



INNOVATION MODEL FOR IMPROVING EDUCATION

October 2020

About SUMMA

It is the first Laboratory of Education Research and Innovation for Latin America and the Caribbean. It was created in 2016 by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), with the support of the Ministries of Education of Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico, Peru and Uruguay. Since 2018, the Ministries of Guatemala, Honduras and Panama have also joined.

About the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS)

OECS is an intergovernmental organization dedicated to regional integration in the Eastern Caribbean. Guided by strategic objectives, OECS works in different programmatic areas and in all its Member States to consolidate a common economic space for sustained economic growth, social inclusion and environmental protection.





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(countries & representatives in alphabetical order)

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Dear KIX representatives and educational community,

Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) continues to be facing pressing social challenges. Socio-economic segregation of education systems, inequalities in access to quality education and in graduation rates are largely influenced by students' social background. In the small states of the Eastern Caribbean systemic approaches have greater impact on these inequalities, but the systems are vulnerable to shocks including economic, extreme weather and tectonic related events. These findings force us to rethink our education systems and to urgently identify those initiatives that are working to address these issues.

Information gaps, limited access or poor use of evidence in decision making, together with weakened support systems for knowledge generation and innovation, are some of the critical points that education systems in the global south have in common.

To strengthen education in our region, knowledge sharing and innovation are at the heart of improvements both in the design and implementation of public policies and in the actual educational practices of education systems. This is why the KIX initiative for Latin America and the Caribbean, implemented by the partnership between the Laboratory for Research and Innovation in Education for Latin America and the Caribbean (SUMMA) and the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), will concentrate its efforts on generating instances of exchange, participation and identification of good practices among the different member countries of the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) network.

With a regional agenda that emerges from the shared demands, priorities and needs of the countries, supported by the International Research Development Centre (IDRC) during four years of collaborative work, KIX Hub LAC will focus on contributing to improving the equity and quality of the region's education systems through its three areas of work: the creation of a regional education policy agenda, the mobilization of knowledge and the strengthening of the institutional capacities of the participating states.

It is our sincere hope that this regional collaborative work will create prosperous learning environments for countries to learn from each other and strengthen their education systems.

On behalf of the KIX Hub LAC team, we extend our fraternal greetings to all of you.



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Goals and Institutions

Restoring the right to a quality education for every child and young person is one of the most pressing challenges that Latin America and the Caribbean faces. As a consequence of the COVID, 160 million children and young people in the region have had their education affected, and almost half of them will live in a poor home in 2021.

In this scenario, reducing knowledge gaps and innovating in the ways we approach educational problems has become more necessary than ever. As the use of scientific evidence has become a matter of importance and as the production of data has never been so intense, understanding the ways through which actors, regulations, knowledge and values interact to produce policy changes becomes fundamental to design and implement initiatives aiming at generating sustainable improvements. However, in spite of unprecedented knowledge availability, there are still challenges on how to ameliorate its timeliness, accessibility and quality to be adequately used in educational policy and practice.

In order to address these challenges, SUMMA and the OECS –with the support of the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) and the IDRC, under the framework of a global and innovative program– are leading the KIX Initiative for Latin America and the Caribbean, aiming at mobilizing knowledge and building capacities for education research and innovation in **Dominica, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Nicaragua, Saint Lucia and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines**. In concrete, the core of the initiative lies on mobilizing education evidence and innovations to effectively solve critical problems identified by the countries themselves. For this purpose, the constitution of a Regional Hub, constituted by 4-5 representatives in leading positions in each of these countries is paramount. They will provide leadership and guidance to the hub, ensuring its relevance and pertinence to the region.

Indeed, the Hub is formed by more than 30 senior public authorities, teachers' union representatives, professionals and experts, academics, NGO leaders and school principals.

KIX LAC activities will be anchored in the following principles: **(a)** promoting a bottom-up approach; **(b)** engaging a broad base of education stakeholders; **(c)** understanding education as a human right; **(d)** promoting the role of evidence in decision-making; **(e)** generating trusting relationships.





Definition of priorities

Supported by IDRC and GPE, KIX LAC was created in April 2020 as a result of a joint initiative between SUMMA and the OECS. In the first six months, the KIX team worked in two strategic lines:

- Identifying the KIX countries' main educational challenges and systematizing its members' priorities to support IDRC's Regional Call and inform the Hub's first initiatives.
- Constituting the KIX Hub's governing bodies, including key stakeholders from the region.
- The goals of these activities have mainly been to inform and set the KIX LAC agenda for the next years.

