

KIX Africa 19 Hub Secretariat at the UNESCO Institute for Capacity Building in Africa (IICBA)

Consultancy Terms of Reference *for the Facilitation of Technical Workshops and a Community of Practice in Developing and Implementing Competency-Based Education and Curricula in Basic Education Systems in Africa*

1.0 Summary

The Global Partnership for Education's (GPE) Knowledge and Innovation Exchange (KIX) Hub for 18 Sub-Saharan African nations¹ is organizing a community of practice with technical workshops for policymakers and experts to exchange critical knowledge about regional innovations, evidence, and good practices in implementing and monitoring competency-based education (CBE). Eight (8) virtual workshops will be organized on CBE-related topics of interest recently identified by KIX Africa 19 country representatives in ministries of education and local education groups.

The Africa 19 Hub Secretariat at the UNESCO International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa (IICBA), in coordination with UNICEF Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office (ESARO) and the African Union (AU), is hiring skilled consultants to facilitate participants' learning at eight capacity-strengthening workshops throughout May and June 2022.

1.1 Background

The Knowledge and Innovation Exchange (KIX) Africa 19 Hub is a joint project of the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC). The KIX Africa 19 Hub supports GPE member countries in accelerating progress toward equitable, inclusive, and quality education under Sustainable Development Goal 4 and the African Union's Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA) 2016-2025. The KIX Africa 19 Hub functions as a regional forum to facilitate inter-country knowledge exchange and mobilization, learning, synthesis, and collaboration among key national education stakeholders. The overall objectives and responsibilities of the Hub include:

- a. Fostering the exchange of demand-driven regional knowledge and building the capacities of Hub members to identify, use, share and mobilize evidence;
- b. Producing and disseminating relevant knowledge and evidence syntheses to policy actors;
- c. Advancing effective regional mobilization and knowledge and evidence uptake.

¹ UNESCO IICBA (2022). [GPE KIX Africa 19 Hub](#).

The 18 Sub-Saharan African nations of the KIX Africa 19 Hub have identified teaching, learning, and learning assessment as their top priority and challenge for development.² They have cited poor instructional leadership and teachers support, poor quality of educational materials, low student motivation, and low teacher competence as the most vexing realities in their contexts.³

Recently, competency-based curriculum has been gaining popularity in Africa as a way to shift paradigmatically from teacher-centered and knowledge-centric approaches to learner-centered and outcome-focused approaches.⁴ In a recent needs assessment, half of the KIX Hub member states requested ministerial capacity strengthening in competency-based curriculum design and case studies on learner-centered pedagogy, and more than half requested capacity strengthening in formative and summative evaluation of learning.⁵ Competency-based curriculum is defined as curriculum that focuses on the outcomes of learning, such as learners' demonstrated knowledge, skills, competencies, and attitudes, rather than focusing on the subject content itself.⁶ Thus, competency-based curriculum is more learner-centered and adaptative to students' needs than traditional knowledge-centered education is.

In July and August 2021, the KIX Secretariat facilitated a [community of practice in competency-based education for more than 30 national policymakers and curriculum developers from 13 Sub-Saharan African GPE countries](#). The community of practice featured six capacity-strengthening and knowledge-sharing virtual workshops in topics of interest identified⁷ by policymakers: the realities of implementing competency-based curriculum and 21st century skill development, scaling the Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL) approach; and innovation in teacher professional development.

Participants in this [2021 community of practice](#) indicated that their learning experience was a positive one. Fifty-seven percent (57%) of participants said the range of topics was highly relevant, and 64% reported that the workshop content was highly applicable to their areas of responsibility. Based on these positive outcomes, the KIX Secretariat is restarting the community of practice in 2022 for the same and new participants from the 18 GPE KIX member states. This second stage of the community of practice will follow up on the topics of the first community of practice that warrant deeper exploration and it will include topics that participants requested further capacity strengthening in.

1.2 Topics of study selected by the community of practice members

- Mapping core competencies for students and developing competency-based curriculum;
- Implementing competency-based curriculum in secondary schools;
- The role of experiential learning in secondary schools;

² UNESCO IICBA (2020). [Thematic priorities in GPE member states within the KIX Africa 19 Hub region: Summary and report](#). Addis Ababa, Ethiopia: UNESCO IICBA.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ruth, C. and Ramadas, V. (2019). "The 'Africanized' Competency-Based Curriculum: The Twenty-First Century Strides." *Shanlax International Journal of Education*, vol. 7, no. 4, pp. 46-51.

