

Call for Proposals in East, West, and Southern Africa:

Generating and mobilizing knowledge and innovation for
early learning

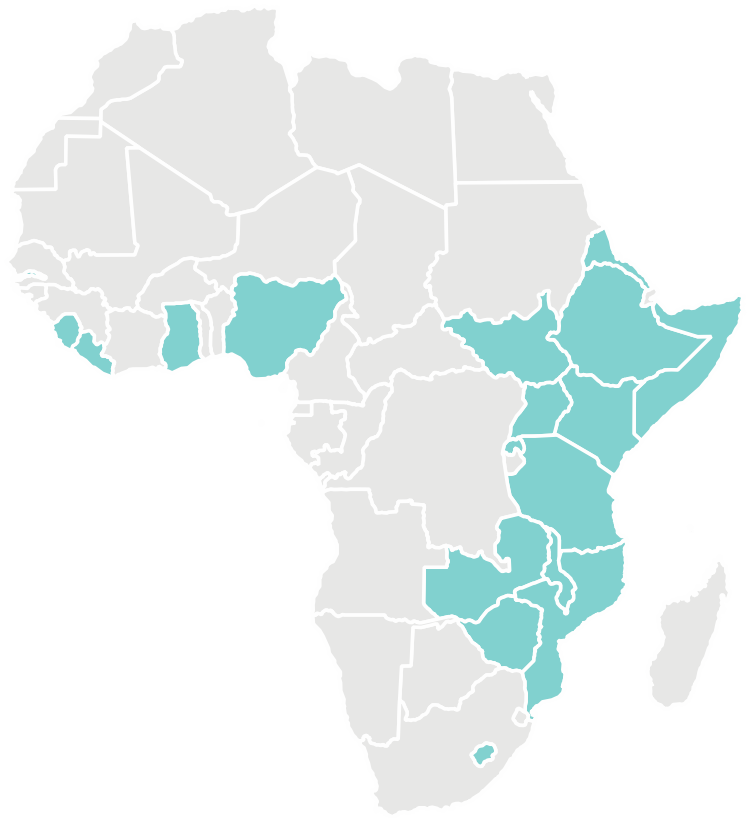


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1. Introduction

The International Development Research Centre (IDRC), the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), and the LEGO Foundation invite proposals from individual African organizations or consortia of organizations led by an African organization for projects to generate and mobilize knowledge so national education systems in developing countries can address challenges associated with the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Target 4.1, to “ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes” and 4.2, to “ensure that all boys and girls have access to early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education”. Specifically, this call will address the following challenge: to generate and mobilize evidence on how to adapt and scale approaches that strengthen quality early learning for all children, based on how they learn best, and support smooth transitions between pre-primary and the early grades of primary education.

THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR EDUCATION KNOWLEDGE AND INNOVATION EXCHANGE

This call is part of the GPE [Knowledge and Innovation Exchange](#) (KIX), and is a joint endeavor between GPE and IDRC, with support from the LEGO Foundation. The goal of KIX is to strengthen national education systems and accelerate educational progress in the Global South by filling knowledge gaps, increasing access to evidence, and strengthening systems to support the generation and uptake of evidence and innovations in GPE member countries. KIX does this by facilitating direct knowledge-sharing across countries through four [regional hubs](#) and by funding projects at global and regional levels to build and mobilize knowledge to address shared priorities in education.

KIX seeks to deepen knowledge about the ways in which GPE member countries can adapt and scale the impact of innovative approaches in their education systems. Since 2019, 36 [projects](#) have been selected through global and regional competitive calls for proposals. This is a second phase of the regional call for proposals to respond to early-learning [priorities of GPE member countries](#) in the [KIX Africa 19](#) region, covering Anglophone and Lusophone countries in East, West and Southern Africa (see Annex A).

The focus for this call is early learning, encompassing formal or organized learning settings and programs that support the cognitive, physical, social, and emotional development of children between 3 and 8 years of age, or preschool to grade 3 of primary education.