The identification of the region's main educational challenges was done through interviews to key stakeholders. In fact, 16 officers from ministries of education, civil society and academia from the region were interviewed. This process was complemented with a thorough analysis of national policy documents, regional reports, and secondary data. The outcome of the research was a policy brief summarizing the main priorities of the region, as defined by the interviewees. These findings were shared during a KIX Inception Webinar (June 9th 2020), and validated by the participants. In the end, 7 educational challenges were selected, as it is shown in the infographics N° 1.

As part of the tasks related to the creation of the Hub, the KIX team met with the focal points to introduce the project and ask for the appointment of the rest of the members. Once each country had chosen their 4-5 representatives, a welcome survey was delivered to them in order to collect data about their needs, interests and opinions on key matters related to the operation of the KIX LAC and the main educational challenges.

Following what had been done in the first stage, a key question in the survey sought to know which, among those identified educational challenges, were considered the most pressing topics for the Hub's members. The most voted challenges were:

Teacher Professional Development

For example: Teachers recruitment and career path; quality of pre-service and in-service training; working conditions; teachers' appraisals; learning communities.

COVID and education

For example: Education impact of classes suspension and families' impoverishment in the region; use of distance learning strategies (ICTs, radio, TV, textbooks) to reach students; leveling plans for post-COVID scenarios.

Strengthening the public education system

For example: Funding and budget allocation to education; strategies to expand public education supply in highly-privatized systems; improving transition among different learning cycles.

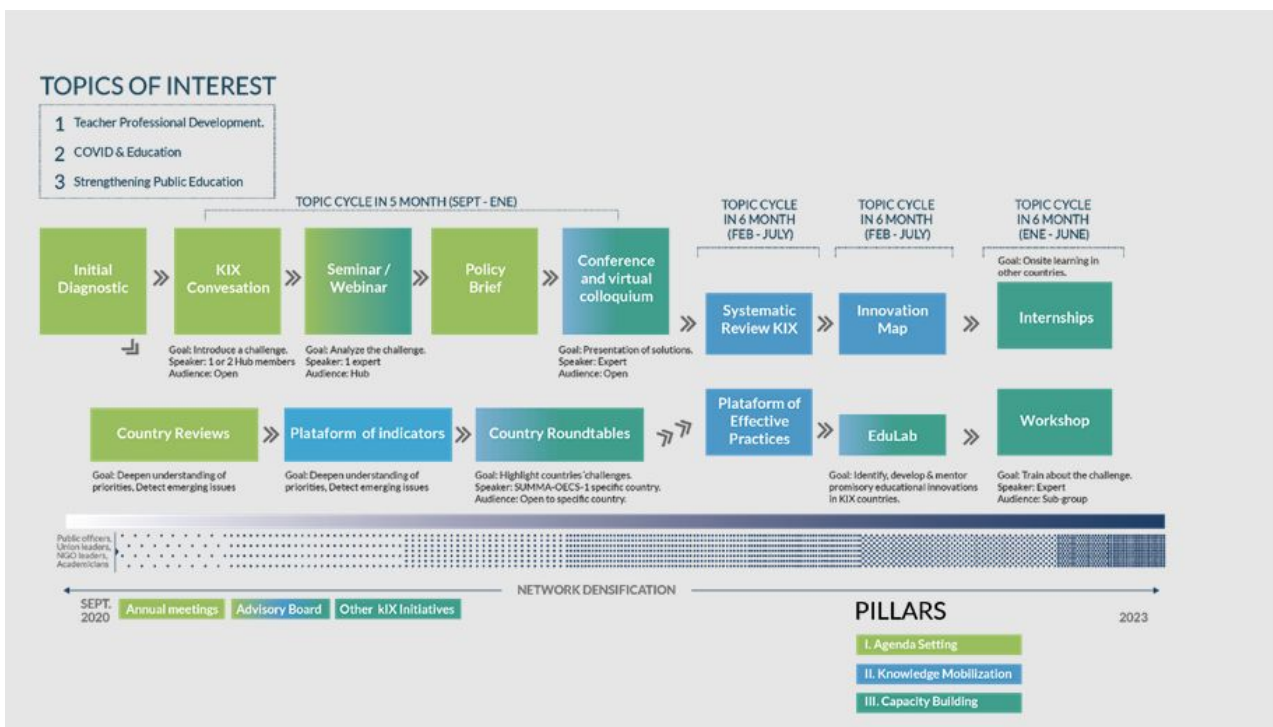
On the basis of these three thematic priorities and under the framework of its theory of change, KIX LAC has structured its future activities (see scheme below).





