies to expand access and enhance quality.

9.4 Theme 4: Innovation and Technology

1. Technology-Enhanced Learning

The potential of technology to transform education was recognized. Strategies to bridge the digital divide and ensure equitable access to technology were discussed. These included leveraging new technology such as AI and machine learning to bridge the technology gaps in education.

2. Data-Driven Decision Making

The importance of using data to inform education policy and practice was emphasised, and strategies to collect, analyse, and interpret data were discussed. Partners such as AU-IPED, GPE and HISP were called upon to step up support for strengthening of the EMIS systems in African countries.

9.5 Theme 5: Leadership and Management

1. Effective School Leadership

The role of school leaders in creating positive school climates and promoting student learning was highlighted. Strategies to develop effective school leaders were discussed.

2. Strengthening Education Management Information Systems

The importance of robust data management systems was emphasised. Strategies to improve data quality and accuracy were discussed.

3. Decentralisation and Empowerment

The benefits of decentralisation in promoting local ownership and accountability were discussed. Strategies to empower local education authorities were highlighted.

9.6 Theme 6: Education Beyond Academics

1. Holistic Education

The need to promote education that develops the whole human was cited. It was suggested that while it was important to educate about human rights, it is equally important to educate on responsibilities in order to support responsible citizenship.

10. ROUND TABLE SESSIONS

The objective of this roundtable session was to provide KIX 19 member states, KIX 21 member states, and the Education Researchers group with a platform to reflect on key learnings from the first three days of discussions, explore strategies for integrating research findings into educational policies, and collaboratively develop a collective document outlining actionable commitments for advancing education

Participants regrouped into three teams to consider the lessons learnt from the research presented during the Symposium and suggest key imperatives specific to each group. The groups were: GPE KIX19 focal officers, GPE KIX 21 focal officers, and a third group of non-governmental researchers. The groups considered the key imperatives listed as 'calls to action'.

10.1 EDUCATION RESEARCHERS ROUNDTABLE CALL TO ACTION

Our Policy Recommendations:
1. **Investing in teacher training is cost-effective:** Incorporate peer mentoring for teachers, strengthening learning communities, and continuous monitoring of teachers with positive feedback. Develop and use relevant indicators to track teacher attendance.
2. **Identify specific needs:** Map out and address the needs of out-of-school children by targeting them for accelerated education. Address the issue of distance to school, and focus on the education of orphans and children with disabilities. Expand public pre-primary education offerings in rural areas.
3. **Government Spending on R&D to include Education research:** Following the AU decision by governments to spend 1% GDP on R&D, governments are requested to commit a share of this for research in education. Bridge the gap

between research and evaluation. Explore ways for researchers to make their voices heard.

4. **Decolonise Curricula and base it on African needs:** Develop lighter curricula. Teach equal rights to promote gender equality. Teach in the mother tongue at the primary school level. Align the various educational levels coherently, using research-based insights. Create pathways between pre-primary, elementary, secondary, and higher education. Develop specific pedagogy for early childhood education.
5. **Ensure Coherent Strategy to develop EMIS (Education Management Information Systems).** Make better use of existing data and strengthen research on educational tracking tools. Produce indicators that allow for international comparisons, and establish a set of indicators at the school level that considers children with specific needs.
6. **Encourage digital literacy.**
7. **Foster cooperation among research teams for advocacy strategies:** Rely on evidence-based data before scaling initiatives.
8. **Engage with communities within research projects (collaborative research).**
9. **Applied research:** Align research with government needs and timelines, and consider what has proven effective.
10. **Communicate research findings to decision-makers:** Institutionalize dialogue days among researchers, ministries, and civil society, promoting co-creation and dissemination.
11. **Networking:** Establish a network of African education researchers.

10. 2 KIX AFRICA 19 ROUNDTABLE CALL TO ACTION

We, the members of KIX Africa 19, having convened for three days, from 20th to 22nd November 2024, at the GPE KIX Symposium on Education Research in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, issue this call to action.