OBJECTIVES OF THIS CALL

The objectives of this regional call for proposals are to:

- build knowledge about innovative solutions to shared policy challenges related to quality early learning, including the transition between pre-primary and early grades of primary school and how the positive impacts of these innovations can be scaled;
- support the use of that knowledge in and across education systems for policy, practice and technological development and implementation; and
- strengthen capacities to generate and use knowledge and innovation for early learning.

The deadline for submission of proposals is August 23, 2021.

WHY EARLY LEARNING IS A PRIORITY

Quality early-learning programs not only prepare young children to succeed in school and in life, but they also improve the efficiency and effectiveness of education systems' programs by fostering foundational skills and boosting children's ability to learn. Quality early-learning settings provide experiences for stimulating interactions that are critical in nurturing children's social and emotional skills that set them up for success in life.

Status of early learning in the KIX Africa 19 region

In the last three decades, early learning in countries across East, West and Southern Africa has undergone tremendous changes. There is growing emphasis on the importance and the key role of early learning in economic development and the need to steadily allocate more resources to the subsector. Increasing numbers of countries in the region have developed or upgraded Early Childhood Education (ECE) policies and focused on the foundational literacy and numeracy skills through mother-tongue instruction in the early grades of primary school. However, the African Union notes that pre-primary education across the continent is still "severely underdeveloped," characterized by "disparities, poor management, and a lack of coherent curriculum and linkages with primary education" (CESA 16-25). Similarly, challenges that are common in the early grades of primary education include large class sizes, inadequate learning materials/environments, and pedagogy and assessment that are not appropriate for young children. These issues build upon each other and lead to low learning outcomes for children or hamper their readiness for success in later grades. These and other significant gaps were reported in the KIX Africa 19 Hub regional priority identification process.

Overall, there are gaps in getting children ready for participating and succeeding in primary school, highlighting the need to identify, innovate, and scale evidence-based cost-effective practices to maximize school readiness. For example, ensuring interactive learning through play approaches in preschool and early primary school, providing an emotionally supportive environment, and engaging parents to foster social and emotional skills, self-regulation, and appropriate nutrition can help children thrive in these early years of schooling. These opportunities are needed for all children, mindful of gender equality, equity, and inclusion issues. Specifically, re-thinking early learning in these contexts should pay attention to the following key aspects:

a. Quality of early learning curriculum and pedagogy

There is growing attention across the region regarding the need to improve curriculum and pedagogy in order to fully realize the potential of quality early learning. For instance, the emphasis on the use of home languages; enhancing children's access to quality experiences and materials, stories, and songs that stimulate and enhance learning; and building capacity of school administrators, parents, and teachers to provide stimulating environments and experiences for holistic learning. A key element to consider is '[learning through play](#)', which is central to quality early-learning pedagogy. This is because: 1) play in the early years enables children to explore, develop their imagination and creativity, and make sense of the world around them; 2) active, play-based learning approaches in the early primary grades can strengthen learning outcomes while enhancing children's mastery of academic concepts and build motivation to learn. However, in both ECE and early primary grades, play-based learning is

often neglected in favor of academic-focused education approaches hence overshadowing social and emotional learning, creativity, and psycho-motor skills.

b. Quality of early education workforce

Quality pre-primary and early primary teaching requires appropriate professional development for caregivers, teachers, school leaders, and administrators. Moreover, primary caregivers, as children's "first teachers", are the biggest supporters of children's learning and have an important role in creating the enabling space for active learning. It is therefore essential to continue supporting and empowering teachers, school leaders, and caregivers to take an active role in shaping children's learning and development in school, at home, and in the community in day-to-day experiences.

Facilitating experiential learning in pre-primary and early primary through play approaches necessitates improvements and expansions to workforce training. Teachers in early primary school need support in understanding and implementing learning through play in a more formal learning setting. School administrations and frameworks in ECE and primary classrooms need to be flexible to allow teachers to experiment with different approaches according to their professional judgement on individual learning needs. A rigid framework may compromise teacher autonomy, a key component of professionalism. Considering the various contextual challenges in the region, approaches for teacher professional development should include mentorship and support and capacity building to strengthen an understanding of how children best learn at all levels, including pre-primary and early primary.

c. School readiness and transition to primary school

Transition from preschool to primary school requires children to adjust to many changes emotionally and in their physical environment. Transition can be most challenging for children from marginalized populations and those with special-education needs. Effective school readiness programs that seek to promote a smooth transition should maintain an open and holistic curriculum for all-round development in addition to emergent literacy and numeracy in preparation for further schooling.