KIX LAC's theory of change

As a means to fulfill the general purpose of improving inclusion, equity and quality in the education systems in the region, KIX LAC works in three dimensions: (a) Agenda Setting; (b) Knowledge Mobilization; (b) Regional and Local Capacity Building. These pillars will structure the work under the three thematic priorities, as displayed in the next graph.





A **first cycle**, directed to set the policy agenda, started with the **Initial Diagnosis** we described before (identification of the 7 regional challenges and the prioritization by the KIX Hub members through the survey).

In parallel to this diagnosis, we contacted local researchers to carry out **Country Reviews**, with the goal of identifying each of the 8 countries' unique challenges. The focus is put on knowledge and innovation gaps in education, which is the core of the KIX Initiative. Country reviews will constitute a fundamental input for the creation of the **Map of Indicators**, which, on the one side, will deepen our understanding of the countries' priorities, and, on the other, will help us to detect other emerging issues. A discussion and presentation of the major findings of country reviews will be carried out within each country through **Country Roundtables**, hopefully led by members of our community.

The initial diagnosis will trigger the kick off of the series of **KIX Conversations**, where Hub members will be encouraged to lead virtual discussions about specific dimensions of main thematic priorities, building on their own experience and context. For example, starting with the most voted thematic priority, teacher professional development, possible specific conversations might include teacher pre-service programs for the XXIst century, improving teachers' working conditions or the importance of practice in teacher learning. We are aware about KIX Hub members' tremendous experience and we believe a learning community must build upon their members backgrounds and expertise.

Triggered by the KIX Conversation, we will invite an international/regional **expert** in the field to a closed **Webinar** to present alternative perspectives about the same topic and shed light on what research has found as promising in the field. That webinar will constitute a fundamental input for the production of a policy brief. The **Policy Brief** will have the objective of synthesizing the discussion about a specific challenge and identifying knowledge gaps to be addressed by KIX. Its results will be shared in an event open to the public --**Virtual Colloquium**--, thus concluding the first cycle.

After the in-depth analysis of challenges as well as of some of its concrete manifestations, a **second cycle** will begin, as it is shown in infographic 2. This second cycle is structured under the purpose of identifying the best practices to tackle those challenges. Two initiatives will take place for that: on the one side, we will carry out **Systematic Reviews**, aiming at synthesizing what research shows about what works, where and how. Those practices that best fit KIX countries' priorities will be uploaded to a **Platform of Effective Practices**, a tool to be consulted by educational practitioners from the Hub, their organizations and beyond.





The **third cycle** is about innovation itself. What are the most innovative solutions for the themes and problems we have prioritized? What new approaches or practices are other countries implementing as policy responses to these challenges? What promising innovations are taking place in our own region? To answer those questions, SUMMA's **Map of Educational Innovations** will be enriched, with the most innovative ways teachers, schools, governments and civil society are answering to those educational challenges. Also, a regional **EduLab** will be launched: an open call that aims at identifying promising innovations in the field for the region. Those practices that turn to be selected will be granted monetary support and offered technical mentoring to improve, evaluate, and scale their innovations.

Finally, the **fourth cycle** is where innovations are expected to be taken forward by countries. **Boutique Workshops** will be offered, directed towards small groups within the Hub, according to their interests or background organizations; these workshops will develop concrete skills that will contribute to foster innovation in their educational space. Additionally, through **Internships** in schools, governments or other organizations in other countries, some of the Hub members will have the opportunity to learn hands-on about some of the identified innovations in the previous stage. This will be their chance to really understand the process through which the innovation has taken place, to detect eventual opportunities for transferring it to their countries, to identify its strengths and weaknesses and to ask questions to the implementing agents.

In the meantime, Hub members will be invited to participate in other multiple activities being developed by SUMMA and the OECS, and to benefit from KIX LAC's newsletter, multimedia resources and so on. A pivotal instance for sharing the KIX LAC's progress, getting to know its members and projecting the Hub's work. Finally, the KIX LAC **Annual Meeting** -with the goal of evaluating the year's progress and setting the guidelines for the future- will be carried out face-to-face once the health conditions improve.

