Independent Interim Evaluation of the Global Partnership for Education

Volume I – Final Evaluation Report

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Foreword: Evaluation oversight

The independent interim evaluation of the Global Partnership for Education was overseen by an independent committee from its conceptualization through to completion. The Independent Steering Committee (later renamed Independent Evaluation Committee), consisting of four senior professionals in the fields of global education and evaluation, was approved by the Board of the Global Partnership for Education in 2013.

The Committee prepared an approach paper and, based on this, proposed to the Board of the Global Partnership for Education that an interim, formative evaluation would be more appropriate than an impact evaluation given the short period since the Education for All Fast Track Initiative was reformed into the Global Partnership for Education. The Independent Evaluation Committee finalized the terms of reference and proposed a budget for this evaluation, which the Board approved in March 2014. The Committee managed the international competitive bidding that led to the selection of a consortium of Universalia and R4D to carry out the evaluation. Throughout the evaluation process, the Committee has had the dual responsibility for upholding the independence of the evaluation and providing quality assurance through on-going peer review. Full terms of reference for the Committee can be found at: http://www.globalpartnership.org/content/terms-reference-independent-evaluation-gpe

Over the period, there were some changes in membership of the Committee, in part to ensure diversity of geographical and thematic expertise (see Table). Notably, Karen Mundy stepped down as interim Chair of the committee in April 2014 to avoid conflict of interest when she was recruited to the post of Chief Technical Officer with the Global Partnership for Education. Pauline Rose was subsequently appointed as Chair in her place.

Membership of Independent Steering/Evaluation Committee

Name	Dates
Birger Fredriksen	March 2013 – June 2013
Rasmus Heltberg	March 2013 – October 2015
Karen Mundy	March 2013 – April 2014
Moses Oketch	March 2013 – October 2015
Pauline Rose, Chair	March 2013 – October 2015
Liesbet Steer	March 2013 – June 2013
Miguel Szekely	August 2014 – October 2015

Along with the quality assurance role performed by the Independent Evaluation Committee, the evaluation was reviewed thoroughly by the Secretariat for possible factual inaccuracies. Once identified inaccuracies had been corrected, a revised version of the evaluation was provided to all Board members for their fact checking, and the report was revised accordingly. Together with the two firms undertaking the evaluation, members of the Independent Evaluation Committee participated in key meetings between the Secretariat and Board members to discuss the draft report.

The Independent Evaluation Committee greatly benefited from the efficient administrative and logistical support provided by the Global Partnership for Education Secretariat throughout the process. The Secretariat together with the Chair of the Strategy and Policy Committee of the Board were diligent in maintaining the independence of the evaluation. At no time through the process did the Independent Evaluation Committee have cause for concern of any violation of its independence.

Acknowledgements

Composition of the Evaluation Team

Universalia and Results for Development Evaluation Team

<u>Team Leaders</u>

Marie Hélène Adrien, Universalia Management Group (UMG)

Nicholas Burnett, Results for Development (R4D)

<u>Core Evaluation Team</u>

Anette Wenderoth (UMG)

Mark Roland (R4D)

Arjun Upadhyay (R4D)

Pamela Teitelbaum (UMG)

Birger Fredriksen (R4D)

Charles Lusthaus (UMG)

Shubha Jayaram (R4D)

Mia Choinière (UMG)

Amy Bellinger (R4D)

<u>Country Case Study Leads</u>

Afghanistan: Lindsay Adams (R4D)

Burundi: Elisabetta Micaro (UMG)

Cambodia: Mark Roland and Arjun Upadhyay (R4D)

Democratic Republic of the Congo: Johan Verhaghe (R4D)

Ethiopia: Geraldine Cooney and Lauren Victoria Hellrung (UMG)

Ghana: Lindsay Adams (R4D)

Honduras: Elisabetta Micaro (UMG)

Madagascar: Elisabetta Micaro (UMG)

Malawi: Shubha Jayaram and Yasmin Lalani (R4D)

Moldova: Lindsay Adams (R4D)

Nicaragua: Katrina Rojas and Juan David Gonzales (UMG)

Rwanda: Johan Verhaghe (R4D)

Senegal: Marie Hélène Adrien and Jérôme Gandin (UMG)

Tanzania: Anette Wenderoth (UMG), Mark Roland (R4D) and Mia Choinière (UMG)

Uganda: Anette Wenderoth (UMG)

Vietnam: Shubha Jayaram, Tara Hill (R4D), Pamela Teitelbaum (UMG)

Yemen: Pamela Teitelbaum (UMG)

Zimbabwe: Mark Roland and Arjun Upadhyay (R4D)

Independent Evaluation Committee

Pauline Rose (Chair)

Rasmus Heltberg

Moses Oketch

Miguel Székel

Executive Summary

The Global Partnership for Education (GPE) is a multilateral global partnership established in 2002 as the Education for All Fast Track Initiative (EFA/FTI). The Partnership seeks to strengthen national education plans, improve aid effectiveness, coordinate donor support, and galvanize financing to achieve the Education for All goals. Today the Global Partnership comprises 60 developing country partners (DCPs), more than 30 bilateral and multilateral donor and development agencies, as well as civil society organizations, private sector bodies, and philanthropic foundations.

In March 2014, the GPE Board commissioned the Universalia Management Group Ltd and Results for Development Institute (R4D) to conduct an interim evaluation covering the period 2010 -2014. The overarching question that the interim evaluation was asked to explore was how the organizational changes since 2010 have improved the relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency of the Partnership.

Data collection took place between September 2014 and April 2015 and included: document review, interviews with 59 GPE Secretariat staff, Board members, and global thought leaders, and with 418 country-level stakeholders; surveys of GPE Secretariat staff (44 responded) and global GPE partners (110 responded); site visits to eight countries and virtual visits (conducted by telephone and Skype) with stakeholders in ten countries.

Evaluation findings deriving from this broad evidence form the basis for the following overall conclusions and recommendations.

Conclusions

Overall, the evaluation found that the GPE Board and Secretariat have made serious efforts to address the recommendations of the 2010 evaluation and other areas for improvement identified since then. These changes have **strengthened the Partnership both operationally and strategically**.

However, the Partnership has not yet clearly defined what constitutes 'success' in view of its broad and ambitious mission; this has implications for the Partnership's future direction. **At present, there is a considerable disconnect between the Global Partnership's ambitious mission and its narrow financing base**. The GPE Board and Secretariat are likely to address this challenge as they develop the Strategic Plan for 2015-2020.

GPE at the Global Level

1: The Partnership has maintained its relevance in evolving global and national contexts by reformulating its strategic priorities, establishing indicative country allocations, and revising its funding criteria.

The Partnership's focus on basic education was relevant during the period reviewed and is likely to remain so under the new global Sustainable Development Goals. In its first Strategic Plan for 2012-2015, the Partnership clarified its strategic priorities and emphasized the importance of improving not only access to education, but also the quality of education. It also focused GPE resources more strategically on geographic areas most in need and least well-funded through other sources, including on fragile and conflict-affected states (FCAS). It adjusted its funding criteria to better serve all countries, and informed current and potential member countries of the maximum grant allocations for which they might be eligible. The Partnership also made progress towards

consolidating GPE financing from all but one donor under a single GPE Fund while phasing out the previously established Catalytic Fund.

Together, these factors contributed to an additional 19 countries joining the Partnership since 2010, 16 of which are categorized as FCAS. GPE has also more than doubled its disbursements to FCAS and the largest share has gone to states categorized as fragile. While the growth in GPE membership is positive, the addition of population rich countries such as Pakistan has meant that mean GPE allocations per primary school aged child and per out of school child in DCPs have decreased since 2010.

2: The Partnership has insufficiently defined how it will translate its mission of "galvanizing and coordinating global efforts to deliver a good quality education" into practice. This has negatively affected its ability to demonstrate progress towards results.

While GPE Board members and Secretariat staff widely agree that the GPE is 'more than just a fund,' it is not clear what 'more' constitutes. This lack of clarity is reflected in the following:

- The absence of an overarching Theory of Change
- The absence of an agreed upon Results Framework
- The absence of a shared understanding of GPE's envisaged role and comparative advantage in advocating for education at the global level and in knowledge generation and dissemination
- The absence of an agreed-upon understanding of the size and role of the Secretariat
- The absence of a clear definition or framework explaining how GPE will leverage the strengths of its partners not only at the country, but also at the global level.

As a result, consulted stakeholders within and across the different constituencies have diverging views on what they consider evidence of the Partnership's success. Some focus on its ability to generate funding for basic education, while others are primarily interested in evidence of GPE contributions to education outcomes at the country level. Another consequence is that the Partnership has limited ability to track and demonstrate progress towards higher level results. The GPE Board and Secretariat acknowledge these weaknesses and expect they will be addressed in the new Strategic Plan 2015-2020.

While there is considerable pressure from at least one major GPE donor for a rigorous impact evaluation of the Partnership, the feasibility of such an evaluation will be affected by the current deficiencies in the Partnership's ability to clearly define, monitor, and demonstrate progress towards results, and the absence of a counterfactual.

3: Changes in GPE governance have had positive effects on the legitimacy and efficiency of the Board.

Since 2010 the GPE Board has become more representative, most notably in the participation of developing country partners. There is room for improvement in ensuring the participation of Southern civil society organizations, and in clarifying the rationale for involving private sector representatives and defining related selection criteria.

The four newly created Board committees have had some positive effects on Board efficiency, but could be used more effectively if they had some operational decision-making authority, which would allow the Board to focus more on strategic rather than operational matters.

4: The GPE Board has insufficiently defined what it means to operate as a global partnership, and has not fully translated the principle of mutual accountability into practice.

The GPE Compact (2013) broadly defined the roles and responsibilities of different types of partners but it is not clear how the Partnership will leverage the strengths of individual partners. A Mutual Accountability Matrix was drafted in 2011 but never formally adopted or implemented.

The current partnership framework has not been used consistently to monitor partner compliance with non-financial commitments (such as harmonizing procedures) and, until recently, did not include any negative consequences for partners who did not honour their commitments. The new GPE Funding Model does stipulate consequences of non-compliance with financial commitments, but only for developing country partners.

5: There is no strong evidence yet of Partnership contributions to filling the financing gap for basic education.

The Partnership's ability to mobilize new external resources has been constrained by the overall global decline in aid to basic education since 2009. To strengthen resource mobilization, the GPE Secretariat introduced and held two pledging conferences (in 2011 and 2014) but pledges and actual contributions from donors have fallen short of envisaged targets. Furthermore, even if the pledge goals were reached, the financing gaps would remain sizeable: the average annual financing gap (between available domestic resources and the amount needed to reach post-2015 targets) across all low and lower-middle income countries between 2015 and 2030 is estimated to be US$ 22 billion.

There is considerable evidence that existing GPE financing is largely not additional to what would have been available without the Partnership. Some donors have reallocated some or all of their bilateral funding for basic education to the Partnership and IDA allocations to GPE countries decreased from US$ 500 million in 2007 to US$ 250 million in 2012.

Increases in domestic resources from developing country partners (DCPs) have been marginal and cannot be directly attributed to the influence of the Partnership. Many of the pledges made by DCPs at the 2011 Replenishment Conference were not fulfilled. At the 2014 Replenishment Conference, DCPs pledged US$ 26 billion, some of which, if adhered to, would represent new but modest resources for education.

6: There is a severe mismatch between the Partnership's broad and ambitious mission on the one hand and its limited financial resources and ability to systematically leverage the strengths of its partners on the other hand.

GPE members and external partners see the Partnership's considerable geographic reach and diverse governance as positive assets in terms of its credibility, legitimacy, and potential to convene partners and optimize their influence on global progress in basic education. Some stakeholders expect the Partnership to take stronger global leadership for the (sub)sector, but it is not yet seen to be filling this role.

This is due in part to the Partnership's limited resources. While GPE funding allocations have not yet addressed some underserved areas of basic education, such as adult and youth literacy, the Partnership is facing considerable pressure from some members and global stakeholders to expand its support e.g. to encompass secondary and/or higher education and education in humanitarian crisis situations. The financing required for such thematic expansions would be sizable.

In addition, the Partnership has not systematically leveraged the strengths of its partners to exert influence and contribute to global level results, such as generating and disseminating global public goods and strengthening the global visibility of education.

GPE at the country level

In most of the countries reviewed for the interim evaluation, it is too early to assess the effects of GPE organizational changes since 2010. This is because some countries only joined the Partnership within the past five years, and countries that joined earlier have not yet undergone grant application and implementation processes before and after the reforms that would allow for meaningful comparisons. The following conclusions need to be understood against this backdrop.

7: Reforms implemented since 2010 have had some positive effects on GPE contributions to strengthening country capacity for education sector planning. Whether and how this will lead to improved education outcomes remains to be verified.

Although the Partnership is seen primarily as a funding mechanism at the country level, it is also valued for promoting evidence-based, participatory and inclusive sector planning processes. It has supported the development or revision of Education Sector Plans (ESPs) and related GPE-funded programs that address national priorities.

The Partnership has made financial contributions through grants, and technical and normative contributions through grant application criteria and participatory processes for ESP and grant proposal development. The GPE Secretariat has provided guidance for GPE grant application processes, reduced processing time, and provided more direct support to DCPs for their grant applications including through more frequent country visits. GPE partners have provided support by acting as Supervising/Managing Entities and Coordinating Agencies.

Since 2010 the Partnership has put more emphasis on developing Local Education Groups (LEG) and has made contributions to diversifying their membership. LEGs have generally been actively involved in developing ESPs and GPE grant proposals, but are less involved during ESP and grant monitoring. The consistent and meaningful participation of civil society organizations and private sector representatives in LEGs is an ongoing challenge.

DCP representatives and LEG members in several countries, especially in FCAS, expressed the desire for more GPE technical assistance in ESP implementation and monitoring.

While some GPE donors are eager to see evidence of GPE contributions to education outcomes, there are practical and theoretical issues to be resolved. The practical issue is whether the Partnership can realistically make direct contributions to such outcomes given its financial resources. The theoretical issue is whether sound ESPs lead to improved learning outcomes – an assumption that has not yet been tested, and which relates to the Partnership's implicit Theory of Change.

8: The current uniform models for Supervising/Managing Entities and Coordinating Agencies are not fully aligned with the principles of national ownership and mutual accountability.

The Partnership is committed to furthering the Aid Effectiveness agenda. It has promoted ownership of GPE-funded interventions by either the national government or the LEG and has made notable contributions to enhancing harmonization and coordination among donors and education stakeholders at the country level.

The Partnership has expanded the number of agencies acting as Supervising Entities (SEs) and Managing Entities (MEs) (as of early 2015, there were 11) and UNICEF is now supervising 15% of active grant amounts. Nevertheless, GPE continues to rely heavily on the World Bank as an SE/ME. SEs and MEs have contributed to country-level processes, especially GPE grant application processes.

Coordinating Agencies (CA) have provided valuable support, especially in the period leading up to GPE grant approval. However, the current CA model, which relies on donor agencies to take on this coordination function, may stifle rather than promote strong Local Education Groups in some countries.

The current models for Supervising/Managing Entities (SE/ME) and Coordinating Agencies (CA) are not fully aligned with the principles of national ownership and mutual accountability. Organizations fulfilling these roles are not accountable to the national governments or LEGs they work with, and the present model does not allow context-specific adaptations.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are grouped according to the 'big picture' findings that emerged from the interim evaluation and accompanied by specific recommendations in each group. Of the four groups of recommendations, the first two are considered imperative, while the third and fourth are considered desirable.

Since the interim evaluation was conducted while the Partnership was developing the new GPE Strategic Plan, the GPE Board and/or Secretariat may already have taken, or be about to take, steps that address some of these recommendations.

Recommendation 1: The GPE Board should agree on where and how the Partnership aims to add value, what constitutes 'success' in view of its mission, and the types of results for which the Partnership can realistically hold itself accountable.

1.1 The GPE Secretariat, in collaboration with the Board, should continue to develop and finalize a theory of change (or one theory each for the global and the country level) that spells out the goals and objectives of the Partnership and the types of changes it intends to influence.

1.2 The GPE Board should decide the future directions of the Partnership's grant-making function in terms of thematic and geographic scope and priorities.

1.3 The GPE Board should decide whether the Partnership will continue to aspire to fill a global role beyond resource mobilization and grant-making, and, if so, what this role will be, how it will be implemented, and with what envisaged results.

1.4 The GPE Board should clearly articulate the value-added of being a partnership and how it will make use of the combined contributions of its partners to better fulfil its mission.

Recommendation 2: The Global Partnership should develop a Strategic Management Framework that is based on the new Strategic Plan and that includes a results framework, monitoring plan, formal feedback mechanisms, and an evaluation plan.

2.1 Based on the agreed Theory (or Theories) of Change, the GPE Secretariat should develop a Results Framework to define the Partnership's envisaged contributions to results.

2.2 The GPE Secretariat should develop a draft monitoring plan for Board approval to facilitate the use of the Results Framework.

2.3 The Global Partnership should develop formal feedback mechanisms to better monitor its performance as a partnership.

2.4 The GPE Board should reconsider the plan to conduct an Impact Evaluation, currently envisaged for 2017.

2.5 The Secretariat should develop an evaluation plan that incorporates an independent external evaluation in or around 2020, as well as one or more periodic evaluations between 2016 and 2020.

Recommendation 3: The Global Partnership should further clarify the respective roles and responsibilities of the Board Committees and the Secretariat.

