

INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT FOR PROMOTING THE USE OF RESEARCH EVIDENCE IN POLICY AND PLANNING IN GPE PARTNER COUNTRIES

Join a Global Network of Education Policy Advisers and Policy Analysts

This peer-exchange and networking initiative targets institutions in education policy analysis. The professionals working as policy advisers in these institutions may be affiliated with Ministries of Education, in universities/research centers, or in think tanks and civil society organizations. The initiative aims to **professionalize and institutionalize policy studies** in education through cross-national exchange and global networking.

To **advance institutional capacity** and establish a **global network of education policy institutes** committed to evidence-informed policymaking, this global initiative brings together institutions representing policy analysts and planners from 25 partner countries of the Global Partnership for Education (GPE). The project is carried out in close collaboration with the four regional hubs of Knowledge and Innovation Exchange (KIX).

Grounded in the thematic priorities identified in national partnership compacts, the project offers **two global learning cycles**: one focused on **gender equity in school leadership** and another with a thematic focus on **quality and equity in education**. Throughout the initiative, institutions will participate in comprehensive global learning cycles led by policy experts, develop and publish data-driven policy briefs, and contribute to a growing global network dedicated to strengthening the systematic use of research evidence in national education systems.

Key Benefits

Institutional Capacity Strengthening

- Build and strengthen your institution's professional identity as a national policy advisory body.

Evidence-Informed Policy Development

- Develop a publishable, data-based policy brief that will be globally disseminated.

Peer Learning and Exchange

- Collaborate with counterparts across all four GPE KIX regional hubs.

Professional Recognition

- Position your institution as a national leader in evidence-informed policymaking by developing high-quality, contextually relevant policy briefs.

Global Visibility

- Learn from and contribute to global conversations, platforms, and publications on evidence use in education

In-Person Workshop

- One representative from each institution will be invited to participate in an international workshop to refine and present their policy brief.

Certificate of Completion

- Receive an official certificate from Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, upon successful completion of the learning cycle and policy brief.

Learning Cycle 1: Advancing Gender Equity in School Leader Selection and Appointment

This learning cycle will provide an opportunity for policy analysts and planners to critically examine the policies and practices governing school leader selection and appointment, and how they impact gender equity in leadership.

Women constitute the majority of teachers worldwide but remain underrepresented in school leadership. Evidence increasingly shows that female school leaders contribute to stronger learning outcomes and more inclusive school environments. In several African and Southeast Asian countries, female-led schools achieved student learning gains equivalent to an additional year of schooling. Women principals tend to foster collaborative and participatory school cultures, which enhance teacher motivation and reduce absenteeism.

INSTRUCTIONAL TEAM



Dr. Fenot Aklog (Professor) is the Director of Research and Evaluation at the Education Center at Bank Street College of Education in the United States. She previously worked at the Institute for Student Achievement, a division of ETS, where she led the research and evaluation of an initiative aimed at advancing and retaining women of color in school systems leadership roles across the United States and Canada. Before that, she was the Director of Research at the National Center for Restructuring Education, Schools, and Teaching at Teachers College, Columbia University, where she co-led the center's global initiatives, including technical assistance projects in the Kyrgyz Republic and Mongolia. She is also an adjunct associate professor at the City University of New York. Dr. Aklog served as the instructor for the KIX EMAP Learning Cycle 6 (LC6) on women's representation in school leadership, which engaged 91 participants from government, academia, and civil society across 15 countries in South and Central Asia, Southeast Asia, and Central and Eastern Europe.



Youngkwang Jeon (Teaching/Research Assistant) is a Ph.D. student in International and Comparative Education at Teachers College, Columbia University. His research focuses on education systems in low- and middle-income countries, with particular attention to inclusive education, socioemotional learning, program evaluation, and the transfer or borrowing of educational policies. He holds an Ed.M. in International Education Policy from Harvard Graduate School of Education, an M.Div. from Yale Divinity School, and a B.A. in Human Development from Boston College. Youngkwang has contributed to several projects at the World Bank and UNICEF, coordinating field-based evaluations in Tanzania and authoring research on early childhood development, remote learning, and professional development of teachers. Fluent in Korean and proficient in Kiswahili, he combines rigorous mixed research methods with a commitment to equity and inclusion in education globally.

