

## Meeting Report: 2nd KIX Knowledge Café on Education Data Systems

**Date and Time:** 22 July 2025, 14:00 – 16:00 EAT

**Location:** Virtual

**Organized by:** AU-IPED under the KIX Africa 19 Hub, supported by GPE and IDRC

**Participating countries:** Liberia, Cameroon, Lesotho, Kenya, South Sudan, Germany, Uganda, Nigeria, Gambia, United States, Norway, Japan, Italy, Mozambique, United Arab Emirates, Kingdom of Eswatini, United Kingdom, Togo, Malawi, Rwanda, Ghana, Somalia, France, Ethiopia, Senegal, Zimbabwe, South Africa

### 1. Background

The [African Union Commission](#), through its Pan African Institute for Education for Development (AU-IPED), under the [Global Partnership for Education](#)'s Knowledge and Innovation Exchange (GPE KIX) - a joint endeavour with Canada's [International Development Research Centre](#) (IDRC), convened the **2nd KIX Knowledge Café** on Education Data Systems on **22 July 2025**.

Held virtually, the event brought together policymakers, EMIS leads, and technical experts from more than 15 African countries. Building on the inaugural session held on 28 May 2024, the Knowledge Café series is a spotlight activity of the [KIX Africa 19 Hub](#) and serves as a continental peer learning platform that fosters cross-country dialogue, knowledge sharing, and technical exchange on education data systems.

The July 2025 edition of the Knowledge Café focused specifically on how African countries are developing and refining responsive national EMIS policies as a cornerstone for effective education planning and service delivery. It forms part of AU-IPED's leadership of the "Meeting the Data Challenge" thematic area under the KIX Africa 19 Hub.

### 2. Agenda Overview

- Opening Remarks by Mr. Adoumtar Noubatour, Head of AU-IPED
- Presentation by Zizi Afrique Foundation (KIX grantee)
- Scene Setting by Lukman Jaji, Policy Officer, AU-IPED
- Country Presentations: Nigeria, Mozambique, South Sudan
- Panel Reflections: UNICEF, Zizi Afrique, and participants
- Presentation on The Gambias' Education Data Centre by Seedy Jallow, SEO System Analyst, EMIS and ICT Unit, Directorate of Planning (PPARBD), The Gambia
- Closing Remarks by Patrick Walugembe, Senior Program Officer, IDRC

### 3. Participation

The session brought together over 70 participants from more than 15 African countries, including policymakers, EMIS leads, researchers, and technical specialists. Attendees

included representatives from the Ministries of Education in South Sudan, Nigeria, Mozambique, The Gambia, Kenya, Lesotho, the Kingdom of Eswatini, and Zambia to name a few. Regional and international stakeholders - such as UNICEF, UNESCO-IICBA, the University of Oslo, the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) were also in attendance, contributing to the richness of the exchange and broader learning ecosystem.

## 4. Session Highlights

**Opening Remarks:** Mr. Noubatour Adoumtar, Head of AU-IPED, reaffirmed the AU's commitment to strengthening EMIS systems in line with the [Continental Education Strategy for Africa](#) (CESA 16–25) and [Agenda 2063](#). He emphasized the importance of reliable, timely, and actionable data in guiding education reform and policy.

**Zizi Afrique Foundation:** Zizi Afrique, a KIX grantee, demonstrated how school-level innovations can inform national systems. Their project collects data directly from learners and teachers to improve classroom practices and influence policy dialogue, reinforcing the value of grassroots data for national reform agendas. "KIX provides a unique platform for government, researchers, and implementing partners to co-create scalable solutions for Africa's education systems." - Charles Gachoki, Research Lead, Zizi Afrique

