Annex A - GPE Knowledge and Innovation Exchange (KIX) - Adapted Design Framework

1. Overview and Summary of Changes

At a time of constrained global development funding, continued education poverty and increasing global instability, operations are ever more challenging – particularly in conflict-affected settings. As KIX prepares for its next phase post-2027, key factors shape design considerations to sharpen its focus, operate with greater efficiency and with fewer resources: building on strong foundations, addressing evaluation recommendations, strengthening KIX's unique role, and integrating with GPE strategy 2030.

A future KIX will shift from being a decentralized program supporting evidence generation and exchange to an integrated GPE mechanism strongly focused on evidence uptake, system transformation, and leadership by partner countries, with more inclusive governance and adaptive design.

What Stays the Same:

- **Core Purpose**: KIX remains GPE's mechanism to generate, mobilize, and apply evidence for education system strengthening
- **Demand-Driven & led by governments and organizations from partner countries**: Country priorities and leadership by partner countries continue as guiding principles
- **Gender Equality, Equity & Inclusion (GEI)**: GEI and disability inclusion remains central across all KIX activities
- **Core operational components:** Regional Hubs and Research Funds remain the two central components
- **Regional Hubs**: Still the main platform for peer learning and knowledge exchange
- **Research scope**: Continues to fund applied research on education priorities and scaling innovations
- **Capacity Strengthening**: Ongoing focus on building skills for evidence-use among policymakers and stakeholders
- **Adaptive Management**: Flexibility and responsiveness to country needs remain core features

What Changes:

- **Strategic Integration**: From alignment with GPE Strategy 2025 to fuller integration with GPE Strategy 2030 and GPE operational mechanisms
- **Design Principles**: Stronger emphasis on evidence uptake, applied research at scale, and systems thinking, integration with the GPE ecosystem, and real-time Monitoring, Evaluation and Adaptative Learning (MEAL)
- **Regional Hubs' Role**: From knowledge sharing to active evidence brokering, with formal links to GPE processes and stronger links between national KIX delegations and local education groups
- **Research Scope**: Support for a smaller number of applied research projects designed to inform or strengthen the delivery of national priority reforms as captured in

partnership compacts, with stronger focus on cost-effectiveness and scaling up of education innovations

- **New Emphases**: Greater integration with GPE 2030 strategy and mechanisms (country-level processes and GPE Secretariat teams, Technical Assistance Initiatives and Education Out Loud); stronger focus on climate resilience and fragility; more inclusive operations (teachers, youth, and marginalized voices); monitoring and reporting more focused on outcomes and impact.
- **Budget Prioritization**: From 80% research / 20% hubs to ≥50% hubs / ≤50% research, prioritizing evidence uptake
- **Governance**: From full management by grant agent to include a new Advisory Committee of Hub lead organizations, in addition to stronger engagement with the GPE Secretariat regional and technical teams.

1.1 Building on strong foundations

KIX will build on over seven years of engagement with partner countries, drawing on key strengths:

- *Comparative advantage* in the education development architecture, distinguished by unmatched reach across countries and design that links (1) evidence generation, knowledge mobilization and exchange, (2) capacity strengthening, and (3) breadth of applied research
- *Demand-driven design* centered on expressed needs of countries and participatory approaches
- *Evaluation findings* that demonstrate relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and added value
- *Ecosystems* that strengthen the role and prominence of organizations in partner countries in their national policy processes alongside *trust-based relationships* essential for future success
- *Sustained support* with multi-year engagement delivering the most significant results, often reinforced by other partners

1.2 Addressing external evaluation recommendations

The 2025 external evaluation confirmed KIX's progress in supporting evidence-informed policy and capacity building, highlighting its unique scale, interconnected design, and influence on national policy. It also noted uneven engagement across regions, persisting challenges in coordinating applied research and Hub activities, and the need for better integration with GPE operations. Annex B explains how design adaptations respond to the report's four recommendations for a 'future' KIX:

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

1.3 Strengthening KIX's unique value in a shifting global education evidence space

KIX has a direct line to the policy cycles of partner countries and, because it sits within the broader GPE financing ecosystem, potential for unique leverage: informing GPE country work and grants with evidence. Few evidence initiatives are directly connected to a financing platform of such scale. The future KIX will capitalize on this opportunity by putting greater emphasis on evidence use and uptake, drawing on resources from across the partnership and other global evidence initiatives and networks.

The education evidence space has changed significantly since the COVID-19 pandemic sparked a surge of research on school closures, learning loss, and recovery strategies, later evolving into a focus on resilience and accelerated learning. Joint assessments by UNESCO, UNICEF and the World Bank set common baselines, while studies on remedial learning offered pathways to get children back on track. Some consensus evolved around 'what works', with the Global Education Evidence Advisory Panel's updated 'Smart Buys' emphasizing cost-effective strategies such instruction aligned to student levels. With tighter budgets, attention has shifted from whether interventions work to whether they deliver value at scale.

