National KIX Africa 19 Hub Dialogue in Ethiopian Educational Priorities and Promising Practices Report & Call to Action
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Meeting Report

Context of the Education Sector

Over the past two decades, the education sector in Ethiopia has remained at the top of the country’s priorities. The Government’s strong commitment to education is reflected in a significant proportion of public resources regularly invested in the sector. With enrolment up to Grade 12 increasing from 10 million in 2003 to over 25 million in 2018. These efforts have resulted in remarkable progress, particularly in terms of access.

The Government’s high level of commitment to the sector is also reflected in its spending priorities. Public spending on education has consistently surpassed other priority sectors as a percentage of GDP. In the most recent year for which data were available, education spending as a share of GDP (4.7%) was more than twice the next highest spending (Road construction, 2.2%) and almost equal to the next highest 2-4 spending (agriculture, natural resources, and public health) 4.9% combined. Over the last four years, education spending has averaged 24.4% of public spending. The share increased from 22.9% in 2013/14 to 26.1% in 2016/17.

Furthermore, regional analysis shows that, in sub-Saharan Africa, Ethiopia performs above average in terms of the share of GDP allocated to education. And it is a leading economy in terms of the proportion of public expenditure on education. The nature of education spending has changed in recent years. In 2012/13, spending was split fairly evenly between capital and recurrent. Namely, 41.4% of the budget was for capital expenditure and 58% for recurrent expenditure.

However, although in recent years, both types of expenditure have increased. These shares have evolved differently: in 2017/18, 73.6% of education expenditure was recurrent and 26.3% was capital, meaning that recurrent expenditure has increased more than capital expenditure. Budget execution was equally divided between regional and federal governments: in 2016/17, 48.9% of the education budget came from federal accounts and 51.1% from regional governments.

Distribution by sub-sector in education

The distribution of budget shares is accompanied by a clear division of responsibilities: while the Federal Government invests almost all its resources in higher education, the regional government is responsible for general education and TVET. In 2017/18, 91.4% of federal resources went to higher education. In 2017/18, general education received almost 44% of the country’s investment in education, while a slightly larger share of public resources went to higher education, reaching 45.6%.

In other words, the shares of the total budget devoted to higher education exceeded those for pre-primary, primary and secondary education combined. Higher education receives the most, even though the number of learners at university represents only 3% of the student population compared to 94% in basic education. Two fundamental reasons can be identified to explain this situation.
First, the development of higher education started at a very low level: the country had only two public university and a few colleges before the launch of ESDP I in 1996/97 which by now have increased up to 45. The expansion of higher education was therefore a necessity, even if it is capital intensive.

Secondly, expenditure per student varies significantly by level. The unit cost is much higher for higher education than for other levels: for example, in 2017/18, expenditure per student in universities was 16.4 times that of secondary education, and 50.5 times that of primary education. In the same year, recurrent expenditure in Higher Education per student was 37.4 times that of a primary student.

The differences in expenditure by level are not unique to Ethiopia, but they are very high. Compared with diverse groups of other countries. Ethiopia spends much more on tertiary education as a proportion of its total education expenditure than the other countries.

To meet this challenge, the Government is committed to increasing funding for general education.

Ethiopia Educational Priorities

The Ministry of education and UNESCO organized KIX 19 Dialogue on 29 January 2022 in Adama where by the policy actors and participants of this dialogue, were encouraged to understand the importance of such dialogues in exchanging knowledge and innovation. The participants emphasized that regular dialogue on these fronts and between relevant actors can contribute to closing the gap between policy and practice in education.

Following welcome remarks and objectives of the dialogue by Dr. Eyerusalem Azmeraw form UNESCO-IICBA and Ato Getachew Admasu from MoE, remarks were made by different stakeholders in different capacities represented from UNESCO-IICBA, UNISEF ESARO, GPE-IDRC, UNESCO NATCOM, African Union and Ministry of Education (MoE).

Next to the remarks, presentations were made as follows:

On translating research into policy and practice by Dr. Yohannes Benti, Chirman, Ethiopian Teachers Association (ETA)

On successes, challenges and key lessons learned in the following themes-

Education planning by Ato Mezgebu Biazen, planning and Resource mobilization team leader, MoE.

Early Childhood Care and Education and School Improvement Programs by Ato Yohannes Wagesso, SIP directorate general, MoE.

Education Management Information System (EMIS) by Ato Milion Bekele from MoE.

The participants, discussed the need to strive with sharpened focus and rekindled synergy in certain priorities, using Ethiopia’s promising practices and innovations as a springboard for informed change and scaling up. To support these efforts, the KIX Africa 19 Hub is expected to provide education stakeholders in the country with technical and non-technical expertise and support.
During the discussion the identified priority areas and promising practices were focused on. The priority areas were drawn from government living document which is the Education Sector Plan six (2020/21 – 2024/25).