### Country Presentations:

- **Kenya:** Highlighted recent EMIS advancements, focusing on increasing data accessibility and improving stakeholder engagement. The Ministry emphasized efforts to enhance coordination between EMIS units and planning departments, as well as integrating performance tracking mechanisms.
- **Nigeria:** Presented a new data feedback mechanism that connects teachers directly to national dashboards, aiming to bridge classroom realities with national policy formulation. This initiative aims to close the loop between classroom realities and national policy formulation.
- **Mozambique:** Shared the transition from manual data collection to digitized EMIS operations, including piloting District Health Information Software 2 (DHIS2) and building offline dashboards to expand real-time access in remote schools. Ricardo Cuco, Head of Statistics, noted that these tools are designed to improve planning, especially for underserved areas.
- **South Sudan:** Reflected on the post-conflict challenges of establishing a reliable EMIS. Their presentation focused on cross-ministerial coordination, building human resource capacity, and aligning donor support with national priorities.
- **The Gambia:** Described its deployment of DHIS2 for education data management. The country demonstrated how open-source systems adapted from the health sector can support education planning, with emphasis on decentralization, training, and real-time analytics.

### Reflections from Partners:

"What gets measured gets improved. Our work aims to ensure schools are not just data providers but data users." - Polycarp Otieno, Education Specialist, UNICEF ESARO

Panelists emphasized the importance of inclusive design, digital equity, and aligning EMIS innovations with national strategies. Discussions also highlighted the role of collaboration among governments, development partners, and researchers in sustaining EMIS reforms across the continent.

## 5. Key Issues Raised

Participants raised a number of cross-cutting challenges facing EMIS development:

- **Human Resource Gaps:** Most countries reported a shortage of qualified EMIS personnel, particularly at the subnational and school levels. This affects data collection accuracy, timeliness, and analysis.
- **Infrastructure Limitations:** Schools in remote or conflict-affected areas often lack electricity, internet access, or even basic ICT equipment, hindering digitization efforts.
- **Fragmented Data Use:** Despite having EMIS platforms, many countries struggle to translate data into actionable insights for planning, budgeting, and performance tracking.
- **Interoperability Issues:** Integrating EMIS with systems used by other ministries (e.g., finance, statistics, or ICT) remains difficult due to outdated protocols or inconsistent standards.
- **Financing Constraints:** Most EMIS reforms rely heavily on external funding. There is a pressing need for national governments to develop sustainable financing strategies.

## 6. Recommendations

- **Policy and Coordination:** Countries should develop or revise EMIS policies to clarify roles, establish data standards, and support long-term system development that aligns with education sector plans.
- **Capacity Strengthening:** Train EMIS personnel across all levels - from school data clerks to national analysts - to improve data quality, ownership, and use.
- **Infrastructure Investment:** Equip schools with solar-powered devices and ensure reliable internet access to support digitization, particularly in marginalized communities.
- **Technology Pilots:** Scale the use of open-source platforms like DHIS2 and the School Open-source Feedback and Improvement App (SOFIA) for real-time, school-level data entry and visualization, with feedback loops to decision-makers. These tools were notably discussed by Mozambique and The Gambia, which have adapted or piloted them to support real-time school-level data collection and analysis.

- **Data Feedback Mechanisms:** Establish two-way communication systems that return analyzed data to schools, enabling teachers and local managers to make informed decisions.
- **Cross-country Collaboration:** Facilitate regular knowledge exchanges and co-development of tools/templates through regional platforms like KIX to avoid duplication and accelerate uptake of good practices.

## 7. Closing Remarks

Patrick Walugembe of IDRC emphasized the importance of peer learning and innovation:

"The KIX Africa 19 Hub continues to demonstrate the power of peer learning in unlocking new solutions... we remain committed to supporting countries in turning data into action."

## 8. Next Steps

The session concluded with a commitment to share a comprehensive summary report, session recordings, and all presentation materials with participants. A third Knowledge Café is scheduled for later this year and will focus on sustainable financing for EMIS.

## Annexes

- Annex 1: Concept Note
- Annex 2: Country Presentations from Zizi Afrique, Mozambique, Nigeria and South Sudan
- Annex 3: [2nd Knowledge Cafe Full Recording](#)