The evidence ecosystem has also matured. Alongside KIX, several initiatives connect research with government reform efforts, including the What Works Hub for Global Education, Jacob's Foundation EdLabs, UNICEF's Global Learning Innovation Hub and the Aga Khan Foundation Schools 2030. Data advances, such as the World Bank's Learning Poverty indicator and citizen-led assessments from the PAL Network, have expanded timely, low-cost data. And EdTech's rapid spread has reshaped priorities and highlighted the significance of artificial intelligence (AI) as governments begin to craft AI policies despite limited research on learning impact.

Such developments and initiatives provide notable opportunities to better connect KIX with potential partners' evidence resources, insights and networks and help drive collaboration and synergies on research.

1.4 Integrating with GPE 2030

KIX will support GPE 2030 by strengthening country-led education reforms through evidence-based learning and collaboration. By bridging evidence and action, KIX will foster inclusive, resilient systems that accelerate access, improve learning outcomes, and promote gender equality. A redesigned KIX enhances legitimacy, ownership, and sustainability, amplifying voices often excluded from decision-making, and strengthens a culture of continuous learning across the partnership.

GPE2030 Objective	KIX engagement
1. Country-owned priority education reforms implemented, fully integrating gender equality and inclusion, people with disabilities and refugees,	Driven by national stakeholders and closely linked with GPE operations, KIX will generate, synthesize and mobilize evidence that helps define, implement and monitor prioritized education reforms. GEI, including disability inclusion, will continue to be a key cross cutting priority: building on current practice, concerted efforts will ensure KIX

and marginalized groups based on country context.	supports integration of the voices of marginalized stakeholders including children with disabilities, refugee communities, teachers, youth and girls in disadvantaged areas.
2. Domestic and external financing mobilized to support and sustain priority reforms.	KIX will help link funding decisions to credible, context-specific evidence that supports value for money investments in education and more equitable resource allocation. By documenting the impact of evidence-informed reforms, KIX will enable governments and stakeholders to advocate for increased and sustained domestic investment in education. KIX will also support research on sustainable financing approaches.
3. Reforms driven and sustained by coordinated, effective, inclusive and accountable partnerships, including core system stakeholders.	KIX will remain demand-driven and led by governments and organizations from partner countries. 'National KIX delegations' – country level stakeholders that engage with KIX Hubs - are already diverse and comprised of representatives from government, civil society, academia, research institutions, and community groups. Building on existing national KIX delegations, KIX will engage a wider range of voices in its work – including teachers, youth and local researchers. Facilitated by GPE Secretariat teams, GPE Government Focal Points and coordinating agencies, KIX will link explicitly to local education groups and grant agents.

2. 'Future' KIX – design adaptations

The adapted design framework for the next phase of KIX offers revised: (1) principles, (2) goal and objectives, (3) theory of change, (4) core components, (4) governance and management considerations, (5) budget allocations, and (6) risks.

2.1 KIX Design Principles

Maintaining the spirit of earlier principles, revisions reflect the tighter integration of KIX with GPE2030 and its strengthened role in an evolving global context. Annex C details earlier principles and provides fuller descriptions of the revised set below. KIX will support:

- *Country-Driven Demand and Ownership*
- *National Collaboration and Regional Leadership*
- *Relevant Evidence and Improved Scaling Pathways*
- *Systems Thinking and Sustainability*
- *Use of Evidence in Decision-Making*
- *Gender Equality, Equity and Inclusion*
- *Integration with the GPE ecosystem*
- *Real time Monitoring, Evaluation, and Adaptive Learning (MEAL)*

2.2 Goal and Objectives

The goal of KIX remains as before and tied to that of GPE2030[1]. Objectives are revised with changes summarized as follows.

2019 (KIX 1.0)	2022 (KIX 2.0)	2027 (KIX 3.0)
Goal: To improve DCP policy and practice to strengthen national education systems through capacity strengthening and the creation, curation, and mobilization of knowledge and innovation.	*Goal: GPE partner countries have and use the evidence and innovation they need to accelerate access, learning outcomes and gender equality through equitable, inclusive and resilient education systems fit for the 21st century*	*Goal: GPE partner countries have and use the evidence and innovation they need to accelerate access, learning outcomes and gender equality through equitable, inclusive and resilient education systems fit for the 21st century*
Objectives • More impactful national education sector planning, monitoring and implementation efforts • Effective aggregation, curation and exchange of knowledge and innovation across the partnership • Acceleration of the availability and use of global and regional public goods, knowledge and innovation	*Objectives*[2] • Improved understanding of what works in improving national education systems and how it can be scaled equitably and sustainably in GPE partner countries • Strengthened capacity of GPE partner countries to integrate evidence into policies and practices that promote gender equality, equity and inclusion • The more routine use of new knowledge and innovations by GPE partner countries in policy and practice.	*Objectives* • Strengthen **evidence-informed policy and planning** at the national level and foster scaling of of innovations within education systems in GPE partner countries. • **Elevate leadership from partner countries** in global education discourse, ensuring more inclusive and representative decision-making at national, regional and global level. • **Improve coherence and impact** across education sector support through enhanced integration of KIX with GPE operations and mechanisms