3.1 The GPE Board should assign clearly defined decision-making powers to either the Coordinating Committee or to all of the other three committees (in which case it should dissolve the Coordinating Committee). This would allow operational decisions to be made in between biannual meetings of the full Board, and would allow the Board to focus primarily on strategic issues.

3.2 The Partnership should revisit and agree upon the nature and scope of the role that the Secretariat is expected to play at both global and national levels, and ensure that it has the resources to do so.

Recommendation 4: The GPE Secretariat should develop a proposal for review by the GPE Board on how to make Supervising Entity and Coordinating Agency arrangements more flexible and adaptable to varying national contexts.

This recommendation does not suggest abolishing the functions currently fulfilled by SE/ME and CA, but to explore whether in selected national contexts some or all of these functions can be fulfilled equally well by national actors. Where this is the case, transferring functions to these actors has the potential to enhance national ownership and capacity. This is reflected in the following specific recommendations.

4.1 The Secretariat, in consultation with DCPs, should explore other options for Supervising Entities.

4.2 The GPE Secretariat should explore whether in some countries there are alternative ways of ensuring the fulfilment of CA functions.

The GPE Secretariat Management Response On Independent Interim Evaluation of the Global Partnership for Education

The GPE Secretariat welcomes the Independent Interim Evaluation, and the useful analysis and lessons it provides. The Independent Interim Evaluation reviews GPE over a five-year period, from 2010-2014. It provides timely and effective recommendations for consideration during the development of the Global Partnership's next five year Strategic Plan, which the GPE Board of Directors will finalize in December 2015.

The Secretariat thanks the Independent Evaluation Committee for its oversight of this Evaluation. It appreciates the opportunities the IEC provided for fact checking of the report, and acknowledges the important role the IEC played in ensuring an evaluation of the highest quality and independence. In particular, the Secretariat would like to thank the IEC for ensuring that the Secretariat had the chance to meet with the Committee and the external evaluators to discuss the evaluation findings and recommendations, and to explore in detail with them their key findings on how to improve GPE's Operational Platform.

The Secretariat considers all of the Independent Evaluation's findings to be fair and it agrees with the four recommendations made in the Evaluation. We welcome the findings that highlight the serious efforts the GPE Secretariat has taken, along with the Board of Directors, to address the recommendations of the 2010 evaluation of the EFA Fast Track Initiative. As the Evaluation notes, these efforts have "strengthened the Global Partnership both strategically and operationally." The Secretariat believes that the fourth recommendation in the evaluation is imperative. It will be up to the GPE Board of Directors to determine what steps it wishes the Global Partnership to take in responding to the Evaluation's recommendations formally.

A more detailed response to the Evaluation Recommendations is provided below:

Recommenation 1: The GPE Board should agree on where and how the Partnership aims to add value, what constitutes 'success' in view of its mission, and the types of results for which the Partnership can realistically hold itself accountable.

1.1 *The GPE Secretariat, in collaboration with the Board, should continue to develop and finalize a theory of change (or one theory each for the global and the country level) that spells out the goals and objectives of the Partnership and the types of changes it intends to influence.*

1.2 *The GPE Board should decide the future directions of the Partnership's grant-making function in terms of thematic and geographic scope and priorities.*

1.3 *The GPE Board should decide whether the Partnership will continue to aspire to fill a global role beyond resource mobilization and grant-making, and, if so, what this role will be, how it will be implemented, and with what envisaged results.*

1.4 *The GPE Board should clearly articulate the value-added of being a partnership and how it will make use of the combined contributions of its partners to better fulfil its mission.*

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The GPE Secretariat fully supports this recommendation. It has been working closely with the GPE Board over the past 12 months to develop a Strategic Plan which further defines the Partnership's value proposition and the building blocks necessary to deliver it. These building blocks will include a Theory of Change and Results Framework and some critical changes to GPE's Operational Platform.

At its meeting in October 2015, the GPE Board will be considering items 1.2 and 1.3 of this recommendation. The geographic and thematic scope of its grant funding is an important question for the partnership, particularly in light of the proposed Sustainable Development Goals. The question of how the Global Partnership makes better use of its country-level grants in leveraging system-wide change and mobilising additional financing for the education sector is one of the highest priorities identified in the Strategic Plan consultation process held over the summer of 2015.

The GPE Secretariat believes that consideration of a global role for the Global Partnership beyond resource mobilization and grant making is also critical, and looks forward to Board's deliberation on this issue as part of the strategic planning process. The Secretariat is mindful of the importance of not overlapping with the roles and activities of other partners on advocacy and sharing of lessons learned.

Recommendation 2: The Global Partnership should develop a Strategic Management Framework that is based on the new Strategic Plan and that includes a results framework, monitoring plan, formal feedback mechanisms, and an evaluation plan.

2.1 *Based on the agreed Theory (or Theories) of Change, the GPE Secretariat should develop a Results Framework to define the Partnership's envisaged contributions to results.*

2.2 *The GPE Secretariat should develop a draft monitoring plan for Board approval to facilitate the use of the Results Framework.*

2.3 *The Global Partnership should develop formal feedback mechanisms to better monitor its performance as a partnership.*

2.4 *The GPE Board should reconsider the plan to conduct an Impact Evaluation, currently envisaged for 2017.*

2.5 *The Secretariat should develop an evaluation plan that incorporates an independent external evaluation in or around 2020, as well as one or more periodic evaluations between 2016 and 2020.*

The GPE Secretariat fully supports this recommendation and the overall need for the Global Partnership to pay greater attention to monitoring and reporting on its results. A Partnership-wide results framework and an accompanying monitoring and evaluation strategy are being developed for the GPE Board's consideration and will be implemented as part of the new Strategic Plan. The Secretariat is committed to improving its work using lessons learned from this evaluation and these new monitoring mechanisms.

Recent consultations across the Partnership for the new GPE Strategic Plan have indicated a strong interest in more careful monitoring of mutual accountability for all partners. The Board will consider specific recommendations in this regard at its October meeting.

The questions of timing of an Impact Evaluation and future external evaluations can only be answered by the GPE Board based on guidance from the Independent Evaluation Committee. That said, the Secretariat agrees that 2017 may be too early for an Impact Evaluation and fully supports periodic thematic evaluations between now and 2020. The Secretariat believes that future Independent External Evaluations are best timed when they can substantively inform the process of strategic plan development, as has been the case this year.

Recommendation 3: The Global Partnership should further clarify the respective roles and responsibilities of the Board Committees and the Secretariat.

3.1 The GPE Board should consider assigning clearly defined decision-making powers to either to the Coordinating Committee or to the Strategy and Policy Committee (in which case it should dissolve the Coordinating Committee). This would allow operational decisions to be made in between biannual meetings of the full Board, and would allow the Board to focus primarily on strategic issues.

3.2 The Partnership should revisit and agree upon the nature and scope of the role that the Secretariat is expected to play at both global and national levels, and ensure that it has the resources to do so.

The GPE Secretariat agrees with Recommendation 3.1. Further clarity about the respective roles and responsibilities of the Board Committees and the Secretariat would benefit all, reduce the time required for some decisions and increase the effectiveness of the Global Partnership. The Governance, Ethics, Risk and Finance Committee (GERF) is currently undertaking a detailed review of the functioning of the Board and Committees and will bring its recommendations to the GPE Board in December.

In regards to Recommendation 3.2, the Secretariat underwent a major organisational review in December 2014 with full endorsement by the GPE Board and approval for increased staffing and budget. Throughout 2015 the Secretariat has focused on strengthening its support to the countries its serves, including through improvements in grant management, quality assurance, monitoring and technical advisory capability. At its October retreat, the Board will consider further recommendations to strengthen GPE's operating platform through the creation of minimum standards, an enhanced quality assurance framework, a conflict resolution mechanism, and improved monitoring and evaluation, all within the broader context of mutual accountability. The Secretariat welcomes the prospect of greater clarity on its role at the global and national levels.

Recommendation 4: The GPE Secretariat should develop a proposal for review by the GPE Board on how to make Supervising Entity and Coordinating Agency arrangements more flexible and adaptable to varying national contexts.

This recommendation does not suggest abolishing the functions currently fulfilled by SE/ME and CA, but to explore whether in selected national contexts some or all of these functions can be fulfilled equally well by national actors. Where this is the case, transferring functions to these actors has the potential to enhance national ownership and capacity. This is reflected in the following specific recommendations.

4.1 The Secretariat, in consultation with DCPs, should explore other options for Supervising Entities.

4.2 The GPE Secretariat should explore whether in some countries there are alternative ways of ensuring the fulfilment of CA functions.

The Secretariat strongly supports this recommendation and would classify it as "imperative." As part of the current Strategic Plan process, the Secretariat is working closely with a Reference Group of the Board to evaluate and strengthen core aspects of GPE's country-level Operational Platform. The recommendations include defining roles, responsibilities and minimum standards for Local Education Groups and developing clear criteria for selecting a managing or supervising entity. The Board has requested the Secretariat to present a proposal by June 2016 that defines circumstances in which a supervising or managing entity would not be required for grant management.

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In closing, the GPE Secretariat thanks the Evaluators and the Independent Evaluation Committee for a strong and very useful report. The Independent Evaluation will undoubtedly be a key element informing Board decisions on the new Strategic Plan. We also thank the Evaluators for helping us to better understand options for further strengthening the work of the Secretariat and supporting improvements in the Global Partnership for Education.

Sincerely,

Alice P. Albright
Chief Executive Officer

Acronyms

AE	Aid effectiveness
AFD	Agence Française de Développement
ASER	Annual Status of Education Report
CA	Coordinating Agency
CC	Coordinating Committee
CCM	Country Coordinating Mechanisms
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CF	Catalytic Fund
CGAP	Consultative Group to Assist the Poor
CGPC	Country Grants and Performance Committee
CIF	Climate Investment Fund
CIFF	Children's Investment Fund Foundation
CRS	Creditor Reporting System (OECD)
CSEF	Civil Society Education Fund
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CST	Country Support Team
CTO	Chief Technical Officer
DC	District of Columbia
DCP	Developing Country Partner
DFID	United Kingdom Department for International Development
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EDP	Education Plan Development Grant
EFA	Education for All
EFA/FTI	Education for All Fast Track Initiative
EPDF	Education Program Development Fund
EPDG	Education Development Plan Grant
ESP	Education Sector Plan
EU	European Union
FCAS	Fragile and Conflict Affected States
FTI	Fast Track Initiative
GAVI	Global Vaccine Alliance
GEF	Global Environment Facility

Acronyms

GERF	Governance, Ethics, Risk and Finance Committee
GMR	Global Monitoring Report
GMR	Global Monitoring Report
GNP	Gross National Product
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
GRA	Global and Regional Activities
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus / Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
IDA	International Development Association
IEC	Independent Evaluation Committee
IEG	Independent Evaluation Group
IHP+	International Health Partnership
IIEP	International Institute for Education Planning
IT	Information Technology
JSR	Joint Sector Reviews
LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean
LEG	Local Education Group
MCA	Maximum Country Allocations
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
ME	Managing Entity
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MIS	Management Information Systems
MoE	Ministry of Education
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NEC	National Education Coalitions
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
ODA	Official Development Assistance
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
OECD-DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development – Development Assistance Committee
PDG	Program Development Grant
PIG	Program Implementation Grant
PISA	Program for International Student Assessment (OECD)

Acronyms

QAR	Quality Assurance Review
R4D	Results for Development Institute
SDSN	Sustainable Development Solutions Network
SE	Supervising Entity
SMI	Sector Monitoring Initiative
SP	Strategic Plan
SPC	Strategy and Policy Committee
SSA	Sub Saharan Africa
TB	Tuberculosis
ToC	Theory of Change
TOR	Terms of Reference
UIS	UNESCO Institute for Statistics
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNGEI	United Nations Girls' Education Initiative
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
US	United States
USD	United States Dollars
VPU	Vice Presidential Unit
WB	World Bank

1   Introduction

1.1   Background

In November 2013, the Board of the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) formally endorsed an Independent Steering Committee (now called the Independent Evaluation Committee or IEC) to develop a framework for the external evaluation of the Global Partnership and supervise the evaluation.

In March 2014, the IEC commissioned the Universalia Management Group Ltd and Results for Development Institute (R4D) to conduct the interim evaluation, which was launched in July 2014.

1.2   Purpose and Scope of the Evaluation

The evaluation is formative in nature and covers the period 2010 -2014. However, the evaluation team also reviewed documents and consulted stakeholders about the pre-2010 period of the Fast Track Initiative (FTI) to understand why and when reforms were implemented.

As per the Terms of Reference (Volume III, Appendix 1), the evaluation goals are to:

- Inform the GPE Secretariat and Board members about the progress made towards achieving the GPE strategic priorities and objectives;

- Provide useful inputs for the Partnership's strategic planning, including inputs to the next strategic plan;

- Identify issues to be addressed in the comprehensive impact evaluation planned for the end of the 2015-2018 strategic cycle.

Thus, the evaluation looks both backward to assess progress and forward to provide inputs for GPE improvement.

As the Terms of Reference did not list objectives in one place, the evaluation team discussed these with the IEC and identified the following objectives:

- Identify key changes that have taken place since 2010;

- Explore the financial, programmatic and partnership contributions made by the Partnership at the global and country level since 2010, including its role and value-added at the country level in terms of the capacity to both formulate and implement education sector policies that improve outcomes in the areas of learning, access and inclusion;

- Examine both improvements and deficiencies in the organizational effectiveness of the Partnership, mainly with regard to relevance, effectiveness and efficiency;

- Develop a model of the organization's theory of change and use it to analyze how the Partnership's activities meet its strategic objectives and enhance its relevance, effectiveness and efficiency at both country and global levels;

- Assess the Partnership's additionality on the flow of resources for education at the global and country level;

- Determine if GPE global and country level resources and activities are aligned;

- Identify lessons learned and formulate recommendations for improvement.

1.3 Evaluation Methodology

The following is a summary of the evaluation methodology and limitations. The full methodology is presented in Volume III, Appendix 2.

Evaluation Framework

The evaluation was guided by an evaluation matrix (Volume III, Appendix 3). The matrix is based on the questions in the Terms of Reference (Volume III, Appendix 1) and includes detailed questions and sub-questions, indicative indicators, sources and methods of data collection.

In order to capture the effects of changes made in the Partnership during the period under review, the evaluation used the 2010 evaluation of the Fast Track Initiative (FTI) as a baseline. In the absence of an agreed upon GPE results framework, the evaluation team constructed a draft overall Theory of Change (ToC) to serve as the basis for the assessment of GPE relevance and effectiveness. The ToC, presented in section 2.2, draws on explicit and implicit assumptions about GPE's program theory in the GPE country level ToC and key GPE documents. Details on the development of the ToC are presented in Volume III, Appendix 4.

Evaluation Management and Process

The evaluation was commissioned by the GPE Board and managed by the Independent Evaluation Committee (IEC). The IEC worked with the Universalia/R4D evaluation team throughout the evaluation (providing guidance, reviewing reports and presentations, providing feedback, and resolving challenges). The evaluation process consisted of three phases, as described below.

Phase I – Inception

During the Inception Phase, the evaluation team met with the IEC to clarify the evaluation purpose, objectives and methodology, reviewed documents, and conducted interviews with 18 GPE stakeholders to obtain their views on how the evaluation could add most value to GPE. All persons interviewed were asked to suggest names other key persons who should be consulted. The list was updated as new informants were identified. An Inception Report was submitted to the IEC for review on 18 August 2014 and approved in September 2014.

Phase II – Data Collection

Data collection took place between September 2014 and April 2015. The evaluation team used a mix of quantitative and qualitative data collection methods and both primary and secondary data sources as described below.

Document review: The evaluation team reviewed relevant literature on the global context for education and aid effectiveness, and consulted a wide range of GPE-related documents, including:

- Documents and reports related to GPE Board meetings;
- Strategic documents such as the GPE Charter and Strategic Plan 2012-2015;
- Tools and guidelines developed by the GPE Secretariat;
- The 2010 evaluation of the FTI, other studies and reviews conducted since 2010;
- Numerous country and grant specific documents.

The list of documents reviewed is presented in Volume III, Appendix 6.[1] Additional documents that were reviewed as part of specific lines of inquiry feeding into the main evaluation report can be found in the synthesis reports in Volume IV: Appendix 1 (Review of Comparator Organizations), Appendix 2 (Review of Global and GPE Financing Trends), Appendix 3 (Review of Global and Regional Activities Program), and Appendix 6 (Review of GPE Documents and Grants).

Stakeholder interviews: In individual and small group interviews, the evaluation team consulted 59 current GPE Secretariat staff and leadership, GPE Board members, and global thought leaders (see Volume III, Appendix 7) and 418 country-level stakeholders (see Volume III, Appendix 8).

Web-based surveys: Two surveys were conducted to elicit information from GPE staff and partners. The staff survey was addressed to all current and former GPE Secretariat staff for whom email addresses were available. Of the 74 individuals invited to complete the survey, 44 responded (36 current staff and 8 former staff). The partner survey was sent to 744 global GPE partners identified by the GPE Secretariat. This group included developing country representatives, Supervising/Managing Entities and Coordinating Agencies from countries not included in site visits, donors, private sector and philanthropic organizations, civil society organizations, multilateral agencies, and some individuals involved in one or more of the global working groups and initiatives that the Partnership is part of. The partner survey elicited 110 responses.

In-country site visits: The evaluation team, supported by regional consultants, conducted visits to eight countries between January and March 2015 (the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Nicaragua, Rwanda, Senegal, Tanzania, Vietnam, and Zimbabwe) and consulted 321 in-country stakeholders. The country selection criteria are described in Volume III, Appendix 2.