While transition policies have been on the agenda of many countries in the region over the past decade, there is little research on how teachers, school administrators, community members, local government, and central government can design, implement, manage, and monitor transitions. There are knowledge gaps on how to design learning, including curriculum, teaching practices, and learning environments, that promotes developmental, experiential, and play-based approaches for children in early primary school.

THE CHALLENGE

To generate and mobilize evidence on how to adapt and scale approaches that strengthen quality early learning for all children, based on how they learn best, and support smooth transitions between pre-primary and the early grades of primary education.

Potential sub-themes:

- i. How can existing mechanisms and frameworks for enhancing school readiness and the transition from pre-primary to primary school be strengthened?

- ii. How can proven or promising learning-through-play approaches be adapted and scaled up in low-resource contexts, promoting gender equality, equity, and inclusion?
- iii. How can the capacity of parents, caregivers, communities, and school leadership be strengthened to enhance learning through play and support the transition from pre-primary to primary school?
- iv. How can early years and early primary-school curriculum, assessment, and learning environments be improved to be more in line with how young children learn best?
- v. How can teachers' capacity to enhance learning-through-play approaches be strengthened and how can existing models for teacher professional development be adapted at national, district or school levels?

2. Scope

Projects will address the challenge, building on existing initiatives or innovative approaches that have potential to be scaled. The approaches may be promising or already proven. They should be appropriate and scalable for the contexts of the region. Proposals will be expected to adapt and further test these innovations, investigating how their impact can effectively be brought to scale to address the challenge.

Projects may focus on national, sub-national or regional levels. The innovative approaches may come from within or outside GPE member countries. They may have originally been developed to address national or international needs.

KIX supports inter-country knowledge exchange for GPE member countries. In this call, projects must focus on and work in two or more countries listed in Annex A. Projects should facilitate knowledge mobilization within and across countries.

CENTRAL CONCEPTS IN THIS CALL

Building and mobilizing knowledge: Projects should be designed to build knowledge, innovation, and evidence. They should be problem-focused and action-oriented. They should also creatively identify and engage with relevant users of the knowledge and innovation. Projects should involve education-system stakeholders throughout to ensure that research is relevant and readily available for policy and practice. IDRC calls this type of project “research-for-development”.

Innovation: For the purposes of this call, the term “innovation” refers to a combination of tools, practices, technologies, policies, programs, methodologies, or interventions that can be used to address the challenge. The innovation may be a package of measures that provide solutions. The

Projects funded through this call will build on existing promising or proven approaches that address the challenge, and:

- i. Adapt and further test the approaches to assess how to scale positive impacts in GPE member countries; and
- ii. Mobilize knowledge and strengthen capacity so the approaches can be taken up in policy and practice.

Projects funded through this call will NOT finance the implementation of the approaches.

innovative element may be the combination of elements that make them effective.

A critical approach to scaling impact: These projects will investigate how innovative approaches can make significant positive change in education systems by optimally scaling their impact. However, applicants are encouraged to take a critical approach to scale. Scaling is not only about making something bigger or increasing the coverage of an intervention. Scaling is the process of improving the reach, breadth, quality, equity, and sustainability of the changes, benefits, and solutions that innovations bring to education systems. Proposals should anticipate potential trade-offs or even negative consequences of innovations as they scale. Decisions to scale must be well justified in light of evidence, as well as the perspectives of those who could be affected (see more in [Gargani and McLean, 2017](#)).

Building knowledge about scaling, and for scaling: The grants **will not** support the large-scale implementation of identified innovations. They **will** fund research-for-development to generate evidence for their scaling. This may include: (1) measures to adapt and refine the innovations to the contextual needs of the selected countries; (2) developing and testing means and models to scale them; (3) supporting capacity building of stakeholders who will adapt, adopt and scale the innovations; and (4) assessing results. Given the relatively short duration of projects funded through this call, proponents should be selective about which are the critical issues of scaling processes that they will focus on.