2.3 KIX Theory of Change

Demonstrated in Figure One and explained in the next section, a redesigned KIX emphasizes evidence use, leadership from partner countries, and systems thinking, with a significant shift in funding: at least 50% of resources will go to Regional Hubs, up from 20%. Hubs will move beyond knowledge mobilization to become evidence-brokering platforms that directly support national priorities through multi-stakeholder dialogues, rapid evidence reviews, and curated evidence for decision-making policy moments and processes such as mid-term reviews of partnership compacts and Joint Sector Reviews. They will work in closer alignment with GPE operations and Secretariat teams, drawing on global and regional evidence networks as well

[1] Noting there is no change from the goal of GPE2025 to GPE2030.

[2] Described as 'Ultimate Outcomes' on the approved Extension Proposal.

as donors and non-GPE partner countries with relevant knowledge to share. They will also support inclusive national KIX delegations and strengthen different stakeholders' capacities to use evidence.

The Evidence and Research Funds will complement this by focusing on actionable, demand-driven applied research co-created with governments. New focus areas include evidence syntheses, implementation research, and studies on scaling, political economy and resilience. A flexible funding structure will allow both short-term and long-term projects, with a strong emphasis on institutions from partner countries and strategic partnerships.

Together, these changes aim to make KIX an integrated GPE mechanism that accelerates evidence uptake, strengthens national and regional ecosystems, and ensures inclusive, cost-effective decision-making aligned with GPE2030.

