



Regional Learning Partner for
GPE's KIX Hub 3



Network for international policies and
cooperation in education and training

Réseau sur les politiques et la coopération
internationales en éducation et en formation

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACER	Australian Council for Educational Research
DCP	Developing Country Partner
DP	Development Partner
EoI	Expression of Interest
EPDC	Education Policy and Data Center
ESPIG	Education Sector Project Implementation Grant
FCAC	Fragile and Conflict-affected Country
GER	Gross Enrollment Ratio
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
GPG	Global Public Good
GRA	Graduate Research Assistant
IDRC	International Development Research Centre
IIEP-UNESCO	UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning
INEE	Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies
InnX	Innovation Exchange
KIX	Knowledge and Innovation Exchange
LC	Learning Cycle
LEG	Local Education Group
LSA	Large Scale Assessments
MEERS	USAID Middle Eastern Bureau on the Middle East Education Research and Support
NN	NORRAG News
NPG	National Public Good
NORRAG	Network for international policies and cooperation in education and training
NSI	NORRAG Special Issue
NUGSE	Nazarbayev University Graduate School of Education
PAX	Policy Analysis Exchange
RLP	Regional Learning Partner
RLP-3	Regional Learning Partner for region 3
RLXP-3	Regional Learning Exchange Platform for region 3
RPG	Regional Public Good
RRAG	Research, Review, and Advisory Group
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

NORRAG (Network for international policies and cooperation in education and training), an offspring of a successful Knowledge and Innovation Exchange (KIX) initiative of more than forty years ago, specializes in knowledge and innovation exchange with a focus on the Global South. We would be pleased to share our expertise, resources, and network as the Regional Learning Partner for region 3 (RLP-3).

We identified the *main challenges* as follows: (i) the underutilization of existing Global Public Goods (GPGs) for policy and planning at the national level; (ii) the unidirectional flow of expertise from the global level to the national level along with a narrow radius of policy and planning expertise typically restricted to government officials; (iii) supply-driven capacity-building that is determined and funded by development partners; and (iv) the disregard for scalability considerations at the time when a pilot project or an innovation is designed.

In order to address the challenges and engender sustainable transformation, the RLP-3 is designed in ways to set in motion *four feedback loops*: (i) between policy research and practice, (ii) between global and national public goods, (iii) between supply and demand-driven capacity strengthening, and (iv) between ‘what works’ in terms of scalable innovations and future project design, and vice versa. The four feedback loops, along with the KIX mechanism of interlinking knowledge, innovation, and exchange, are essential features of our theory of change.

The RLP-3 results framework consists of three objectives, six outcomes, and nine outputs. We have developed indicators to regularly monitor progress towards established benchmarks. The *three objectives* are:

1. **Enhance** the utilization of public goods for national policy analysis and planning
2. **Mobilize** national experts for agenda setting, policy analysis, and policy advice
3. **Identify and learn** from successful innovation for future project design

Along with objective 1, knowledge mobilization and dissemination, peer learning and exchange (at the national, sub-regional, and regional levels) as well as capacity-strengthening are carried out over the entire timespan of the project. In addition to the regional webinars and the regional workshops (2 in total), the RLP-3 introduces a demand-driven model of capacity strengthening and strategic partnerships. Concretely, the RLP-3 serves as a broker for inter-country visits and as a facilitator of sub-regional capacity-building workshops, hosted by national partners. As a result, the group of strategic partners will grow over time and include additional strategic partners from the region, as well as at the global level. The initial group of strategic partners consists of ACER, FHI 360, and Nazarbayev University Graduate School of Education. For objective 2, we designed two rounds of in-depth policy analysis learning cycles during which national expert teams develop national discussion papers based on the topics and organization of the six Global Partnership for Education (GPE) KIX papers or on country-specific policy challenges. As part of objective 3, national policy experts develop—with active support from RLP-3 research associates and graduate research assistants—up to two case studies on innovation. One of the 6-month innovation exchange learning cycle must focus on projects with explicit gender, equity, and inclusion considerations.

NORRAG, along with its strategic partners, is well connected in the region and is able to mobilize policy experts for peer review and quality assurance. RLP-3 personnel are located in Europe as well as in Australia to allow for active engagement with the participants despite time zone differences. Activities at the national level are facilitated and coordinated by up to 21 research-based RLP-3 liaison members. The duration of the proposed project is 45 months, and the budget is CHF 2,489,079.

JUSTIFICATION AND VISION OF THE REGIONAL LEARNING PARTNER FOR HUB 3

Challenges. We live in an era in which knowledge-based policy and monitoring are expected to be the norm rather than the exception. Even though the initiatives to develop global databanks date back to the mid-1990s,¹ the development of global public goods (GPGs) such as openly accessible international toolkits, documents, studies and databanks in education has only begun to proliferate over the past ten years or so. There exists now a flurry of global data, technical toolkits, training modules, good practices, and global monitoring reports that are publicly accessible. Whereas the production of global goods proceeds at a breathtaking pace, the *effective* usage of such goods for policy and planning at the national level is lagging behind.²

Today, the most active users are those that have also produced the GPGs: international consultants assisting governments in Developing Country Partners (DCPs) to prepare sector reviews, grant applications, or education sector plans. Neither researchers at universities nor other stakeholders in education are involved in policy research at national level. Very often, the only national experts involved in policy analysis and planning are either government officials or other national experts that are reduced to the role of translators or informants for international consultants.

Produced mostly by international organizations with great subject knowledge but somewhat little country expertise, the national education and development experts in DCPs are not aware of the great wealth of research and knowledge or do not find them applicable to their own context. Without any doubt, there would be a great demand for databanks, technical toolkits, and studies informing policy and planning if national expertise from both governments and other stakeholders (universities, civil society organizations, teacher organizations, private sector, in-country development partners, and others) would be actively involved in their production. Involving national education and policy experts would render the GPGs more meaningful

and context-sensitive for use at the national level.

A feedback mechanism for adapting GPGs to national challenges and resources is currently missing. The feedback loop is also broken for scaling up innovations: innovations after innovations are funded by the government, development partners, or the private sector in the form of pilot projects—without being ever scaled up. Typically, only a few scalable elements of the pilot project are sustained beyond the stage of secured funding because the project is too expensive, requires too much specialized knowledge, is difficult to manage at a grand scale, or is non-scalable for other reasons. What is very much needed is an evidence-based reflection on how a project needs to be designed and implemented in order to make the innovation work at the national level.

Finally, there is also a lack of communication in the area of capacity strengthening: what national policy experts find useful for their policy and planning work does not necessarily correspond to what is being offered. The toolkits, training modules, and other GPGs are currently more supply than demand driven.

Despite the great variety and complexity of countries in hub 3 (addressed in [section 3](#) of the proposal), there also exist a few commonalities that enable active peer exchange and policy learning within the region, notably:

- **Similar challenges** across the region but for different reasons
- **A demand for greater national participation**, voice, and expertise in policy analysis and sector planning
- **A fatigue with externally funded projects** that are rarely scaled up nationwide
- **Free public access to policy-relevant**, user-friendly, and high-quality information produced at the global, national, and regional levels

To sum up, the four most pressing challenges in hub 3, addressed by the KIX RLP-3, are the following:

1. The **unidirectional** flow of expertise from the global level to the national level along with a narrow radius of policy and planning expertise typically restricted to government officials
2. The **underutilization** of existing GPGs for policy and planning at the national level
3. **Supply-driven capacity-building** funded by development partners
4. The **disregard** for scalability considerations at the time when a pilot project or an innovation is designed

Transformative learning in key areas. The vision of the KIX initiative is stronger education systems. In hub 3, all elements of the KIX mechanisms (linking knowledge, innovation, and exchange) will be used to address the regional challenges briefly sketched above:

- Knowledge mobilization, production, and dissemination
- In-depth study and analysis of scalable innovations
- Peer exchange and policy learning in order to address the national and regional challenges

In order to address the challenges identified above, the design of the RLP-3 activities will set in motion four feedback loops that will engender sustainable change. The first feedback loop is between policy research and practice, the second between global and national public goods, the third between supply and demand-driven capacity strengthening, and the fourth between ‘what works’ in terms of scalable innovations and future project design, and vice versa. **Figure 1** illustrates the four feedback loops that result from systematically implementing the KIX mechanism: interconnecting knowledge, innovation, and exchange.

As **indications of success**, the KIX mechanism will accelerate the transformation process set in motion by the four feedback loops, with the following results:

- **Evidence-based research** informs practice, and practice is informed by evidence.
- The **utility of national and global public goods** is enhanced.
- The **supply of national, regional, and global capacity-building** and mentoring is improved.
- **Scalable innovations** are identified, and features of successful innovations are specified and subsequently applied for the design of future projects.
- **National experts** learn from experiences in countries that face similar policy challenges or have interesting innovations to share.

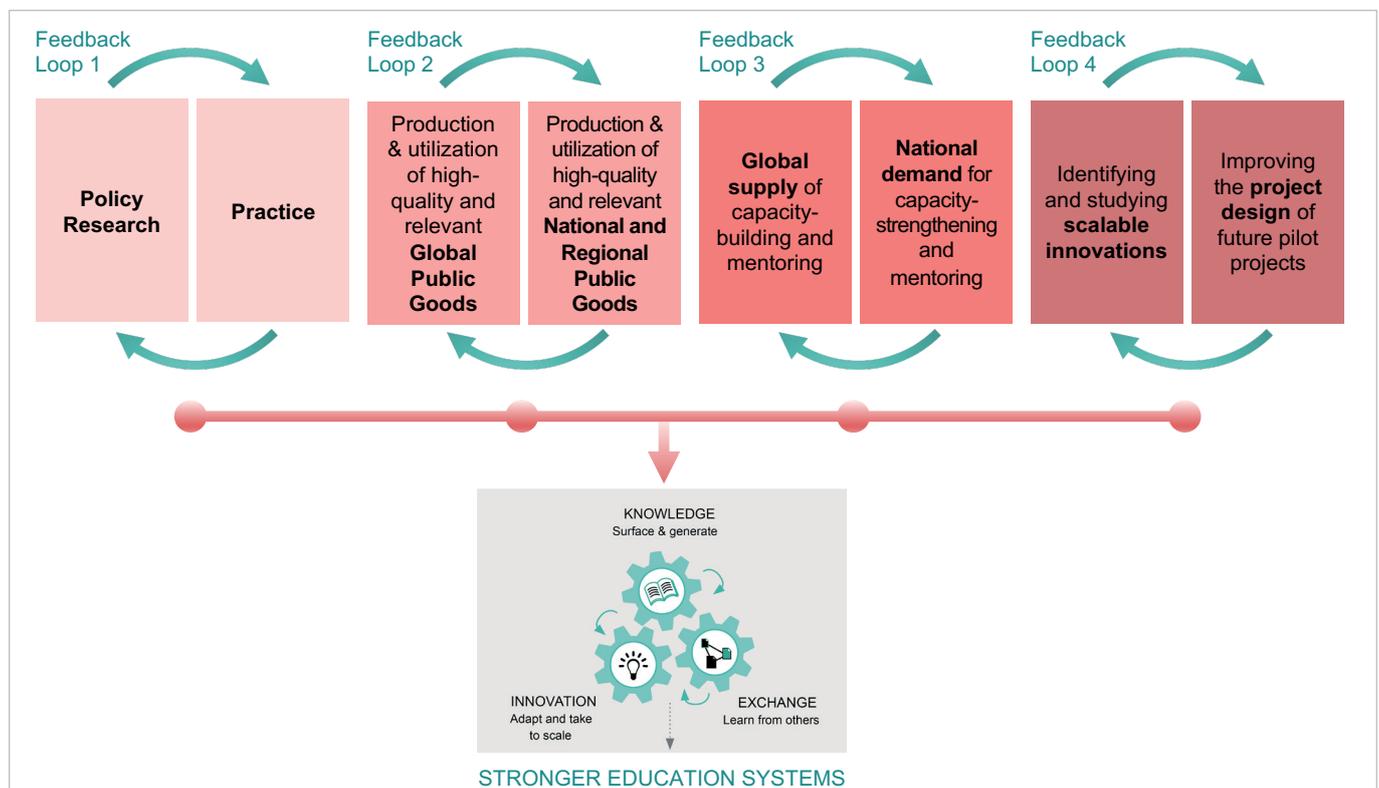


Figure 1 : Implementing the KIX mechanism in four feedback loops

The digital Regional Learning Exchange Platform for hub 3 (RLXP-3) creates open access to all existing documents from the DCPs, DPs (development partners), and international organizations related to the countries in the hub 3 region. In addition, the voices of national experts, who will produce high-quality, data-based policy analyses and case studies on innovations in their countries, will be amplified by linking their knowledge products with relevant background papers, videos, blog posts, and podcasts. The knowledge dissemination chain, interconnecting different means of communication *and* sources of information, will enhance the utility of knowledge products generated in the DCPs. The RLP-3 will continuously enlarge its group of strategic partners and link the various resource libraries and public goods of the partners to the digital platform, and vice-versa.