Learning Cycle 1: Advancing Gender Equity in School Leader Selection and Appointment

Participants will:

- Enhance their understanding of how selection and appointment systems shape gender equity in school leadership.
- Examine and compare policy approaches and institutional practices from different country contexts that promote equitable selection and appointment.
- Investigate barriers and enabling conditions that shape equitable access to school leader positions and develop policy and institutional recommendations to advance women's representation in school leadership within their country contexts.
- Produce a policy brief that integrates data, research evidence, and actionable recommendations for improving gender equity in school leader selection and appointment within their national contexts.
- Cultivate a professional network of experts for knowledge exchange, collaboration, and strategy development on gender equity in school leader selection and appointment

 **Estimated total commitment: 52 hours (March–May 2026)**

Please note that the sessions take place at 5:00 AM New York Time/EST

Date(s)	Session Type	Content
March 11, 5:00 AM EST March 13, 5:00 AM EST	Instructional Session (1.5 hrs per session) Peer Knowledge Exchange (1.5 hrs per session)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Course orientation• Fundamental role of school leadership• Review of the research evidence on women in school leadership positions.• Gender disparities in school leadership
March 18, 5:00 AM EST March 20, 5:00 AM EST	Instructional Session (1.5 hrs per session) Peer Knowledge Exchange (1.5 hrs per session)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• School leadership pathways and pipelines• Barriers to women advancing to leadership positions
March 25, 5:00 AM EST March 27, 5:00 AM EST	Instructional Session (1.5 hrs per session) Peer Knowledge Exchange (1.5 hrs per session)	Policies and practices for increasing school leadership opportunities for women
Week of March 30	<i>Break</i>	<i>n/a</i>
Week of April 6, 5:00 AM EST	Team Time (2 hrs per session) and Instructor Consultation (1 hr per consultation)	Teams draft and submit parts 1 and 2 of policy brief
April 15, 5:00 AM EST April 17, 5:00 AM EST	Instructional Session (1.5 hrs per session) Peer Knowledge Exchange (1.5 hrs per session)	Synthesizing the evidence and framing actionable recommendations
Week of April 20, 5:00 AM EST	Team Time (2 hrs per session) and Instructor Consultation (1 hr per consultation)	Teams draft and submit part 3 and 4 of policy brief
Week of April 27, 5:00 AM EST	Team Time (2 hrs per session) and Instructor Consultation (1 hr per consultation)	Teams refine draft policy brief sections, prepare for the in-person workshop
Week of May 4 (TBD)	In-Person Workshop	Teams present draft policy briefs and engage in peer review
Week of May 11, 5:00 AM EST	Team Time (2 hrs per session) and Instructor Consultation (1 hr per consultation)	Teams revise and submit final policy briefs

Learning Cycle 2: The Use of Data to Improve Quality and Equity in Education

This learning cycle will equip participants with analytical and practical skills to strengthen data use for policy improvement. It emphasizes evidence-informed decision-making to enhance educational quality and equity.

Data production on education systems' performance has been a top priority among countries as a key input to enhance learning outcomes and reduce inequalities across gender and social groups. Nonetheless, despite efforts, education systems keep showing significant differences in their capacity to generate, analyze, and use data to inform educational improvement. Moreover, the data still reveals substantial gaps in learning opportunities across genders and minority groups, increasingly requiring urgent and effective policy action.

INSTRUCTIONAL TEAM



Dr. Tomás Esper (Professor) is an Assistant Professor at the Department of Theories of Education and Social Pedagogy of the Autonomous University of Barcelona, and a Junior Researcher in the GEPS (Globalisation, Education and Social Policies) group. He earned his Doctorate in Comparative and International Education from Teachers College, Columbia University. Dr. Esper teaches comparative education and education policy courses at UAB's School of Education. His work lies at the crossroads of policy studies, the politics of education, and comparative & International education. Dr. Esper's research centres on policy transfer and education governance reform in Latin America, with a particular interest in processes of privatisation, educational accountability, the role of International Organisations and non-state actors as key agents in policy change. He has contributed to research projects funded by UNESCO, ECLAC and NORRAG. He examined, among others, secondary education policies aimed at expanding schooling access in Latin America, challenges of vocational education systems ahead of the digital transformation, and the emergence of innovative financing mechanisms as a tool to increase educational funding globally.



Gabriela Chacon Ugarte (Teaching/Research Assistant) is a Ph.D. student in International and Comparative Education at Teachers College, Columbia University. Her current research examines how policymakers shape and adapt education reforms, with a focus on teacher accountability policies. Prior to joining Teachers College, she served as an educational consultant at the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB), producing policy briefs and tools to support the evaluation of 21st-century skills across Latin America and the Caribbean. Furthermore, during her seven years at Peru's Ministry of Education, she led the design and implementation of large-scale teacher-evaluation systems and nationwide initiatives to strengthen the professional development of more than 650,000 public school teachers.

Learning Cycle 2: The Use of Data to Improve Quality and Equity in Education

Participants will:

- Deepen their understanding of the policy feedback cycle, focusing on how information generated through monitoring and evaluation can be translated into actionable policy and practice to improve learning and equity.
- Analyze and compare different forms of evaluation across education systems — including national, regional, and international large-scale assessments; school inspections; external evaluations; and participatory or formative approaches.
- Examine the role and performance of system-wide monitoring tools, such as EMIS, and learning assessment, in generating timely, relevant, and disaggregated data for decision-making.
- Identify barriers and opportunities for data and evidence uptake, including institutional capacity, coordination, and communication challenges, and propose mechanisms to strengthen the link between data production, policy development, and implementation.
- Explore strategies to ensure that M&E practices systematically address equity and gender disparities, promoting inclusive and meaningful learning for all.
- Produce a policy brief tailored to each country's context, with visual and actionable recommendations to strengthen the integration of system-wide monitoring and evaluation efforts with actionable and efficient policies to address existing challenges.