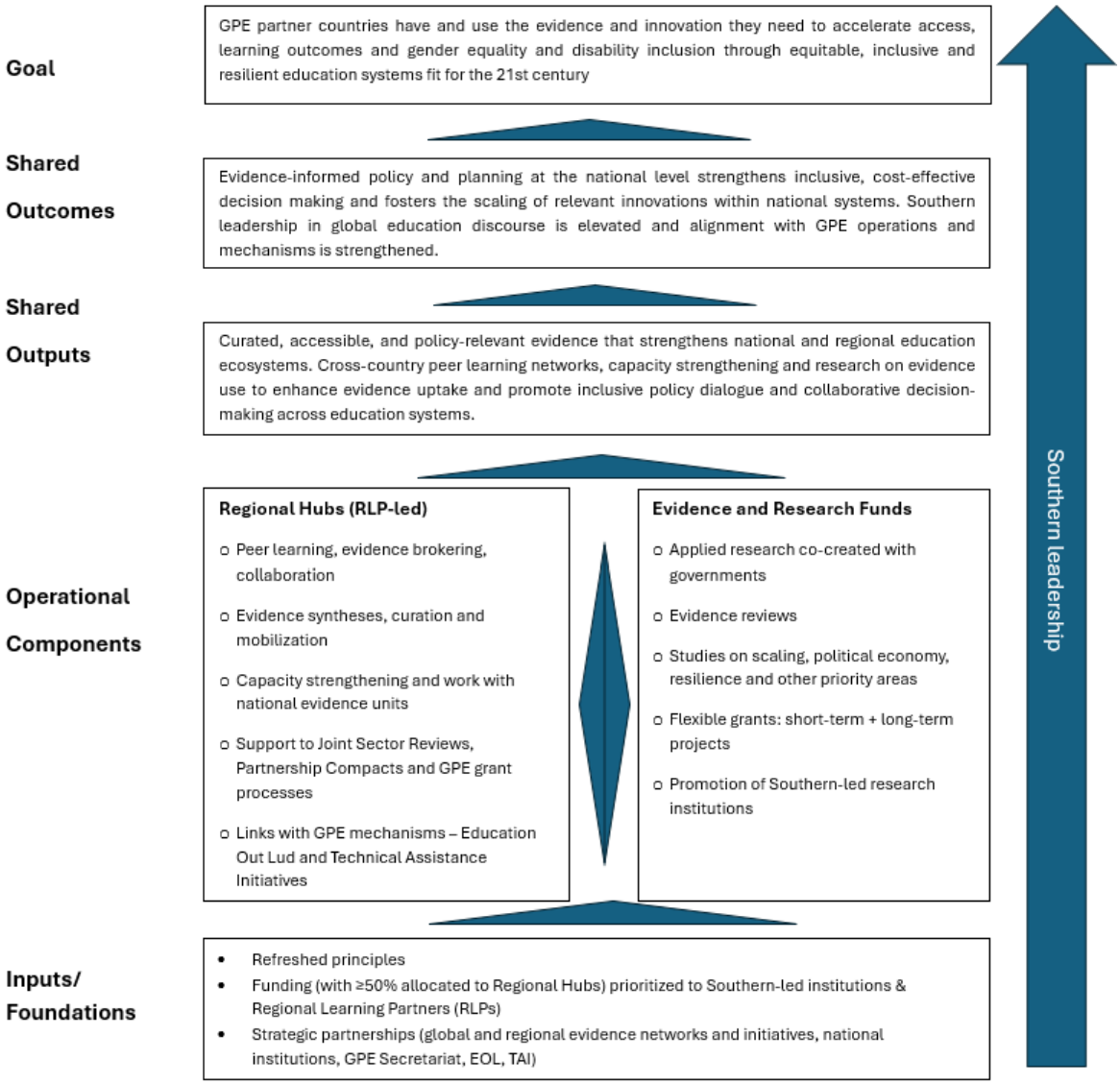


Figure One: Future KIX Theory of Change

2.4 Operational Components

Integration of KIX with GPE2030 will require closer engagement with GPE Secretariat teams and national GPE stakeholders – local education groups and CSO networks, GPE Focal Points, coordinating agencies and grant agents. Tight coordination will clarify where and how KIX could reinforce GPE operations without duplicating work supported by System Capacity Grants (national or global) or other GPE mechanisms. Offers - where they make sense and demands exist - could include:

- Provide *evidence-based analysis,* rapid evidence reviews and identify relevant comparative experiences for multi-stakeholder discussions and collaboration to help understand enabling factors or define priorities to be articulated or reaffirmed in partnership compacts and education sector plans
- Provision of curated resources and evidence to inform discussions and decision-making in *national and regional monitoring of GPE processes and financing,* including joint sector reviews and mid-term reviews of partnership compacts
- Support for in-depth, nationally focused research on priority topics of education reforms to inform GPE grants, tying some KIX applied research to individual countries' compact priorities or implementation research on priority reforms

Furthermore, recognizing that 43 GPE partner countries are fragile or conflict-affected and in response to external evaluation and review findings, KIX will draw on recent GPE guidance to strengthen coordination and evidence brokering in crisis contexts by:

- prioritizing fragility-sensitive research and rapid evidence syntheses
- ensuring flexible and adaptive arrangements for grantees and Hub partners to respond to and work in volatile Fragile and conflict-affected environments.

2.4.1 Component One: Regional Hubs - Accelerating Evidence Uptake and System Transformation

Regional Hubs are the cornerstone of KIX. They serve as dynamic platforms that connect countries and partners across GPE, foster collaboration, and ensure evidence informs policy and practice. In the next phase, their role expands from facilitating knowledge exchange to more deliberately driving evidence uptake.

Hubs will help countries respond to urgent policy needs while also building long-term cultures of evidence use. They will help prioritize national and regional education priorities, curate evidence, and strengthen the capacity of policymakers, researchers, and civil society organizations to use evidence. Hubs will focus on sustained engagement through activities including learning cycles, communities of practice, and ongoing peer exchange.

To maximize the uptake of evidence at national level, Hubs will establish formal links between local education groups, national KIX delegations and ministry-affiliated evidence units such as Education Evidence Labs, where these exist. They will work closely with the GPE Secretariat to align with processes such as partnership compacts, Joint Sector Reviews, and grants, especially system

capacity grants. Hubs will also inform and promote the use of applied research funded by KIX, ensuring research findings translate into relevant, actionable reforms.

By strengthening national evidence ecosystems and fostering inclusive collaboration, KIX Hubs will build local leadership while promoting regional dialogue and knowledge exchange, serving as platforms for evidence brokering and engagement with key regional and global organizations.

Key Features of Regional Hubs

Inclusive Participation: Hubs will engage a broad range of stakeholders — government, civil society organizations, academia, researchers, teachers, and youth groups — through structured national delegations and regional networks, ensuring formal links with GPE stakeholders including Partner Country Focal Points, coordinating agencies, grant agents, and members of local education groups.

Core Functions:

- Broker and translate evidence for policy use
* Organize cross-country learning and regional cooperation
- Reinforce GPE operations and mechanisms
- Strengthen stakeholder capacities for evidence use and uptake
- Inform and promote uptake of applied research
- Convene inclusive national KIX delegations

Content Sources: Hubs will draw on resources from across the partnership, including Regional Learning Partners (RLPs) who run the Hubs, KIX research outputs, GPE technical work, and global and regional knowledge resources including donor and non-GPE partner countries as relevant.

Structure and Leadership: GPE partner countries will be grouped into smaller clusters with organizations from or focused on partner countries serving as RLPs, leveraging their skills in knowledge mobilization, capacity strengthening, coordination and evidence curation[3]. RLPs and members of national KIX delegations will provide coordination functions and ensure KIX efforts complement other evidence initiatives. Closer collaboration between RLPs and the GPE Secretariat – notably Regional Teams and Thematic Leads - will ensure KIX contributions to GPE operations are jointly agreed, increase collective value, and avoid overlap.

Funding Commitment: To reflect their expanded role prioritizing evidence uptake and country support, the share of KIX funding for Hubs will increase from 20% to at least 50%. This may increase depending on the amount of funding available: i.e., the lower the total amount, the greater the proportion to the Regional Hubs/Learning Exchange.