Two types of *transformative learning cycles*, in particular, engage teams of national experts over a period of six months. The teams (three from each DCP) review, analyze, contextualize, and produce high-quality studies based on two types of peer learning and exchange experiences:

A. Policy analysis exchange (PAX) that includes topics of the six GPE KIX discussion—teaching and learning, early childhood care and education, equity and inclusion, gender equality, data systems, learning assessment systems—or any other policy and planning-related topic that meets the interest of more than one participating DCP.

B. Innovation exchange (InnX) that targets at least one pilot project with a focus on gender, equity, and inclusion

Known for knowledge brokerage, mobilization, and dissemination as well as for bridging the gaps between the Global North and the Global South and between policy research and practice, NORRAG is able to support the continuous adaptation of the hub to the needs of its participants in the region. **Figure 2** illustrates seven areas of activities and lists, in an *exemplary manner*, the kind of deliverables that are to be expected in the areas of knowledge (green), innovation (red), and exchange (gray).

Body of evidence available. Over the past decade, several important studies have been published that offer suggestions on how openly accessible knowledge may be used more effectively in today’s aid architecture.³ These studies share the concern that global agendas, databases, benchmarks, and GPGs fall short of closing the learning gap and addressing the needs of developing country partners. For example, the 2016 background paper for the Education Commission’s study *The Learning Generation contends*:

Donors give relatively little attention to GPGs for education. GPG provision is underfunded, and arrangements to supply GPGs are fragmented and thin at the global level. (Schäferhoff and Burnett, 2016, p. 36)

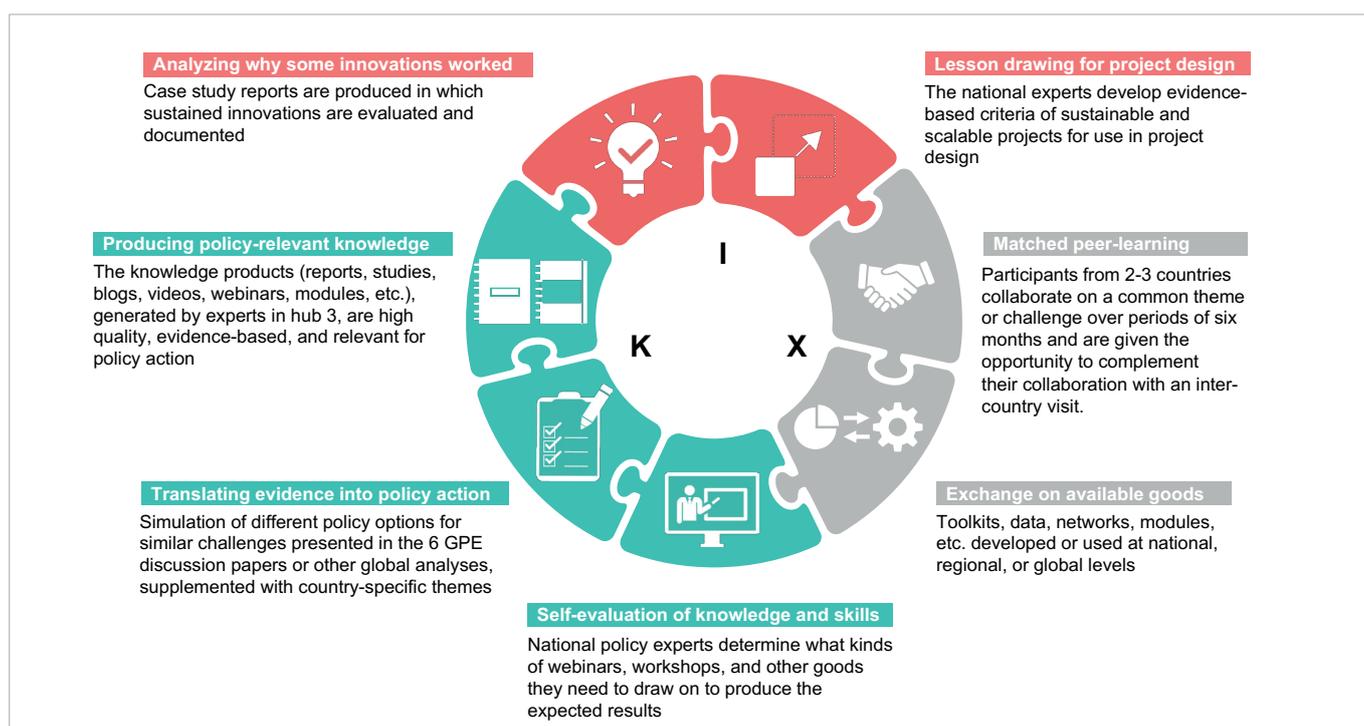


Figure 2 : RLP-3 activities related to knowledge, innovation, and exchange

A wide range of reform propositions have been made about how to remedy the shortfalls related to global agenda setting, channeling of aid, and GPGs. Examples include Oxfam's early suggestion to eliminate one-size-fits-all benchmarking processes and dedicate 3 percent of grants for capacity building to recipient country government and national civil society organizations.⁴ Others suggested that the indicative framework of the Fast Track Initiative is replaced with "a real country-driven approach" and recommended to include technical review panels with independent experts that represent a broad constituency (including from developing country partners and civil society) tasked with evaluating all grant applications on their technical soundness.⁵

For a while, the question arose whether the World Bank, UNESCO institutions, UNICEF, GPE, or other international organizations should earmark funds for research capacity building and policy analysis. One of the early suggestions was to increase funding for global and regional agencies of UNESCO (IIEP, GMER, UIS, BREDA) and UNICEF to advance cross-country sharing of knowledge on education and development. In addition to statistics, the UN organizations would use the funds to disseminate knowledge derived from research and from global sharing of experience.⁶ Others found the World Bank to be ideally suited for helping expand research funding and activities given its commitment to policy research, including in education. They recommended that researchers at the World Bank would work more closely with other staff for country-level policy reform and advice.⁷

The GPE Strategic Plan 2016-2020 has drawn lessons from the debates of the past decade and has taken into consideration the 2015 GPE Interim Evaluation.⁸ As part of its Results Framework, GPE instated at the operational level formal feedback and quality assurance mechanisms at various stages of the Education Sector Project Implementation Grant process (ESPIG). For reviewing the ESPIG application, for example, three criteria (for the fixed part) reflect the importance of data, accurate analysis, and realistic strategic planning at the national level. Submitting a "credible" Education Sector Plan or, in the case of fragile and conflict-affected countries (FCACs), a credible Transitional Education Plan is one of the review criteria. The two other knowledge-related review criteria are availability of data and quality of the program document.⁹ The KIX Initiative, that is, the importance of interconnecting knowledge, innovation, and exchange, is a logical consequence

of the shortfalls in global agenda setting, channeling of aid, and GPGs diagnosed by many researchers in education and development.

At NORRAG, we found that the supply or, by now even, the surplus of global data, toolkits, studies, and other public goods for sector review and planning is not evenly distributed along country contexts and thematic areas. For example, there is a scarcity of resources and global goods for FCACs. The 2019 Education in Emergencies Data Summit, co-organized by NORRAG and hosted at the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies in Geneva, highlighted, among other things, the lack of global indicators, standards, and data for out-of-school children and internally displaced children and youth in FCACs.¹⁰ Similarly, there is a gap that yawns for capacity-building in the area of results-based aid and innovative finance in education, which we attempt to fill.¹¹

Education development priorities. The digital RLXP-3 will make existing GPGs (including toolkits for policy analysis and planning, modules, etc.) as well as material received from the DCPs publicly available. We will ask our in-country liaisons to supply the RLP with documents that relate to externally funded projects, such as joint sector reviews, sector analyses, education sector plans/transitional education plans, project designs, and evaluations. In addition, we will make a special effort to also solicit documents that are less known in the international development community: documents on the governments' own action plans as well as pilot projects carried out with financial support of foundations (e.g., Michael and Susan Dell Foundation) or with technical assistance from consultancy companies (Cambridge International, Pearson, etc.). The role of the RLP-3 is to help surface all educational development efforts in the DCPs regardless of international development priorities, funding source, or language of publication.

In addition, the staff at the RLP-3 will facilitate *two learning cycles*. The three RLP research associates and GRAs closely guide, mentor, and assist national experts to explore topics that have previously been identified at the global or regional level. The teams will be encouraged to supplement these topics with priorities that matter for their country context. The expected outcomes—policy analyses and the case studies—are based on data collected in-country and on peer exchange at the sub-regional and regional levels. The thematic priorities of the two learning cycles are explained in the following:

A. **Educational development priorities of the PAX learning cycle:** There will be two rounds of the first learning cycle—centered around policy analysis exchange (PAX). Each learning cycle lasts six months (including holiday breaks). The national expert teams determine which policy challenges they would like to focus on. The only two requirements are that the LEG identifies the topic as a priority for their country and that more than one country is interested to work on the select policy challenge. Concretely, the in-country liaison members will administer a survey in the quarter prior to each of the two PAX learning cycles to determine the thematic preferences of the LEG. The selected topic may, or may not, take inspiration from the six available GPE discussion papers (see [annex 1](#)):

- [Teaching and learning](#)
- [Early childhood care and education](#)
- [Equity and inclusion](#)
- [Gender equality](#)
- [Data systems](#)
- [Learning assessment systems](#)

We will match national expert teams cross-nationally for peer learning and exchange based on their selected topic. In addition, a limited number of grants is made available for these cross-national teams to invite their peers for a study visit. By the end of the two PAX learning cycles, the various expert teams at the country-level will have produced up to two policy analyses on relevant topics. The RLP staff will produce two regional synthesis reports and share them globally to ensure dissemination beyond the regional level. Over the entire six-month period of the learning cycle, the research associate regularly meets with the national expert teams and the cross-national teams.

B. **Education development priorities of the InnX learning cycle:** The same incremental approach applies for the innovation exchange (InnX) learning cycle. To generate excitement among the participants, the InnX is now scheduled to precede the PAX learning cycle (see table 7). The sequencing of the two learning cycles over the project period, broken down by 3-month periods or quarters (Q), is as follows:

- [InnX 1: Year 1, Q2 and Q3](#)
- [PAX 1: Year 1, Q4 and Y2, Q1](#)
- [InnX 2: Year 2, Q3 and Q4](#)
- [PAX 2: Year 2, Q4 and Year 5, Q1](#)

Similar to the PAX learning, the RLP-3 will pair up the national expert groups, in close consultation with the in-country liaison staff and their respective LEGs, according to the selected thematic focus of the innovation. This will enable sub-regional and/or thematic peer exchange and learning. One of the two successful pilot projects or innovations need to explicitly target gender, equity, or inclusion. The focus of the other selected innovation is entirely determined by the LEGs. Similar to the PAX learning cycle, the national expert teams choose a second innovation for analysis. The national teams decide—based on a desk review as well as nominations secured from the Local Education Group (LEG) and other stakeholders in the country—which innovation they will evaluate and document in detail. As with the first learning cycle, national experts are able to draw on advisors (NORRAG research associates), topic experts (NORRAG research associates and strategic partners), and technical assistance (GRAs from the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Geneva, and Australian National University, Canberra) to publish their high-quality, peer-reviewed reports on scalable innovations.

C. **Education development priorities of webinars and capacity-strengthening workshops.** There will be approximately eight webinars per year (26 in total) and a total of four three-day face-to-face workshops, held during the two regional workshops (two per regional workshop), scheduled for year 2, quarter 1 and year 4, quarter 1, respectively. An important feature of our technical approach is the demand-driven nature of professional development. Starting in the first quarter of the project and repeated annually, we will ask our in-country liaisons to solicit suggestions for workshop themes, providers, and areas in need of mentoring. The questionnaire will be distributed to the LEG as well as national education and policy experts representing the government, academia, civil society organizations, teacher organizations, the private sector, and development partners.

For the *first four webinars and for the first regional workshop*, held in the third quarter of the first project year, NORRAG and its initial group of strategic partners—ACER, FHI 360, and Nazarbayev University Graduate School of Education (NUGSE) in collaboration with the University of Cambridge—are prepared to provide webinars and/or three-day capacity-strengthening workshops on the following topics of expertise:

- **NORRAG**: results-based aid and innovative financing in education
- **ACER**: translating learning assessment data into policy and planning
- **FHI 360**: gender-sensitive and socially inclusive pedagogies
- **NUGSE** in collaboration with University of Cambridge: teacher management and instructional leadership
- **Transparent and publicly accessible** in order to mobilize a broad and evidence-based policy dialogue
- An instrument for **consensus-building**
- Based on **data and evidence**
- **Owned by national stakeholders, notably the LEGs** and their relevant partners, that nominate participants, propose themes, and recommend the inclusion of additional regional strategic partners
- **Capitalizes on peer-learning** whereby national expert teams are paired with teams from other countries to collaboratively and comparatively examine their topic of interest

Starting in the second project year, the selection of topics and workshop providers of webinars and regional workshops become entirely demand-driven, that is, determined by governments and LEGs in the 21 DCPs. The group of strategic partnerships, including with international organizations and regional organizations in the hub 3 region, will increase over the duration of the project as a result of recommendations solicited from the participants.