FUNDING AND DURATION

KIX will allocate CA\$5 million through this call, with individual projects receiving funding between CA\$700,000 and CA\$1 million.

Projects can be up to 22 months in duration.

Proposals deemed high quality but not approved for funding may be retained for an additional 12 months, based on applicant permissions, in the event that additional funds become available.

3. Eligibility

This call prioritizes funding to African organizations. Proposals should demonstrate that the organization applying for the grant is working in and has relationships with relevant education stakeholders in the target countries. An applicant organization/lead organization or any other organization that will enter into a grant agreement with IDRC as part of a consortium must have legal corporate registration and capacity to administer foreign funds.

Proposals may be submitted by individual organizations or by consortia that include up to three organizations working together. Applicants from organizations that do not meet the eligibility criteria will be screened out at the first stage of proposal review.

Individual organizations:

Eligible organizations may include, but are not limited to, civil society organizations, research institutions, universities, think tanks, network secretariats and associations, non-profits, or private sector organizations, with independent legal registration in an African country. For organizations with offices on multiple continents, to be eligible for this call, their headquarters should be in an African country.

Consortia:

- Consortia may have up to three organizations.
- One of the three organizations must be named as the lead. The lead organization must meet the eligibility criteria listed above for individual organizations. They must also have the capacity to coordinate and subgrant to the other organizations.
- Other consortium members may include organizations from Africa; national, regional or international offices of multi-lateral organizations or international NGOs; or other organizations from outside Africa.

Private sector: Proposals from or that include private sector partners are welcome. Such applications should demonstrate how private sector resources (financial or technical know-how) will contribute to the project, in partnership with others.

Who is NOT eligible?

- Individuals.
- Government ministries and agencies are not eligible for funding but can be involved in projects.
- For-profit providers of core education services.

4. Proposal requirements

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Proposals should clearly present anticipated outcomes linked to the objectives of this call.

- Proposals must address the challenge described in section 2. Proposals should present a case about existing approaches that could be relevant to address the challenge in the education systems of at least two of the countries listed in Annex A. A sound justification should include relevance to the challenge, contexts and policy priorities; existing evidence of results (for whom and under what circumstances); gender equity and inclusion considerations to be considered; and cost-effectiveness and sustainability.
- Proposals must present a rigorous and practical methodology to generate knowledge. They should include measures to adapt and test the selected innovative approaches to meet the contextual needs of education systems in the countries from Annex A in which they will be implemented, as well as outline the selected scaling issues, approaches, and delivery mechanisms they have prioritized to test.
- Proposals must present knowledge-mobilization strategies, including articulating how the project will engage and respond to relevant stakeholders throughout, to ensure relevance, quality, and the potential to inform policy-making and practice.
- Proposals must present a project team with an appropriate range of expertise to ensure the project's success, including expertise in research; gender equality, equity, and inclusion; monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL); and knowledge mobilization.
- Proposals submitted by a consortium should provide a rationale explaining why the consortium members have come together to implement the project and describing the role and added value provided by each member organization. Consortia must describe governance and coordination arrangements they will use to produce high-quality work and support fair and equitable partnerships. IDRC may consider separate grants to multiple consortium members on an exceptional basis in its sole discretion.

GENDER EQUALITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

Gender equality, equity, and inclusion are core values of KIX, IDRC, GPE, and the LEGO Foundation. All projects funded must be gender sensitive¹, gender responsive,² or gender transformative³. Proposals that are gender blind⁴ **will not** be considered.

Equity in education refers to the fairness of the distribution of educational resources, opportunities, and outcomes within and between societies. Inclusive education is a process that involves the transformation of schools and other centers of learning to cater for all children – including children of different genders, students from ethnic and linguistic minorities, rural populations, those affected by HIV and AIDS, and those with disabilities and difficulties in learning. Gender and equity considerations

1 Gender (the differentiated and intersectoral experiences of women, men, boys, girls, and people of all genders) is considered in the research project's rationale and is addressed in the project design and methodology.

2 Gender is considered in the research project's rationale, design, and methodology and is rigorously analyzed to inform implementation and communication, and influence strategies.