[3] Clusters will be organized in tighter geographic scopes based on shared affinities and existing structures and languages such as: Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), East and Southern Africa (ECA), West and Central Africa (WCA) and the four sub-regions overseen by the KIX EMAP Hubs – Europe and Central Asia (ECA), South Asia, Middle East and North Africa (SAMENA), South East Asia (SEA) and Pacific (PAC). Oversight by RLPs would align as closely as possible to the GPE Secretariat's regional groupings.

2.4.2 Component Two: Evidence and Research Funds - Generating Actionable Knowledge for System Reform

The Evidence and Research Funds will strengthen the availability of relevant, actionable evidence that supports education sector planning, policy development and implementation. Beyond generating new knowledge, the funds will produce insights on how evidence can be used to drive reforms and strengthen education systems.

This component will finance applied research on themes identified by partner countries, working through Regional Hubs. It will also support rapid evidence reviews, research on the science of scaling, and studies on evidence-related issues such as the political economy of evidence use and implementation strategies. Strategic partnerships with global and regional actors — including but not limited to ERICC[4], the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies, the African Education Research Funding Consortium, and the What Works Hub for Global Education — will help avoid duplication, leverage resources, and amplify impact.

By generating actionable evidence for use in policy cycles and contributing insights for better uptake of evidence, KIX Evidence and Research Funds will help countries implement reforms that are context-sensitive, cost-effective, and sustainable.

Key Features of the Evidence and Research Funds

Participants: The Funds will prioritize support to institutions based in partner countries. Applied research projects will be co-created with government policymakers and local education groups to ensure relevance and uptake. Regional Hubs will play a key role in shaping research agendas and link findings to national policy processes.

Core Functions:

- Support applied research projects that scale proven approaches and inform education policy and practice
- Conduct rapid evidence reviews tailored to country needs and policy moments
- Explore forward-looking themes through foresight research and evidence uptake such as political economy analysis
- Foster collaborative research governance with local education groups that also inform GPE processes and grants
- Build strategic partnerships with global and regional initiatives to maximize impact and avoid duplication

Research Scope: The Funds will support a flexible portfolio of short-term and long-term projects, including:

- Scalable applied research in thematic areas determined by partner countries

[4] Education Research in Conflict and Protracted Crisis (ERICC) is a six-year research program (2023–2029) funded by the UK's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), designed to improve education outcomes in contexts affected by conflict and long-term crises.

- Scaling research focused on the institutionalization of proven innovations within educational systems, building on KIX ROSIE (Research On Scaling the Impact of Innovations in Education)
- Foresight and prospective research to identify future trends in educational systems
- Implementation research to understand how to translate evidence-based interventions into real-world settings
- Political economy studies to understand the politics of knowledge and power dynamics in policy processes
- Financing models for sustaining educational innovations under fiscal constraints.
- Rapid evidence reviews that synthesize existing research
- Research on education resilience and climate adaptation (in coordination with GPE's climate work).

Funding Structure: To reflect stronger emphasis on evidence uptake, the share of KIX funding for this component will decrease from 80% to no more than 50%. A *flexible grant structure* will support short-term projects tied to specific country priorities and research addressing longer-term processes and broader priorities. Additionally, a *modular funding approach* will allow research streams to be launched based on available budgets and co-financing opportunities. This component will continue to prioritize organizations from partner countries and seek additional resources from private sector and philanthropic partners.

2.5 Governance and management

A refined governance and management arrangement will help ensure KIX operates more coherently as part of a cogent GPE architecture that supports partner countries.

A grant agent with experience in managing research grants and supporting innovation will ensure KIX continues to produce high-quality, relevant knowledge products. A grant agent will also manage RLPs and support capacity strengthening and cross-Hub learning. One grant agent may implement both components, or two working in a consortium. Stronger engagement by the GPE Secretariat will ensure KIX links with GPE's strategic priorities and technical operations, creating a more integrated ecosystem for knowledge and innovation across the partnership.

To that end, an advisory committee of RLPs led jointly by the GPE Secretariat and grant agent will offer strategic and program-level guidance, through which RLPs may channel input from Hub stakeholders, including government, academia, researchers, teachers and civil society.

Governance structures will include:

- ***Oversight by GPE Governance:*** The Performance, Impact and Learning Committee (PILC) oversees the effectiveness and strategic alignment of KIX with GPE2030. It will continue to receive regular performance updates, review evaluations, and inform strategic adaptations, integrating KIX into broader decision-making by the GPE Board of Directors.
- ***KIX Executive Committee:*** Comprised of senior management from the GPE Secretariat and the grant agent, the Executive Committee will meet at least quarterly to provide strategic

guidance and monitor overall progress, approve significant changes and funding reallocations, and proposals for research. ExCom will also sign off on annual reports and work plans.