In the dialogue session, the components of system strengthening; management of education information systems; equitable access to and internal efficiency in pre-primary education; mobilization, equitable allocation and use of resources; communication and research for education improvement; and capacity development for improved management were emphasized.

The themes presented were Ethiopia’s Education Sector priorities and recent outcomes in the thematic areas; Translating research into policy and Practice, Educational Management Information System (EMIS); success, challenges, and key lessons learned in Educational Planning in Ethiopia; and covid -19 impact on the education sector.

Following the presentations, panel discussion continued, panelists were those who presented papers for discussion. The following questions were forwarded from the facilitator and participants present physically and online.

The facilitator was Mr. Salliou Sall, Senior Program Coordinator, UNESCO-IICBA. Some of the main questions were the following:

**What is the importance of such a platform?**
Panelists underlined the importance of such platform that it is important to share other countries’ experience, innovative ideas and practices, and to take scalable practices to the respective country education systems and was believed that it is one means of capacity building for the experts and leaders.

**What knowledge and scalable practice do Ethiopia contribute?**
Panelists explained that capturing educational information and produce annual abstract which is the base for the decision maker, the EMIS system captures refugee education statistics and refugee education become part of the national education system, very broad based research where more than three million Ethiopians and scholars participated was done which resulted in preparation of education road map which is in turn translated into policy, strategy, and other relevant activities such as curriculum reform. As a result of the in-depth research conducted, Education and Training policy was revised, though not endorsed yet, which is expected to transform the education system of Ethiopia in terms of quality, equity and access. Teachers’ voice was properly heard in the research process and in developing outcome documents especially by involving the Teachers Association.

Establishing school feeding program could also be another scalable practice in Ethiopia.

**How can school based violence be measured?**
Template which could serve to measure was developed and filled by the responsible stakeholders; reporting formats were made available. Manual known as School Violence Index (SVI) was developed by Ethiopian Teachers Association which is being utilized in some schools where training how to use the manual was provided. Therefore, the violence that happened could be captured with the formats and filed for future reference and necessary action.
The other pertinent issue raised was whether researches conducted by the Ethiopian Teachers’ Association or others done were used to improve policies and practices. In this regard, the Association argues that researches are relatively utilized when sponsored by government, typical example is the road map study, and only few of the many researches done by the association were considered to have influenced policy and practice; requiring further dialogue in the future. Chairman of the Association forwarded that stakeholders/development partners should put a mechanism to check whether teachers’ voice, at least through their association, be heard at Africa and global level.

The national dialogue was finalized after participants were divided into groups to identify lessons from existing good and promising practices, to agree on priorities and call to action. Then, in the end post meeting survey was introduced; discussion ended up by closing remarks.
A Call to Action on Education in Ethiopia

We, the policy actors and participants of this dialogue, understand the importance of such dialogues in exchanging knowledge and innovation from the government, civil society organizations, universities, schools, and communities. We understand that regular dialogue on these fronts and between these actors can contribute to closing the gap between policy and practice in education.

At this dialogue, we, the participants, discussed the need to strive with sharpened focus and rekindled synergy in certain priorities, using Ethiopia’s promising practices and innovations as a springboard for informed change and scaling up. To support these efforts, the KIX Africa 19 Hub resolves to provide educational stakeholders in the country with technical and non-technical expertise and support.

Our priorities and many of our education sector’s promising practices and innovations are documented in this Call to Action.

This Call to Action supports and draws on the Ethiopian government’s current goals professed in the Education Sector Development Programme VI (2020/21 – 2024/25), especially the components of system strengthening; management of educational information systems; equitable access to and internal efficiency in pre-primary education; mobilization, equitable allocation and use of resources; communication and research for educational development; and capacity development for improved management. This Call to Action also draws on the Ethiopian Education Development Roadmap’s (2018 – 2030) future perspectives on and gaps identified in pre-primary education and policy, governance and leadership.

In 2022 and 2023, we have agreed to prioritize:

In Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE):
Existing promising practices/innovations in ECCE in Ethiopia:

The government with its respected ministry as well as regional education bureau implement the strategy that aim each public schools; especially primary schools to open preprimary (O-Class or KG) in the premise and enroll children with preprimary school age.

The results so far of these promising ECCE practices/innovations: Due to the above strategy, access to preprimary schools has increased in large number and this in turn has brought more school age Childers. As a result the number of Childers enrolling in preprimary in either of the modality increased at large across in the country.

First priority in ECCE for increased focus in 2022-2023:

Provision of meal (school feeding) in all preprimary schools

This priority is important because:
Parents are encouraged to send their children to schools which in turn increase the number of children enrollment as well as it increases retention of children in the schools for the school year.

Second priority in ECCE for increased focus in 2022-2023:

Provision of teaching and learning materials (Montessori materials)

This priority is important because:
It improves the teaching learning process in the sector as well as enable schools for effective implementation of preprimary education according to the standard stated in preprimary teaching learning policies and strategies.