3 Examines, analyzes, and builds an evidence base to inform long-term practical changes in structural power relations and norms, roles and inequalities that define the differentiated experiences of children and adults of all genders. Gender-transformative research aims to lead to sustained change through action (e.g. partnerships, outreach, and interventions).

4 The project treats all genders the same while ignoring biological sex and historical differences and context across gendered identities. The project fails to recognize the distinct needs of girls and boys in education and that participation in education is driven by specific social, cultural, economic, and political contexts and hindrances.

should be cross cutting in the proposal, including in the rationale, design, intended results, data collection, analysis, interpretation, and knowledge-mobilization processes.

ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT

Projects funded through this call will have to incorporate an adaptive-management approach for at least two reasons. First, there may be emergent elements to the project design and knowledge-mobilization strategies. Second, proposals are being developed during the **COVID-19 pandemic** that may pose a challenge to future planning, particularly for projects that will work in multiple countries. Proposals should present a plan of how the project will start activities in the context of COVID-19, considerations of **shorter and longer-term potential impacts of the pandemic** on the project, and how adaptations will be planned and managed.

FAIR AND EQUITABLE PARTNERSHIPS

One of the unique aspects of this call is the expectation that organizations will establish and develop fair and equitable partnerships from the beginning to the end of the project with relevant local stakeholders, involving them as appropriate throughout the project, respecting their knowledge and expertise, and taking an adaptive approach that is responsive to the local context. Proposals should outline processes to establish such partnerships. Local stakeholders can include, but are not limited to, school principals and teachers, caregivers and children, local education groups and teachers' unions, education ministry officials, development partners, and policy-makers. Fair and equitable partnerships must also be established among members of the consortium if multiple organizations are working on the implementation of the project.

RESEARCH QUALITY

The projects funded out of this call will be expected to meet the quality standards expressed in [IDRC's Research Quality Plus \(RQ+\) framework](#). Proposals must be methodologically rigorous, original and relevant. They must also be ethically sound; mindful of equity, inclusion, and gender dimensions; and well-positioned for use by different stakeholders.

BEING PART OF THE KNOWLEDGE AND INNOVATION EXCHANGE

The projects funded out of this call will become part of the Knowledge and Innovation Exchange. They will be invited to participate in joint learning and synthesis activities with other projects, and to extend their knowledge-mobilization strategies with regional hubs. They will be required to link their results to the KIX-wide results framework and track some common results in their monitoring, evaluation and learning strategies. Proponents should anticipate allocating at least 12 days to these KIX-level activities in their plans and budgets.

5. Proposal submission details

All applications should be submitted in French or English, using the [online IDRC application](#). The components of the online application form are outlined below.

The online application will ask applicants to provide:

- the project title
- countries of focus
- project duration
- project summary in plain language
- contact information of the project leader and co-applicants (if applicable)
- the rationale for the consortium (if applicable)

Applicants are strongly encouraged to seek out resources to appropriately address gender equality, equity, and inclusion in the project proposal, for instance this [Guide to integrating gender in your proposal](#).

Proposals are expected to address the following in the application:

Problem identification and background (max. 1,500 words)

- Clearly state the problem or opportunity to be addressed in your project; how it addresses an important knowledge gap relevant to the challenge; how it addresses gender equality, equity, and inclusion issues of the challenge; and how the project responds to the specific identified education priorities of chosen GPE member countries, including their education sector plans.
- Present the relevant background and literature in relation to the proposed project.
- Provide a justification for the selected innovative approach(es) to be adapted and further tested.

Research purpose and anticipated results (max. 1,000 words)

- Clearly state the proposed project objectives⁵ and research questions, adapted and refined from the objectives of this call, and directly addressing the challenge.
- Describe what the proposed project will produce in terms of outputs, and the outcomes and intended impact to which it will contribute; explain how it will add to existing knowledge for education systems.
- Describe how the proposed project objectives address and impact gender equality, equity, and inclusion issues and their underlying causes.

⁵ This includes general and specific objectives of the project. The general objective should state the development goal being pursued related to the policy challenge. The specific objectives should indicate the specific types of knowledge to be produced; the policy, practice or innovation that could be improved with that knowledge, specifying which stakeholders will be reached; and capacities to be strengthened. The success of the project will be judged against the specific objectives by the end of the project.