Virtual country visits: The evaluation team conducted telephone and Skype interviews with 97 stakeholders in ten additional countries (Afghanistan, Burundi, Cambodia, Ghana, Honduras, Madagascar, Malawi, Moldova, Uganda, and Yemen). The criteria used to select these countries are described in Volume III, Appendix 2.

Site visit to the GPE Secretariat: The evaluation co-team leaders and core team members collected data during a site visit to Washington D.C. and via telephone/Skype and email to inform the reviews of the GPE Secretariat and Board.

Phase III - Data Analysis and Reporting

As noted above, the assessment was based on the draft overall Theory of Change constructed by the evaluation team and findings of the 2010 evaluation of the FTI were used as the baseline. The evaluation matrix was used to structure data analysis and formulate findings on the key evaluation questions and indicators and on the evaluation's different lines of inquiry.[2]

The mix of data collection methods and sources of data provided opportunities for the evaluation team to triangulate data on specific questions from different sources. This helped to validate and ensure the reliability of information and to increase the quality and credibility of the evaluation findings and conclusions.

In April 2015, the evaluation team analyzed data (including a two-day workshop with core team members) and compiled the zero draft of the evaluation report. The report was revised based on

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[1] Documents consulted for the Rapid Organizational Review and the Review of the Civil Society and Education Fund are included in Volume III, Appendix 6.

[2] GPE Document and Grant Review, Review of Global and GPE Financing Trends, Rapid Organizational Review, eight in-country and ten virtual country field missions, Review of the Global and Regional Activities Program, and Review of the Civil Society and Education Fund.

feedback and discussions with the IEC and shared with the GPE Secretariat in June 2015 and the Board in July/August 2015 for their comments.

Limitations and Mitigation Strategies

The challenges encountered in the evaluation and mitigation strategies are outlined below. While the challenges affected the timing of data collection and analysis, they are not expected to affect the final evaluation results. For more detail, see Volume III, Appendix 2.

- During the conduct of the evaluation, the Global Partnership, and in particular the Secretariat, has continued to undergo numerous changes. In this report, the evaluation team has made efforts to acknowledge issues that the GPE Secretariat and/or Board have already started to address. However, overall, the later than originally envisaged timing of this evaluation has negatively affected the potential use of evaluation findings for informing the process of developing the new Strategic Plan from its very beginning.[3]

- The evaluation team encountered challenges in the GPE Document and Grant review due to inconsistent and evolving GPE grant reporting formats and the absence of a clear component breakdown in the budgets of many GPE grants. This meant that mapping grant allocations and activities against GPE objectives was dependent on the evaluation team's interpretation, rather than on GPE's own categorizations. To address inconsistencies to the extent possible, the evaluation team created a standardized tool for document review and compared the emerging findings with those presented in the GPE Results for Learning Reports and Portfolio Reviews.

- In analyzing GPE additionality, issues arose in terms of the quality, reliability and consistency of data available from the GPE Secretariat and country-level stakeholders and documents. This, and the absence of a clear counterfactual, made it difficult to ascertain GPE effects on education financing. To mitigate these challenges, the evaluation team consulted representatives of the Global Monitoring Report (GMR) and Government Spending Watch to ensure the highest possible data quality and consistency. Where possible, the team analyzed pre and post 2010 trends in education financing and interviewed numerous stakeholders to ascertain GPE's influence on trends in education financing.

- The response rate for the survey of global GPE partners was very low at 14%, despite a reminder sent to potential respondents by the evaluation team. While survey results have therefore not been assigned high prominence in the evaluation report, they are noted in selected places to complement information derived from other lines of inquiry. Relevant information was also elicited through interviews with global stakeholders and experts and during the 18 in-country and virtual site visits.

1.4 Organization of the Report

The interim evaluation report is presented in four volumes.

Volume I, the main report, is organized as follows:

- Chapter 1: Background on the evaluation and a summary of the methodology

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[3] The Independent Evaluation Committee had already been brought together in March 2013, but was only formally approved by the Board in November 2013, and the evaluation Terms of Reference were approved in April 2014, five months later than originally envisaged.

- Chapter 2: Profile of the Global Partnership for Education
- Chapter 3: GPE Context and Relevance
- Chapter 4: GPE Global Partnership, Governance, Management
- Chapter 5: GPE Global Effectiveness
- Chapter 6: GPE at the Country Level
- Chapter 7: Conclusions and Recommendations.

Volume II contains eight country case studies that informed the main report.

Volume III provides the detailed methodology and tools (matrix, interview protocols, and survey questionnaires).

Volume IV provides synthesis reports on six lines of inquiry:

- Review of comparator organizations
- Review of Global and GPE Financing Trends
- Review of the Global and Regional Activities Program (GRA)
- Review of the Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF)
- Synthesis of Virtual Case Studies of 10 countries
- Review of GPE Documents and Grants.

2 Profile of the Global Partnership for Education

2.1 Overview

This profile is descriptive rather than analytical and is intended to provide basic information on the Global Partnership for readers of the report.

The Global Partnership for Education (GPE) is a multilateral global partnership for strengthening national education plans, improving aid effectiveness, coordinating donor support, and galvanizing the financing required to achieve the Education for All goals. Currently, GPE comprises 60 developing country partners (DCPs), [4] more than 30 bilateral and multilateral donor and development agencies, as well as civil society organizations, private sector bodies, and philanthropic foundations.

The Partnership was originally established in 2002 as the Education for All Fast Track Initiative (EFA/FTI). In 2010, a mid-term evaluation of the FTI [5] highlighted the continued relevance of the FTI and acknowledged its role as an inclusive global forum that had successfully reinforced the focus of education donors on supporting country-owned education plans and processes. However, it also noted that the FTI's contributions had fallen short of its ambitious expectations for both domestic and external resource mobilization for education. Key recommendations deriving from the mid-term evaluation were:

- To transform the FTI into a much stronger partnership including by enhancing country representation in decision making and reducing dependence on the World Bank.

- Clarify the scope and configuration of the Partnership's activities, e.g. in terms of what types of EFA goals to support, and for which countries. This included the recommendation to have one common process that all countries, including fragile states, would follow, but with support tailored to circumstances.

- Ensure that FTI funding was used to do things that would not happen in its absence, e.g. by prioritizing funding for countries that lose out because of how bilateral agencies allocate their aid.

- Strengthen the FTI's systems and processes for monitoring and evaluation (M&E), in particular by devising an agreed upon M&E framework.

The findings and recommendations of the 2010 evaluation led to various reforms aiming to improve the FTI's performance and strengthen its governance and funding arrangements. This included renaming the FTI as the Global Partnership for Education (2011) and modifying its mission, strategic goals and objectives. These reforms are discussed in Section 3.3 (internal context). A detailed list of reforms is provided in Volume III, Appendix 5.

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[4] One country joined in 2015.

[5] Cambridge Education. Mokoro, Oxford Policy Management (2010). Mid-term evaluation of the EFA Fast Track Initiative. Cambridge/Oxford/UK.

2.2   GPE at Country and Global Levels

While the transition from FTI to GPE included a number of strategic and operational changes (see section 3.3), the fundamental logic underlying both the FTI and GPE models is essentially the same, namely that "adequate financial and technical support to ensure a robust education policy process leads to improved education sector policies, which, in turn, leads to improved education outcomes among children and youth."[6]

As before 2010, the Partnership functions at both the country and global level with the intent to facilitate mutual positive influence between the two. The evaluation team's understanding of this relationship, as derived from GPE documents, is depicted in Exhibit 2.1.

Exhibit 2.1 Relationship of GPE Efforts at Country and Global Level
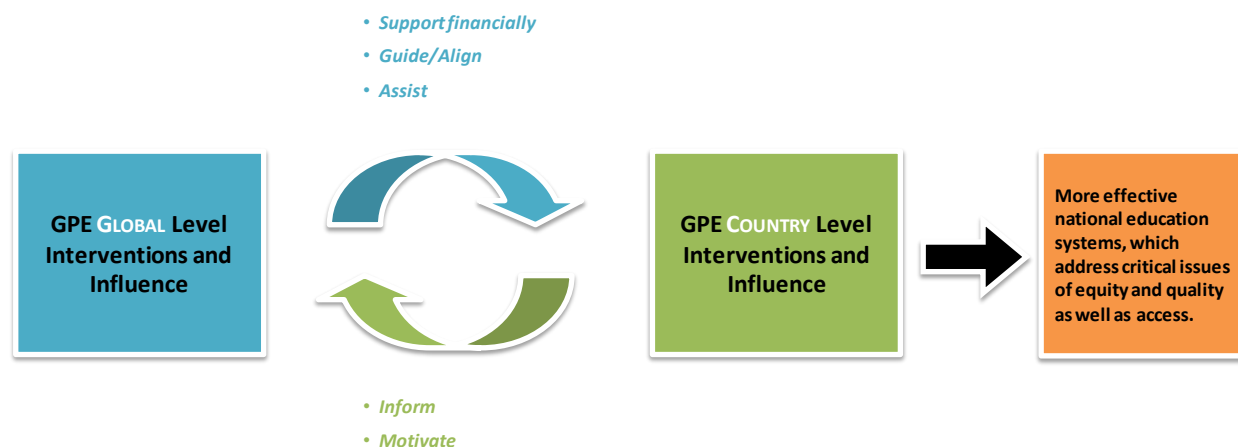
- *Support financially*
- *Guide/Align*
- *Assist*

GPE GLOBAL Level Interventions and Influence

GPE COUNTRY Level Interventions and Influence

More effective national education systems, which address critical issues of equity and quality as well as access.

- *Inform*
- *Motivate*

In the absence of an agreed upon GPE results framework, the evaluation team constructed a draft overall Theory of Change (ToC) [7] to serve as the basis for the assessment of GPE relevance and effectiveness. The ToC draws on explicit and implicit assumptions about GPE's program theory in the existing GPE country-level ToC and key GPE documents. Exhibit 2.2 provides a simplified version of the ToC, with related comments following the graphic representation. A more comprehensive version of the ToC, which elaborates on the process of its development and discusses logical underlying assumptions relevant to Exhibits 2.1 and 2.2, is included in Volume III, Appendix 4.

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[6] GPE 2013 Results For Learning Report.

[7] A Theory of Change is a visualization and description of the central mechanisms by which change is envisaged to come about due to (or with contributions by) a development intervention. A comprehensive ToC should be broader than a results framework, and incorporate a discussion of the assumed logical links between different stages, including a reflection on the extent to which these are based on existing evidence or on hypotheses. As such, a ToC allows identifying areas of uncertainty, which can then be tested and adjusted during program implementation. In comparison, a results framework typically focuses on selected elements within the complex change processes outlined in the ToC.

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Exhibit 2.2 Simplified GPE Theory of Change (constructed by evaluation team)

Improved Education Outcomes

Improved Education Received

Bottlenecks resolved

Program & Plan Implementation: Specific Bottleneck Interventions

Development of Quality Program Plans

Development, appraisal and endorsement of Quality Education Sector Plans

Output to outcome and impact assumptions. Located here are several different nested ToC, one for each type of specific bottleneck intervention carried out in a particular country, such as related to teacher effectiveness or girls' education. These are the real practical interventions supported through GPE funds while everything below relates to planning.

Monitoring of Education Sector Plan Implementation

Action Theory – GPE efforts and envisaged contributions

Global:
- More aligned external financing for education available;
- Consensus on principles of collaboration, participation, and alignment;
- Shared standards of what constitutes quality education sector plans and programs;
- Consensus over and use of solid indicators to plan for and assess education progress;
- Relevant knowledge on what works in education available.

Country:
- GPE grants available to fill key financing gaps
- More domestic financing for education available
- Technical support through GPE Secretariat, Supervising/Managing Entity or Coordinating Agency available to fill capacity gaps
- Active participation and contributions of diverse education stakeholders channeled through Local Education Groups.

Activity to output assumptions

Global and Regional Level

According to the 2012 -2015 Strategic Plan, at the global and regional level the Partnership aims to "leverage the reach, skills, leadership and resources of its partners." GPE documents imply that global level activities and achievements aim to support financially, guide, align, and assist GPE efforts at the country level by contributing to:

- The availability of more aligned external financing for education, and of strong and increased domestic financial support to education.

- National and international stakeholders at the country level adopting and acting according to GPE-promoted principles of collaboration and participation; and taking into consideration GPE-promoted norms for effective and inclusive sector planning processes and harmonized aid for education.

- The availability and accessibility of global knowledge on education policy processes and good practice to inform national ESP development, implementation and monitoring.

- Strengthened capacity of country-level actors through technical assistance for education sector reform efforts (through the GPE Secretariat and other GPE partners on the ground).

Through the Global and Regional Activities (GRA) program, education stakeholders can apply for GPE funding for research, capacity development and knowledge sharing in relation to the objectives outlined in the GPE Strategic Plan 2012-2015.

Country Level

At the **country level** GPE provides financial and technical support to member countries for the development and implementation of sound Education Sector Plans, strengthening Local Education Groups (LEGs) and Joint Sector Reviews, and activities towards the achievement of national education goals and objectives. During the period under review, countries have been able to apply for three types of grants from the GPE Fund. As described below, in some cases the names or foci of these grants have slightly changed in the fall of 2014 under the new GPE funding model (see section 6.3).

1) **Program Implementation Grant (PIG),** which is a central funding mechanism that "supports the implementation of a three-year program that contributes to implementation of the education sector plan. Since late 2014 this grant is now called Education Sector Program Implementation Grant (ESPIG). The maximum amount available under this funding window is US$ 100 million.

2) **Education Plan Development Grant (EPDG),** which provides support to DCPs for developing or revising their education sector plans. In particular, low-income DCPs are encouraged to apply for this grant type. In 2014 this grant was renamed Education Sector Plan Development Grant and now includes dedicated funding for sector analysis.

3) **Program Development Grant (PDG)**, which supports the "design of a program that will be financed by the [GPE]. This program must be derived from the national education sector plan and must be aligned with GPE strategic directions, as appropriate."[8] The name and focus of this grant has not been changed in 2014.

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[8] GPE Country Level Process Guide, p.6.

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Additionally, National Education Coalitions can apply for a GPE grant through the **Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF)** which is meant to enhance the role of civil society organizations (CSOs) in the development and monitoring of education sector plans (ESP).

2.3 GPE Governance and Management

Global level

At the global level, GPE is governed by a Board of 19 members representing the main constituencies: 6 seats each are held by Developing Country and donor representatives, 3 seats are held by each Multilateral Agencies and Civil Society organizations,[10] and one seat is reserved for the Private Sector and Foundations. Board members and their alternates

> **Box 1: Board Member roles and responsibilities (per 2013 Charter)**
>
> Direct GPE's strategic and policy processes and oversee the performance of the Partnership to achieve its mandate
>
> Act as a global leader, advocate and convener for education (i.e. advocate for the Partnership and for the delivery of quality education to all children in developing countries and ensure GPE participates in shaping and responding to the global dialogue on education[9])
>
> Mobilize resources for GPE and advocate for increases to domestic and external funding for education in developing countries
>
> Direct and oversee the ethical and effective performance of the Partnership and its financial management processes.

serve for two years. Ms. Julia Gillard, the former Prime Minister of Australia, was appointed Chair of the GPE Board in February 2014. The roles and responsibilities of the Board are noted in Box 1.

Operational modalities supporting the implementation of the GPE strategy are led and managed by a Secretariat based in Washington DC and headed by a Chief Executive Officer. As of late 2014, the Secretariat had 62 staff. Secretariat responsibilities (per 2013 Charter) are to:

- Support the Partnership, the Chair, the Board, and its committees.
- Provide support and coordination for the organization of Global Partnership meetings; leading fundraising efforts for the GPE resources, and supporting increases to domestic and external funding for education.
- Work with all partners to promote effective communication of education data and results.
- Provide support to the LEG and Coordinating Agencies to strengthen the in-country process.
- Collect, monitor, and share, among partners, global and country-level information on education financing.
- Help coordinate the efforts of the Global Partnership to address issues and priorities related to policy, data, capacity, and finance.
- Facilitate the sharing of lessons learned and data collected from developing country partners within the Global Partnership.

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[9] GPE. 2013 [3], Charter of the Global Partnership for Education, p.11

[10] One for International/Northern, one for Developing Country, and one for the Teaching profession CSOs.

Country level

At the country level, GPE governance and management bodies include the developing country partner government, a Local Education Group (LEG), a Coordinating Agency (CA), and a Supervising Entity (SE) or Managing Entity (ME).

The Local Education Group comprises representatives of stakeholder groups with a vested interest in the education sector and ideally includes the government Ministry of Education, donor countries, the private sector, and civil society organizations. As a "collaborative forum for policy dialogue, and alignment and harmonization of development partner support to the education sector plan"[11] the LEG is responsible for ensuring transparent communication among LEG members, and solid monitoring and review procedures to track progress, challenges and funding of the education sector.

The Coordinating Agency, selected by the LEG, plays a central communication and coordination role in implementing GPE programs at the country level. The CA functions include but are not limited to: fostering strong relationships among partners at the country level; facilitating the work of the LEG; supporting the establishment of solid monitoring and evaluation mechanisms; ensuring that disbursements of GPE funds are handled in a timely and efficient manner; supporting the implementation of the education sector plan, etc.[12]

Once an indicative allocation has been approved, either a **Supervising Entity (SE)** or a **Managing Entity (ME)** is designated, depending on the country context and how GPE funds are provided to the partner country. An SE transfers funds from GPE to the partner government, while an ME directly manages the funds and program activities that are implemented in the country. After an allocation has been disbursed to a country, the SE or ME is required to report to the LEG and, through the GPE Secretariat, to the Partnership Board on the progress of implementation.