ECCE related strategy
All public schools are directed to open a preprimary case (especially O-Class) The government encourage private investors to open preprimary schools
The education sector allocates huge budget to support public schools how opened preprimary schools
Design curriculum and train preprimary teachers

Other notes about ECCE:
The government, though its respected ministry mobilizes resources to enhance the facility and the teaching learning process
Design a capacity building training to enhance preprimary school teachers.

In 2022 and 2023, we have agreed to prioritize:

In Education Management Information Systems (EMIS):

Existing promising practices/innovations in EMIS in Ethiopia:

EMIS at the federal; Ministry of Education, address the data enquires by reviewing the data gap against the education sector plan in place (ESDP VI) and SDG 2030 targets; goal 4 as well as different stakeholders and users demand and incorporate and customize EMIS data collection tools.

The results so far of these promising EMIS practices/innovations:

EMIS able to collect majority of the data required to evaluate the sector plan implementation as well as provide data to UIS and to users according to request received.

First priority in EMIS for increased focus in 2022-2023:

Improve the data capturing tool; StatEdu2 and integrate different data source from different directorate.

This priority is important because:
In order to capture bulk data, the current system faces limitation issue due to that we are looking a system that enhance the current one and enable as to accommodate a large data as well as enable us to integrate different data source and generate holistic school-based information.

Second priority in EMIS for increased focus in 2022-2023:

Development of tablet-based data collection tool and configuration

This priority is important because:

The current data reporting has a timeliness issue. In order to get the latest data from schools and use information at the spot, the way data being captured from school should be changed from paper to digital form.

EMIS related strategy

Conduct Capacity building training

Improve data capturing tools

Integrate data sources at a single point and generate holistic school based data

Other notes about EMIS:

Provide capacity building of EMIS experts at all level on how to generate more informative information about the school.

In 2022 and 2023, we have agreed to prioritize:

In School Improvement Plans (SIPs):
Existing promising practices/innovations SIPs in Ethiopia:

Provision of different teaching learning materials and school feeding in all public preprimary and primary schools

The results so far of these promising SIP practices/innovations:

Student enrollment increase at all level and dropout also decreased in significant amount.

First priority in SIP for increased focus in 2022-2023:

Upgrade under standard schools

This priority is important because:

Majority of the schools (about 90%) are below the standard. In order to bring the schools to the standard Sip gives this activity a priority.

Second priority in SIP for increased focus in 2022-2023:

Provide capacity building training to school management; especially school principals at all level.
This priority is important because:
As the capacity of school leadership improve the performance of the school will show radical change and teaching learning process will also managed in expected manner.

SIP related strategy

Implementation of PACO model
Monitoring and evaluation of implementation

Other notes about SIPs:

Provision of teaching learning materials
Construction of model schools across all the regions
Maintaining schools affected by conflict
Provision of psychosocial support to teachers and student in the area where conflict affect.

In 2022 and 2023, we have agreed to prioritize:

In Education Planning:

Existing good practices/innovations in education planning in Ethiopia:

Education road map and education policy has been develop with full engagement of all stakeholder.

The results so far of these good practices/innovations:

It creates ownership and paved effective implementation by all actors in the education sector.
First priority in education planning for increased focus in 2022-2023:

Conduct mid-term evaluation of the education sector plan (ESDP VI)

This priority is important because:

The implementation of the sector plan will be assessed and some remedial adjustment will be added that consider the current conflict in the country.

Second priority in education planning for increased focus in 2022-2023:

Reconstruction of damaged schools

This priority is important because:

Many schools in the conflict area have been damaged and currently they are not being used for the teaching learning unless the federal government with its respected ministry has develop and implement a reconstruction plan.

Education Planning related strategy

Mobilize more resource
Create a plate form for public private partnership

Other notes about education planning:

Conduct intensive monitoring and evaluation and use the information for imitate intervention.
Timeline:

The KIX Africa 19 Hub project is funded until December 31, 2023. It is expected that from now until the end of 2023, policy actors and participants of this dialogue will use the Hub forum to exchange knowledge with countries in Eastern, Western, and Southern Africa, and scale up good practices in Ethiopia in the priorities above.

From now until the end of 2023, the participants of today’s dialogue have agreed to:

Actions to be undertaken by mid-2022:
Provision of teaching and learning materials (Montessori materials)
By whom/identified organization:
By MoE and Stakeholders

Actions to be undertaken by end-2022:
Development of tablet-based data collection tool and configuration

By whom/identified organization:
MoE EMIS and ICT
Actions to be undertaken **by mid-2023:**

Upgrade under standard schools

**By whom/identified organization:**
MoE SIP/ Stakeholders

Actions to be undertaken **by end-2023:**

Conduct mid-term evaluation of the education sector plan (ESDP VI)

**By whom/identified organization:**
MoE in collaboration with IIPE