Project design and methodology (max. 1,500 words)

- Describe the study design, conceptual framework, methods, and type of analysis.
- Describe the project's adaptive management approach, and how it will manage risks, including those related to COVID-19.
- Outline how gender, equity, and inclusion considerations will be incorporated in all elements of project design and methodology.
- Outline how relevant stakeholders will be involved in fair and equitable partnerships during the project.
- Identify risks to achieving project objectives and strategies for mitigation.

Knowledge-mobilization strategy (max. 700 words)

- Explain how the activities and outputs of the project will engage, on an ongoing basis, potential knowledge users, including ministries of education; the strategies to ensure that research results are used by relevant stakeholders; and what the outcomes of the project might be for policy-making and capacity building.

Gender equality, equity, and inclusion considerations (max. 500 words)

- Discuss how the project addresses topics of gender equality, equity, and inclusion and how it is integrated in the study design, methods, analysis, outputs, outcomes, and potential impacts.
- Discuss the level of the continuum of gender integration throughout the project as described in the gender, equity, and inclusion part of section 4, above.
- Discuss what the likely impact of addressing the problem will have on different groups within the region, such as people of different genders, ethnic, and linguistic minorities, rural populations, those affected by HIV and AIDS, and those with disabilities and difficulties in learning.

Research ethics (max. 500 words)

- Provide details of the potential ethical issues in relation to the proposed research and what steps will be taken to ensure the highest ethical standards and the protection of research participants. Refer to the [Canadian Tri-Council Policy Statement on Ethical Conduct of Research Involving Humans](#).
- Identify which institutional or national research ethics body will provide ethics review and oversight. Note that prior to commencing research, applicants will need to obtain ethics approval and will need to comply with the terms and conditions of the grant agreement.

Monitoring, evaluation, and learning (max. 700 words)

- Provide a theory-of-change and results framework and an overview of the mechanisms, methods, and evidence to be used to assess project progress.
- Discuss how monitoring, evaluation, and learning will incorporate and assess gender equality, equity, and inclusion issues.

Project team capacities (max. 1,000 words)

- List the project team members, their roles and expertise relevant to the project (research, early learning, learning facilitation, gender equality, equity, and inclusion, MEL, and knowledge mobilization).
- Provide a brief overview of the organization's (or the consortium's) track record relative to its proposed role in the project.

Additional documents

In addition to the proposal, applicants are expected to submit:

1. Contact information of the lead applicant and members of the consortium if applicable.
2. [Institutional Profile Questionnaire](#) (IPQ) to be completed by the lead applicant, along with a copy of the organization's legal registration.
3. Estimated budget, with a cost breakdown by categories [using the IDRC budget template](#). Complete all the tabs except the Summary tab, which will be generated automatically. Save the completed and duly-signed budget as a PDF document and attach this to your application. For a list of eligible expenses, please refer to the IDRC [Guidelines for Acceptable Project Expenditures](#)⁶. For general information, refer to the [General IDRC Funding Guidelines](#)⁷. Please add information on any matched funding, or additional leveraged resources, that are relevant to this proposal under the "Donor contributions" and "Local contributions" tabs.
4. Two-page CVs of the lead applicant with relevant experience and key contact individuals from other organizations in the case of consortia.

By submitting this proposal, the applicants and sub-grantees confirm that their acknowledgement of the applicable [Terms and Conditions](#) for the Grant Agreement, acknowledged and accepted, form an integral part of the funding application. The applicant also agrees to abide by [IDRC Corporate Principles on Research Ethics](#), [IDRC Open Access Policy](#) and [IDRC Open Data Statement of Principles](#) to proceed.

⁶ To access the link to "Part 2 of IDRC's standard grant agreement" found within this document, please visit: <https://idrc-crdi.smapply.io/protected/resource/eyJ0ZnJlJjogOTU1OTE0ODQsICJ2cSI6IDE0NDcxMH0/>

⁷ For the most recent versions of the material hyperlinked in this document, please refer to the links found throughout this detailed call for proposals.

6. Evaluation criteria

An independent expert panel will assess proposals using the evaluation criteria and the criteria weighting (in percentages) outlined below.