2.4 GPE Funding

From inception in 2003 to December 2013, combined FTI and GPE approved funding totalled US$3.66 billion to support the implementation of education sector plans in 52 countries, of which 55% (US$2 billion) had been disbursed at the end of 2013. During the period under review (2010 – 2014), GPE approved approximately US$ 2.47 billion in support of education sector development.

Currently, GPE has 22 bilateral donors.[13] Most GPE grants to countries are administered through the Global Partnership for Education Fund, a single trust fund established in 2011 specifically for the Partnership, which is managed by the World Bank. The Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF) is a grant window funded from the GPE Fund.

In addition to the main GPE Fund, three other Funds currently remain in operation: the Catalytic Fund (CF) that existed under the FTI, and two funds to facilitate contributions by the European Commission (EC). These three funds still had significant cash balances that needed to be utilized when the GPE Fund was created. To date, contributions to the three funds have been completed, and the Partnership is winding down the remaining cash balances.

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[11] GPE. 2013 [3], Charter of the Global Partnership for Education p. 5

[12] GPE Country Level Process Guide (2012), p. 9

[13] A few donor members have not contributed to the GPE in recent years (Romania and Russia). If the Children's Investment Fund Foundation (CIFF) and Dubai Cares are added, there will be 24 donors to the GPE Fund.

The Catalytic Fund is due for closing in 2016 However, for the EC pledge to the 2015-2018 replenishment, two additional single donor Trust Funds will need to be created as the EC cannot channel its contributions through the main GPE Fund as it is a Financial Intermediary Fund.

3   GPE Context and Relevance

3.1   Introduction

This chapter summarizes key developments in the Partnership's external context, their implications for GPE's global relevance, and changes in its internal context during the period under review.

3.2   Global Context and GPE Relevance

Finding 1:   **Major progress has been made in basic education[14] in developing countries but is now somewhat stalled, and there is a risk that under the new Sustainable Development Goals global attention to basic education may decrease. The Partnership's foci on access to and quality of basic education and on allocating external and domestic funds strategically have been, and are likely to remain, relevant in this evolving context.**

Although the two Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) related to education and the six Education for All (EFA) goals set for 2015 in 2000 will not be met, major progress has been made over the past decade, especially in enrollments and gender parity.[15] These achievements are associated with increased public spending on education and increases in the percentage of national budgets allocated to education in both low income and lower middle income countries.[16] External assistance has also played a role, with ODA for education rising from US$6.5 billion in 2002 to US$13.5 billion in 2013.[17]

Much less progress has been made, however, with the other EFA goals (e.g. Goal 4 on adult literacy, and Goal 6 on education quality).[18] Above all, while more children are in school, they are not all learning and it is now very evident that there is a global learning crisis, with 250 million children of grade 4 age still unable to read.[19] In addition, the number of adults who cannot read and write has stagnated at around 780 million (two-thirds of whom are women) and global illiteracy has decreased by only 1% since 2000.[20] In pre-primary settings, where enrollment rates have increased considerably since 2000, lack of equity in access and poor quality of provision persist.[21]

Even in areas in which progress was being made, such as enrollment, this was most pronounced in the first decade of the century and has stagnated since then. For example, while primary school enrollment rates increased, they did not keep pace with population growth, especially in Africa. The global number of out of school primary age children has remained at around 58 million since 2008. These children are disproportionately in fragile and conflict-affected states.

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[14] Throughout this report the term 'basic education' refers to pre-primary (i.e. anything before Grade 1), primary (Grades 1-6), lower secondary (Grades 7-9), and adult literacy education, in formal and non-formal settings.

[15] Source: World Bank Education Statistics. Available from: http://databank.worldbank.org/data/home.aspx

[16] UNESCO GMR. (2015). Retrieved from: http://en.unesco.org/gem-report/report/2015/education-all-2000-2015-achievements-and-challenges#sthash.8fGM9VIT.dpbs

[17] Source: OECD-DAC CRS database. Available from: http://stats.oecd.org/index.aspx?DataSetCode=CRS1#

[18] The six EFA goals are listed here: http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/themes/leading-the-international-agenda/education-for-all/efa-goals/

[19] GMR 2014.

[20] Sources: GMR 2013-2014 and GMR 2015.

[21] GMR 2015

The new Sustainable Development Goals currently being finalized for the period 2015 to 2030 largely recognize these problems and emphasize both learning and equity at all levels of education. Consulted global thought leaders cautioned, however, that under the proposed SDGs basic education may not get as much attention from the global community as it has since 2000. As currently drafted, education will be one of 17 SDGs, while in the past basic education was addressed in two of the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and in all six EFA goals. In the proposed SDGs, education will be addressed in a single comprehensive goal in which the definition of basic education includes pre-primary, primary and lower secondary education. There will be no parallel and more detailed Education for All goals, though notably there will be a UNESCO-led framework for action that will go into more detail than the education-focused SDG.

Low and declining levels of external financing for basic education continue to be a major barrier to progress even as both developing countries' expectations about and need for international assistance and donor priorities and modalities evolve. The share of non-traditional assistance for development[22] has risen from approximately 8% to 31%, with a corresponding decline in the relative share of ODA. Overall, ODA is still increasing, after some setbacks following the global recession that began in 2008. Donor countries are, however, channelling more assistance through bilateral channels and less through multilateral channels.

A recent survey of developing countries indicates that they expect to continue to want aid but expect donors to shift to a more enabling role, "still providing vital finance, but in support of government-led sector investment programmes; providing more and better technical and policy advisory support; and doing more to leverage private flows." [23] Developing countries expect general and sector budget support to be the most important aid modality in future.

Meanwhile, the financing needs of basic education are growing faster than the availability of external funding. Assuming that the new SDGs call for 100% enrollment at pre-primary, primary and lower secondary levels, the 2015 Global Monitoring Report (GMR) estimates the annual total cost in low and lower middle income countries to more than double from its current level of about US$100 billion to US$239 billion, including more than tripling in low-income countries. It does not seem likely that annual aid flows for education can increase to the extent required.

As argued by Fredriksen (2011),[24] whether aid for basic education continues to stagnate or even increases modestly, it will need to be focused more strategically on the areas of greatest need that are the least well-funded. These currently include: poor people, out of school children, and adult illiterates, and not just in poor countries; sub-Saharan Africa, which, due to its continuing high rates of population growth, requires simultaneous expansion of both primary and secondary education; fragile and conflict-affected states, including refugees; and, global or cross-country public goods

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[22] Non-traditional assistance includes such things as non-DAC assistance, philanthropy, impact investing, global funds and climate finance. See: Greenhill, R., A. Prizzon and A. Rogerson (2013), "The Age of Choice: Developing Countries in the New Aid Landscape: A Synthesis Report." *ODI Working Paper 364.*

[23] Davies, R. and J. Pickering (2015), "Making Development Co-operation Fit for the Future: A Survey of Partner Countries", *OECD Development Co-operation Working Papers no. 20.*

[24] Fredriksen, B. (2011): Education Resource Mobilization and Use in Developing Countries: Scope for Efficiency Gains through more Strategic Use of Education Aid. Retrieved from: http://www.resultsfordevelopment.org/sites/resultsfordevelopment.org/files/R4D_Education%20Resource%20Mobilization.pdf

such as data and good practices on education, which also include tools, sector analyses, and various forms of knowledge products (e.g. research reports on topical areas)[25].

Implications for the Global Partnership

In light of the stagnation in basic educational progress during the period 2010-2014, the Partnership's focus on basic education, which as referenced above, includes pre-primary, lower secondary, and adult literacy, has remained relevant and appropriate and is likely to continue or even grow under the new Sustainable Development Goals. Similarly, the Partnership's emphasis on access to and quality of education and learning outcomes, which was more pronounced during the period under review than prior to 2010, has been appropriate in view of the global learning crisis. However, GPE funding allocations to date have excluded underserved areas of basic education, such as adult and youth literacy.

Furthermore, the GPE strategic priorities during the period, in particular its increased emphasis on supporting fragile and conflict-affected states, have been relevant in view of the noted stagnation of aid for basic education, and the related need to focus remaining aid strategically on the areas of greatest need that are the least well-funded.

The Global Partnership is currently disbursing around US$500 million per year, which is being used to fund all dimensions of basic education (including, pre-primary, lower secondary, second chance learning, etc). While this is an important contribution, it is small compared to total estimated global financing needs for basic education.

3.3   GPE Internal Context

Finding 2:   **Since 2010, the Global Partnership has undergone (and continues to undergo) extensive changes that address previously noted areas for improvement. The GPE Board and Secretariat have managed parts of the change journey well, although aligning the pace and scope of change with organizational capacities and monitoring the effects of changes on GPE performance have been challenges.**

The 2010 evaluation of the FTI noted that the Initiative had shown "willingness and commitment to reform," in particular in the area of governance. This spirit continued during the period under review, during which the Partnership made numerous efforts to address areas for improvement highlighted in the 2010 evaluation and additional issues that have emerged since then.

Exhibit 3.1 outlines some of the most prominent reforms implemented since 2010, which constituted the transition from the FTI to GPE. Details on the response to the 2010 evaluation are provided in Volume III, Appendix 5.

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[25] Here, the term global (or cross-country) public goods refers to activities and resulting products that are explicitly linked to knowledge development and/or sharing, and that are both relevant and accessible to a variety of actors at no or only minimal cost.

Exhibit 3.1 Changes Characterizing the Transition from FTI to GPE since 2010

Fast Track Initiative (2002 – 2010)[26]		Global Partnership for Education (since 2011)[27]
Mission	"Accelerating progress towards the core EFA goal of universal primary school completion for boys and girls alike by 2015."	"To galvanize and coordinate a global effort to deliver good quality education to all girls and boys, prioritizing the poorest and most vulnerable."
Strategic Goals and Objectives **Strategic Goals and Objectives**	**Key FTI contributions**: • Sound sector policies and use of benchmarking. • More efficient aid to primary education (Paris Declaration). • Sustained increases in aid to primary education. • Adequate and sustained domestic financing to primary education. • Increased accountability for sector results against indicators. FTI documents post 2004 also highlight the aim to close financial, policy, capacity and data gaps in the education sector.	**Four Goals** 1. *Access for all*: All children have access to a safe, adequately equipped space to receive an education with a skilled teacher. 2. *Learning for all*: All children master basic literacy and numeracy skills by the early grades. 3. *Reaching every child*: Resources are focused on the most marginalized children and those in fragile and conflict-affected states. 4. *Building for the future*: National systems have the capacity and integrity to deliver, support and assess quality education for all. **Five Objectives** 1. Fragile and conflict affected states able to develop and implement their education plans. 2. All girls in GPE-endorsed countries successfully complete primary school and go to secondary school in a safe, supportive learning environment. 3. Dramatic increase in the number of children learning and demonstrating mastery of basic literacy and numeracy skills by Grade 3. 4. Improve teacher effectiveness by training, recruiting and retaining teachers and supporting them to provide a good quality education. 5. Expand the volume, effectiveness, efficiency and equitable allocation of external and domestic funding and support to education in GPE-endorsed countries.
Governance	Steering Committee originally comprising representatives of 6 donor partners, 1 developing country partner (DCP), and 1 civil society organization (CSO). After 2008, 2 additional seats for civil society and developing countries. Annual rotation of co-chairs, always one G7 and one other donor.	**2010**: Creation of a constituency-based Board structure with equal representation of DCP and donor governments. Board Chair independent of any constituency who represents the Board and the overall Partnership.

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[26] Source: 2004 FTI Strategic Framework

[27] Source: GPE Strategic Plan 2012-2015, as well as relevant GPE Board decisions

	Fast Track Initiative (2002 – 2010)[26]	Global Partnership for Education (since 2011)[27]
Management	Secretariat hosted by the World Bank (Vice Presidential Unit for Human Development). Led by a Secretariat Head appointed by the World Bank.	Secretariat hosted by the World Bank (Vice Presidential Unit for Development Finance). **2013**: Appointment of a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) appointed by the GPE Board.
Funding mechanism	• Catalytic Fund. • Education Program Development Fund.	• Creation of a single GPE fund with three types of grants (2011), • Winding down of the Catalytic Fund and two single donor trust funds (EC contributions)

The GPE Board and Secretariat have effectively managed several aspects of the ongoing organizational change, as indicated by the following.

■ A review of Board meeting reports and papers indicates that several reforms were based on the findings and recommendations of independent external assessments of the FTI/GPE, including: the 2010 evaluation of FTI; a review of the Partnership's hosting relationship with the World Bank (2012) [28] which informed subsequent efforts to modify the existing hosting arrangement (see section 4.3.2); and an organizational review of the GPE Secretariat (2014)[29] which led to some first steps in restructuring the Secretariat and adding staff members (see section 4.4.2).

■ Under its current CEO, the GPE Secretariat formed a senior leadership team to ensure that actors with different backgrounds and horizons work together to analyze and address gaps between where the Secretariat and GPE overall are now, and where they want to be. However, the composition of the leadership team does not yet reflect the diversity of the Partnership itself, as all members are from the global North. Efforts were made to fill the Chief Technical Officer (CTO) position created in 2014 with a candidate from the global South, but some applications received did not met the full requirements of the post, and some qualified candidates from developing countries withdrew their application.

■ The GPE Strategic Plan and related Implementation Plan for 2012-2015 provided a vision, albeit incomplete, for the envisaged changes (see section 4.2) and shorter term roadmaps were provided in annual Secretariat work plans.

Other aspects of the change journey were managed less effectively, as indicated in document review, interviews with GPE Board members and Secretariat leadership, and the survey of Secretariat staff.

■ The independent 2014 Organizational Review noted a misalignment between the Partnership's growing ambitions (as outlined in the Board-approved Strategic Plan 2012-2015) and the capacity of the Secretariat.[30]

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[28] GPE (2012): GPE Hosting Review Options, retrieved from: http://www.globalpartnership.org/content/gpe-hosting-review-options.

[29] Evans, A. (2014): Global Partnership for Education – Organizational Review.

[30] These ambitions relate to a variety of issues, including the ambitious goals (at the level of education outcomes) outlined in the Strategic Plan; the aim to increase GPE membership, in particular of fragile and/or conflict affected countries and thus complex environments; as well as higher fundraising targets as reflected in the 2014 recent replenishment event.

- Interviewed Secretariat leaders acknowledged that the pace and scope of change since 2010 in the Partnership, and the Secretariat in particular, had been "dizzying". This was partly attributed to the fact that in 2013 the Board recruited a new CEO to execute a different vision than had been pursued under the former Secretariat head.[31]

- At a recent pre-Board DCP Constituency Meeting (May 2015), delegates for constituencies Africa 1, 2 and 3 expressed concern that the pace of reforms in the Global Partnership is too fast, needs to be slowed down to allow countries to catch-up and allow the Partnership to take stock of what is working well and what is not.

- A small number of interviewed Board members indicated that, in their view, the pace and scope of change in relation to the Partnership's ability to better track and demonstrate results of its work had neither been fast nor broad enough (see section 4.4.3).

- While consulted Secretariat leaders acknowledged the positive purpose of this interim evaluation (to proactively monitor and adjust the change journey if and as needed), they were critical of the timing, which coincided with the development of the new GPE Strategic Plan, thereby limiting the time available for taking evaluation findings and recommendations into account during this planning process.

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[31] Three Secretariat staff members surveyed for this evaluation noted that some reforms had been given too little time to unfold and be thoroughly assessed before being changed again (e.g. the internal organization of the Secretariat, in particular the role and composition of the Country Support Team). Other surveyed staff members did not comment on the pace of reforms.

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Results 4 Development

4 GPE Global Governance, Partnership, and Management

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents evaluation findings related to GPE as a partnership at the global level, the global governance of GPE, its relationship with the World Bank, and management of the Global Partnership. (Chapter 6 elaborates on these dimensions at the country level.)

4.2 Partnership at the Global Level

This section explores GPE as a global multi-stakeholder partnership (see Box 2). It presents findings on the value-added deriving from such a partnership, and the extent to which GPE at the global level has lived up to the partnership principles outlined in the GPE charter. Findings on the Partnership at the country level are presented in section 6.4.

> **Box 2: Partnership**
>
> In the context of international development assistance, partnerships can be defined as "**voluntary and collaborative relationships between various parties (…) in which all participants agree to work together to achieve a common purpose or undertake a specific task and to share risks and responsibilities, resources and benefits**."[32]
>
> The underlying rationale for this type of collaboration is the idea of **synergy**, i.e. the expectation that jointly partners can do and achieve more and/or better (i.e. qualitatively different) results than any one of them could by themselves.[33]
>
> This is reflected in the GPE Strategic Plan 2012-2105, which notes that, through its activities, GPE will "**leverage the rich skills leadership and resources of its partners.**"

Finding 3: Since 2010, the GPE Board and Secretariat have clarified the global Partnership's strategic priorities and purpose.

The 2010 evaluation of the FTI noted a lack of clarity regarding the FTI's priorities and recommended that it make more explicit which EFA goals the Initiative was focusing on and why. It also recommended that the FTI make a strategic decision to increase its support for fragile and conflict affected states. Since 2010 the GPE Board and Secretariat have made a number of relevant and successful efforts to address these recommendations.