Acknowledging the lessons drawn from the symposium, including research findings and key policy recommendations shared during the forum, we particularly highlight the following insights:

Key lessons learnt and recommendations during the GPE-KIX symposium:

10. 2.1 DATA

1. Data should be used to inform policy decision making by policy makers
2. Capacity building for policy makers to understand and use research based evidence
3. Strengthening data management systems in education – EMIS to collect, analyse, interpret and produce real-time data

4. Data to be interpreted in a simple and understandable manner for policy makers
5. Data to be disseminated and shared with other ed. Stakeholders [collaboration and partnerships]
6. Data must be accessible
7. Decentralization of data – empower our districts to share data

10.2.2 TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND CAPACITY BUILDING FOR QUALITY EDUCATION

1. Training at Pre-Service and in-service training should be strengthened
2. Capacity building for teachers on emerging trends and innovation including Artificial intelligence
3. In-service training - Capacity building workshops and training should be carefully planned and not too short yielding no results or impact
4. Teacher's well-fare should be prioritized for effective professionalism and quality education
5. Adequate remuneration for teachers work and hardship allowance
6. Equip teachers to be innovative and use locally sourced materials for teaching
7. **TEACHING AS A CALLING AND ART**– emphasis on teaching as a calling is key so that people who choose teaching as a career should be made aware
8. **Teacher Recognition -** Learn from teachers who perform well and get good results regardless of difficult conditions; what can we learn?

10.2.3 CURRICULUM REFORM, DEVELOPMENT AND ADOPTION

1. Invest equally in curriculum development and implementation
2. Use research to inform curriculum
3. Learn good practices from other countries and create good learning environment
4. Curriculum development should be country led and aligned with country development goals and vision

10.2.4 INCLUSIVITY

1. **The human right approach** - Governments to be sensitized that Education is a human right.
2. Governments to support and integrate marginalized children in the education system including learners with disabilities (children who are displaced due to wars, marginalized groups, children living in rural settings and poverty; Child headed households, orphaned and vulnerable children).
3. Schools to support learners with disabilities and to collect and provide disaggregated data on children with disabilities.
4. Investing to narrow disparities – inclusivity and disparities.

5. Schools to promote gender sensitive policies and address gender norms and stereotypes.

10.2.5 SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

1. The role of the school principal/head teacher is critical in promoting learners' educational outcomes and creating a conducive learning and teaching environments.
2. Ministries of education should provide training for newly appointed school principals and devise strategies for effective school management.
3. Teachers feel the need to be supported by leadership at the school level.
4. Promote female leadership in education especially at the school level.
5. Leadership is key to successful education.

10.2.6 DEPOLITICIZING OF EDUCATION

Citizens voice –
1. Parental involvement in their children's education is very important.
2. Communities should have voice in formulation of education policies.
3. Researchers to produce ready solutions for Governments to use – build more synergies among researchers.

10.3 A CALL TO ACTION

We therefore call upon our governments to:
1. Invest more in education
2. Ensure public participation in the education policy making process and governments to use feedback mechanisms, so that policy design and implementation considers the voice of the people. Community engagements in policy making is a pillar for sustainable education
3. Utilize Data for policy-making and liberation from political bias
4. Prioritize teachers for quality education
5. Invest in generation of good quality data; include data in decision making.

This call to action is supported by representatives from the following KIX Africa 19 countries: Eritrea, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

10.4 KIX AFRICA 21 ROUNDTABLE CALL TO ACTION

We, the members of KIX Africa 21, representing the following countries - Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Côte

d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, Togo, São Tomé and Príncipe), meeting for three days, 20-22 November 2024, at the KIX GPE Symposium on Educational Research in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, issue this call to action.