Finally, funds will be made available for the sub-regions to hire strategic partners of their own choice for three-day workshops under the condition that the interested host country organizes the event and provided that the participating countries cover their own travel and accommodation cost. We have tentatively scheduled four such demand-driven sub-regional capacity-building grants (CHF 15,000 per grant) in the budget for years 1 and 3, but anticipate that requests to host sub-regional workshops will be made throughout the duration of the project.

Methodology. Different from more traditional approaches to policy and planning frequently used in the region, the strategic planning methodology pursued in the RLP-3 is:

- **Outcomes-oriented** rather than input-oriented
- **Participatory and inclusive** rather than restricted to government voice and expertise
- **Geared towards change and transformation** rather than reconfirming routines
- Regarded as a **tool for policy makers** to carry out outcomes evaluations rather than merely compliance monitoring
- Concerned with examining the **actual project design and implementation** rather than with the quality of the planning documents

These key features apply to each step in the planning cycle: analysis of the key policy issues, agenda setting, policy formulation, plan preparation, plan implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and analysis of the key policy issues.

Indications of success. A successful RLP is one in which the mechanism for strengthening education systems by means of knowledge sharing, innovation, and exchange is sustained beyond the duration of the funded 45-month project.

Sustainable change occurs when feedback and continuous adaptation occur in both directions:

- From **policy research to practice** and vice-versa
- From the **global to the national level** and vice-versa
- From the **supply to the demand of capacity-building** and vice-versa
- From **innovations to scalable** project designs and vice-versa

As a result of the change, the group of national experts using GPGs for effective policy and planning in the hub 3 region is expected to become larger, more diverse, and more productive. At the same time, successful innovations that consider gender, equity, and inclusion will be scaled up and inform subsequent pilot projects in terms of scalable design and implementation plan.

1. Diane Stone, ed. (2000). *Banking on knowledge: The genesis of the Global Development Network*. London: Routledge.
2. See NORRAG *Special Issue 3*, entitled “Monitoreo global del desarrollo educativo nacional: ¿coercitivo o constructivo?” [“Global monitoring of national educational development: Coercive or constructive?”]
3. For example, Birger Fredriksen (2011). [Education resource mobilization and use in developing countries. Scope for efficiency gains through more strategic use of education aid](#). Washington, DC: Results for Development Institute; Marco Schäferhoff & Nicholas Burnett (2016). Rethinking the financing and architecture of global education. Background paper “The Learning Generation.” New York: The Education Commission; The International Commission on Financing Global Education Opportunities. The Education Commission. (2016). *The Learning Generation. Investing in education for a changing world*. New York: The Education Commission; The Education Commission. (2019). *Transforming the education workforce: Learning teams for a learning generation*. New York: The Education Commission.
4. Oxfam. (2010). [Rescuing Education for All. How reform of the Fast Track Initiative should lead to a Global Fund for Education](#). London: Oxfam International.
5. Steven J. Klees, Rebecca Winthrop and Anda Adams (2010). [Many paths to universal primary education: Time to replace the indicative framework with a real country-driven approach](#). Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution.
6. See Birger Fredriksen (2011) and Nicolas Burnett (2010). How to develop the UNESCO the world needs: The challenges of reform. [Journal of International Cooperation in Education](#), 13 (2), 89-99.
7. Michael Clemens and Michael Kremer (2016). [The new role of the World Bank. Working Paper 421](#). Washington, DC: Center for Global Development.
8. See [GPE Strategic Plan 2016-2020](#).
9. See the [2019 guidelines for ESPIG applications](#) (January 2019).
10. The summary and livestreams of the Education in Emergency Data Summit are [publicly available](#).
11. For example, NORRAG develops training modules and case studies on [Innovative Finance in Education](#), which will be offered in 2020 as a massive open online course (MOOC).

THE HUB AND ITS NICHE WITHIN THE REGIONAL ECOSYSTEM OF ACTORS AND INITIATIVES

The region of hub 3 is, perhaps more than the other three GPE KIX hubs, extremely diverse and complex. Ranging from Moldova in the West to Papua New Guinea to the East, and Republic of Maldives in the South, hub 3 covers not only a vast territory and different time zones but a wide range of DCPs with vastly different trajectories in terms of educational development. The region includes a cluster of post-socialist countries (Central Asia, Caucasus, Eastern Europe, Mongolia) that is able to build on a legacy of gender equity and near universal access to primary and lower secondary education yet struggles with the quality and efficiency of educational provisions. Another cluster in the Middle East, North Africa, and South Asia are FCACs that produce and/or host refugees or have to cope with a large number of internally displaced persons and undocumented out-of-school children and youth. The hub is also home to several small states in the Pacific region that closely collaborate with each other while preserving their own local languages and promoting indigenous knowledge. Finally, similar to other parts of the world, a few governments in hub 3 have territorial disputes with neighbouring countries

and, despite their geographical proximity, prefer to collaborate with more-distant countries.

The region is also diverse in terms of educational development. Figure 3 provides an overview of the gross enrollment ratio (GER) for girls in lower secondary in the 21 DCPs of the hub 3 region, ranging from below 50 percent in Afghanistan and Pakistan to over 100 percent in several countries of the region, accounting for high enrollment but also reflecting early or late enrollments as well as high repetition rates.

The great variation is also discernible in the quality of education in the region. When we take into account the harmonized test results for eighteen of the 21 DCPs in the hub 3 region (data for Bhutan, Maldives and Uzbekistan is not available), the education systems of Nepal and Vietnam are situated at opposite ends. In Nepal, the difference between expected years of schooling (11.7 years) and learning-adjusted years of schooling (6.8 years) is with 4.9 years the greatest. In stark contrast, students in Vietnam spend on average of 12.3 years

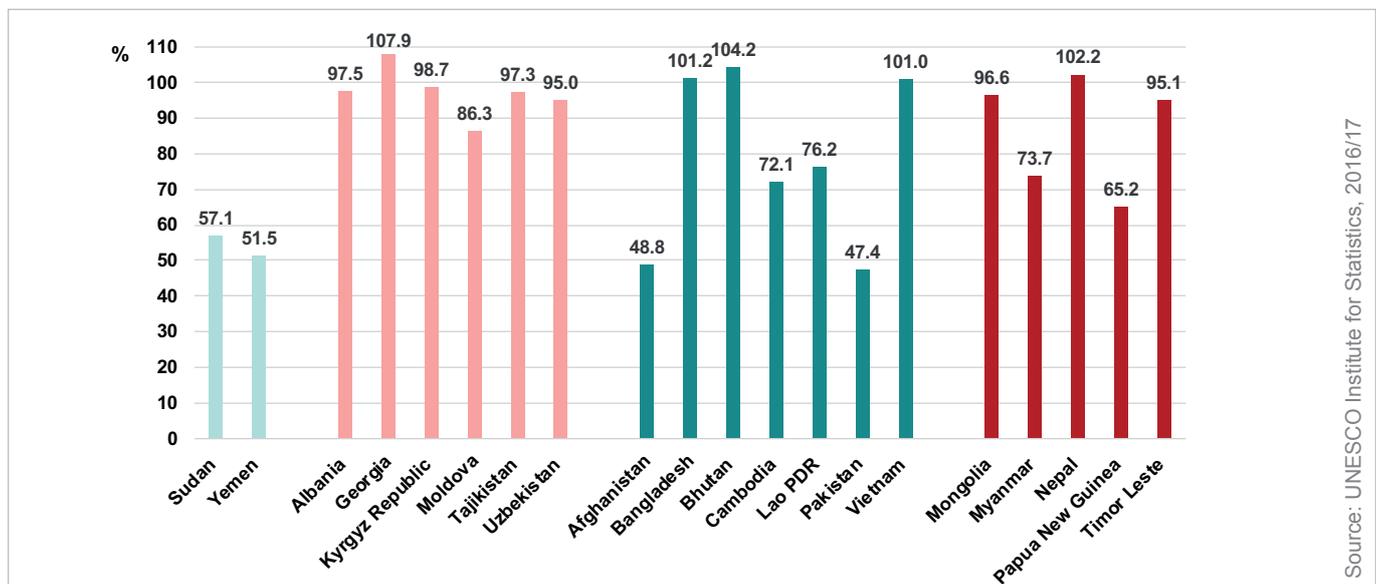


Figure 3 : GER lower secondary school, girls

in school, of which 10.2 years are considered to be effective as measured by standardized learning assessments or the harmonized test results, respectively.¹²

The huge variation within the hub 3 region requires organizing peer-exchanges by sub-region and, depending on the learning cycle, pairing national expert teams with similar policy challenges or similar types of innovations, respectively. Concretely, peer-exchange is planned at the national level (among the three team members representing different constituents and stakeholders in education), sub-regional level (once every two months), and at the regional level (during webinars and annual regional conferences). In addition, we periodically pair experts from 2–3 countries based on their thematic priorities and interests. [Table 1](#) lists the four regions by country and the RLP-3 research staff who facilitate peer-learning and actively support the national teams in their knowledge production. The country, language, and topic expertise as well as the location of the RLP-3 staff (three research associates and four GRAs) were the main criteria for assigning the staff to the four sub-regions.

The innovative approach of gradually extending the number of strategic partners enables the RLP-3 to be not only participatory and demand-driven (participants) but also inclusive of important organizations in the hub 3 region. The RLP-3 starts out with three strategic partners, each with specific topic expertise (see profile of the partners in [annex 3](#)), different geographic reach (including different time zones), and their own ecosystems of actors and initiatives. Collaboratively, we are able to leverage our different networks in the region:

- **NORRAG, Geneva:** throughout the hub 3 region
- **FHI 360, Washington/DC:** Middle East and fragile and conflicted affected countries (FCAC)
- **NUGSE, Astana:** Central Asia, Western and South Asia
- **ACER, Australia:** Pacific Islands, Southeast Asia, East Asia

[Figure 4](#) shows the four networks that will be leveraged for knowledge mobilization in the RLP. We listed the individual members of the NORRAG network in the region (N = 253) numerically by country of residence. The three concentric circles for ACER (marked in green), FHI 360 (red), and NUGSE (gray) indicate the potential for knowledge and resource mobilization in the region during the first year of the project.

NORRAG. Most of the 253 NORRAG members in the hub 3 region work for governments, universities, civil society organizations, or the private sector. In addition, the Graduate Institute, Geneva is able to draw on existing collaboration agreements with the American University of Central Asia (Kyrgyzstan) and the Asia Institute of Technology (Vietnam), which it established for their Executive Education program on “Development Policies and Practices.”

ACER works very closely in East and South Asia and in the Pacific region. The two liaison members at ACER—Jeaniene Spink and Elizabeth Cassity—who will serve as the main counterparts for the RLP-3, are involved with ACER’s Global Education Monitoring Centre and cooperate closely with UNICEF, UNESCO (IIEP-UNESCO and UNESCO Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education),

Table 1: Organization of RLP-3 by sub-region and RLP staff

Sub-region	Caucasus, Central Asia and Mongolia	East Asia & Pacific Region	South Asia	Europe & North Africa
DCPs	Georgia Kyrgyzstan Mongolia Tajikistan Uzbekistan	Cambodia Lao PDR East-Timor Papua New Guinea Vietnam	Afghanistan Bangladesh Bhutan Myanmar Nepal Pakistan Maldives	Albania Moldova Sudan Yemen
Research associate	Julia Levin	Arushi Terway. With punctual inputs from J. Levin & P. Montjouridès		Patrick Montjouridès
Location of research associate	Hamburg, Germany	Canberra, Australia		Cambridge, UK
Location of GRAs	Geneva	Canberra	Canberra	Geneva

UNESCO Institute for Statistics, and the Global Learning Metrics Task Force in the area of student assessments, monitoring, and quality measurement.

FHI 360 has been a partner in USAID’s Middle Eastern Bureau on the Middle East Education Research and Support (MEERS) program and has extensive experience working in FCACs, including in Afghanistan, South Sudan, and Yemen. The Education Policy and Data Center (EPDC) combines data collection with policy-relevant interpretation of educational statistics. NORRAG and FHI 360 have jointly established the INEE (Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies) Data and Evidence Collaborative.

Finally, the Nazarbayev University Graduate School of Education or NUGSE entertains institutional agreements with the Ministries of

Education of Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan and employs faculty members in its Graduate School of Education from Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Pakistan. It has initiated the establishment of the Eurasian Higher Education Leaders Forum and hosts the annual event.

Over the course of the project, additional strategic partners, proposed by DCPs will be invited. As a result, the RLP-3 continuously expands its partnership based on the demand and suggestions from participants. The strategic partners may be intergovernmental or non-governmental organizations and professional associations. In addition, the RLP will actively reach out to international organizations (including World Bank, UNICEF, UNESCO) that produce GPGs or provide capacity-strengthening webinars or workshops on important topics.