- The rebranding of the FTI as GPE (2011) was a deliberate step to clarify and communicate the Partnership's renewed identity and purpose. According to consulted Secretariat staff and global stakeholders, the rebranding has been both appropriate and successful.[34]

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[32] United Nations (2005): Enhanced Cooperation between the United Nations and all relevant partners, in particular the private sector. UN Doc. A/60/214

[33] See, for example: Draxler, A. "New Partnerships for EFA: Building on Experience", UNGEI, 2008. http://www.ungei.org/resources/files/Partnerships.pdf

[34] In the survey of staff, 79% of Secretariat staff stated that the visibility of the GPE has increased as a result of efforts to rebrand the GPE. Only 6% disagreed and 9% think that the rebranding made no difference in improving the organization's visibility. 6% indicated that they were not familiar enough with the situation to be able to respond to the question. Similarly, 84% of surveyed global stakeholders fully agreed that the rebranding better reflected the purpose of the partnership, 13% somewhat agreed, and only 3% either somewhat or fully disagreed.

- In 2012, the first GPE Strategic Plan (2012-2015) articulated its strengthened focus on supporting fragile and conflict affected states, girls' education, and early childhood education; it also emphasized quality of education, particularly in relation to early grade reading, numeracy, and learning outcomes. Despite a number of weaknesses (see following finding) the Plan was an important milestone in that it explicitly formulated the Partnership's purpose and principles and summarized important changes in its functioning and priorities.

- The GPE Charter (2013) formulates the Partnership's purpose and outlines the GPE Compact to which its members commit.

- In 2014, the Board requested the Secretariat to develop a new Strategic Plan for the period 2016-2020 building on lessons learned from the current SP.

Finding 4: Until recently, the GPE Board has given insufficient attention to reaching agreement over where, how and why the Partnership has the potential to add value.

The 2013 Implementation Plan for the GPE Strategic Plan noted that in order to enhance its accountability and credibility the Partnership needed a more systematic definition of the value-added of GPE as a partnership, beyond its role in providing funding to support the development and implementation of national ESPs.[35] This has not yet been adequately addressed as illustrated by the following points.

- While the 2012-2015 Strategic Plan and Implementation Plan outlined the Partnership's overall objectives and thematic priorities, they did not elaborate on how and why the Partnership's activities and outputs are consistent with its overall goal and the attainment of its objectives and impacts. While the Implementation Plan outlines a basic Theory of Change (ToC) for GPE's role at the country level, it focuses on activities; the key assumptions that logically link different elements in this ToC are not explicit, and it is not clear which of the implicit assumptions are based on evidence of how change occurs.[36]

- One of the core assumptions underlying the Partnership's overall approach is that solid education sector plans, if paired with financial resources and government commitment and ownership, more inclusive and evidence based policy dialogue, and mutual accountability lead to positive changes in education access and quality. While this link is intuitively convincing, it has, to our knowledge, not been proven, and GPE has not yet 'unpacked' the various change processes and conditions that need to be in place for this logical link to hold.

- Neither the GPE Strategic Plan 2012-2015 nor the Implementation Plan provide an overarching Theory of Change that: a) clarifies how the Partnership's global and country-level roles were envisaged to mutually influence and benefit from each other; b) formulates the specific benefits expected to derive from this global multi-stakeholder partnership; c) clarifies how those benefits are envisaged to complement the Partnership's grant-making function; or d) 'unpacks' the underlying assumption that by working together in a coordinated manner, GPE partners can achieve more or different results than they could individually.

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[35] Implementation Plan to the GPE Strategic Plan (2013), p. 24.

[36] In the reconstructed GPE Theory of Change (Volume III, Appendix 4) the evaluation team attempted to make explicit some of the assumptions implied by GPE documents, and noted related questions.

The GPE Board and Secretariat have acknowledged these shortcomings and the development of an overarching ToC is envisaged as part of the development of the SP for 2016-2020. In addition, as illustrated in a presentation by the GPE Chief Technical Officer to the GPE Board (December 2014),[38] the ongoing strategic planning process aims to engage stakeholders in targeted discussions to address the diverging views of GPE Board members, Secretariat staff, and global partners on what the Global Partnership is, where and how it can best add value, and why. [39]

Differences in views of different GPE stakeholders are related both to views over the Partnership's thematic and/or geographic reach (see Box 3), but also relate to the overall nature of GPE, in particular the relative weight that is being (or should be) assigned to the Partnership's grant-making function versus its potential contributions to knowledge and learning, advocacy, convening partners, and capacity development that (may) derive from its nature as a global, multi-stakeholder partnership.

> **Box 3: Examples of calls for differentiation of GPE's reach**
>
> Interviews and surveys of Secretariat staff, Board members, and global stakeholders illustrated a currently ongoing debate over whether, to what extent, and how GPE should increase its engagement in humanitarian settings.
>
> Consultations at the country level, e.g. in Senegal, indicated the desire of some countries to have the Partnership support their needs beyond Universal Primary Education, e.g. related to secondary education, as well as to vocational education and training.
>
> Interviews with Board Members and Secretariat leaders indicated that some donor agencies have expressed an interest in providing new or additional funding to the Partnership provided that it can be earmarked for certain geographic regions or specific countries, some of which are not currently eligible for GPE funding e.g. due to their income status.[37]

While most consulted Board members and Secretariat staff who commented on this issue supported the theoretical notion that, due to its partnership structure, GPE was "more than just another vertical fund," most of them were unable to define "more"– other than enabling the Partnership to raise funds for its grant-making function. Similarly, while some Board Members described the main purpose of GPE country grants as being investment resources to countries, other Board members and Secretariat staff emphasized the potential for country grants to serve as a vehicle for engaging countries in dialogue with GPE and with each other as an equally important purpose (or even the main purpose). At the country level, interviewed national and international stakeholders described the Partnership as primarily a funding mechanism, but often acknowledged that its funding requirements had contributed to fostering the principle of partnership among actors at the country level (see chapter 6). They did not comment on the perceived benefits of GPE as a global partnership. See also Box 4.

> **Box 4: The notion of being "more than just a fund"**
>
> is one shared by some comparator organizations: for example the Global Fund, IHP+, and CGAP emphasize their role as partnerships. However, other organizations, such as CIF and GEF, articulate their function as being almost exclusively a financing one.

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[37] Some donors have expressed an interest in specifically funding Middle Income Countries.

[38] Towards a Post 2015 Strategic Plan for the Global Partnership for Education. Discussion Note for the Board Retreat, December 13-14, 2014.

[39] It is important to note that differences of views exist not only between, but within each of these stakeholder groups and constituencies. For example, within the GPE Board, varying positions on the Partnership's nature and value added were expressed by DCP, multilateral organization and donor representatives alike.

Overall, interviews and surveys conducted for this evaluation indicate that while stakeholders generally agree with the Partnership's broad mission to "galvanize and coordinate global efforts to deliver good quality education," there are different interpretations of what success under this mission will look like.

Finding 5: **Since 2010, the Secretariat and Board have made some efforts to ensure partner compliance with the GPE Compact and partnership principles. Nevertheless, current accountability requirements are not consistently applied, and ask more from developing country partners than from donors.**

The 2010 FTI evaluation noted that accountability under the FTI had remained asymmetrical: while DCPs were expected to demonstrate development results, donor commitments were not systematically recorded or monitored.

Since then, the FTI/GPE has made efforts to strengthen partner accountability, in particular through: i) the formulation of the GPE Compact (see Box 5) and seven partnership principles in the 2013 GPE Charter,[40] and ii) the development of a draft Mutual Accountability Matrix (2011).

The Matrix elaborated on the broad commitments outlined in the GPE Charter and specified the roles and responsibilities of different types of partners,[41] but did not specify what measures would be taken (e.g. penalties) if partners did not live up to their commitments.[42]

The Secretariat initially presented a draft version of the Matrix in 2010. At the 2011 Board meeting the Board tasked the Secretariat with finalizing the Matrix, which presented a revised version as

> **Box 5: Through the GPE Compact (2013), GPE partners commit to:**
>
> Developing country partners:
>
> Develop and implement a sound and sustainable education sector plan (comprehensive or transitional) through broad-based consultation
>
> Provide strong and increased domestic financial support to education
>
> Demonstrate results on key performance indicators.
>
> Donors, multilateral agencies, civil society organizations and private foundations and the private sector:
>
> Increase support to the education sector plan, including financial support
>
> Assist in mobilizing resources and aligning them with the priorities of developing country partners
>
> Harmonize procedures as much as possible.

part of the 2012-2015 GPE Strategic Plan Implementation Plan. To date, the Board has not formally adopted the Matrix. In consequence, the framework has never been comprehensively used to monitor or report on partner compliance with the various responsibilities that it describes and that are noted in the GPE Compact. Instead, at its Brussels meeting in 2013, the Board approved the SP Implementation Plan along with its results indicators, but chose an opt-in approach. In other words, partners were encouraged to contribute to the implementation of the Strategic Plan, including in

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[40] The partnership principles are: country ownership, benchmarking, support linked to performance, lower transaction costs, transparency, development results and value for money, and (again) mutual accountability. Source: GPE Charter.

[41] It spells out specific roles and responsibilities of different types of GPE partners at global and country level, rather than grouping diverse actors like donors and civil society organizations into one category with the same responsibilities (as had been done in the Charter).

[42] Board members noted the lack of clarity on how partners would be held accountable for their commitments during the 2013 Board meeting in Brussels.

relation to its process indicators focusing on the performance of GPE as a partnership, but there was no further mentioning of whether and how partner would be held accountable for their actions.

In 2014, to encourage other GPE donors to honour the notion of mutual accountability, the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID) made its GPE pledge equivalent to 15% of the total replenishment amount made available by donors for the period 2015-2018. Based on this, the total amount of DFID contributions would be affected by other donors' contributions. Nevertheless, since 2011 the GPE Secretariat has made regular efforts to monitor donor and DCP compliance with their financial commitments by means of annual pledge monitoring reports. However, the accuracy of these reports has been limited, as the Partnership has not had appropriate country-level mechanisms to monitor actual compliance with pledges made by different partners.[43]

For its 2014 replenishment conference, the GPE Secretariat introduced the innovative measure of including not only donor pledges in the calculation of overall amounts raised at the event, but also DCP pledges related to envisaged increases in domestic resources allocated to education overall and to equity and quality issues. Acknowledging the monetary value of both donor and DCP pledges offered the possibility to reframe perceptions about the nature and value of different types of contributions. However, while DCP partners were required to produce a confirmation letter from their Ministry of Finance or Parliament confirming and backing up the pledge, this was not required from donor agencies.

> **Box 6: Aiming for greater parity in donor contributions**
>
> In 2104, in an attempt to push other GPE donors to honour the notion of mutual accountability, the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID) made part of its GPE pledge conditional on other donors increasing their contributions to the Partnership to reduce the UK's share to less than 15%. To our knowledge this has not yet been successful.

It is hoped that the new GPE funding model for the period 2015-2018 (see finding 16) will strengthen the Partnership's ability to effectively monitor and enforce compliance with the GPE Compact. However, while the model makes brief reference to the obligations of other partners (by asking them to provide support that is better aligned to country priorities) it outlines tangible consequences of non-compliance (i.e. more or less funding) only for developing country governments. Similarly, the new model sets a specific target for DCP financing commitments, but there are no equal measures in place to ensure that GPE donors are pulling their weight (see Box 6). Finally, it is not evident how GPE will monitor partner compliance with non-financial partnership commitments, e.g. related to identifying and sharing best practice, or advocacy.

4.3 GPE Governance

4.3.1 GPE Board

As discussed in the findings below, consulted Board members, Secretariat staff, and global stakeholders consider the current Board more effective and efficient than at the time of the 2010 evaluation. See Box 7.

> **Box 7: Governance**
>
> The notion of **governance** refers to the structures, functions, policies, processes, and organizational traditions that have been put in place within the context of an organization's authorizing environment to ensure that it is run in such a way that it achieves its objectives in an effective and transparent manner. It is the framework of accountability and responsibility to users, stakeholders and the wider community, within which organizations take decisions, and lead and control their functions, to achieve their objectives.[44]

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[43] As noted in a Secretariat presentation to the GPE Board (May 2013)

[44] Sourcebook for Evaluating Global and Regional Partnership Programs. Indicative Principles and Standards. Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) World Bank, 2007

Finding 6: Changes to the GPE Board have strengthened DCP representation and participation in GPE governance. Room for improvement remains in ensuring equal, strong and meaningful representation and participation of all GPE constituencies.

Within a diverse partnership such as GPE, effective governance is often expected to both reflect and draw upon the mix of skills, abilities, experiences and competencies of its members.[45] One of the key recommendations of the 2010 FTI evaluation was to strengthen partner country representation in its governance function, including in relation to financial decisions.

Evaluation data from document review and stakeholder consultations[46] indicate that changes to the GPE Board structure and functioning have led to notable improvements in this area: The new constituency-based composition of the Board better reflects the diversity of GPE partners and DCP representatives

> **Box 8: Comparison with other organizations**
>
> Four of the six comparator organizations reviewed for this evaluation (IHP+, Global Fund, GAVI, and the GEF) have constituency-based Boards similar to the current GPE Board. All four have noted similar challenges in ensuring equal and high quality participation from all constituencies. Similar to GPE, both GAVI and the Global Fund have put in place technical support to DCP representatives to assist with Board meeting preparation.

have become increasingly active and influential as Board members and on the four Board Committees in which their representation is equal to that of donor constituencies. [47] The introduction of pre-Board DCP constituency meetings has been instrumental in this regard, by allowing constituency members to get together and develop agreed upon positions and questions to be brought to the Board.[48]

At the same time, a number of areas for improvement remain, as outlined below. See also Box 8.

- DCPs still often lack both the capacity and the status to strongly influence Board or Committee discussions.[49] Despite noted improvements in DCP representation, Board discussions and decisions tend to reflect the views and input of donor constituencies more

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[45] Keith A. Bezanson and Paul Isenman. 2012. "Governance of New Global Partnerships: Challenges, Weaknesses, and Lessons." CGD Policy Paper 014. Washington DC: Center for Global Development.

[46] Interviews with GPE Board and Committee members, interviews and survey of GPE Secretariat staff, interviews with global thought leaders, and a survey of global GPE partners

[47] The stronger engagement of DCPs was noted by 13 of 18 consulted Board Members from all constituencies, and 69% (29 of 43) of surveyed Secretariat staff. In the survey of global partners, 77% either somewhat or fully agreed that both partner representation and participation in GPE governance and decision making had increased since 2010.

[48] These meetings were initially fully funded through the German BACKUP Initiative. In June 2014 the GPE Board approved GPE funding of US$ 700,000 for the GPE Secretariat (BOD/2014/06-03) to organize face-to face pre-Board constituency meetings for DCP constituencies in advance of the next two Board meetings. The funding sufficed to cover costs of the DCP constituency meetings in Washington (December 2014) and Dubai and Dakar (May 2015), and part of the costs related to the meeting in Kigali (December 2014). Approximately 14% of the Kigali meeting were covered by a $ 50K contribution from the BACKUP initiative. In February 2015 the Secretariat requested an additional $ 150,000 in support of constituency from BACKUP. These funds have not yet been distributed due to administrative delays in processing the related agreement, but the Secretariat is expecting to be able to access and use the funds towards supporting the upcoming DCP constituency meetings in December 2015.

[49] This was noted by 7 of 18 consulted Board members from different constituencies.

strongly than those of others.[50] One surveyed global partner pointed out that some developing country constituencies are larger and more diverse than donor ones, which makes it more difficult for some DCP representatives to consult with and represent the often diverse views of their constituency members. Three Board members and the Secretariat leadership team also noted that some donor organizations have at times expressed their views to the Secretariat bilaterally, rather than channeling their input through the GPE Board or its committees.

■ Southern civil society organizations also continue to face challenges in ensuring regular and effective communication and consultation with their constituencies.[51] The Secretariat has suggested that the Board approve funding for pre-Board CSO constituency meetings, as it has for DCP constituencies.

■ The GPE Board does not yet include a constituency that represents the views of parents, children, youth, and other disadvantaged groups as key education stakeholders. See Box 9 for some comparisons with other organizations. The 2014 GPE Secretariat Civil Society Review recommended that the Board assess the potential to increase formal representation of these groups on the Board, and also ensure that they can attend meetings as observers.[52]

> **Box 9: Comparison with other organizations**
>
> The Board of the Global Fund includes one seat for a representative of affected communities living with HIV. All interviewees familiar with the Global Fund Board noted that having this 'affected community' representation has led to more tangible and "passionate" dialogue.
>
> The Climate Investment Fund includes two indigenous stakeholders not as Board members, but as active observers who are invited to provide input to Committees and Sub-Committees based on their practical knowledge of environmental issues in areas where they live. Interviewed representatives viewed these contributions as highly valuable in view of ensuring the relevance of CIF's work.

■ There is a lack of clarity about the most appropriate selection criteria for representatives of the private sector and foundations.[53] Until now, the types of contributions beyond potential financial ones that the Partnership expects from these types of organizations at both global and country levels have not been defined; nor has it been clarified what types of roles private sector companies represented on the Board should play in relation to the education sector (e.g. is the selection limited to organizations that are actively involved in providing education services or related tools, or would it be equally desirable to include organizations that, for example, represent the needs of private sector employers who could provide inputs on the links between education and the labour market?).[54] At time of finalizing this report (June 2015) the

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[50] This was also noted in interviews conducted for the 2014 GPE Secretariat Civil Society Review.