Evaluation criteria	%
<p><i>Relevance and likelihood of impact</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The proposal responds to the challenge <input type="checkbox"/> The proposal speaks to at least one of the potential sub-themes of the challenge statement. <input type="checkbox"/> The proposal focuses on testing and assessing scalability issues of an innovation that is well-justified, feasible, and cost-effective in the context of chosen GPE member countries. <input type="checkbox"/> The proposal presents convincing strategies, including stakeholder involvement, policy-engagement approaches, and links with education planning processes, for the uptake of project results in the selected countries from Annex A. <input type="checkbox"/> The proposal identifies the gender equality, equity, and inclusion challenge and presents a convincing strategy on addressing the challenge. 	30
<p><i>Project design and methodology</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The proposal presents a convincing design to achieve relevant and important results within the (maximum) 22-month funding period. <input type="checkbox"/> The project has an appropriate methodology to address research question(s). <input type="checkbox"/> The proposal includes clear strategies for adaptive management and mitigating risks. <input type="checkbox"/> The proposal identifies key ethical issues and ways of addressing them, including how ethical oversight will be managed. 	30
<p><i>Gender equality, equity, and inclusion considerations</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Gender equality, equity, and inclusion are considered at all stages of the project, including design, intended results, data collection, analysis, interpretation, and knowledge-mobilization processes. 	15

<p><i>Organizational capacity</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Applicant demonstrates a strong track record that is suitable to the task proposed. <input type="checkbox"/> The team demonstrates capacity in education systems; applied research; gender equality, equity, and inclusion issues; monitoring, evaluation, and learning; and knowledge mobilization. <input type="checkbox"/> The proposal explains how the team will coordinate their multi-country work and ensure fair and equitable partnerships. <input type="checkbox"/> For consortia, the proposal presents effective governance and coordination mechanisms to be used. <input type="checkbox"/> Applicant demonstrates they have the capacity to achieve results within the project timeframe. 	15
<p><i>Monitoring, evaluation, and learning</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The proposal includes a theory-of-change and results framework with outputs, outcomes, and intended impact. <input type="checkbox"/> The proposal includes a monitoring, evaluation, and learning strategy to help the team monitor progress, adapt, achieve results, and report. 	10
<p><i>Total</i></p>	100

7. Submission and review process

Proposals must be submitted no later than August 23, 2021 (11:59 p.m. EDT). Proposals received after the deadline or incomplete proposals will not be considered. All applications must be submitted, in French or English, using the [online application form](#).

The review process will consist of the following steps:

1. Verification of eligibility requirements and proposal completeness: IDRC will review all submitted proposals to ensure they meet eligibility requirements, each section of the application is completed, and all required supporting documentation is included. Incomplete proposals or those that do not meet the eligibility requirements will not be considered further.
2. Initial shortlisting of eligible proposals: In case of a large number of submitted proposals, IDRC will review eligible proposals on the basis of the evaluation criteria presented in section 7 and shortlist the top 15 proposals, which will be sent to the KIX Independent Assessment Panel (IAP).
3. Review and ranking of proposals by IAP: IAP members will assess shortlisted proposals using the evaluation criteria in section 7. Each proposal will be reviewed by at least two panelists. Proposals will be ranked on the basis of scoring and subsequent IAP discussion. The IAP will recommend which proposals are of sufficient quality to receive KIX funding.
4. Recommending a cohort of projects: IDRC will identify a cohort of proposals up to the maximum budget for the funding envelope available for the call from the IAP's list of recommended applications, to be submitted for approval by the KIX Executive Committee. As much as possible, the cohort will balance thematic, geographic, and applicant diversity. IDRC will also analyze budgets and the proposals' value for money.
5. Executive Committee approval: The Executive Committee of KIX will provide final approval of the projects funded through this call.
6. IDRC reserves the right to request successful applicants to make changes based on feedback from the IAP and IDRC, if necessary. IDRC may also facilitate additional interaction with KIX representatives in GPE member countries to further hone the selected proposal to country realities.
7. High-ranking proposals, which are deemed of sufficient quality but are not funded through this round, will be kept by IDRC for up to 12 months for future funding opportunities, provided permission to do so is given by applicants.