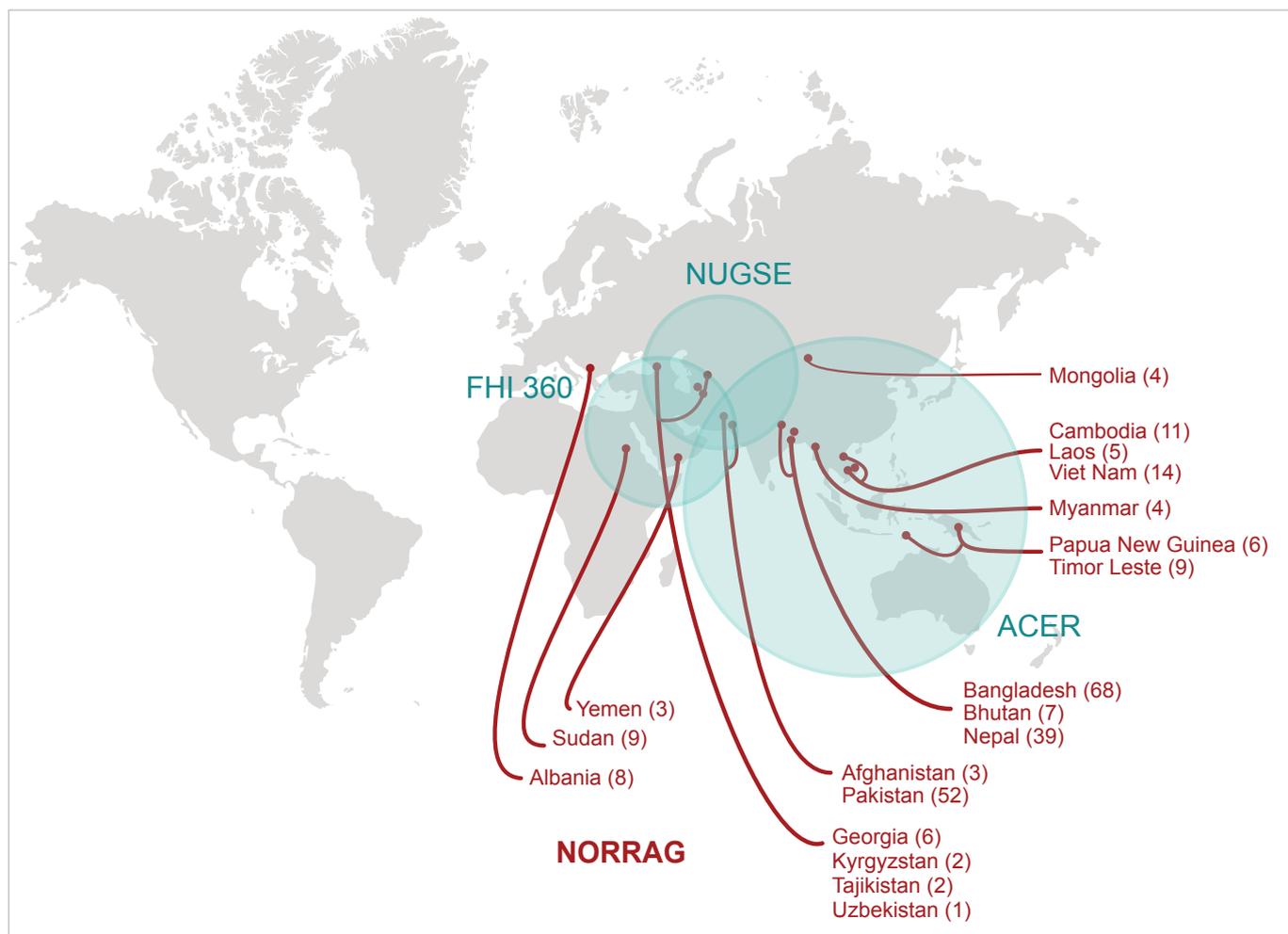


Figure 4: Network of NORRAG and its initial group of strategic partners

12. Data retrieved from <https://databank.worldbank.org/source/human-capital-index>. Several studies have convincingly explained the high scores on PISA for Vietnam: S.D. Parandekar

and E. K. Sedmik, E. K. (2016). Unraveling a Secret: Vietnam’s Outstanding Performance on the PISA Test. World Bank, Policy Research Working Paper 7630. Washington, DC: World Bank.

RESULTS

Figure 5 provides an overview of the general objectives ('goals') and the specific objectives ('objectives') of the project as well as the expected outcomes.

As Figure 6 shows, our theory of change assigns a central role to the four feedback loops, explained in detail in section 1 of the proposal. These feedback systems are catalysts of change or, to use the terminology of the KIX terms of reference, constitute the pathways through which we plan the outputs or activities towards achieving the expected outcomes.

Our results framework reiterates the objectives and outcomes, already listed in Figure 6 above, and also specifies the outputs, indicators, and whenever possible the benchmarks. We plan to conduct a baseline study during the second quarter of the first project year with the help of the in-country liaison

members. In the absence of baseline data, the proposed benchmarks need to be regarded for now as tentative. Table 2 presents our results framework. The detailed results framework, including specific considerations regarding gender inclusions, will be developed in collaboration with the in-country liaisons, that is, during the second quarter of year 1.

It is important to reiterate here that dissemination of the outputs is a key component of objective 1 and is specified in the results framework (see Table 2) as well as in the methodology section (section 5 of the proposal). The existing open access policy reflects the priority attached to effective dissemination.

NORRAG, as International Development Research Centre (IDRC), shares the belief that knowledge is a public good and should therefore be freely, widely, and readily available to society, provided

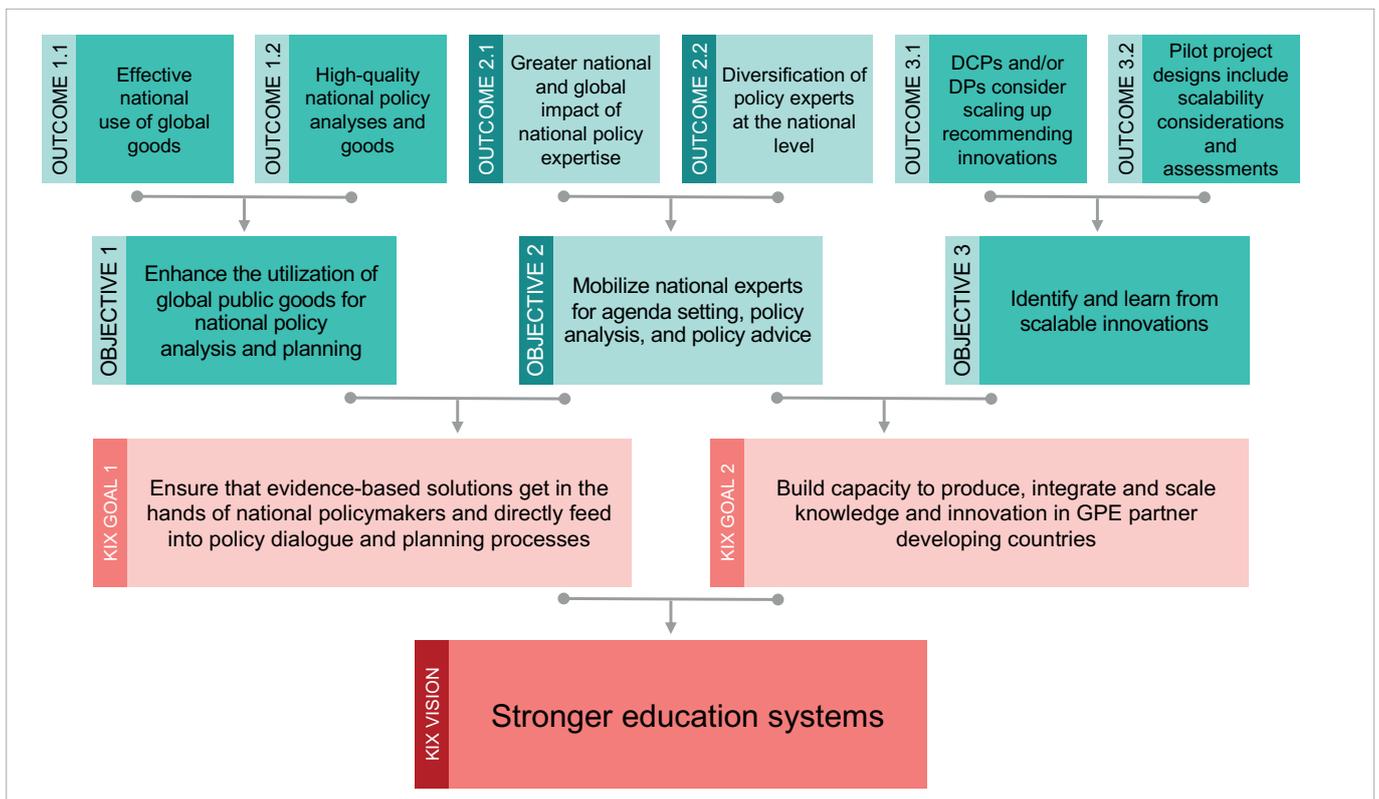


Figure 5: General and specific objectives of the RLP-3

that proper attribution is given to the author of said knowledge.¹³ For knowledge generated by the RLP-3 and made publicly available on the newly designated RLXP-3, NORRAG will use the Open Access clauses of IDRC¹⁴ whereby content is free of

charge to the end-user and licensed by the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license—meaning free from restrictions on use or reuse, as long as the original author(s) are properly acknowledged and cited.