[51] As noted in the 2014 GPE Secretariat Civil Society Review, interviews with GPE Board members, and by one surveyed global partner.

[52] GPE Secretariat Civil Society Review (2014), p. 7.

[53] Currently, Board Members for this constituency are the Children's Investment Fund Foundation and Pearson plc, a British multinational publishing and education company which is the world's largest book publisher.

[54] The Boards of both the Global Fund and GAVI include private sector representatives. In case of the Global Fund, this constituency is currently represented by Merck/MSD, a pharmaceutical company involved in developing and producing drugs for HIV. The GAVI Board has one seat each for representatives from the vaccine industry from a developed and developing country respectively. In both cases the nature of the

Private Sector constituency is in the process of reviewing draft terms of reference for its role on the Board. Once approved these ToR are suited to clarify the noted issues.

Finding 7: **The creation of four Board Committees has strengthened the effectiveness and efficiency of the Board. Nevertheless, the structure is not yet used to its full potential.**

The 2010 FTI evaluation noted a lack of efficiency in governance processes, as well as a lack of consideration of strategic issues underpinning FTI decisions. A review of Board meeting documents conducted by the evaluation team shows that in 2009, the (then FTI) Board took a total of 35 decisions, of which only two (5.7 %) related to strategic issues. This increased slightly between 2010 and 2014, during which 14% of Board decisions and 25% of discussion items addressed items of a primarily strategic nature.

In 2013, the GPE Board approved the creation of four committees (see Box 10) to enhance its efficiency and strengthen its strategic function. The intention was to increasingly delegate detailed discussions to these bodies, thereby freeing the Board to

> **Box 10: GPE Board Committees**
>
> **Coordinating Committee** –assists the GPE Chair in coordinating the work of other committees and acts as a sounding board for the CEO on critical matters. The committee currently has 9 members including the Board Chair and the chairs of the three other committees.
>
> **Country Grants and Performance Committee** (CGPC) – makes recommendations to the Board and tracks progress on the portfolio of country-level grants awarded from the GPE fund. The 11 member committee is currently chaired by the Donor 1 constituency (the Netherlands).
>
> **Governance, Ethics, Risk and Finance Committee** (GERF) – provides oversight of GPE's Conflict of Interest Policy and risk management framework, and advises the Board on ensuring GPE resources are managed efficiently, effectively and consistent with the Partnership's mission, goals, objectives and policies. The GERF has 7 members and is chaired by the Africa 2 constituency (Senegal).
>
> **Strategy and Policy Committee** (SPC) – develops, tracks and ensures implementation of the GPE Strategic Plan; it advises and makes recommendations to the Board on the Partnership's response to the global debate on education, and make recommendations for the prioritization frameworks and/or policies at the global and country levels and new innovative funding mechanisms.[55] The SPC is chaired by the Northern/Developed Country NGO Save the Children, and has 11 members.

focus on the Partnership's overall and longer-term vision and strategy. Committee members are nominated by their respective constituencies and appointed by the Board. They do not have to be current or alternate Board members; this allows constituencies to nominate individuals with expertise relevant to the committee.

The committees have been functional since early 2014. Since then, the GERF, SPC and CGPC have submitted a number of meeting reports and suggestions to the Board to inform and guide discussions and decision making. Consulted Secretariat staff and leaders noted that most decisions put forward by the committees at Board meetings are passed more easily and effectively than had been than had been the case in the past.[56]

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organization's mandate makes it easier than in case of the GPE to establish the relevance of the selected private sector representatives and their contributions not only to the Global Fund/GAVI, but to the (sub)sector that these are addressing.

[55] Source: GPE Website http://www.globalpartnership.org/board-committees, and Terms of Reference for the four committees.

[56] When asked the open ended question about the greatest improvements in the governance of GPE since 2010, nine surveyed Secretariat staff members named the creation of the four committees, which in their

Nevertheless, while eight of 18 interviewed Board members felt that the strategic functioning of the Board had improved somewhat with the creation of the committees, they also noted that the Board was still too tied up in operational deliberations.[57] The Board members linked this to the fact that none of the committees has decision-making power, which limits the extent to which they can save time and energy during Board meetings. However, at the 22-23 May 2015 Board meeting, the Board approved delegating authority to the CGPC to approve material revisions to grants and requests for accelerated funding (BOD/2015/05-06).

> **Box 11: Comparison with other organizations**
>
> Both the Global Fund and GAVI have in place a formal Committee structure. In 2011, the Global Fund delegated decision-making power to its three Committees, namely the Strategy, Investment and Impact Committee; Finance and Operational Performance Committee; and Audit and Ethics Committee. An interviewee with insight of the Global Fund noted that the committees now have a mandate to do the "heavy lifting," thus improving the efficiency of Board decision making. Consulted stakeholders indicated that as a result of their expanded mandate, certain Committees are now perceived to be "more powerful than others", and therefore more desirable for Board members to participate in.
>
> In a similar manner, GAVI delegates certain responsibilities to five standing Board committees, namely the Executive Committee; Programme and Policy Committee; Governance Committee; Investment Committee; Audit and Finance Committee. Additionally, an Advisory Committee is present to oversee organization and program evaluation. Interestingly, Committees comprise not only Board members and alternates, but also experts or partner representatives in certain cases.
>
> The CIF and IHP+ do not have formal committee structures, but both have delegated certain tasks to sub-groups.

Two interviewees[58] as well as four surveyed Secretariat staff specifically questioned the value-added of a Coordinating Committee with no decision making authority. (See Box 11 for comparisons with other organizations.)

The SPC and CGPC, each with 11 members, are relatively large given that the overall Board has only 19 members. This is positive in ensuring the representation of different constituencies, but, in the view of the evaluation team, may hinder the committee's ability to reach consensus and make recommendations to the Board.[59]

4.3.2 GPE's Relationship with the World Bank

Finding 8: **At the global level GPE has established itself as an entity whose programmatic work is (and is seen to be) more independent from the World Bank than in 2010.**

The 2010 evaluation of the FTI suggested that the Initiative: reduce its dependence on the World Bank and disentangle the Bank's various roles as Trustee, partner, and administrative entity; better guard against conflict of interest deriving from these different roles; and, overall, ensure a **clearer demarcation** between the FTI and the WB.

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view had strengthened the boards' focus and attention to particular issues, and, in case of the GERF and CGPC, led to "improved oversight over financial positioning and related allocation issues.

[57] Only one Board member felt the strategic functioning had not at all improved, while the remaining nine consulted members did not comment on this issue.

[58] One Board member and one Secretariat staff member.

[59] The Partnership is planning to conduct a full governance review (led by the GERF), including on the role and performance of the Board committees starting in July 2015.

In response to these recommendations, the Partnership commissioned an independent Hosting Review in 2012 to summarize costs and benefits of its affiliation with the World Bank. Based on the review findings, the GPE Board opted to maintain the hosting relationship (albeit to be improved), but did not rule out the possibility of the Secretariat eventually seeking full independence from the Bank. See Box 12 for comparisons with other organizations.

In 2013, the GPE Board and the World Bank agreed on a number of principles for a formal Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the two entities that would provide more flexibility to the CEO and Secretariat.[61] A draft MoU has been developed but has not yet been signed as the GERF Committee expressed

> **Box 12: Comparison with other organizations**
>
> Four of the six reviewed comparator organizations are housed within the World Bank (CGAP, CIFF, GEF, and IHP+). All four operate as independent entities while taking advantage of the World Bank's administrative structures. None of the organizations has experienced major disadvantages from the arrangement.
>
> GAVI, while initially housed by UNICEF in Geneva, evolved into an independent legal entity, partly in response to a large inflow of resources.[60]

reservations over remaining ambiguity around the GPE CEO's authority to implement Board decisions with regard to Secretariat budget, headcount and workplan, ambiguity in relation to who would conduct the CEO's performance review, and the statement that the Secretariat would continue to be bound by all WB policies, regardless of the source of funding.

Consulted Secretariat leadership and World Bank representatives agreed, however, that they regarded resolving these issues as a formality rather than a substantive disagreement, and noted that, overall, the relationship of the two organizations had clearly improved since 2010. They also stated that while the MoU has not been formalized, both parties have been acting as if was, which has allowed the Partnership to implement the following steps to establish a clearer demarcation between itself and the World Bank.

- The appointment of a Secretariat CEO (2013). The CEO is formally accountable to the World Bank for the Secretariat budget, but reports and seeks approval from the GPE Board only as regards partnership achievements and outcomes.

- An agreement (informal) that the GPE Board, not the WB, approves Secretariat workplans, staffing and budgets.[62]

- The introduction of a competitive hiring process for GPE staff that does not give preference to World Bank staff. According to interviews, this has raised some GPE Board members' trust in the independence and professional credibility of the Secretariat, as it no longer runs the risk of acting as a 'revolving door' for World Bank staff.

- Changing the GPE website domain and email addresses of Secretariat staff members to GPE-specific ones.

- Relocation of the GPE hosting arrangement under the Vice Presidential Unit (VPU) for Development Finance. Its previous location under the VPU Human Development, which includes responsibility for the education sector, had come with expectations that the VPU

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[60] Please see Volume IV, Appendix 1 (Review of Comparator Organizations) for further details.

[61] Available at http://www.globalpartnership.org/content/principles-agreed-hosting-mou-between-wb-and-gpe

[62] While in theory the World Bank still has the right to disapprove staff hiring decisions, it has not made use of this right, nor has it insisted on preference being given to WB internal staff.

would provide input to the Partnership's education agenda. This is no longer the case under the new arrangement, allowing for more programmatic independence of the Secretariat. Two former and current senior Secretariat staff noted that one drawback of the relocation is that the GPE Secretariat is drawing less upon the Bank's technical capacity as regards knowledge dissemination and learning.

As shown in Box 13, other aspects of the hosting arrangement have not changed and provide a number of benefits to the Partnership.

No significant changes were made to the role of the Bank as Trustee for the GPE Fund. Consulted GPE donors widely agreed that the World Bank's reputation for effective fund management, and its performance in the Trustee role, have positively influenced donor trust in the Global Partnership.

> **Box 13: Unchanged aspects of the hosting relationship with the World Bank and related benefits**
>
> Legal status: The Global Partnership has not been required to register as an independent legal entity; this has not only saved related costs, but also has practical benefits in terms of the Secretariat's ability to hire foreign nationals to work in the US-based Secretariat
>
> Infrastructure: The World Bank leases office space on behalf of the Partnership, paid for by the GPE Fund
>
> Access to legal support, financial management, IT services and equipment (at standard cost)

Overall, interviews with Board members, Secretariat and World Bank staff indicate that at the global level the noted changes have contributed to a stronger and more visible programmatic separation of the Partnership from the World Bank due to an operationally more independent Secretariat. Similarly, none of the interviewed stakeholders raised concerns that the World Bank unduly influences the Partnership's strategic direction [63] or that the hosting arrangement adversely affects GPE performance.

The risk of the World Bank being in a potential conflict of interest due to its various roles in the GPE was addressed through a Conflict of Interest Policy adopted by the Board in 2011. The policy is not specifically geared to the WB, but applies to all Board members and committee members when they are participating in GPE-related decision-making processes.[64]

4.4 GPE Management

4.4.1 Overview

The boundary between governance and management (see Box 14) is not "hard and fast"[66] and several issues that are relevant to GPE management functions were

> **Box 14: Management**
>
> Management refers to the day-to-day operation of the program within the context of the strategies, policies, processes, and procedures that have been established by the governing body. [65]

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[63] One of the common negative effects of hosting arrangement as noted in the Independent Assessment of the World Bank's Involvement in Global and Regional Partnership Programs, conducted by the WB's Independent Evaluation Group in 2011.

[64] Source: BOD/2011/11- DOC 09. Retrieved from: http://www.globalpartnership.org/content/policy-conflict-interest-1

[65] Sourcebook for Evaluating Global and Regional Partnership Programs. Indicative Principles and Standards. Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) World Bank, 2007.

[66] Ibid.

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discussed in section 4.2.[67] This section focuses on the extent to which organizational changes in the Partnership since 2010 have strengthened the capacity and performance of the GPE Secretariat in managing GPE activities and grant operations,[68] and of the Partnership as a whole in monitoring, reporting on, and eventually evaluating its progress and contributions to results.

4.4.2 GPE Secretariat

Evaluation data confirm the positive attributes of the Secretariat noted in the 2014 organizational review, which highlighted the passion of Secretariat staff members, their sense of mission, and willingness to be flexible.

Document review and stakeholder consultations also confirmed the areas for improvement in the Secretariat's capacity, structure and performance that were highlighted in the 2014 Organizational Review (see Box 15). Given that the Board and Secretariat leadership have already accepted and taken steps to address the recommendations of the

> **Box 15: Secretariat capacity gaps as per 2014 Organizational Review**
>
> An insufficient link between GPE strategy and operations
>
> Weak policy and technical leadership at the global level
>
> Overburdened country leads
>
> Conflicts of interest between advisory and quality assurance work
>
> Insufficient analytical capabilities
>
> Underpowered financial management capabilities
>
> Insufficient communications and knowledge management capabilities
>
> Gaps in leadership capabilities, especially around prioritization and planning

organizational review, [69] the evaluation does not reflect in depth on the noted capacity gaps, but focuses instead on the Secretariat's role and value added.

Finding 9: **Diverging views on the size, structure and technical capacity of the GPE Secretariat indicate a lack of clarity about its role and value added to the functioning of the Partnership.**

The number of GPE Secretariat staff increased significantly from 13 staff in 2009 to 62 in 2014 and 12 additional staff positions will be added in 2015. This growth and the evolution of the GPE grant portfolio during the same period are shown in Exhibit 4.1.

Exhibit 4.1 Evolution of the GPE Secretariat and GPE Portfolio (2009-2014)

Area of Change	Year						Relative change since 2009
	2009	**2010**	**2011**	**2012**	**2013**	**2014**	
Total Secretariat staff	13	19	32	36	46	62	+ 49 (+376%)

---

[67] E.g. the extent to which the GPE has formulated and used an overall strategy and implementation plan for day to day monitoring; and issues around monitoring partner compliance with the GPE Compact.

[68] The Secretariat has recently undergone an extensive organizational review (Evans 2014). Rather than duplicating this study, the evaluation draws upon it where and as relevant, and complements this with evidence collected during the evaluation.

[69] Immediate actions taken in response to the organizational review are described in a Memorandum from GPE Secretariat CEO Alice Albright to the GPE Board of Directors (26 November 2014). During its December 2014 meeting, the Board approved funding for 12 additional staff positions in the Secretariat.

Area of Change	Year						Relative change since 2009
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	
Number of DCP member countries in GPE	40	44	46	54	59	59	+19 (+47.5%)
Number of grants approved[70]	6	13	7	9 PIG 13 EPDG 11 PDG	29 PIG 14 EPDG 14 PDG	11 PIG 1 EPDG 5 PDG	
Number of DCPs categorized as FCAS (fragile, conflict affected, or both)	12	15	17	25	28	28	+16 (+133%)
Number of approved PIG to FCAS	2	5	5	6	9	2	NA
New grant commitments (in US$ millions)	211	594	153	490	1,031	462	NA
PIG disbursements (in US$ millions)	221.9	242.5	385.1	353.9	334.5	523.7	+301.8

Document review, interviews with Secretariat staff and Board members, and the survey of Secretariat staff show differing views of the Secretariat's growth.

- The 2014 Organizational Review[71] found that the increase in Secretariat staff only partly compensated for the parallel increase in demands on and workload of the Secretariat due to: the growth and diversification of the GPE portfolio, in particular the increase in FCAS, and in light of the demanding GPE reform agenda, which the Secretariat was tasked with operationalizing. This view was supported by interviewed Secretariat leadership and some surveyed Secretariat staff and by a review of the Terms of Reference for Senior Country Education Specialists (Country Leads).[72] Interviews with Board members and Secretariat leaders also indicate that servicing the increasingly active and diverse GPE Board has placed additional demands on the Secretariat.[73]

- The 2014 Organizational Review also argued that the GPE Secretariat continues to be comparatively small when measured in terms of the value of grant disbursements per staff member,[74] as well as in view of the share of staff employed in country facing roles.[75] This view was also emphasized by some interviewed and surveyed Secretariat staff and leaders.

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[70] Before 2012 Catalytic Fund Grant Agreements.

[71] Evans (2014)

[72] Since 2013 these include additional responsibilities related to providing support to Local Education Groups and contributing to the thematic clusters on the GPE's strategic objectives (e.g. by representing the Partnership in other international networks).

[73] Two consulted Board members commented that the GPE Secretariat's performance in servicing the Board had improved over the past years in terms of providing timely, well organized, and thematically relevant support to Board meetings. One Board member disagreed with this assessment, while others did not comment on the issue, implying that they did not see significant gaps in the Secretariat's performance.

[74] According to the 2014 Organizational Review (p.8), the latest figures for the Global Fund show this value to be around US$ 4.8 million and just over US$ 5 million in GAVI. In GPE, the value is around US$ 7.8 million, i.e. each staff member is handling higher volumes of funding than in other funds.

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- On the other hand, several consulted Board members, surveyed global partners, and some current and former Secretariat staff expressed concerns that the Secretariat is "getting too big" and that the Partnership might be getting too bureaucratic in light of the comparatively limited amounts disbursed by the partnership.[76] The consulted individuals did not elaborate on specific processes or functions that they thought were superfluous or unnecessarily rigid. These general expressions of concern over the size of the Secretariat may be related, at least in part, to the original ideal of a "light touch" and "lean" Secretariat that was envisaged when the FTI was created. However, the 2010 FTI evaluation noted that this ideal had never been reconciled with the extensive roles the Secretariat was required to perform to translate the FTI design into practice, and in fact recommended significantly strengthening the Secretariat.