- ***RLP Advisory committee:*** An advisory committee of Regional Learning Partners will be led jointly by the GPE Secretariat and grant agent, meeting virtually twice a year and involving grant agent and GPE Secretariat staff as needed. It will offer suggestions on strategy, operations and areas of adaptation, including links between KIX and GPE mechanisms.
- ***GPE Secretariat oversight and engagement:*** The GPE Secretariat will oversee program implementation and financial management by the grant agent. It will ensure KIX' close alignment with GPE2030 and synchrony with GPE-supported processes at national and regional level. KIX program leads for the Secretariat and grant agent will meet regularly to track progress and alignment with GPE2030, coordinate with broader GPE activities, and harmonize partnerships with other networks or initiatives. Secretariat colleagues - especially from Regional Teams - will regularly engage with RLPs, provide input to research proposals, and lead on co-financing arrangements.
- ***Grant agent program Implementation:*** The grant agent will be responsible for KIX operations. Complying with standard grant agent operating procedures and GPE policies on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Harassment (PSEAH), it will commission, award and manage the portfolio of grants, organize technical support for RLPs and research partners, and lead on KIX monitoring and reporting focused on outcomes and impact.

2.6 Budget prioritization

In June 2025 (BOD/2025/06-07) the GPE Board agreed that 2 percent of available resources from replenishment be allocated to KIX, capped at US$ 80 million. Depending on final funding levels, GPE may frontload spending to prioritize Hub support and seek targeted financing for applied research. A modular approach to research will require co-financing, and funding ratios between Hubs and Research Funds may be adjusted based on replenishment scenarios as described below:

- ***Replenishment Scenario 1 (US$5 billion)*** – US$ 80 million cap, with a proposed 50:50 Hub to Funding ratio
- ***Replenishment Scenario 2 (US$4 billion)*** **-** US$ 70 million cap, with a proposed 60:40 Hub to Funding ratio
- ***Replenishment Scenario 3 (US$3 billion)*** - US$ 48 million cap, with a proposed 70:30 Hub to Funding ratio

2.7 Risks

Annex D describes key risks and mitigation measures.

Annex B – Responses to Evaluation Recommendations

Recommendation	Future KIX response
Clarify positioning and mandates of Regional Learning Partners (RLPs) within the broader GPE architecture to ensure support for systematic reforms in partner countries	• RLPs will lead Regional Hubs as platforms for evidence brokering, peer learning, and policy engagement • RLP mandate is tied to GPE operations – in coordination with GPE Secretariat: supporting partnership compacts, Joint Sector Reviews, and informing grant processes • RLPs will convene national KIX delegations, link with local education groups, and coordinate with GPE Secretariat Regional Teams to avoid duplication and strengthen accountability. • Governance includes an RLP Advisory Committee co-led by the GPE Secretariat and the grant agent for strategic alignment
Clarify the positioning of applied research projects within GPE's country-level processes	• Applied research will be co-created with governments and local education groups to ensure alignment with national priorities and GPE processes • Research outputs will feed into policy moments such as education sector planning, partnership compacts, and mid-term reviews • Regional Hubs will help shape research agendas and promote uptake, ensuring findings inform GPE grants and system reforms • Evidence and Research Funds will support implementation research, political economy analysis, and rapid evidence reviews tailored to country needs
Deepen the integration of intersectional GESI [Gender Equality and Social Inclusion] approaches throughout the program life cycle.	• GESI is a core design principle and cross-cutting priority in all KIX activities • Research calls and Hub activities will require intersectional analysis (gender, disability, marginalization, linguistic diversity) • KIX will amplify marginalized voices — including teachers, youth, refugees, and persons with disabilities — through inclusive national delegations and participatory evidence-use activities • Monitoring and evaluation will track equity and inclusion (including disability related) outcomes

	across both components and inform real-time adaptive management

Establish a more integrated and adaptive governance model to steer KIX strategically and sustainably.	• Moves from a grant-agent-led model to stronger engagement by the GPE Secretariat, ensuring tighter integration with GPE2030
	• Creates options to work with a single grant agent or two working in consortium
	• Governance includes:
	  • PILC oversight for strategic alignment
	  • A KIX Executive Committee (GPE + grant agent) for operational decisions
	  • An RLP Advisory Committee jointly led by GPE and the grant agent
	• Introduces real-time MEAL system for adaptive learning and continuous improvement, with monitoring oriented to outcomes and impact
	• Budget and funding model redesigned for flexibility, with ≥50% allocation to Hubs and modular research funding to respond to changing contexts