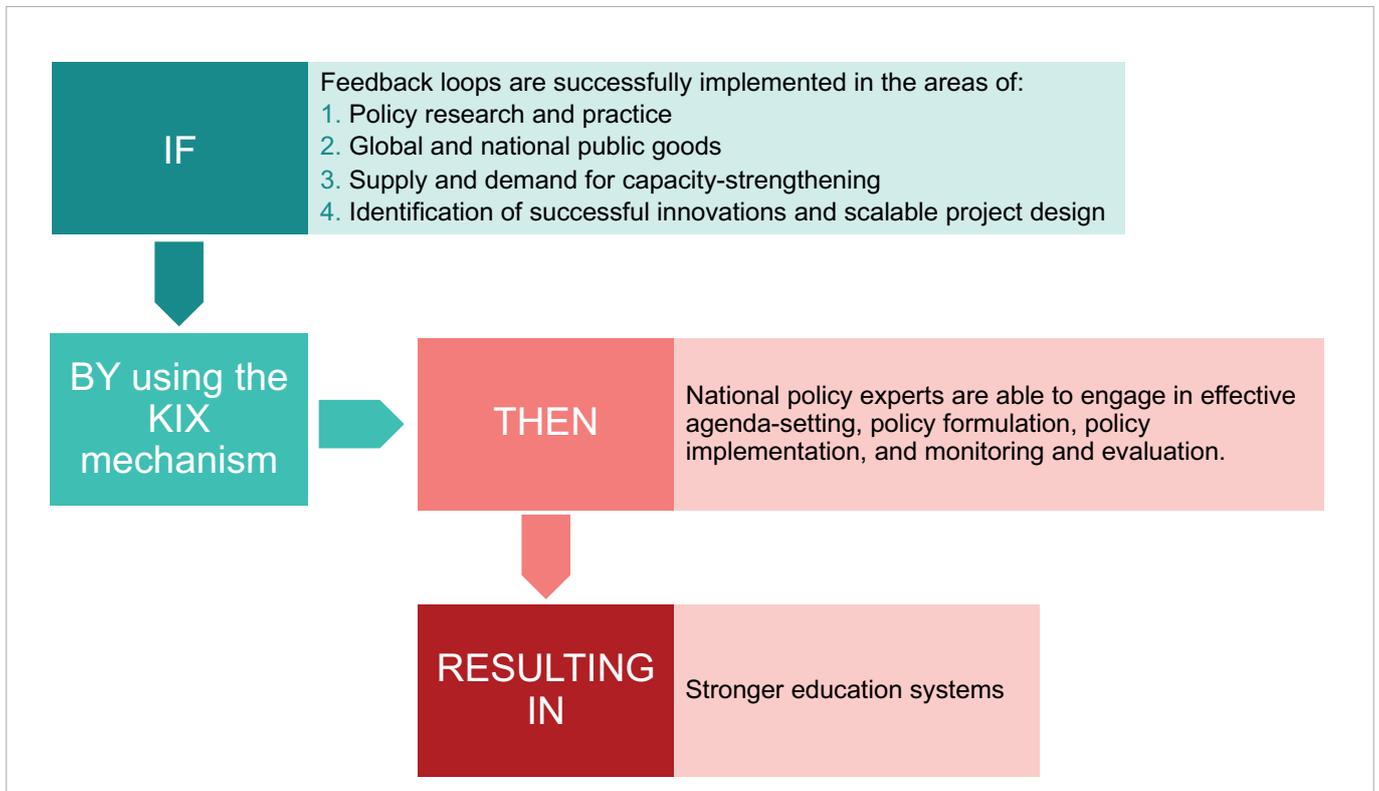


Figure 6: The theory of change of the RLP-3

13. See NORRAG's [Open Access Policy](#)

14. See IDRC's [Open Access Policy](#)

Table 2: Results Framework of the KIX RLP-3

Objectives	Outcome	Output	Indicator	Benchmark 12/24
Objective 1 Enhance the utilization of public goods for national policy analysis and planning	1.1 Effective national use of global and regional public goods	RLP-3 uploads of global, regional, and national public goods using a dissemination chain methodology	Unique users accessing of RLP-3 resources by country Clicks and/or downloads of RLP-3 resources by country	Annual increase of user engagement over project duration, disaggregated by country
		Integration of GPGs in national knowledge products	Citation of sources in national discussion papers and case studies by location of publication	At least 50% of the references are from regional and global sources
	1.2 High-quality national policy analyses and goods	Publication of externally reviewed discussion papers and case studies	Publications that passed the external quality assurance with minor revisions or no revisions	75% of discussion papers and case studies passed the external quality assurance
Objective 2 Mobilize national experts for agenda setting, policy analysis, and policy advice.	2.1 Greater national, regional and global impact of national policy expertise	Involvement of national policy experts in national policy analysis and planning	National policy experts that participate in joint sector analysis and preparation of education sector plans/transitional education plans, disaggregated by gender	TBD, based on the baseline study
		Regional syntheses of national knowledge products (produced during the two learning cycles) with recommendations for global/regional uptake	Uptake of national case studies in global inventories on innovations relating to gender, equity, and inclusion (e.g., Brookings Institute's global catalog on leapfrogging inequality)	TBD, based on the baseline study in which such global inventories are identified
	2.2 Diversification of policy experts at national level	Diversity of the community of policy experts, representing the GPE partnership model (including universities), that participate in the two learning cycles (PAX and InnX)	National policy experts that participate in the two learning cycles (PAX and InnX) Composition of the participating national expert teams representing stakeholders, specified by constituency (government, academia, civil society)	Annual increase of national policy experts that participate in PAX and InnX Increased engagement of stakeholders in policy analysis and planning (TBD based on the baseline study)
Objective 3 Identify and learn from scalable innovations for future project design.	3.1 DCPs and/or LEGs consider scaling up recommended innovations	Active recruitment of women for participation in the national expert teams DCPs and/or LEGs credibly express interest to scale up the recommended innovations	Female members in national expert teams Expression of Interest (EoI) proposals from DCPs and/or LEGs to scale up the recommended innovations	At least 50% of the national expert teams are women At least 50% of the recommended innovations result in EoIs, of which the majority are innovations in the area of gender, equity, and inclusion
	3.2 Pilot project designs include scalability considerations and assessments	Clearly defined and measurable scalability criteria for use in pilot project designs	New grant proposals or externally funded projects with indication of scalability considerations	75% of new grant proposals or externally funded projects include scalability considerations (measured in project year 4)

METHODOLOGY

This section explains first how we will embark on knowledge mobilization and recruitment of participants. Then, it presents our methodology for the three objectives listed above.

General: Knowledge mobilization and recruitment of participants

Knowledge mobilization and recruitment of participants occur throughout the 45-month project, generating a snowball effect in which an ever-increasing number of national experts, strategic partners, and networks participate in the RLP-3. As a corollary, the resources—global, national, and regional public goods—will grow exponentially because of the diversity and continuously growing number of RLP-3 participants in the region of hub 3.

The primary beneficiaries or target groups that are mobilized to produce knowledge are identical with those that use the knowledge products: education experts, policy analysts, and policy makers of DCPs in the hub 3 region. The partnership structure of GPE is reflected both in terms of the production and the uptake of the KIX knowledge products. The producers will be stakeholders in education representing government, donors, international organizations, civil society organizations, teacher organizations, foundations, the private sector, and universities.

Recruiting national counterparts. Different from the GPE partnership structure, NORRAG will mobilize universities in the DCPs to actively participate in the production, utilization, and dissemination of knowledge products. Strengthening their capacity to contribute to, and advocate for, an evidence-based policy dialogue in their own country is essential for sustaining change beyond the duration of the funded KIX initiative. For this reason, we will recruit a motivated faculty member or researcher at a reputable university, a research center, or at an analytical unit with the ministry of education as in-country liaison for the RLP-3 hub.

The recruitment of researchers from ministerial analytical units applies only to countries where such units (e.g. strategic planning or policy analysis units) are established with permanent staff and explicitly excludes temporarily staffed, externally funded Program Implementation Units funded by one or more donors. The details of recruiting the in-country liaison persons are explained in section 7 of the proposal.

Recruiting national education experts and policy experts for the learning cycles.

We will facilitate two types of learning cycles—Policy Analysis Exchange (PAX) and the Innovation Exchange (InnX)—during which national experts will collaboratively collect and analyze data and write-up and publish high-quality national discussion papers (deliverable of PAX) and case studies on innovations (deliverable of InnX).

- **During the PAX learning cycle**, teams of national education and policy experts (three persons per team) develop policy-relevant discussion papers. Two rounds of the PAX learning cycle will be offered enabling an in-depth investigation of policy issues that two or more countries in the region share. Thus, there will be up to 42 policy-relevant discussion papers produced by up to 123 policy experts in the hub 3 region. In addition, the RLP-3 produces two rounds of syntheses papers (after each PAX learning cycle) in which the country-specific analyses as well as the insights from inter-country visits or crossnational comparisons are summarized.
- **During the InnX learning cycle**, teams of national education and policy experts produce empirical case studies on innovation. Two innovations per DCP will be evaluated, of which one of them has to be a project that explicitly targets gender, inclusion, or equity. As with the PAX learning cycle, three national experts per team will be recruited to carry out and publish, with intense mentorship and assistance by RLP staff (research associates and GRAs) case study

research. We expect that up to 40 successful pilot projects or innovations will be documented and analyzed in depth as a result of the two InnX learning cycles. The RLP-3 will produce two syntheses reports (one after each InnX learning cycle) in which it categorizes the case studies in terms of beneficiaries, objectives, impact, cost-effectiveness, scalability and other criteria that are deemed relevant for the study of innovation. Similar to the PAX learning cycle, there will be up to 42 case studies produced on innovations written by up to 123 policy experts in the hub 3 region. In addition, the RLP-3 produces two rounds of syntheses papers (after each InnX learning cycle) in which the country-specific analyses as well as the insights from inter-country visits or crossnational comparisons are summarized.

In sum, a total of up to 12 experts per DCP will be given the opportunity to produce policy-relevant discussion papers or empirical case study (covering two innovations). The Regional Learning Exchange Platform for the hub 3 region (RLXP-3) will portray several of these national experts in short video-clips and also assist them in writing blogs. In other words, the RLXP-3 will be used as a tool to amplify the voice and visibility of the national experts that participate in the PAX and InnX learning cycles. It is important to note that some countries have the capacity to appoint different members for the various teams. In other countries, however, there are overall fewer policy experts present, increasing the likelihood that a core group of experts will contribute to several issue papers and case studies; possibly less than benchmark—that is, 7-9 national issue papers and two case studies on innovations. One of the objectives of RLP-3 is in fact to increase and diversify policy expertise (in terms of gender and institutional affiliation), resulting in a larger number of national experts who are motivated, empowered, and able to generate, with the help of the RLP-3 and its community of policy experts, national knowledge products. For this reason, the monitoring and evaluation framework of the RLP-3 takes into account the annual overall increase in national education and policy experts producing knowledge as well as the gender distribution of knowledge producers.

Three conditions need to be met to participate in one of the two learning cycles:

- Each country-level team consists of **three persons**: at least one member must represent **government** and another member **academia or a research-type institution/unit**; depending on the topic, the third and fourth members need to represent one of the other **stakeholders in education** (donors, international organizations, civil society organizations, teacher organizations, foundations, and the private sector).
- At least half of the country-level team must be **women**.
- The composition of the various country-level teams must be **endorsed by the LEG**.

The Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies will issue a Certificate of Completion for all national experts that actively participated and contributed to the various tasks in the learning cycle.

Recruiting a community of policy experts for external review and quality assurance.

The RLP-3 will apply a triple recruitment strategy to create a community of policy experts in the region that periodically reviews, on an honorary basis, the newly developed knowledge products. The members of this wider community of policy experts will be recruited as follows:

- Targeted call to the **253 NORRAG members**, located in the DCPs of the hub 3 region (see **section 3** of the proposal)
- Outreach to **universities, think tanks, and non-governmental organizations** in the hub 3 region (in DCPs and non-DCPs) that have a history of collaboration with NORRAG, the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, or the strategic partners of the RLP-3
- Invitation to the **governments** and the LEGs to nominate experts for the review of new knowledge products—notably the national discussion papers and the case studies on innovation

The reviewers will be provided with a list of review criteria and are asked to recommend whether the knowledge product is publishable in the submitted form or whether (minor/major) revisions are needed. The quality assurance procedure and review criteria will be explained to the participants in the two learning cycles.

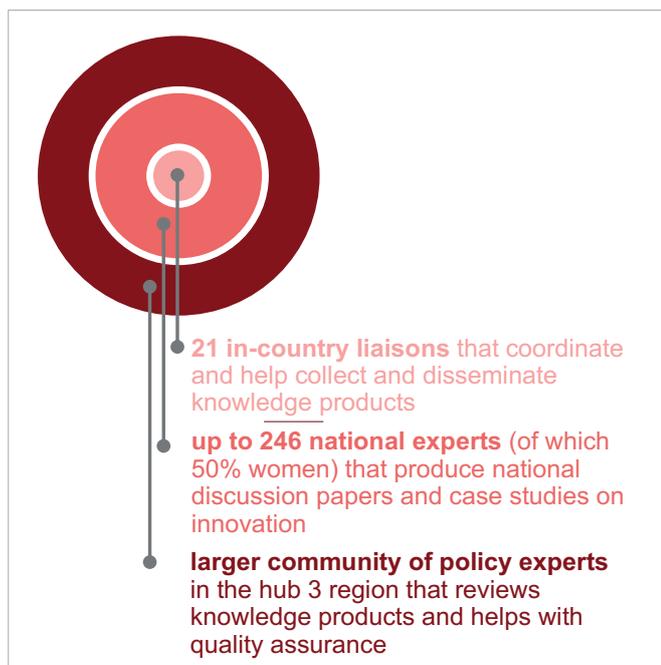


Figure 7: Knowledge mobilization and recruitment of participants in the hub 3 region

Figure 7 illustrates how the RLP-3 mobilizes and recruits participants: (i) 21 in-country who coordinate and support the national expert teams, (ii) up to 240 national experts that produce discussion papers and case studies, and (iii) a larger community of policy experts that assists the RLP-3 with the external review of newly produced knowledge products.

Objective 1: Enhance the utilization of public goods for national policy analysis and planning

Throughout the 45-month project, the RLP-3 will create opportunities for education and policy experts in the 21 DCPs to substantiate their professional expertise with data and evidence and to write-up their own analyses, developed over the course of two learning cycles, as high-quality, peer-reviewed reports. In particular, the following five different types of knowledge products will be made available:

- **Existing global public goods (GPGs):**
Toolkits, documents, studies, reports, and data analyses published by GPE and other international organizations
- **Newly produced national public goods (NPGs):**
Publications from the two learning cycles (PAX and InnX) as well as the background papers, toolkits, and evaluations developed, or used, to produce these public goods
- **Existing NPGs:**
Education sector plans/transitional education plans, education sector analyses, ESPIG, program descriptions from other development partners, etc.
- **Newly produced regional public goods (RPGs):**
Regional syntheses reports, developed by the RLP-3, and the material distributed at the annual regional conferences and capacity-strengthening workshops
- **KIX reports and information:**
Material received from IDRC and the other three RLPs

It is important to point out here that objective 1 involves not only production and dissemination of knowledge but explicitly targets *increased utilization* of the (national, regional, and global) goods for national policy analysis and planning. To enhance utilization, the RLP-3 will implement a knowledge dissemination chain to amplify the impact of these public goods. This means that different means of communication (reports, blog posts, videos, podcasts, social media posts, etc.) will be put to use to draw attention to newly published documents and to generate debate and peer-exchange. The digital RLXP-3 will thus give national experts a voice, a platform, and opportunities to be heard and to learn from each other.

Table 3: The integration of knowledge products in a dissemination chain

PRE KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION		KNOWLEDGE PRODUCT	POST KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION			
Social Media Posts	Video segment	Existing GPGs	Blog post	Social Media Posts	Network dissemination	
		Newly produced NPGs	Social Media Posts	Blog Post	Webinar	Network dissemination
	Blog Post	Existing NPGs	Podcast	Social Media Posts	Blog Post	Social Media Posts
Blog Post	Social Media Posts	Newly produced RPGs	Social Media Posts	Podcast	Live-streaming of workshop	Network dissemination
	Social Media Posts	KIX reports and information	Blog Post	Video segment	Podcast	Network dissemination

Table 3 visualizes in an *exemplary manner* how each knowledge production activity is accompanied by a plan detailing the means of communication that will precede or follow the product. Under this approach, each knowledge production activity is systematically supported and amplified by other means of communication or knowledge products.

The systematic application of a knowledge dissemination chain will enable the national experts to share their knowledge not only among the participants in the hub 3 region but also more widely in their own national context as well as internationally. The causal chain of effects, produced by the knowledge dissemination chain, is meant to enhance the effective use of public goods at the national level and generate among the participants a sense of belonging to a broader professional community of policy experts in the hub 3 region. Table 4 presents an overview of the deliverables for the most important multi-media communication products used in the digital RLXP-3.