In acknowledging the lessons learned from the Symposium, including the research findings and key policy recommendations shared at the Forum, we highlight in particular the following lessons learnt:

1. Invest in education data production and to put in place mechanisms for the effective use of such data to inform education policy.
2. Ensure he need for qualified, motivated and committed teachers to implement educational reforms, particularly in relation to teaching and learning practices.
3. Promote the use of national languages in education systems in a multilingual context to enhance learning outcomes.
4. Strengthen Funding for education and research by exploring endogenous funding mechanisms.
5. Contextualise research findings to make them more relevant to each country.
6. Ensure Equity and inclusion, so that no target group is left out of our interventions.
7. Promote girls' education and encouraging them to take up technical and vocational studies.
8. Promote social and financial education to address specific challenges.
9. Harness the power of technology to ensure continuity of education, particularly in fragile contexts, and to improve the quality of learning. Seize the opportunities offered by artificial intelligence (AI) to promote learning.
10. Produce research reports tailored to each category of user.
11. Develop promising alternatives for out-of-school children.
12. Recognize the importance of community involvement.
13. Disseminate the publication of symposium findings to generate interest.
14. Produce policy briefs for countries.
15. Scale up promising initiatives.

In the light of these observations, we call on our countries to take the following actions:

1. Develop pre-school education to better prepare children for primary school and help improve learning outcomes.
2. Set up mechanisms to professionalise education system managers.
3. Establish a frank dialogue between researchers and decision-makers in the countries concerned.
4. Set up mechanisms for monitoring and implementing the recommendations arising from the symposium.

This call to action is supported by the following member state representatives

Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, Togo, São Tomé and Príncipe.

11. CONCLUSIONS AND WAY FORWARD

11.1 Closing Ceremony

The Closing Ceremony was Chaired by Dr. Victoria Kisaakye, Coordinator of KIX Africa 19 Hub. Stimulating remarks were made in turn by Dr. Tricia Wind, IDRC; Dr Ian MacPherson, Knowledge and Innovation Exchange Lead, GPE; and Prof Saidou Madougou Director Education, Science, Technology, and Innovation at the AUC. They appreciated the organisers of the symposium, and the GPE KIX Africa initiative that is playing a crucial role in positively contributing to the desired improvements in education outcomes in Africa. They agreed that in the face of multidimensional challenges, our only option is to reassess our policies, approaches, and methods. This, they said, underscores the importance of research especially as carried out by practitioners in the field and not only academics in Universities. Prof Madougou said that in the face of these challenges, political responses aimed at improving learning outcomes, data collection and management, as well as education reporting and monitoring, remain priorities for the African Union Commission.

The GPE KIX Africa Symposium 2024 was a most strategic and insightful convening of government officials and researchers from different countries and education institutions. From the presentations it is clear that there is significant capacity for research, which is necessary for promoting evidence basis for policy and development of interventions in the education system in Africa. It also means that the African Union's desire for generating Africa-led solutions for addressing African challenges can be achieved within the education sector.

The Symposium has also demonstrated the value of expanding the researcher space to complement the university and traditional research sectors with the addition of policy makers themselves, teachers in classrooms and development agencies.

It is also clear from the discussions that there are pertinent research efforts but many results remain invisible to policy makers and education practitioners, thus denying the continent this valuable resource. Furthermore, a significant quantum of validated research that is visible has not yet resulted in commensurate changes in policy and practice. This is a gap that the convening partners are requested to address.

Another implication drawn from the symposium is that although differences abound among and within African countries, many successful practices in one place can be adopted or adapted across the geographic and linguistic divides. It is therefore commendable that GPE brings the KIX Africa Hubs together.

The challenge moving forward is therefore how the outcomes of the Symposium will find their way to influence policy and practice across Africa.

The Researchers and other participants appreciated the Symposium and requested that the Abstracts be compiled and shared.

It was also suggested that to ensure that the recommendations are implemented, a plan of action needs to be developed so that by the next Symposium, impact reports will be produced from individuals, institutions and member countries.

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