8. Inquiries

One webinar, hosted in English and French, will take place on June 28, 2021 (7:30 a.m. EDT) to answer questions about this call for proposals. Questions must be submitted in advance; the question submission deadline for the webinar is June 21, 2021. To attend the webinar, [please register in advance \(https://forms.gle/ZYFJP4M9DM4Kegkg6\)](https://forms.gle/ZYFJP4M9DM4Kegkg6). Only those who register will receive access to the webinar platform.

Any inquiries that affect all applicants will be posted anonymously online on the [KIX regional call FAQ site](#). Applicants are strongly encouraged to monitor this website for any information updates regarding this call.

9. Call timeline

Activity	Date
Call launch	June 10, 2021
Webinar	June 28, 2021
Deadline for submitting proposals	August 23, 2021
Review of proposals by IDRC	August 25 - Sept. 3, 2021
Review of proposals by IAP	September 10-24, 2021
Proposals selected for funding receive feedback from IAP and IDRC and amendments made, if necessary	October 2021
Applicants resubmit amended proposals	December 2021
Approval of proposals	January 2022

10. Additional considerations

1. As a Canadian Crown corporation, IDRC is subject to Canada's [Access to Information Act](#). Consequently, any submissions in response to this call for research proposals will be held by IDRC in a manner consistent with the *Access to Information Act*, including IDRC's obligations to disclose documents requested by members of the public.
2. By way of submitting an application under this call, applicants consent to the disclosure of the documents they submit to IDRC and external reviewers who are involved in the assessment and selection processes of proposals. If selected for funding, applicants further consent to the disclosure of their name and the title of the proposed project in any announcement of selected projects. Unsuccessful proposals will be destroyed within 180 days after the close of the application period. Proposals deemed as high quality by the IAP, but which do not receive funding from this round, will be retained for an additional 12 months, based on applicant permissions.
3. Applicants must publish research findings in the public domain in accordance with [IDRC's Open Access Policy](#).
4. IDRC reserves the right in its sole discretion at any time to withdraw support for a project or recipient where the i) implementation, ii) monitoring of, or iii) access to a project is not possible or would jeopardize the safety of staff, contractors or anyone affiliated to IDRC. Additionally, where it is determined that a project or participation of an institution or individual would or could reasonably violate laws, sanctions or other obligations with which IDRC and/or the applicant must comply, support for the project may be withheld or withdrawn.
5. Country clearance requirements: IDRC has conducted general agreements for scientific and technical cooperation with a number of governments. These agreements establish the framework for IDRC cooperation with that country by defining the rights and obligations of both IDRC and the government. As such, the applicant institution may be required to obtain country approval in accordance with these agreements prior to receiving funding from IDRC. This requirement applies only for selected applications. IDRC reserves the right to not pursue the funding of a selected project if the country approval is not secured within six months after IDRC officially announces approval of the project, as this would jeopardize the timely completion of the initiative.

11. Background information on GPE and IDRC

GPE is a multi-stakeholder partnership and funding platform that aims to strengthen education systems in developing countries to dramatically increase the number of children who are in school and learning. GPE supports developing-country governments to develop good-quality education-sector plans. GPE also mobilizes financing from public and private sources around the world and encourages developing-country partners to provide sufficient domestic financing for basic education. Finally, GPE

enables developing countries to address common education challenges through learning from each other, strengthening technical capacity, and accessing the best technical expertise.

IDRC is a Canadian Crown corporation that collaboratively works with researchers from the developing world in search of their own solutions for building healthier, more equitable, and more prosperous societies. IDRC achieves this by providing developing-country researchers with financial resources, advice, and training to help them find solutions to local problems, encouraging knowledge sharing with policymakers, researchers, and communities around the world, and fostering new talent by offering fellowships and awards.

Annex A

List of GPE member countries in the KIX Africa 19 region.

Eritrea
Ethiopia
The Gambia
Ghana
Kenya
Lesotho
Liberia
Malawi
Mozambique
Nigeria
Rwanda
Sierra Leone
Somalia
South Sudan
Tanzania
Uganda
Zambia
Zimbabwe