The digital RLXP-3 will be in English with select documents and audio-visual material posted or translated into Russian and, upon request, into Arabic. The inverse also applies: key documents will be, upon request of the in-country liaisons, government, or LEGs, translated from Russian and Arabic into English and made publicly available.

Table 4: Multimedia communication products: deliverables

		Frequency
Podcast	Podcast on national policy analyses and national case studies on innovation produced by Will Brehm / NORRAG	12 per year
Livestreaming	Produced at the capacity-strengthening workshops in the region or subregion	4 regional (2 per regional conference N/A sub-regional)
Webinars	Webinars for capacity-strengthening	8 per year
Video segment	Short video for peer exchanges	12 per year
Blog posts	Posted or cross-posted on a variety of locations	24 per year
Social media posts	Inform about the knowledge products to a wider audience	numerous
Network dissemination	Various forms such as events, news items, newsletters, personal contacts; linkages with other networks	numerous

Objective 2: Mobilize national experts for agenda setting, policy analysis, and policy advice

In addition to disseminating existing public goods from the region, and on the region, through the digital RLXP-3, the project organizes, as mentioned before, two rounds of learning cycles in which national expert teams carry out data-based policy analyses, share their work in progress with peers, and publish their analyses in the form of national discussion papers. Each of these policy analysis exchange learning cycles (PAX LCs) lasts six months, affording an in-depth analysis of challenges, an examination of feasible policy options, and a review of public goods (at the national, regional, and global levels) related to the policy issue. The products are externally reviewed to ensure the quality of the publications.

The topics for the national discussion papers must be policy relevant in the given country and also be of interest to one or two other DCPs (for matched peer-learning and exchange). They may draw their inspiration from the six GPE KIX discussion papers, which we summarized in [annex 1](#).¹⁵

The RLP research associates and GRAs will mentor and support two expert teams per country over the

course of a learning cycle, enabling in-country peer support and exchange. In addition, the research associates organize monthly sub-regional meetings as well as peer exchange among teams that work on similar policy challenges.

To incentivize inter-country peer exchange and learning, a limited number of grants (34 grants at CHF 5,000 over a period of 45 months) are made available on a competitive basis for national research teams that are interested to either host 1-2 expert teams from other countries that work on the same topic or are able to make a case of why a visit to another DCP is beneficial for their own policy and planning related work.

A key feature of the PAX LC methodology is the feedback mechanism between the national, regional, and the global levels of policy analysis. The interactive methodology encourages the use of standardized indicators, review of existing or new data (statistics, interviews, collection of background papers), and “translation” of global policy issues and challenges into national ones, and vice versa, completing a feedback loop. [Figure 8](#) illustrates the feedback loop as well as the interactions between the various levels over the course of the six-month PAX LC.



Figure 8: The global/national feedback loop applied to the policy analysis exchange

It is indispensable to systematically recontextualize the KIX discussion papers or other GPGs for the varied national contexts as well as for the various subsectors (early childhood, primary, lower secondary education) and population groups within a country during step 1 of the learning cycle. Considerations of gender, equity, and inclusion need to be a cross-cutting theme applied to all discussion papers, along with a stand-alone discussion paper. Steps 2–6 of the methodology are spelled out in figure 8 in a self-explanatory manner. Steps 5 and 6 are essential for putting into motion the global/local feedback loop addressed earlier in this proposal (see figures 1 and 6): The RLP-3 director will, in collaboration with the RLP-3 research associates, produce regional synthesis reports in which the newly generated national discussion papers are compared and conclusions are drawn for regional calls for action, issued by IDRC. It is expected that future KIX discussion papers and studies, produced at the regional and global levels, will become more context-sensitive as a result of the regional syntheses reports and feedback provided during steps 5 and 6 of the PAX LC.

Our comparison of the six discussion papers, presented in table 5, clearly demonstrates the different approaches in how the six discussion papers address the policy issue under investigation. We consider the diversity of approaches to be a strength because it helps to trigger in-depth reflection and trigger country-specific explorations of the topics.

The six discussion papers lend themselves as a source of inspiration for a variety of reasons, including their differentiation between challenges and solutions, their comprehensive definition of “goods” (including, for example, networks), and how to incorporate feedback from reviewers into the final knowledge product. It would be too narrow, however, to focus on the six topics of the discussion papers alone.

The greatest *risk* of using already existing GPGs—such as the six discussion papers and global tool kits—is the perpetuation of, and in fact legitimization of, “global speak” by means of selectively used evidence. The “global speak” in DCPs is one of the main causes why externally funded projects fail to get to the root causes of local challenges and therefore have limited impact on systemwide improvements. Therefore, a special effort must be made to ensure that the policy cycle is not turned on its head: rather than first defining a challenge and then analyzing various policy options,

government officials oftentimes identify challenges in line with available (global) problem definitions and good practices, disseminated and funded by development partners. The RLP methodology used in the PAX LC—starting with step 1—encourages national experts to specify their policy challenges and solutions *in comparison* to, rather than tailored after, already existing problem definitions and options. They are encouraged to use the six published GPE discussion papers as a source of stimulation to better articulate their local problem definitions rather than as blueprints for emulation.

A brief explanation of our comparative methodology might be necessary here. For the past twenty years or so, simulations and interactive databases have been used to stimulate reflection and discussion, ranging from the micro simulations developed as part of the Millennium Villages Project to the policy trees currently under construction by IIEP-UNESCO. The assumption underlying such interactive tools is that there exists a limited number of policy challenges and a limited number of policy options from which national experts are able to select—if provided with data and given the right tools for policy analysis—the most suitable (global) solution for their national context. Such a methodology inadvertently creates blind spots for local problems and local solutions. We therefore use the national adaptations of global debates as a starting point to elucidate differences and similarities between the varied policy contexts. This comparative policy approach—along with the requirement of broad, in-country consultation with state and non-state actors—helps to mitigate the risk of “global speak.” Second, the national research team will receive feedback from the RLP resource associates and their peers in-country and in the sub-region, ensuring solid, data-based analyses rather than mere replication of what already exists. Finally, the RLP research associates will address plagiarism issues, notably when text passages are simply copied or references to the sources are missing.

Table 5: Comparison of the six GPE KIX discussion papers

Global challenges	Teaching and learning	Learning Assessment Systems	Equity and Inclusion	Gender equality	Early childhood care and education	Data systems
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Challenges in support to teacher development Challenges in teaching methods and learning materials Challenges in recruiting, managing and engaging teachers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insufficient quality of assessment tools and lack of technical expertise for assessment design, administration and analysis Aligning the various types of LAS used, and positioning these assessments within national education systems LAS often do not encompass the most marginalized children, including those with disabilities and those who are not in school Lack of use of learning assessment results: influenced by how assessments are designed and communicated, and the expertise and resources available for making change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multiple sources of disadvantage and challenges facing specific groups are not tackled Access and learning gaps are not addressed simultaneously Lack of prioritizing education from early years leads to learning gaps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Challenges faced by girls and boys in access, participation and learning Challenges in political, social and economic structures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insufficient system-level planning Lack of global goods concerning the design and implementation of curriculum and methods of teaching and learning Lack of professionalization of ECCE workforce Challenge of engaging families in ECCE services due to non-supporting cultural norms, working patterns Lack of data collection and feedback cycles in the pre-primary subsector, especially for monitoring and quality assurance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data availability Data usage Need for stronger, coordinated approach to tackling data challenges in education, particularly in low- and lower middle-income countries and countries affected by conflict 	
Tools	LSAs	Data disaggregation	Frameworks	Planning and financial resource allocation	EMIS and other administrative data systems	
Data	Data	Use of disaggregated data in planning and programmes	Funding streams	Quality assurance, programme standards and effective curriculum	Household and school surveys	
Evidence	Networks and knowledge sharing	Diagnosis of equity and inclusion in education plans	Research	Country-level workforce and early childhood education stakeholders	Randomized control trials and other evaluations	
Networks	Capacity development	Promoting equity and inclusion in public financing allocations	Data	Working with families and communities	Real-time monitoring tools	
Innovations	Innovations	Evidence	Tools	Data collection for the sake of learning from monitoring and evaluation, particularly to ensure quality and outcomes		
			Networks, convening and coordination mechanisms	Innovations		
			Innovations			

Global goods

Global challenges

Objective 3: Identify and learn from successful innovations for future project design

Similar to the PAX LC, the Innovation exchange learning cycle (InnX LC) also lasts six months. As mentioned before, two innovations per country will be evaluated by teams of four national experts. The first innovation needs to involve gender, equity, and inclusion considerations, whereas the second may include an innovation or a project with a different priority.

Figure 9 below shows the methodology for the InnX LC, notably the dual purpose of the learning cycle: to make suggestions on whether, and under which conditions, a successful innovation may be scaled up and to study the design and implementation of successful innovations for future pilot projects. Thus, the feedback loop (step 6) ensures that the InnX LC has a positive spill-over or learn effect for non-participants and for future innovations. As part of the sixth step, we included the possibility of inter-country visits for teams that are interested in the similar type of innovations. As with the PAX learning cycle, a limited number of grants are made available to either host a visit or initiate a study visit. The

feedback loop enhances the likelihood that policy experts and stakeholders have scalability of a pilot project in mind at the stage of designing, costing, and implementing the project.

In line with our theory of change and similar to the first learning cycle (PAX LC), we consider it the role of the RLP-3 to provide feedback and lobby for the newly produced national and regional goods at the global level. In the case of the InnX LC, completion of the feedback entails production and dissemination of regional syntheses reports as well as collaboration with additional potential strategic partners such as, for example, the Brookings Institute, which is currently building a global catalog of innovations that help to “leapfrog inequality.”

Different from the PAX LC, which is based on reviews and secondary analysis of data, national experts in the InnX LC will actually collect their own data and evaluate the proposed innovations in order to better understand what works and why.

We have identified two risks: (i) difficulty producing solid empirical research without prior experience in



Figure 9: The innovation learning cycle: Focus on gender, equity, and inclusion

evaluation research and (ii) biased case selection—that is, informal criteria used for selecting an innovation.

The RLP-3 mitigates the first risk by implementing an incremental approach to developing the final product (case study report) and by providing ample technical support over the course of the six-month learning cycle. Figure 10 shows that each national expert team produces, with strong support from their research associate and their GRA, four different deliverables (project description, evaluation methodology, draft evaluation report, and draft feasibility report) before integrating all deliverables into the fifth and final deliverable: the case study report.

No prior knowledge with social science data analysis is required, because the RLP research associates and the GRAs will closely guide the national teams throughout the six-month learning cycle, providing them with toolkits, guidelines, and software as well as one-to-one mentoring for developing the

five deliverables, including technical support with writing up the case study report into a publishable form. They will also ensure that the **research ethics protocol** of the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies is strictly followed, ensuring anonymity, confidentiality, and evidence of non-coercive and voluntary participation of informants and interviewees.

The *second risk for the InnX LC* is the biased case selection, because influential stakeholders may exert pressure to select a particular pilot project for studying and scaling-up at the expense of other, more successful innovations. For the first case study (focus on gender, equity, and inclusion considerations), we will use the indicators of the GPE results framework, which lists gender, equity, and inclusion as its second goal that needs to be annually monitored and reported.¹⁶ For the second case study, the risk of biased case selection will be mitigated by clearly defined, measurable selection criteria and by requiring evidence of a broad consultation process prior to the case selection.