⁵ GPEKIX Africa 19 rapid assessment of member ministries' institutional capacity building needs, October 2020, UNESCO IICBA.

⁶ UNESCO International Bureau of Education (2022). [Competency-based curriculum](#).

⁷ Identified by country representatives in a rapid needs assessment on institutional capacity building conducted by UNESCO IICBA in October 2020.

- Integrating ICT in competency-based curriculum;
- Classroom-based formative assessment for competency-based learning;
- Assuring quality in competency-based education through data generation and usage;
- Effectively strengthening teachers' capacities in low-resource contexts;
- Implementing competency-based curriculum and approaches in teacher preparation, education, and professional development.

More than one consultant will be hired to ensure they bring specific expertise in different topics.

1.3 Purpose of the assignment

In this community of practice, the KIX Secretariat aims to strengthen the capacities of participating policymakers to implement reforms in competency-based education (CBE) in their national education systems or teacher education institutes. The community of practice will deliberate on the value and challenges of and good practices in implementing CBE, and the workshops will allow participants to share national experiences, challenges, and innovations to enrich their and others' understanding of CBE, under the guidance of skilled and knowledgeable facilitators. As a result, the members of the community of practice will acquire new policy and practice options in CBE; a strengthened understanding of what works in CBE and what can work in their own national systems and teacher education programs; and partnerships with other policymakers and researchers within and across countries.

1.4 Targeted participants

The community of practice will comprise of policymakers in curriculum, pedagogy, assessment, and education planning in the regional GPE KIX member states: Eritrea, Ethiopia, The Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia (Somaliland and Puntland), South Sudan, Tanzania (mainland and Zanzibar), Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

Ministries of education will be encouraged to ensure at half of their participating representatives are women. In the first stage of the community of practice in 2021, gender parity was achieved with women making up 53% of the participants.

1.5 Objectives of the consultancy

The consultant(s) is expected to:

1. Work closely with the KIX Africa 19 Hub Secretariat staff at UNESCO IICBA **to plan and organize technical workshops and a community of practice** for national education policymakers titled "Developing and Implementing Competency-Based Education and Curricula for Basic Education Systems in Africa";
2. **Engage** the community of practice in **analyzing their own systems' readiness and policy windows** for the introduction/strengthening of reforms in competency-based education;

3. **Use promising practices or case studies identified in Africa, facilitate/moderate interactive technical workshops and a community of practice** on “Developing and Implementing Competency-Based Education Curricula for Basic Education”;
4. **Provide technical guidance** to more than 30 policy actors from 18 countries in **studying guidelines and regional good practices in implementing, institutionalizing, or strengthening competency-based education**, including curricula, assessment, pedagogies, and teacher education – for the goal of identifying ways to strengthen their own national systems;
5. **Promote the exchange** of regional research, evidence, and good practices, and **promote partnerships** between policy actors in a sustained community of practice model;
6. **Build on the work of** and access the implementation status of the results of the first stage of the community of practice in 2021.

1.6 Scope of work

More than one consultant will be hired to ensure they bring specific expertise in different topics (in Section 1.2). The consultant(s) will be responsible for the following tasks:

Task 1: Work closely with the KIX Africa 19 Hub Secretariat staff to plan and organize technical workshops and a community of practice (CoP)

- Prepare an inception report and present it in a meeting with the KIX Africa 19 Hub Secretariat for validation and approval;
- Undertake a quick review and validation of country needs in the development and implementation of competency-based curriculum in order to develop a clear training plan for the CoP and present the plan to the KIX Secretariat;
- Design clear learning objectives, interactive and practical activities, succinct content, and formative assessments for the more than 30 members of the existing community of practice;

Task 2: Identify guidelines, research, and case studies to learn from

- Prepare a template for participants to document their experiences and practices on CBC development and implementation
- Provide participants with an overview of knowledge that is contextually relevant to them: new research, good practices, and critiques/challenges of implementing competency-based education in Sub-Saharan Africa;
- Identify representatives from Sub-Saharan African governments or organizations to present their experiences in implementing and monitoring CBE.