Annex C – Evolution of KIX principles

2019
• Being driven by the needs and aspirations of GPE DCPs • Having transparent, competitive, and fair grant selection processes based on clear quality criteria for proposals and adjudication by an Independent Assessment Panel (IAP) • Integrating an adaptive management approach, underpinned by monitoring and evaluation of its outcomes, and thematic learning • Ensuring that KIX and the Advocacy and Social Accountability (ASA) funding mechanism are complementary and mutually reinforcing • Ensuring that KIX does not duplicate existing GPE mechanisms and that it reinforces good practice, such as the emerging LEG and Partnership Effectiveness Principles. The KIX design also adheres to the 15 GPE Board approved KIX design principles.
2022
• *Demand-driven* — responsive to the priorities and aspirations of GPE partner countries • *Southern-led* — defining priorities through strong relationships with partner countries, and building evidence generated in the South, primarily by southern organizations • *Focused on GEI* – integrating intersectional approaches • *Transparent* — conducting open, competitive, and fair grant selection processes • *Adaptively managed* — gathering and responding to country priorities through systematic processes supported by monitoring, evaluation, and thematic learning • *Directly linked to the GPE strategy and operating model* — reinforcing good practice and effective partnerships, and complementing other GPE mechanisms • *Large-scale* — leveraging access to a broad range of evidence for GPE partner countries • *Focused on long-term results* — linking with GPE's longstanding relationships
2027
• *Country-Driven Demand and Ownership*: Apply evidence, research and innovation to partner countries' current and evolving education priorities, driven by demand and as expressed by national stakeholders in sector plans, policies and partnership compacts • *National Collaboration and Regional Leadership*: Prioritize support to governments and organizations in the partner countries, strengthening national and regional leadership through equitable partnerships in evidence governance, implementation, funding and use, based on primary stakeholders' understanding of national and regional realities, and capacities to influence policy design and decision-making processes.

- *Relevant Evidence and Improved Scaling Pathways*: Support evidence and innovative responses to education challenges that are context-sensitive, methodologically sound and co-created with evidence users to drive scaling principles, system integration and cost-effectiveness.
- S*ystems Thinking and Sustainability*: Balance responses to immediate policy needs for evidence with support for system-level change through strengthened institutional capacities, focused on scalability and long-term sustainability.
- *Use of Evidence in Decision-Making*: Focus on strategic knowledge mobilization and uptake, emphasizing policy-relevant syntheses of evidence, actionable recommendations for scaling into education systems, and capacity building for evidence use at all levels of government.
- *Gender Equality, Equity and Inclusion*: Embed an intersectional approach to equity across all activities — addressing gender inequality, disability, marginalization, and linguistic diversity – and support the meaningful engagement of marginalized voices, including Indigenous communities, refugees, teachers and youth in evidence use activities.
- *Integration with the GPE ecosystem*: Integrate with GPE2030 goal and objectives, GPE operations and mechanisms (partnership compacts, system capacity and transformation grants, Girls Education Accelerator, Multiplier, Education Out Loud, Technical Assistance Initiatives), and engage GPE stakeholders at national level (GPE focal points, local education groups, civil society organizations, teacher representatives, youth) to strengthen strategic alignment and avoid overlap and duplication.
- *Real time Monitoring, Evaluation, and Adaptive Learning (MEAL)*: Strengthen MEL systems to capture policy influence, practice change, and learning outcomes, including unintended effects, through embedded real-time feedback loops, participatory evaluation, and adaptive learning that informs continuous improvement.

Annex D – Risk and Mitigation

Category	Risks	Mitigation
Strategic	• Weak integration with GPE strategy, operations and mechanisms limits overall value and contribution to GPE2030 • Insufficient distinction / overlap between KIX and System Capacity Grants • Competition from comparator initiatives limits engagement in KIX	• Joint implementation plan with roles for GPE Secretariat, grant agent, RLPs and KIX partners • Terms of Reference for national GPE stakeholders (GPE Focal Points, coordinating agencies, grant agents) and GPE Secretariat staff reviewed to reflect KIX engagement • Individual country-specific KIX plans with coordinated input and actions from GPE and KIX partners • Strong Secretariat coordination around KIX • Ongoing market and foresight analysis • Effective governance with associated adaptive management decisions
Financial	• Low volume of funding is available from replenishment • Constrained financial environments prioritize implementation	• GPE funding for KIX is prioritized towards Regional Hubs • Targeted co-financing strategy developed that emphasizes themes, regions and countries • A modular approach to funding research identifies streams with implementation contingent on available financing
Operational	• Governance and management arrangements are overly complicated and burdensome • Competing priorities / low perceived value of engagement by national policy makers limit engagement • Varied capacities of implementing partners, especially RLPs, lead to uneven	• Clear terms of reference for partners in management and governance • Excellent communication strategy • Effective knowledge management and communication protocols • Robust internal controls and audits • Continuous capacity assessments of RLPs

	impact and varied support needs • High numbers of partners (RLPs, KIX grantees, collaborators) make coordination and communication challenging and resource intensive	• Selecting appropriate a grant agent(s) able to support capacity strengthening
Compliance	• Large numbers of partners working in different contexts limit effective oversight and compliance with GPE, grant agent and national fiduciary, PSEAH and other relevant policies	• Clear due diligence of all potential KIX grantees and partners • Strong grant agent with established policies, systems and resources • Clear internal GPE processes and protocols for audit and assessment
Reputational	• KIX is not well communicated or understood by stakeholders or partners, leading to low engagement and reflects negatively on GPE • Complexity contributes to disinterest and a weakened brand • Poor engagement or inability to demonstrate results	• Strong communication strategy and clear products • Robust MEAL approach supports good storytelling and results and focused on outcomes and impact • Effective governance and championing by partner countries