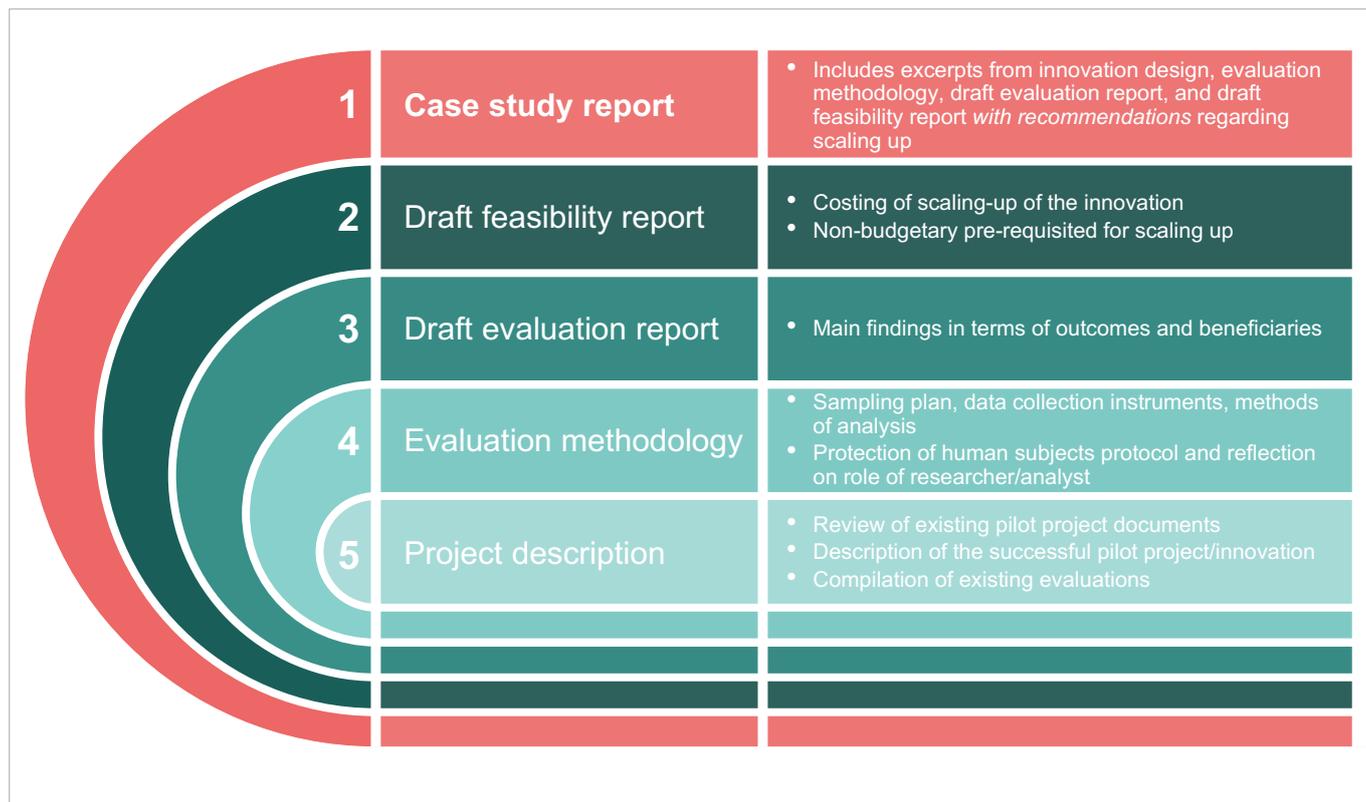


Figure 10: The incremental approach to developing a case study report

15. [Strengthening early childhood care and education. Meeting the data challenge in education. Strengthening learning assessment systems. Improving teaching and learning. Achieving gender equality in and through education. Leaving no one behind.](#)

16. See [GPE's results report 2019](#) (chapter 2, p. 33 ff.) as well as the [gender equality policy and strategy 2016-2020](#) and the [joint GPE/UNGEI/UNICEF guidelines on gender-responsive education sector plans](#).

Table 6 provides an overview of the scoping studies (discussion papers and case study reports) and the reports that will be produced after each of the 4 in-depth learning cycles (2 rounds of innovation exchange learning cycles and 2 rounds of policy

analysis learning cycles) and the 34 inter-country visits. Note that the multimedia communication products are listed separately in table 4 of the proposal.

Table 6: Overview of Scoping Studies and Reports

Category	Description	Title	Frequency
In-depth, empirical scoping studies, produced by national expert teams	Policy Analysis Learning Cycle (2 rounds)	Discussion Papers	Up to 2 per 21 DCPs
	Innovation Exchange Learning Cycle (2 rounds)	Case Study Reports on Innovations	Up to 2 per 21 DCPs of which 1 focuses on gender inclusion
Regional synthesis reports produced by the RLP-3	Summaries, comparisons and recommendations drawn from the discussion papers and case study reports (produced after each round of the 4 learning cycles)		4 in total
Reports from Inter-Country Visits produced by the sub-regional host with support of the RLP-3	Program and participants of the inter-country visits, lessons learned and recommendations for the RLP-3 and for the global KIX platform		34 short reports
Total: up to 42 scoping studies (half policy analyses, half innovation analyses), 4 regional syntheses, and 34 short reports.			

PROJECT SCHEDULE

Objective 1 is carried out over the entire duration of the project (45 months), whereas objective 2 (includes the PAX LC) and objective 3 (InnX LC) each consists of two six-month cycles, scheduled alternatively. Objectives 2 and 3 also include a grants component which enables national expert teams to visit their

peers that either work on a related policy or planning matter (objective 2) or implemented an interesting innovation (objective 3). As shown in [Table 7](#), Year 1, Quarter 1 (Q1) begins in April 1 and the project ends in Year 4, Quarter 3 (December 2023).

Table 7: Project Schedule

	Year 1				Year 2				Year 3				Year 4		
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3
GENERAL															
Management, Reporting, Monitoring & Evaluation															
Development of the detailed workplan															
RLP-3 management meetings with global staff (weekly)															
RLP-3 meetings with in-country liaisons (1x month)															
Reporting to IDRC (includes monitoring reports and final report)															
Outreach and Knowledge Mobilization															
Needs assessment surveys															
Outreach to 21 LEGs, NORRAG network, and partner networks for nominations of 21 RLP in-country liaisons															
Appointment and TORs with 20 in-country liaisons															
Memorandum of understanding with Ministries and LEGs															
Mobilization of three-member national expert teams for each new round of the learning cycles 1 and 2 (six rounds)															
Monitoring and Evaluation															
Baseline study and finalization of the results framework (including specific considerations for gender inclusion), with input from in-country liaison															
Annual review of results and target as well as final review (during year 5/quarter 1)															
Evaluations by participants (LC1, LC2, conferences, webinars, workshops, inter-country visits)															
Formative evaluations & feedback by DCP governments and LEGs															
Annual formal staff evaluated (mandated by the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies)															

	Year 1				Year 2				Year 3				Year 4		
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3
OBJECTIVE 1: Enhance the utilization of public goods for national policy analysis and planning															
Production, Translation, Dissemination of Knowledge (Script)															
Digital RLXP-3: ongoing posting of existing documents, policy analyses, studies, and case studies submitted by DCPs or collected by RLP-3															
Translations into/from Russian (and possibly into/from Arabic)															
Disseminate regional syntheses reports															
Mobilize writing and help edit blog posts written by experts in DCPs and international experts (two per month)															
Edit, publish, and disseminate new national knowledge products, generated by participants in the RLP-3 region															
Disseminate resources from GPE and other three RLPs															
Create linkages to the IDRC Digital Learning Exchange Platform and share resources															
Podcasts and Videos (Audio-Visual)															
Podcasts of policy analyses and innovations (12 per year)															
Livestreams of three-day regional workshops (four workshops in total) [upon request also live-streams from sub-regional meetings]															
Short videos clips introducing national expert teams' work (one per month)															
Regional Conferences, Sub-Regional Initiatives, Webinars & Capacity-Strengthening Workshops															
Five-day, face-to-face regional conferences (63 participants from DCPs)															
Workshops during regional conference (three-day workshops; two parallel workshops per regional conference)															
Grant for hosts of sub-regional workshops (4 grants in total that cover demand-driven invitations of 4 new strategic partners to moderate sub-regional workshops) – scheduled anytime during the project period, starting in Year 1, Q4 and ending in Year 4, Q2															
Webinars (26 in total, approximately 8 per year) – topics selected based on surveys and sub-regional demands															
OBJECTIVE 2: Mobilize national experts for agenda setting, policy analysis, and policy advice															
Learning Cycle (LC) 1: Policy Analysis Exchange (PAX)															
Round 1: National analyses related to policy & planning															
Round 2: National analyses related to policy & planning															
Joint reviews of all discussion papers															
Regional synthesis reports, produced by RLP															
Meetings in four sub-regional or cross-national thematic teams, moderated by RLP-3 research associates (every month)															
Certificates of Completion by the Graduate Institute for LC 1 participants															
Grants for inter-country visits (34 grants in total of which approximately 17 for PAX LC participants and 17 for InnX LAC participants)															

	Year 1				Year 2				Year 3				Year 4		
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3
OBJECTIVE 3: Identify and learn from successful innovations															
Learning Cycle (LC) 2: Innovation Exchange (InnX)															
Round 1: National evaluation studies of innovation in the area of gender, equity, and inclusion		■	■												
Round 2: National evaluation studies of innovation in the country's area of choice								■	■						
Joint reviews of all evaluation studies											■				
Regional synthesis reports, produced by RLP				■						■					
Meetings in four sub-regional or cross-national thematic teams, moderated by RLP research associates (every month)		■	■					■	■						
Certificates of Completion by the Graduate Institute for LC 2 participants			■						■						
Grants for inter-country visits (34 grants in total of which approximately 17 for PAX LC participants and 17 for InnX LAC participants)		■	■					■	■						

INSTITUTIONS, PERSONNEL, AND ORGANIZATION

There are three features of NORRAG that make it ideally suited to serve as a KIX RLP for hub 3: (i) its mission and expertise as a knowledge broker between the Global South and the Global North as well as between policy makers, analysts, and practitioners, (ii) its partnership structure and funding model, and (iii) its association with a flagship university in the hub 3 region.

First, NORRAG's strength is knowledge mobilization and dissemination with a focus on providing greater voice and visibility to expertise from the Global South. Incidentally, NORRAG is the offspring of a successful KIX initiative of more than forty years ago. Thus, knowledge and innovation exchange are ingrained in the core mission of NORRAG. In 1976, the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) of Canada supported the formation of a Research, Review, and Advisory Group (RRAG) that was charged with critically reviewing and disseminating education research related to the developing world. In time, this initiative led to Regional RRAGs and in due course, in 1986, to what at that time was called the Northern Research Review and Advisory Group (NORRAG). Although it was a few years before "Northern" was changed to "Network," from the very first issue of *NORRAG News* (NN)¹⁷ in November 1986, edited by Christine McNab and Kenneth King, it was a priority to send NN to all the other regional RRAGs in Latin America, Sub-Saharan Africa, South East Asia, and the Caribbean. Also from the very beginning, its members and contributors were drawn from academia, from development agencies, and from civil society. This was evident in the three presidents that it had in its early years: Noel McGinn (Harvard), Aklilu Habte (World Bank), and Ingemar Gustafsson (Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency).

NORRAG disseminates development news, debates and knowledge products ([NORRAG Special Issue](#), [NORRAG book series](#), [NORRAG blog](#), NORRAG Newsletter, livestreams, and podcasts), produced globally by partners and in-house. A good example is NORRAG Special Issue (NSI). This publication includes brief, policy-relevant analyses produced by

researchers, policy makers, and practitioners placed in academia, government, development agencies, non-governmental organizations, and international organizations. Each contribution is 4–5 pages in length, and in total approximately 30 authors contribute to the NSIs. Over the past two years, we added brief videos on the topic in order to give visibility to the editors and authors. A special effort is made to recruit editors and authors from the Global South and to publish in all six officially recognized UN languages. For example, the guest editor of the most recent issue was Mexican researcher Marisol Vazquez Cuevas. She edited the special issue in Spanish, entitled *Global monitoring of national educational development: Coercive or constructive?* NSI 3 is now being translated into the other five UN languages. Each regional editor of NSI mobilizes additional authors from the language region to contribute to the topic of the special issue.

By hosting the material of the RLXP-3 on the NORRAG blog platform and the NORRAG Resource Library, existing networks and readers can be leveraged. The podcasts will be hosted in a SoundCloud account designated for the RLXP-3. NORRAG is today a 5,000-strong member network with close to 3,000 followers on Twitter, 2,000 subscribers to its quarterly newsletter, 1,000 followers on Facebook, and 700 subscribers to its blog. The strength and reach of this network will benefit the digital platform of the project. For example, some of the blog posts for the RLXP-3 will be cross-posted by NORRAG strategic partners, RLPs of other hubs, and the DCPs. Currently, NORRAG holds agreements for cross-posting blogs with more than a dozen international institutions including the World of Education (Education International). The vast experience of NORRAG in the area of knowledge sharing and dissemination will be made available to the RLP in terms of both the available technology and equipment as well as human resources.

In addition to knowledge sharing and dissemination, NORRAG organizes conferences and produces analytical work in thematic areas that we find to be

underexplored. In all of the NORRAG projects, we operate globally and collaborate closely with partner organizations. Examples include the following:

- **Data and Evidence for Education in Emergencies** together with INEE and USAID MEERS
- **Innovative Finance in Education** with Tata Institute of Social Sciences in India, University of Cape Town in South Africa, Beijing Normal University in China, and Universidad Nacional de General Sarmiento, Argentina
- **Philanthropy in Education Symposia**, held in seven countries and in collaboration with fifteen universities and foundations

It is also relevant here that NORRAG also serves as advisor (“backstopper”) for the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), which is a GPE partner country since 2009, and represents five bilateral donors in GPE’s Grants and Performance Committee board (Belgium, France, Luxembourg, Netherlands, and Switzerland). We provide analytical work and advice to SDC on GPE-related matters and are therefore familiar with the important work of GPE. In addition, and as part of our backstopping mandate, we support the SDC Education Focal Point in linking global initiatives and global policy dialogue with field-related activities (and vice-versa) and facilitate peer-learning among SDC’s country officers and partners.

Second, the partnership structure—salient feature of GPE—is also reflected in NORRAG’s financing and governance model. Approximately half of the funding

of NORRAG is from the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, and the other half from the Graduate Institute, the Open Society Foundations, the Swiss National Science Foundation, and projects, events, and activities co-sponsored with NORRAG partners. Similarly, NORRAG’s governance structure reflects the global partnership model. The **Consultative Committee** (board) is composed of internationally renowned experts in the field of international and comparative education representing the UN system (IIEP-UNESCO), academia, think tanks, and private foundations.