Concerns about the continued growth of the Secretariat indicate a lack of clarity about the Secretariat's desired role and value added within the functioning of the Partnership.[77]

As regards the Secretariat's value added at the global level, stakeholder consultations[78] and document review indicate that the Secretariat has been the key driver and implementer of the vast GPE reform agenda implemented since 2010. Examples are provided throughout this report of positive Secretariat contributions during the period under review in matters of strategic leadership, monitoring and evaluation, country support, resource mobilization, and advocacy. At the same time, as explored in section 5.2 and also noted in the 2014 Organizational Review, the Secretariat has neither had a strong mandate, nor resources (including technical capacity) to make significant contributions in global level advocacy and leadership for education. Expanding the office of the CTO is hoped to strengthen the Secretariat's capacity in this regard. However, the Partnership has not yet clearly defined how contributions from the broader GPE Partnership are envisaged to complement the Secretariat's global level efforts (see section 5.2).[79]

Overall, the noted diverging views on the size and role of the Secretariat appear to be an indication of a broader issue, namely the existence of competing, but largely implicit theories of change for the Global Partnership overall (see finding 4 above). Whether the current (and still evolving) size and structure of the GPE Secretariat is and will remain fit for purpose will depend on the priorities outlined in the new GPE Strategic Plan 2016-2020, in particular: i) the relative emphasis that the Partnership, and thus the Secretariat, will give to the Partnership's grant making and its contributions in other areas (such as global advocacy and knowledge dissemination); and ii) decisions on how the role of the Secretariat Country Support Team will evolve in terms of supporting ESP implementation and monitoring.

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[75] According to the 2014 Organizational Review, in the Global Fund, around 45% of staff is engaged in grant management, which includes advisory and operational support to its country work, and, overall, the Global Fund claims that 70% of its staff is actively supporting country level work. In GPE, the equivalent is around 29% of staff.

[76] From inception in 2003 to December 2013, combined FTI and GPE approved funding totalled US$3.66 billion. In comparison, GAVI, for example approved $ 8.9 billion in grants from its inception in 2000 to March 2015.

[77] This was strongly noted in the 2014 Organizational Review.

[78] These included consultations with GPE Board members, stakeholders from all constituencies at the country level, as well as with Secretariat staff and leadership.

[79] This also includes efforts related to global fundraising.

4.4.3 Monitoring, Reporting on, and Evaluating GPE Progress

Finding 10: **Despite some improvements in monitoring and reporting at sector and grant level, the Global Partnership's ability to track and demonstrate its contributions to results has remained weak.**

The 2010 evaluation of the FTI noted weaknesses in monitoring, reporting and evaluating the FTI's effectiveness, and included the strong recommendation to develop a comprehensive, agreed upon overall results framework.

Between 2010 and 2014 the GPE Secretariat made a number of efforts to address noted shortcomings. Since 2013 these have largely been driven by a dedicated M&E unit within the GPE Secretariat (see Box 16),

> **Box 16: M&E Unit**
>
> The Secretariat requested Board approval for the establishment of an M&E unit as early as in November 2011. The Board did not explicitly refuse this request, but indicated the need to "draw upon existing partner monitoring resources to the maximum extent possible."[80] The M&E unit was established in 2013, following another proactive request from the Secretariat.
>
> However, from November 2013 to July 2014 the Head of the unit was pulled in to support the development of the New Funding Model, which took up a considerable part of his time. In June 2014 a Monitoring Unit has been created within the Country Support Team. A new Evaluation lead is currently (June 2015) under recruitment.

which has established more systematic and regular monitoring and reporting at both sector and grant portfolio level.

- Since 2013, the Secretariat has produced an annual GPE Portfolio Review, which constitutes an improvement in GPE's monitoring of its grant portfolio. The reviews focus on financial and administrative characteristics of the grant portfolio, but also provide some limited information on the development results achieved through individual grants. Reported results tend to be at the output level (e.g. number of schools constructed) and do not discuss GPE contributions to higher level results.

- The Results for Learning Report (produced annually since 2012) has systematized GPE reporting on sector level results by summarizing information on those outcomes defined in the 2012-2015 Strategic Plan for which data is available. The 2014 report combines information on sector level developments with information from the GPE Portfolio Review. However, like the Portfolio Review, it has not established an evidence-based link between GPE contributions and changes in sector-level indicators. The evaluation team did not find data on the use and/or user feedback on the Reports, or on the costs of producing the report.[81]

- The Sector Monitoring Initiative (SMI) was launched by the Secretariat in 2012 in collaboration with UNESCO IIEP, the Pole de Dakar and other development partners. While the Secretariat commented that the SMI has contributed to strengthening the monitorability of Education Sector Plans (see section 6.3), it has until now compiled only limited information on the effects of the SMI at country, regional or global levels.

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[80] BOD/2011/11

[81] As of late June 2015 the GPE Secretariat was in the process of compiling information on the cost of producing the Results for Learning Report.

- In relation to the New Funding Model approved in June 2014, a new policy for the (renamed) Education Sector Program Implementation Grants has been developed that details criteria for credibility, and the Secretariat has created a standard format for reporting on grant performance. It is currently too early to assess the use and benefits of this new template.

Despite these efforts, the Partnership continues to lack a comprehensive system and framework for monitoring, reporting upon, or evaluating progress towards results. In particular:

- **Lack of agreement over what the Global Partnership should hold itself accountable for**: This is a result of the absence of a clearly formulated and agreed upon understanding of the Partnership's functions (aside from its grant-making role) and where its contributions "fit" within a broader theory of how change happens at global and country levels (see section 4.2). While some GPE donor partners would like to see evidence of GPE contributions to sector level changes, the Partnership has not yet established if or how it contributes to such changes, or how these contributions could be measured. This is reflected to some extent in the reconstructed Theory of Change in section 2.2, which shows that the Partnership's action theory currently focuses on sector and program planning, but is not directly linked to outcome or impact level results.

- **Continued absence of a comprehensive, realistic results framework**: The Implementation Plan for the Strategic Plan 2012-15 includes a results framework with results and indicators at impact, outcome and process (i.e. partnership) levels. However, the absence of available UIS data has, until now, prevented the Secretariat from monitoring progress towards several of these outcomes. Similarly, the partnership-related results statements and indicators have not been systematically used to monitor and report on GPE performance. A proposal put forward by the Secretariat's Global Good Practice team in 2012/13 to invest US$ 8 million annually on M&E, including on data collection in relation to the Strategic Plan results and indicators, was rejected by the Board.[82] During the period under review the Board has not inquired about, or tasked the Secretariat with reviewing the usefulness of the existing results framework.[83] See Box 17.

> **Box 17: Comparison with other organizations**
>
> All six reviewed **comparator organizations** have struggled (and often continue to do so) with issues around attribution of results. Nevertheless, all six have results frameworks with indicators that are used as the basis for regular monitoring and reporting on both programmatic and organizational (partnership) objectives.
>
> At Gavi, M&E is perceived as a cross-cutting function, with the Secretariat, Vaccine Alliance partners, and countries all playing roles. The Secretariat is ultimately responsible for coordinating M&E. M&E occupies approximately 14% of the Gavi budget.
>
> At the Global Fund, monitoring and evaluation activities account for 4% of expenditure.

---

[82] US $ 8 million per annum would have constituted 2.3% of GPE implementation grant disbursements in 2012, 2.4% in 2013, and 1.5 % in 2014. Caution needs to be applied, however, in comparing these figures with those noted for other organizations in Box 17, given that the bases for calculating these percentages vary by organization depending on the types of available data.

[83] According to interviewed Secretariat leaders, the development of the Implementation Plan for the Strategic Plan (2013) was driven mainly by the need for a strategic document to present to potential donors (the Secretariat's Manager of Partnership and External Relations took the lead in its development) and less by the intent to have a workable plan that the Secretariat would implement and monitor.

- **Lack of clarity about roles, responsibilities and processes** for performance and financial monitoring and oversight at global and country level.[84]
  - The Secretariat has, until now, merged the functions of grant-related advisory work and grant oversight.[85] This puts country leads in a potential position of conflict of interest given that they have to provide quality assurance of grant proposals, the development of which they have supported.
  - The 2014 Organizational Review noted the absence of quick and comprehensive access to data on grant performance due to: i) a lack of clearly assigned responsibilities for sector monitoring (orphaned between the Country Support and M&E teams); and ii) the absence of both dedicated responsibilities for overall grant management, and of a basic information system. As noted in section 1.3, data collection for this evaluation was negatively affected by these gaps, e.g. inconsistent grant reporting formats.
  - Until now, Supervising and Managing Entities have used inconsistent formats to track and report on grant performance, making it difficult for the Secretariat to synthesize information in timely ways. The Secretariat has developed new, more unified reporting guidelines, which, once applied, are hoped to address this issue.
  - Absence of clearly defined theoretical and practical links between grant monitoring (as conducted by SE/ME and DCP government) and sector monitoring (as captured in Joint Sector Reviews), contributing to a lack of data on the (likely) contributions of the GPE grant to ESP implementation and results.
  - The GPE Board and the Country Grants and Performance Committee have played no significant role in assessing and tracking grant performance in programmatic terms, e.g. whether there is evidence of ESPs being nationally owned, and whether GPE grants lead to ESP implementation. Instead, discussions have focused on operational issues such as the timeliness of grant disbursements.

At the same time, there are steadily increasing demands from some GPE donors for robust evidence of the Partnership's successes and challenges, and considerable pressure from some donors for a rigorous impact evaluation of the Global Partnership in as soon as two years. See also Box 18.

Interviewed GPE Board members[87] and the Secretariat leadership team noted that the Partnership is unlikely to keep, let alone increase, levels of donor funding if it does not demonstrate its contributions to outcome or, ideally, impact level results. It is,

> **Box 18: Donor Requests for Results Framework**
>
> In the past two years the GPE Secretariat has been asked by at least two donors to provide progress reports using a **bilaterally agreed results framework,** developed in collaboration with one donor, to track progress against a set of indicators deemed most relevant to demonstrate GPE contributions, including information on the quality of country level Education Sector Plans.[86]
>
> These donors indicated their willingness to accept reporting under the new overall GPE results framework that will be developed for the SP 2016-2020, provided it meets their information needs.

---

[84] As outlined in the Memorandum from GPE Secretariat CEO Alice Albright to the GPE Board of Directors (26 November 2014) the Secretariat has taken some first steps to address the first three of the following bullet points, i.e. by redeploying Secretariat staff to better address issues of Quality Assurance, and in view of Results and Reporting.

[85] As noted in the 2014 Organizational Review (p.11f) and confirmed by document review and stakeholder consultations conducted for this evaluation.

[86] At the time of writing (April 2015) the M&E unit was completing a comprehensive review of ESPs to determine if they meet basic levels of quality.

[87] Seven out of 18 consulted Board members.

however, only since late 2014 that the GPE Board is paying more explicit attention to the need to strengthen the Partnership's ability to track and report upon progress towards results. [88] At its meetings in May 2015, the GPE Board acknowledged the importance of a Results Framework for the new Strategic Plan, and tasked the Secretariat with submitting a draft such framework for consultations at this October 2015 meeting, with the intent to finalize it in December 2015. At the same time, decisions on a full corporate monitoring and evaluation strategy are not envisaged to be taken before 2016. [89]

---

[88] This is reflected in the Risk Management Matrix developed by the GERF Committee and in the SPC review of the SP Implementation Plan, both of which highlight the need to strengthen the GPE's ability to define and track its (envisaged and actual) contributions to results.

[89] Source: GPE Meeting of the Board of Directors, May 22-23, 2015. Seoul. Final Decisions. BOD/2015/05-13 (2.)

5 GPE Global Effectiveness

5.1 Overview

This chapter presents evaluation findings on the Partnership's role and contributions deriving from its envisaged role as a "global leader, advocate and convener for education" as noted in the GPE Charter. This includes, in section 5.2, reflections on the Partnership's role in and contributions to the creation or dissemination of global or cross-country public goods,[90] and in relation to global advocacy for education. Section 5.3 then analyzes GPE's effect or additionality on the volume, flow and quality of global financial resources for basic education and education overall for GPE partner countries. Both sections incorporate observations on the Partnership's use of its convening power to facilitate results.

5.2 GPE as a Producer of Global Public Goods and Advocate for Education

In the absence of clearly formulated and agreed upon results and indicators for the Global Partnership's envisaged contributions at the global level, the evaluation team based its assessment on three areas noted in the GPE Strategic Plan (2012-2015) as shown in Box 19.

> **Box 19: Envisaged Global Contributions**
>
> The Strategic Plan 2012-2015 notes that the Partnership will leverage the reach, skills, leadership, and resources of its partners by:
> - Increasing the visibility of education as a key strategy for the health, wealth and stability of nations
> - Continuously improving through innovation and by promoting best practice
> - Developing and promoting harmonized education goals and metrics and improving development effectiveness.

Finding 11: **Efforts to support the development of global or cross-country public goods have been negatively affected by differing views within the Partnership on its role in supporting such goods, and by the absence of a coherent strategy that articulates GPE's comparative advantage in this area.**

As per its Strategic Plan, GPE aspires to contribute to the creation of global or cross-country public goods by continuously improving through innovation, promoting best practices, and supporting harmonized education goals and metrics.[91] To that end, the Partnership has made several attempts to cultivate and share knowledge, tools and best practices to help strengthen partner capacity, albeit with mixed results.[92]

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[90] The term global/cross-country refers to products, including tools, knowledge and information, that are relevant to and can help strengthen the capacity of stakeholders, institutions and systems in all, or at least a considerable number of countries, and which stakeholders can obtain at no or only a modest cost.

[91] This latter issue is closely linked to the Partnership's potential role in convening education stakeholders in order to work towards jointly agreed upon goals and metrics.

[92] 25.7% of surveyed Secretariat staff agreed with the statement that changes made since 2010 had improved GPE support for conducting and disseminating research on EFA issues, another 28.6 % noted that the changes had made no difference, 20% disagreed with the statement, and 25.7% of staff selected 'don't' know.

The first such attempt was made under the FTI in the form of the Education Program Development Fund (EPDF). Established in 2004, the EPDF provided funding "for priority studies, capacity building, national outreach and stakeholder consultations."[93] As noted in the 2010 FTI evaluation, the performance of the EPDF was difficult to ascertain and there was "insufficient evidence to make a global determination of EPDF accomplishments."[94]

In November 2010, the EPDF was abolished and the Global and Regional Activities (GRA) program established to "engage education stakeholders in applying new knowledge and evidence-based practices to resolve education challenges."[95] Both mechanisms address issues of capacity development and producing relevant research, but the mandate of the GRA is more focused. The EPDF had encompassed supporting countries in the development of Education Sector Plans and capacity development activities, and thus issues that with the advent of the GPE Fund and the introduction of Education Sector Plan Development Grants were now covered otherwise.

The GRA solely funds research activities managed by GPE partners, with $60 million originally set aside for the program. From its creation to September 2014, the share of GRA funds approved as a percentage of all GPE grants approved during this period was approximately 2.7%.[96]These activities correspond to three of the Partnership's ten thematic focus areas: learning outcomes, out-of-school children, and education financing.[97] Volume IV, Appendix 3 provides a detailed analysis of the relevance and performance of the GRA to date.

The process for selecting GRA recipients was regarded by grantees as highly inefficient and poorly designed. Stakeholders reported lengthy delays, as Board Members took an extremely hands-on approach due to concerns about quality of the process and applications. One interviewee noted that "much more scrutiny was given to (GRA) grants of one million dollars than program implementation grants that were more than twenty times as large." Consulted Board members expressed the view that such involvement was necessary to ensure technical rigour. The impartiality of the grant allocation process was also questioned by interviewees, who noted that Board members approved grants to GPE member organizations (including their own), implying a potential conflict of interest. The end result of this protracted process was an erosion of confidence in the GRA program among Board members, who, after two funding cycles totalling US$ 33 million, voted not to reallocate the remaining US$ 27 million. At present the GRA is still active insofar as grantees are carrying out work, but no further rounds of funding are foreseen.

Given that all GRA funded initiatives are still underway, it is too early to assess their effects on informing or influencing actors at global or country level. Nevertheless, early evidence suggests that GRA funding is supporting some promising applied research in areas highly relevant to the GPE focus areas. For example, in Senegal, the Ministry of Education has used GRA financing to build capacity in public and external financing analysis, with initial analysis feeding into redefinition of the criteria for school grant allocations for 2015.

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[93]*Accelerating progress towards quality universal primary education: Framework.* FTI, 2004.

[94] FTI Evaluation, Appendix 3, page 191

[95] GPE website.

[96] In comparison, during its active period the share of the EPDF was approximately 7.8% of committed grants. However, only approximately 25% of EPDF resources were used to support individual studies, and 2% for knowledge sharing, while the bulk of resources (43%) went to preparatory ESP work and 30% to capacity development work, which are now covered by Program Implementation and ESP Development Grants.

[97] Education financing is one of the GPE strategic goals, and is relevant to the focus area of Aid Effectiveness.