 **Estimated total commitment: 52 hours (March–May 2026)**

Please note that the sessions take place at 8:00 AM New York Time/EST

Date(s)	Session Type	Content
March 11, 8:00 AM EST March 13, 8:00 AM EST	Instructional Session Peer Knowledge Exchange (1.5 hrs per session)	Topic I: System Monitoring and the Policy Feedback Cycle <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Course orientation ● Data and evidence use in education policy making: bottlenecks and best practices. ● Redefining education quality as a multi-dimensional concept
March 18, 8:00 AM EST March 20, 8:00 AM EST	Instructional Session Peer Knowledge Exchange (1.5 hrs per session)	Topic II: Assessing Learning and System Performance I: National and International Assessments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● International and Regional Large Scale Learning-Assessments: reading beyond the data ● National Large Scale Learning Assessments: uses and misuses ● Gender and social disparities in educational attainment
March 23, 8:00 AM EST March 25, 8:00 AM EST	Instructional Session Peer Knowledge Exchange (1.5 hrs per session)	Topic III: Assessing Learning and System Performance II: Beyond Standardized Testing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Education Monitoring & Information Systems (EMIS): goals, functions and recent developments ● Alternative and complementary forms of evaluation —formative, classroom-based, participatory, or school self-evaluations— ● How to build a more comprehensive picture of learning and system quality.
Week of March 30	<i>Break</i>	<i>n/a</i>
Week of April 6, 8:00 AM EST	Team Time (2 hrs per session) and Instructor Consultation (1 hr per session)	Teams draft and submit parts 1 and 2 of policy brief
April 15, 8:00 AM EST April 17, 8:00 AM EST	Instructional Session Peer Knowledge Exchange (1.5 hrs per session)	Topic IV: Evidence Uptake and Use in Policy and Practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Institutional capacities and mechanisms that facilitate the translation of data into equitable and evidence-informed policy decisions. ● Synthesizing the evidence and framing actionable recommendations
Week of April 20, 8:00 AM EST	Team Time (2 hrs per session) and Instructor Consultation (1 hr per session)	Teams draft and submit part 3 and 4 of policy brief
Week of April 27, 8:00 AM EST	Team Time (2 hrs per session) and Instructor Consultation (1 hr per session)	Teams refine draft policy brief sections, prepare materials for the in-person workshop
Week of May 4 (TBD)	In-Person Workshop	Teams present draft policy briefs and engage in peer review
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ELIGIBILITY

We invite national institutions engaged in policy analysis, planning, or educational research in GPE partner countries.

- Applicants must be **national institutions** (not individuals) that **provide policy analysis or policy advice** to Ministries of Education (MoE) and/or based within ministerial structures, affiliated research institutes or universities, national academies, think tanks, or comparable non-government policy research bodies.
- From each national institution, 2-3 professionals are expected to participate in one of the Learning Cycles. The project will cover the costs for one representative to attend the in-person workshop.
- Must be nominated or endorsed by the **regional KIX Hub** and relevant national partners (MoE, KIX Focal Point, KIX National Coordinator, KIX National Delegation, KIX Steering Committee, or Local Education Group).
- Demonstrated **experience in policy analysis, planning, or education research**.
- Commitment to producing and publishing a data-driven policy brief and hosting a national uptake forum.
- Willingness to disseminate KIX-related knowledge products through institutional communication channels.
- The language of instruction is English; however, the project will try to accommodate non-English speakers whenever possible.

REGISTER FOR INFORMATION SESSION

Meet the instructors, explore the learning opportunities, and get all your questions answered.

Interested in joining one of the Learning Cycles?

INFORMATION SESSION FOR LEARNING CYCLE 1: **ADVANCING GENDER EQUITY IN SCHOOL LEADER SELECTION AND APPOINTMENT**

 **DECEMBER 17, 6:00 AM (NEW YORK TIME/EST)**

 **REGISTRATION LINK:** 
<https://norrag.zoom.us/join/registration/XdQn4hTaRhaxHkQVL78lsw>


 **LANGUAGE: ENGLISH**
(AUTOMATED LANGUAGE TRANSLATION IN ALL LANGUAGES PROVIDED)

INFORMATION SESSION FOR LEARNING CYCLE 2: **THE USE OF DATA TO IMPROVE QUALITY AND EQUITY IN EDUCATION**

 **DECEMBER 16, 8:00 AM (NEW YORK TIME/EST)**

 **REGISTRATION LINK:** 
<https://norrag.zoom.us/join/registration/oAukWIV6SsqB5FudBEmdNQ>

 **LANGUAGE: ENGLISH**
(AUTOMATED LANGUAGE TRANSLATION IN ALL LANGUAGES PROVIDED)



For more information, please contact the Project Coordinator:

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