Finally, NORRAG is legally an Associate Programme of the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies in Geneva and greatly benefits from the central services of the Graduate Institute for financial oversight and human resource management. The Director of NORRAG (Gita Steiner-Khamsi) is appointed as full professor at the Graduate Institute and teaches courses in the interdisciplinary development studies program with a focus on education. NORRAG’s association with a flagship university has several advantages for the RLP:

- We do not financially depend on promoting our own products or toolkits but, on the contrary, we are eager to partner with other regional and international organizations to maximize the effective use of the regional learning partnership.
- We are able to draw on highly competent, motivated, and cost-effective GRAs—enrolled as masters or doctoral students—that serve the

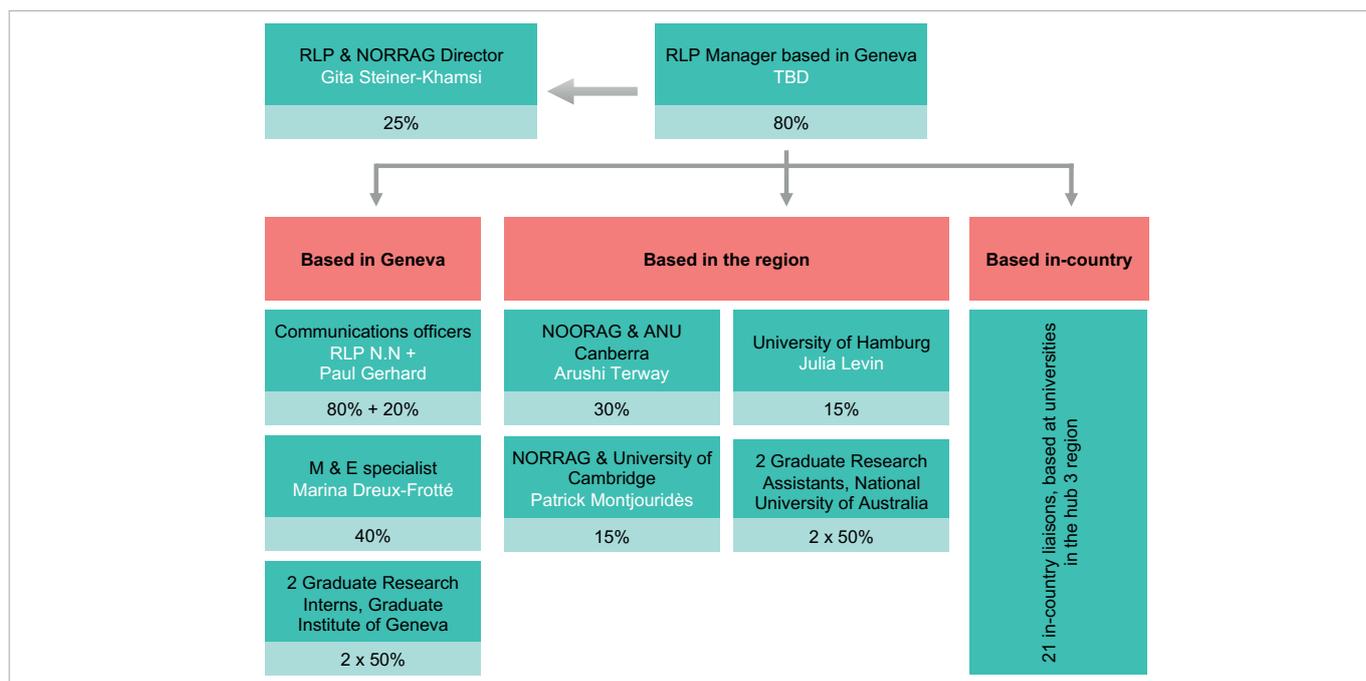


Figure 11: Personnel of the RLP-3

national expert teams as assistants for data analysis and technical writing.

- We are able to issue a Certificate of Completion from a reputable university that is internationally renowned for international relations and development studies.

Personnel for the RLP-3

To enable capacity transfer and support, NORRAG will contribute a portion of its staff time in-kind to the RLP-3 (see the local contributions in the budget, listed in annex 4). At least half of the personnel are women. The 2-page CVs are included in the annex. For better ease of understanding, [figure 11](#) provides information on the organizational structure, the location of the project staff, and their employment percentage for the KIX project.

The [RLP-3 director](#) ([Gita Steiner-Khamsi](#), 25%) supervises the RLP manager, lends substantive support to the research associates, and produces the regional syntheses reports. Together with the RLP manager, she regularly reports to IDRC.

[Gita Steiner-Khamsi](#) has worked more than 20 years in international educational development, teaches program evaluation, international policy analysis, and strategic planning (for masters and doctoral students), and is a Mongolia and Central Asia specialist. In particular, the facilitation of in-depth learning cycles benefits from her experience with blended teaching/learning.¹⁸ A former president of the Comparative and International Education Society, she has published numerous books and peer-reviewed articles and is internationally well networked. She has carried out strategic planning and analytical work for the Asian Development Bank, Council of Europe, DANIDA (Danish International Development Agency), European Union Aid, Open Society Foundations, SDC, UNICEF Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, ESARO & CEECIS, USAID, and the World Bank. Prior to pursuing an academic career, she worked close to ten years as a policy analyst at the Ministry of Education, Canton of Zurich, Switzerland. In addition to English, she speaks fluently Farsi and German (mother tongues) and speaks French at an intermediate level.

The [RLP-3 manager](#) (N.N., 80%, based in Geneva) directs and supports the staff and serves as the point person for the participants in the countries, including the 21 in-country liaisons. The manager carries out the management of human resources and finances with the respective offices at the Graduate Institute and reports to the RLP director. The manager is

someone with extensive management experience in international cooperation contexts.

The three groups of RLP-3 associates—staff and GRAs at the hub in Geneva, research associates and GRAs in the region, and in-country liaisons—are explained in the following.

Geneva-based RLP-3 staff. The RLP staff works closely with the NORRAG staff and uses the same infrastructure and office space. In addition to the RLP manager, the following staff is based in Geneva:

The [two RLP-3 communications officers](#) (N.N., 80% and [Paul Gerhard](#), 20%) are in charge of knowledge mobilization and the dissemination of national, regional, and GPGs through the digital RLXP-3. Once a year, they also lend their support to the in-country liaison and event manager to organize the regional conference. They are both experts in outreach and communication, including script, podcasts, blogs, videos, and social media.

[Paul Gerhard](#) (20% RLP-3, 80% NORRAG) has worked for the past 17 years as a communication, digital media, and outreach specialist for, including others, the Qatar Foundation in Doha (six years), the EU, and the Swiss government. He speaks French (mother tongue), English, German (B level), and Arabic (A level).

The [monitoring and evaluation specialist](#) ([Marina Deux-Frotté](#), 40%) keeps track of outputs, records outcomes, oversees the external review process for publications, and ensures quality assurance for all knowledge products.

[Marina Deux-Frotté](#) holds a M.A. from the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies. She joined NORRAG in 2017 and has worked, most recently, on the portfolio review monitoring framework for SDC's education programs. She speaks Spanish (mother tongue), English, and French.

The [two GRAs](#) (each 50%) from the Graduate Institute support the two communications officers and the research associates. They are recruited from the interdisciplinary development studies program.

The podcasts with national experts (one per month) will be hosted by [Will Brehm](#), lecturer at the University of London (UK), Institute of Education (CV included in the annex) and internationally renowned for his weekly podcast series [FreshEd](#).

In addition, we will outsource certain services (graphic design for publications, video-editing, translations, copy-editing, video-editing, etc.) and cost-share the cost. The portion charged to the RLP-3 operation cost is listed in the budget (see [annex 4](#)).

RLP-3 staff based in the region of hub 3. Four RLP-3 research associates and two GRAs reside outside of Geneva. We are able to overcome time zone communications challenges by having three persons based in Canberra, Australia: Arushi Terway and two GRAs from the Australian National University.

Caucasus, Central Asia, and Mongolia: Julia Levin (15%). Lecturer, University of Hamburg, Germany; areas of specialization are student assessment systems and program evaluation. She worked for the Kyrgyz Academy of Education in Bishkek (three years), funded by GIZ (German Society for International Cooperation) and worked as a consultant for a Kyrgyz school reform project (spread out over two years) that was funded by the Asian Development Bank. She speaks Russian (native), German (native), English (fluent), Ukrainian (basic), and Kyrgyz (basic).

East Asia, South Asia and Pacific region: Arushi Terway (30%). NORRAG senior lead research associate and director of NORRAG's Innovative Financing in Education MOOC (massive open online courses). She holds a M.Ed. (Harvard) and an Ed.D. (Teachers College, Columbia University, New York) and is based at the Australian National University in Canberra. She worked as education policy consultant for GPE (three years), for the Results for Development Institute, FHI 360, and the Academy for Educational Development (five years). Project experience in numerous countries, including Southern Sudan (two years) as well as the following countries in the hub 3 region: Afghanistan, Jordan, India, Indonesia, Lebanon, Nepal, Pakistan, and the Philippines.

Europe, Middle East, and North Africa regions: Patrick Montjouridès (15%). Senior consultant, based at the University of Cambridge, NORRAG senior research associate. He specializes in education statistics, data visualization, strategic planning, equity indicators and measurement, as well as social network analysis. He worked for four years for UNESCO's Education for All-Global Monitoring Report in Paris and for six years at the UNESCO Institute of Statistics in Montreal. He

speaks French (native) and English (fluent).

The **two GRAs** (each 50%) from the Australian National University support the two communications officers and the four research associates.

RLP-3 liaison members in the 21 DCP. The 21 in-country liaison members are professors, researchers, strategic planners or policy analysts at reputable universities or research-type institutions in the DCP. They may also represent the heads of strategic planning or policy analysis units within ministries of education, if granted some release time from their work to serve as in-country liaison. In that case, they must be permanent staff with a policy-relevant research background or interest. The selection of professors, researchers or strategic planners/policy analysts as in-country liaison will reflect the purposes of (i) bridging research, policy and practice and (ii) ensure sustainability of capacity beyond the duration of the 45-month KIX initiative and GPE funding, (iii) as well as endure possible political or administrative changes in the DCPs during the project period. For this reason, term-appointed or externally funded staff in Program Implementation Units are not directly targeted as in-country representatives. The in-country liaisons will receive a monthly stipend (see budget, annex 4) to mobilize national experts and coordinate activities. We will develop a memorandum of understanding with the 21 participating universities/research center/analytical units, their respective governments, and their LEG to ensure broad support for the nominated national liaison members. The memorandum also includes the terms of references for the liaison position. The memorandum will be signed during the first three months of the project (see project schedule, presented in [table 7](#)). Government employees will need to use the granted release from their work and will not receive a stipend from the project.

Administrative arrangements for strategic partners. As mentioned before, the number of strategic partners of RLP-3 grows over time and will include additional influential organizations that are active in the region. The three initial strategic partners made a commitment to offer three-day workshops and help leverage their own networks for knowledge mobilization (see letters of commitment in [annex 3](#)). We have on purpose not made specific administrative arrangements with the first group of strategic partners. This allows the RLP-3 to be demand driven and open to additional strategic partners.

17. Renamed to NORRAG Special Issue in 2018.
18. Starting in 2002, Gita Steiner-Khamsi has offered—through Teachers College, Columbia University, New York—semester-long professional development learning opportunities for government officials and field-based staff of the Open Society Foundations (located in the hub 3 region), the Inter-American Development Bank, UNICEF CEECIS (Central and Eastern Europe and Commonwealth of Independent States), and Open

Society Initiative for Southern Africa (OSISA). The program officers of these international organizations produced, similar to the proposed LCs 1 and 2, either high quality data-based policy analyses or project evaluations. The LCs for the professional development used a blended-learning design (online and once face-to-face) in which the various national teams collaborated closely by means of virtual meetings and online discussion boards over a period of 4-8 months. The national reports were translated in the languages of the respective countries.

BUDGET AND DURATION

The duration of the proposed project is 50 months, and the budget is CHF 2,519,618 or Can\$ 3,338,920.

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS

The additional documents are included in the annex with the following content:

1. Summary of the six discussion papers
2. RLP-3 personnel: CVs and employment verification
3. Initial group of RLP-3 strategic partners: profiles and commitment letters
4. Budget¹⁹
5. NORRAG annual report 2018
6. Institutional profile questionnaire (IPQ) and required supporting documents
7. Supplier, tax and bank information form

19. Interactive sheets of budget are attached in a separate file.

About NORRAG

NORRAG is a global membership-based network of international policies and cooperation in education, established in 1986. NORRAG's core mandate and strength is to produce, disseminate and broker critical knowledge and to build capacity for and with a wide range of stakeholders. These stakeholders inform and shape education policies and practice, both at national and international levels. By doing so, NORRAG contributes to creating the conditions for more participatory, better informed, and evidence-based policy decisions that improve equal access to and quality of education.

NORRAG is an associate programme of the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Geneva.

More information about NORRAG, including its scope of work and thematic areas, is available at www.norrag.org

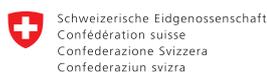
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internationales en éducation et en formation

20, Rue Rothschild | P.O. Box 1672
1211 Geneva 1, Switzerland
+41 (0) 22 908 45 47
norrag@graduateinstitute.ch

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