At the end of these almost 4 years of joint work, we expect to have created a stimulating and sustainable learning community, that has made progress in learning to mobilize the knowledge needs and innovation demands from each of its members.

In the long run, the KIX LAC hub expects to have contributed to the advent of innovative initiatives, practices, programs or norms in KIX countries, that positively impact in the equity, quality and inclusion of their education systems.



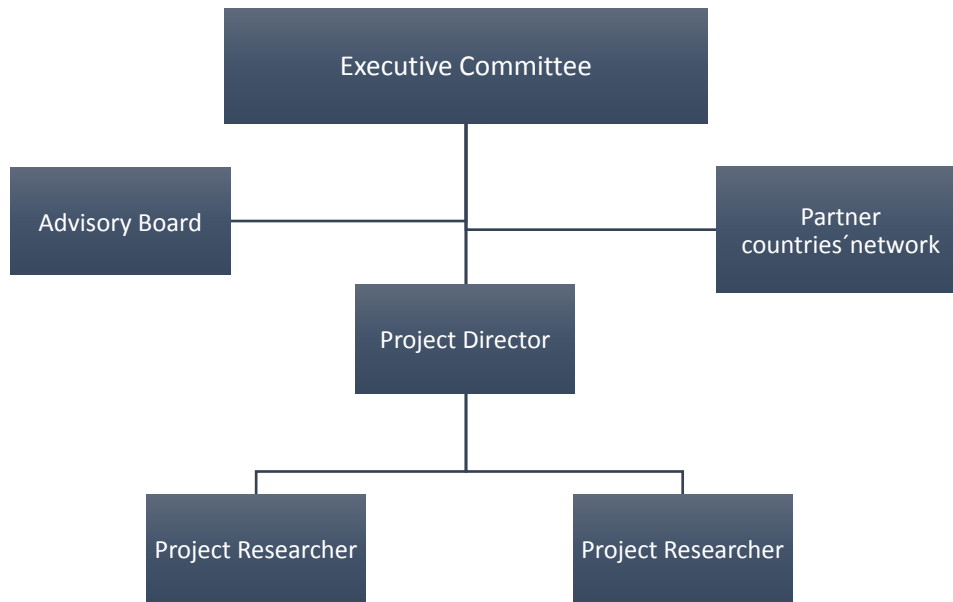


Expected outputs and impact (2020-2023)

Pillars	Expected Outputs	Expected Impact
I. Agenda setting	✓ 1 policy brief on educational challenges for the region	1.1 Strengthened understanding of what works in improving national education systems and how it can be scaled equitably and sustainably.
	✓ 8 country reviews	
	✓ 8 KIX conversations led by Hub's representatives.	
	✓ 8 webinars/ seminars (for Hub's representatives) led by one or more experts.	
	✓ 1 platform with relevant indicators for the region online.	
	✓ 1 COVID-19 survey implemented and results published	
	✓ 3 Advisory Board meetings	
II. Knowledge synthesis and mobilization	✓ 6 policy briefs on thematic priorities	1.2 New knowledge and innovation integrated in policy and practice. 1.3 Strengthened capacity to integrate new knowledge into policy and practice at appropriate scales on a more routine basis.
	✓ 3 systematic reviews on solutions for thematic priorities	
	✓ 5 virtual colloquiums/ conferences (open) to discuss innovations and solutions to challenges	
	✓ 1 EduLab call, supporting 4 promising innovations in the region.	
	✓ 1 Platform with Effective Practices online.	
	✓ 1 Map on Educational Innovations (relevant to the region) online.	
III. Capacity building	✓ 5 national/ subregional roundtables to discuss country review main findings on knowledge gaps.	
	✓ 5 boutique workshops to train subgroups within the Hub..	
	✓ 3 annual meetings of the Hub, to analyze progress and plan future activities.	
	✓ 8 internships (for 2 members of each country), carried out in foreign countries.	



Governance



- An **Executive Committee**, integrated by authorities from SUMMA and the OECS and the executive team, will oversee the general functioning of the projects.
- The **Partner countries' network** is the core of KIX LAC. It sets the thematic priorities and participates in knowledge mobilization and capacity building activities.
- An **Advisory Board**, integrated by experts in the education in the region, will inform the KIX LAC activities and offer advice about aspects of the topics under discussion as well as possible speakers or trainers for the Hub's webinars and workshops.
- The initiative is led by the **Project Director**, from SUMMA, and it is also constituted by two **Project Researchers**.





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