Task 3: Conduct workshops and facilitate learning on the topics in Section 1.2

- Facilitate interactive workshops using a competency-based approach;
- Guide participants in-session in analyzing their own national systems’ entry points for CBE reforms;
- Guide participants in-session identifying ways to apply their learning in their own national contexts.

Task 4: Facilitate and sustain a community of practice

- Encourage dialogue between community of practice members during the workshops and between them on WhatsApp and the Kopano digital learning platform;
- Give participants opportunities to develop partnerships during and after the workshops.

Task 5: Document learning and results

- Continuously assess participants' learning;
- Modify subsequent workshops according to the participants' interests and learning in previous workshops;
- Document the learning, action plans, and good practices arising from the community of practice;
- If applicable, coordinate with other consultants/facilitators to ensure a smooth learning experience for the community of practice.

1.7 Deliverables

The consultant(s) will be expected to submit the following deliverables for the assignment:

1. Inception report: a clear community of practice capacity-building plan with clear learning objectives and methods;
2. A lesson plan for each workshop, with accompanying PowerPoints, learning materials, formative assessments, etc.;
3. Timely reports on each workshop documenting what participants are learning;
4. A final report on participants' plans for applying their learning, with recommendations for policy action.

1.8 Methodology:

The capacity building will take place in a community of practice (CoP) model. Communities of practice are groups of learners gathered by common interest in a research area, technical skill, or domain. The learners meet and collaborate regularly to share and analyze information, improve their capacities, and advance their knowledge of the domain.

Workshops will follow a competency-based educational approach. Active learning pedagogies, dialogical methods, and continuous formative assessment will be used to engage participants.

This community of practice will meet virtually eight times throughout May and June 2022, and then will continue to network on a demand-driven basis. The sessions will be held virtually on Zoom and will utilize the Kopano digital learning platform for asynchronous discussions and work. The assignment will be conducted virtually.

The language of instruction will be accessible English.

1.9 Timeframe of the assignment:

The assignment will take place from May 9th – July 2nd, 2022. Workshops will be held on Thursdays throughout May and June 2022.

In the case of multiple consultants hired for specific topics, each consultant’s assignment will begin three (3) days before the first workshop they facilitate, and end two (2) days after the last workshop they facilitate.

A schedule is below:

Session	Date	Topics selected for study by the community of practice
1.	May 12, 2022	Mapping core competencies for students and developing competency-based curriculum
2.	May 19, 2022	Implementing competency-based curriculum in secondary schools
3.	May 26, 2022	The role of experiential learning in secondary schools
4.	June 2, 2022	Integrating ICT in competency-based curriculum
5.	June 9, 2022	Classroom-based formative assessment for competency-based learning
6.	June 16, 2022	Assuring quality in competency-based education through data generation and usage
7.	June 23, 2022	Effectively strengthening teachers’ capacities in low-resource contexts
8.	June 30, 2022	Implementing competency-based curriculum and approaches in teacher preparation, education, and professional development

1.10 Profile of the consultant(s)

The consultant(s) is expected to have the following qualifications in skills:

- Advanced academic degree (PhD preferred; Master’s required) in a field related to the topics above (preferably in education, education policy, education planning and analysis, education research, etc.);
- Extensive professional knowledge and at least 10 years’ experience working with governments in Sub-Saharan Africa;
- Experience leading professional development courses, or conducting stakeholder consultations;
- Strong grasp over learner-centered pedagogies and methodologies, in practice, not only theory;
- Ability to convey complex information succinctly, clearly, and in plain language;
- Solid presentation, writing, communication, and collaboration skills;
- Prior experience with UNESCO or large education development programs is an asset.

Reporting

The contract will be managed by the UNESCO International institute for Capacity Building in Africa (IICBA) in Addis Ababa.

Expression of interest:

Interested candidates may submit a cover letter, CV, and a brief proposal on their methodology and approach for the assignment to Victoria Kisaakye at v.kisaakye@unesco.org and Yvonne Mboya at yr.mboya@unesco.org, and copy Maryann Dreas-Shaikha at mj.dreas@unesco.org.

The deadline to apply is April 15th 2022.