Annex E - Grant Agent selection criteria and process

Criteria	Description and example indicators
Experience in education innovation, knowledge exchange and mobilization grant-making, grant-management and support	Relevance and strong performance of the organization's education grant making related to innovation, knowledge exchange and mobilization. Evidence of managing multi-year grants to support cross-national knowledge, evidence and innovation activities between US$500,000 and US$2,500,000 within a portfolio size in the region of up to US$20,000,000 per annum with diverse grantees. Experience in developing operational procedures, tools, manuals and accounting systems that reflect the size of the grant and are appropriate for a diverse range of grant recipients. Ability to support grantees to shape programs of relevance to GPE partner countries. Ability to provide ongoing support to grantees throughout the grant cycle, including on reporting and opportunities for experience sharing between different funded projects. Expertise in developing creative designs for funding disbursements that are not limited to calls for proposals/grant windows.
Experience in knowledge mobilization, uptake and utilization	Experience in developing and implementing knowledge transfer strategies and approaches in partnership with national or regional learning partners including universities, research institutes, think tanks, international or national civil society organizations, or others. Experience of working with knowledge mobilization platforms to disseminate and utilize grantee outputs, lessons learned and global and/or regional public goods. Experience in working with partner country governments and their partners to meet the demands for policy relevant knowledge and learning and sharing of best practices.
Experience in strengthening capacity of organizations, systems and individuals for evidence use	Experience in designing and implementing capacity strengthening activities and approaches for individuals, organizations and systems for evidence use. Deep understanding of political economy of policy making, the politics of knowledge, and commensurate experience in evidence curation, analysis and synthesis. Exceptional coordination and communication capacities with demonstrated experience of working with diverse stakeholders at national, regional and global levels.

Management capacity	Experience in managing fair and transparent calls for proposals and grant-selection processes with experience in utilizing an independent technical selection panel and online application systems. Experience in management, monitoring and reporting on a diverse portfolio of multi-year grants in terms of grant size ($500,000 - $2.5 million), geography, type of recipient (academic organizations, think tanks, or others), type of innovation, knowledge exchange and mobilization activities, etc. Ability to provide strong reporting on grant portfolio to the GPE as funder and its Board. Experience, in country and internationally, with managing fiduciary and administrative risk, relative to the modality and scope of grants. Evidence of developing monitoring and evaluation strategies to demonstrate the impact of grants and include feedback mechanisms and using grantee feedback to make changes in how programs are managed. Capacity to communicate routinely to the public and the partnership about the portfolio of activities, outputs and events funded under KIX.
Languages	Ability to work in English, French and Spanish. Arabic is considered an advantage.
Regional networks and expertise	Strong partnerships and experience in the regions where KIX is be active in low and low middle income countries in some or all of: Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), East and Southern Africa (ESA), West and Central Africa (WCA), Europe and Central Asia (ECA), South Asia, Middle East and North Africa (SAMENA), South East Asia (SEA) and Pacific (PAC).
Cost effectiveness	Economical approach to the percentage of direct management, administrative, and overhead costs requested as part of the overall program. Low or preferably no indirect cost recovery percentage requested. Ability to provide match or in-kind resources to the KIX programs.
Vision statement	Description (no more than 4 pages) of how the applicant will implement KIX, explaining its operational vision for the Regional Hubs and Evidence and Research Funds (clearly stating whether the application is as grant agent for one component or both). The statement will also describe how the applicant plans to leverage its institutional experience and networks to operationalize KIX, what success looks like, and how the monitoring and reporting framework will capture KIX outcomes and impact.

Next steps for grant agent selection

A competitive grant agent selection process will be launched after the design framework has been approved by the GPE Board in December 2025. Grounded in GPE procedures for selecting

grant agents, a call for Expressions of Interest will be launched in early 2026 based on Terms of Reference provided above.

In the interest of program continuity, the GPE Secretariat will manage the application process and recommend the grant agent. Expressions of Interest will outline how prospective grant agents propose to implement KIX and measure its impact. Applicants may apply to be the grant agent for both KIX components or one component only: based on submissions, the GPE Secretariat will recommend one grant agent for KIX overall, or two working in consortium. PILC will be updated about the selection process during its April 2026 meeting. The Board would invite the recommended grant agent(s) to develop a full KIX proposal once the final budget is approved in June 2026. The grant agent(s) proposal will be quality assured by the GPE Secretariat and submitted to PILC in October 2026 for recommendation to the Board. Precise steps are outlined in the table below.

Date	Action
December 2025	GPE Board considers and decides on the design framework
January 2026	Grant agent Expression of Interest launched
March – May 2026	Assessment of EOIs and pre-accreditation criteria
June 2026	• Grant agent(s) recommended • Board of Directors considers and decides on the amount of available funding for KIX • Board of Directors invites recommended grant agent(s) to develop proposal
June – August 2026	KIX proposal developed by grant agent(s)
September 2026	KIX proposal quality assured by GPE Secretariat
October 2026	KIX proposal submitted to PILC for review
December 2026	Board of Directors considers and decides on portfolio and budget
July 2027	New KIX program begins