While GRA grants are meant to produce global and regional public goods, they also aim to help build national capacity by encouraging that most research be conducted through GPE country partners, and by addressing specific country challenges. To date, however, GRA products have not been consistently aligned with GPE Program Implementation Grants in the respective countries.[101] Instead, GRA-supported efforts have largely run in parallel, and without drawing upon potential benefits of engaging with, for example, Local Education Groups (LEGs). [102]

In addition to the GRA, GPE has supported a variety of other activities to generate and/or share (new) knowledge and tools with the intent to, strengthen partner capacities. These include:

- The development of guidelines for ESP planning ,jointly developed with IIEP, as well as of education sector analysis guidelines.

- To support the implementation of the 2012-2015 Strategic Plan, GPE created Communities of Practice (CoP) in relation to each of its thematic priority areas.[103] See Box 20.

- Secretariat staff participation in a variety of global working groups including on learning metrics (see following finding).

> **Box 20: GPE Communities of Practice**
>
> The specific purpose of these groups and their envisaged way of how to operate remained undefined. According to Secretariat leaders, the work of the CoP became increasingly remote from other GPE activities, and did not lead to tangible benefits or products. [98] The one exception to this is, however, work conducted in relation to the priority area of girls' education, where the collaboration of the GPE Secretariat and UNGEI led to the development of gender sensitive sector planning tools, as well as to a number of Discussion Briefs.[99] In December 2014 the CoP were reframed as Technical Reference Groups that, according to their TOR, are expected to be task-based advisory and consultative mechanisms that are proactive and responsive, and focused on GPE core business (financing and country-level processes for ESP development and monitoring).[100] The Groups are not yet active, and while there is a plan to convene them for a consultation meeting on the new Strategic Plan, it is not yet clear how the Partnership will work with them past this point.

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[98] A document provided by the Secretariat indicated that the now dissolved Community of Practice on early grade numeracy had provided various DCPs with technical advice that in some cases resulted in changes to the country's numeracy-related strategies and/or approaches. As the evaluation did not conduct in-depth data collection in the noted countries, the team was unable to verify this information.

[99] E.g. on Cash Transfer Programs for Gender Equality in Girl's Secondary Education.

[100] Terms of Reference for the Technical Reference Groups are available under http://www.globalpartnership.org/content/terms-reference-technical-reference-groups

[101] Although GRA grants are meant to produce global and regional public goods, they are country-facing insofar as the research is intended to be largely conducted by (primarily GPE) country partners in order to build capacity and respond to country challenges. Accompanying lessons, tools, etc. are then expected to be disseminated to a wider regional or global set of partners.

[102] One notable exception is a project to promote school based health interventions to improve learning outcomes and access to education, in which the World Bank in its role as SE, has made concerted effort to liaise with GPE focal points and LEGs in relevant countries, resulting in LEG members attending project workshops and significant dialogue regarding the inclusion of school based interventions in the education sector plans.

[103] The initial Community of Practice on 'learning' later split into sub-groups dedicated to numeracy, literacy, and early childhood respectively.

- GPE- supported thematic workshops and meetings at global and regional levels,[104] in some, but not all cases as part of the Sector Monitoring Initiative (see section 6.3).

- Similarly, the CSEF includes a knowledge exchange component, that encourages and supports National Education Coalitions to capture and share lessons on good practices related to their work as contributors to, and advocates for education.

- The annual Results for Learning Reports, which includes selected examples of good practice deriving from GPE member countries; [105] as well as information shared through the GPE website, blog, and social media.

While all of these contributions are relevant in relation to GPE's mission, stakeholder consultations conducted for this evaluation provided only very limited information on the specific effects: Several country-level stakeholders who participated in regional or global meetings organized or co-organized by the Partnership provided positive feedback on these events, which they described as relevant and effective opportunities for learning and South-South exchange. Others commented positively on the various tools developed by the Secretariat. To date, however, neither the Secretariat nor other stakeholders have systematically tracked or reported on results deriving from these multiple knowledge-generating or knowledge-sharing efforts.

More fundamentally, GPE's efforts to support the creation and/or dissemination of global public goods have been hampered by the lack of a clearly defined strategy that would: i) provide coherence to the many individual initiatives and activities noted above and clarify how they are envisaged to contribute to addressing persisting capacity gaps among national actors [106] ii) outline why, where and how the Partnership intends to support the creation or dissemination of global public goods; iii) defines the Partnership's comparative advantage and clearly articulates the expected **roles** and contributions to this agenda not only of the Secretariat, but also of the broader GPE membership at both global and country levels, and iv) clarifies how this role of the Partnership draws upon and complements its country level engagement.

While consulted stakeholders generally agreed that GPE should have a stronger role than it currently does in disseminating relevant research or good practices, interviews with global thought leaders and

> **Box 21: Stakeholder quotes**
>
> "Global public goods are the core business of UNESCO and others, not GPE". Board Member
>
> "GPE should play a central role in global public goods, because it is an area that is being neglected. It is difficult to attract funding from bilaterals to global public goods and thus important to create an environment where people can share ideas". Global Stakeholder

Board Members, and the survey of global partners revealed a diversity of views as to whether GPE should support the creation of any kinds of global (or cross-country) public goods (GPG) such as tools and studies**.** Of the interviewed Board members who expressed a view, 60% supported the notion of GPE playing some role in facilitating the production of GPGs and 40% felt that such work

---

[104] Since 2012 the GPE Secretariat has (co)organized at least nine such events, covering topics such as "All Children Reading", "Affordable, Quality Pre-primary Education", "Getting the Right Books to the Kids", and "Data and Metrics".

[105] At the same time, several national stakeholders, e.g. in Vietnam, noted disappointment over the fact that they had not been called upon by the Partnership to share success stories deriving from their work supported by GPE funding.

[106] In future the various initiatives noted above will come under the CTO role and be managed by cross-unit teams to ensure that they are coherent and closely linked to the GPE country level platform.

is better left to other actors such as UNESCO and UNICEF (see Box 21). [107] At the Board meeting in May 2015, the Board directed the Secretariat to further postpone any work on the Partnership's global role related to knowledge, innovation and/or advocacy until after December 2015, i.e. until after the development of the new Strategic Plan. [108]

At the country level, almost all consulted stakeholders were unaware that the Partnership played or intended to play any role in this regard, but expressed general interest in any kind of knowledge products that might help them address education sector challenges.

Finding 12:   GPE has made some contributions to enhancing the global visibility of education but has not notably used its convening power to leverage the strengths of its partners in related advocacy work.

The GPE Strategic Plan 2012-2015 notes that the Partnership aimed to increase the visibility not only of education in general, but specifically the role of education as a key "strategy for the health, wealth and stability of nations." The SP Implementation Plan does not elaborate on how the Partnership would accomplish this, and includes no objectives or targets in this regard. However, document review and consultations with Secretariat staff and global stakeholders show that during the period under review the GPE Secretariat and Board Chair made a number of efforts to raise the visibility of the Partnership and/or of basic education. These efforts included bilateral visits and keynote presentations to various audiences; efforts around preparing for and advertising the two GPE replenishment conferences; work conducted in relation to the GRA program; rebranding GPE and renewing the Partnership's website accordingly; and increasing GPE Secretariat engagement in various global dialogue and advocacy mechanisms as listed in Box 22.[109]

> **Box 22: Global dialogue forums and working groups in which the GPE Secretariat participates**
>
> Numeracy for Development Community of Practice
>
> Education For All (EFA) Steering Committee
>
> Learning Metrics Task Force
>
> Global Reading Network
>
> Education Communications Group (co-chair)
>
> UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) Learning Outcomes Board
>
> Million Books Initiative (Norway/USAID/DFID-led)
>
> International Network on Education in Emergencies
>
> Education in Emergencies: Education cannot wait (co-convener)
>
> Interagency group working on a proposed Global Humanitarian Fund
>
> UNGEI - Collaboration on Gender Sensitive Planning in Education Building Evidence in Education
>
> Global Education Cluster Working Group
>
> United Nations Global Education First Initiative
>
> Global Business Coalition for Education

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[107] Already in 2009 a UNESCO paper on "Scaling up aid for education. Lessons from the Education for All Fast Track Initiative (FTI)" noted that "many FTI partners have argued for a greater role for UNESCO and its institutes in order to build on their comparative advantage" in relation to the objective of tackling the systemic and institutional issues that continue to impede long term capacity development in the sector. (p. 27.)

[108] Following the decision to stop further GRA grant allocations, the Secretariat, upon a request from the Board, developed a paper on innovation, knowledge gaps and regional programmes (November 2013). This paper was never formally adopted or rejected by the Board, and the Secretariat temporarily postponed further efforts in this regard until the arrival of the new CTO in 2014.

[109] For a discussion of GPE contributions to country-level advocacy for education through the Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF), please see chapter 6 as well as Volume IV, Appendix 4.

The Partnership's diverse governance and global reach are widely seen to enhance its credibility, legitimacy, and its (potential) ability to convene partners and optimize their individual and collective contributions to and influence on (basic) education.[110] Nevertheless, feedback from consulted global stakeholders indicates that while the GPE Secretariat is a respected partner in and contributor to these forums, it is not widely seen as providing leadership. Two stakeholders noted, for example, that the Partnership had not played a strong role in the process of shaping the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals agenda for education. While two GPE partners (UNESCO, UNICEF) have been the main drivers of this process, there is little indication that the Partnership has leveraged the strengths of these partners in relation to the post-2015 agenda. This links to the observation that, to date, almost all responsibility for the Partnership's visibility and contributions in terms of global advocacy for education has been (implicitly) assigned to the Board Chair and the Secretariat. Until the arrival of the CTO in 2014 the Secretariat did, however, not have the type of technical resources in house that would have allowed it to play a more pronounced leadership role. More importantly, the role of the broader partnership in relation to advocacy work has remained undefined.

Document review and interviews with the Secretariat leadership team, Board members and global thought leaders indicate that there are considerable expectations (or aspirations) for the Global Partnership to take on a more pronounced global leadership role in basic education.[112] Similar to other global initiatives (e.g. in the health sector), this role is seen by some to effectively lock together the functions of providing (or identifying new sources of) significant financing for education, and other key functions such as knowledge, innovation, monitoring results, as well as advocacy for education in order to "galvanize and coordinate global effort to deliver a good quality education" as envisaged in the GPE mission.[113] The GPE Secretariat

> **Box 23: Comparison with other organizations**
>
> Both the Global Fund, and GAVI, focus on a very specific and limited sub-section of the health sector by addressing either selected diseases (Global Fund) or a distinct preventative measure, i.e. vaccination in case of GAVI. Similarly, CGAP is focused on the specific issue of financial inclusion.
>
> Within its area of specialization, the Global Fund is focusing primarily on the financing side of global efforts around HIV/AIDS, and Malaria, while global advocacy and technical assistance around HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria are being led by Roll Back Malaria, UNAIDS, and the Stop TB Partnership respectively.
>
> In case of GAVI, its comparatively narrow mandate has allowed the organization to carve out a clearly focused role for itself in view of its advocacy work. [111]

---

[110] This was noted by the Secretariat leadership team as well as by one interviewed global thought leader. In the survey of global partners, 10 of 85 partners used terms such as "unique global forum", "key global player" and "fills a critical gap" when describing the GPE's role in the global development architecture.

[111] Schäferhoff et al (2015) note that currently an average of only approximately 3% of donor assistance for education is spent on the global functions (creating global public goods, leadership and stewardship, managing cross-border externalities), compared to 21% in the health sector.

[112] This desire, as well as the current absence of strong sector leadership, are reflected in the May 2015 Incheon Declaration (deriving from the World Education Forum), which recognizes GPE as a "multi-stakeholder financing platform for education to support the implementation of the agenda according to the needs and priorities of the countries" and recommends that GPE be part of a future global coordination mechanism. Note, however, that GPE is primarily described in its role as a financing mechanism. Available at: https://en.unesco.org/world-education-forum-2015/incheon-declaration .

[113] This view is reflected in: J. Sachs and G. Schmidt-Traub (2014): Financing Sustainable Development: Implementing the SDGs through Effective Investment Strategies and Partnerships. Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN). Available at: http://unsdsn.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Full-FSD-draft-for-public-consultation_clean.pdf

has acknowledged that the Partnership is not yet fulfilling all of these functions, but that it is on the right track to do so.[114]

The review of comparator organizations (see Box 23) indicates that whether the Partnership is likely to be able to play a more clearly pronounced leadership role in any area, be it education financing or advocacy, may be dependent not only on the Partnership's financial and technical capacity, but also on the scope and nature of its mandate.

5.3 GPE Financing

From its inception in 2003 to December 2014, GPE approved funding totaling US$ 4.1 billion to support the implementation of education sector plans in 52 countries, of which 61% (US$ 2.5 billion) had been disbursed. During the period under review (2010-2014), GPE approved approximately US$ 2.7 billion. The introduction of pledging conferences in 2011 was an important post-2010 development intended to strengthen GPE resource mobilization efforts.

The first pledging conference in Copenhagen in October 2011 was attended by representatives of 52 donor and developing country governments, multilateral, civil society and private sector organizations. The conference resulted in 57 pledges totalling US$ 1.5 billion towards the envisaged target of US$ 2.5 billion before the end of the three-year replenishment period.[115] Additional contributions following the conference brought overall resources mobilized up to approximately US$ 2 billion.

The second replenishment conference, hosted by the European Commission in Brussels in June 2014, was attended by more than 800 participants from 91 countries and resulted in 85 financial pledges and policy commitments.[116] Donors have pledged US$ 2.1 billion, thus far falling short of the target of US$ 3.5 billion, though it is worth noting that the target is over four years. Developing country governments pledged US$ 26 billion in support of education over the replenishment period. Two private foundations, the Children's Investment Fund Foundation (CIFF) and Dubai Cares, pledged donations for the first time to the GPE Fund, totaling US$ 23 million.

Since 2010, there have been notable shifts in the relative share of GPE funding by donor. Between 2004 and 2009, the Netherlands was the largest contributor to the Partnership (32%) followed by the UK (20%) and Spain (17%), as shown in Exhibit 5.1 below. Since 2010, both Spain and the Netherlands have significantly reduced their contributions to GPE, mostly due to shifts in aid policies. The UK has continued its strong commitment to GPE and is now the largest contributor, although the UK's continued support is also conditional upon other donors also committing a specific proportion of all resources.[117] The decrease in contributions from previous large donors has been mitigated by an increase in contributions from the EC, Australia, and Sweden.

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[114] GPE (2014): Financing Education for All Children: An Ambitious Partnership, Not a New Fund. Available at: www.globalpartnership.org/fr/download/file/fid/46880%20

[115] Pledging Conference Summary Report, 2011, p. 2

[116] GPE Final Pledge Report: Second Replenishment Pledging Conference

[117] The UK made a pledge of up to £300 million over 4 years, contingent upon continued GPE reform, support from other donors, and its contribution not exceeding 15% of the total amount pledged.

Exhibit 5.1 Donor Contributions to GPE, pre and post 2010

Donor contributions to GPE, pre-2010

Others 11%
Ireland 3%
Denmark 3%
Sweden 4%
Norway 10%
Spain 17%
United Kingdom 20%
Netherlands 32%

Donor contributions to GPE, post-2010

Netherlands 9%
Others 14%
EC 7%
Australia 13%
Ireland 1%
Denmark 11%
Sweden 10%
Norway 7%
Spain 4%
United Kingdom 24%
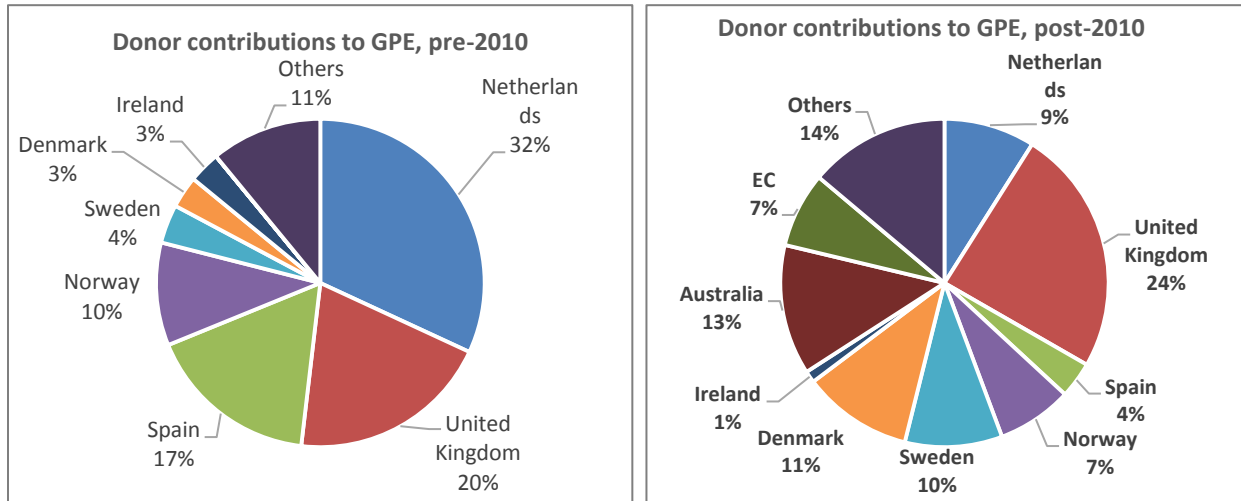
The Partnership's resource mobilization efforts have facilitated a steady growth in the amount disbursed via program implementation grants (PIG) from the pre-2010 period, with total disbursements increasing from nearly US$ 1.4 billion to US$ 2.7 billion. During the 2010-2014 period, on average 13.6 grants were approved per year, as compared to 6.6 in the pre-2010 period.

Exhibit 5.2 Commitments and Disbursements of Program Implementation Grants
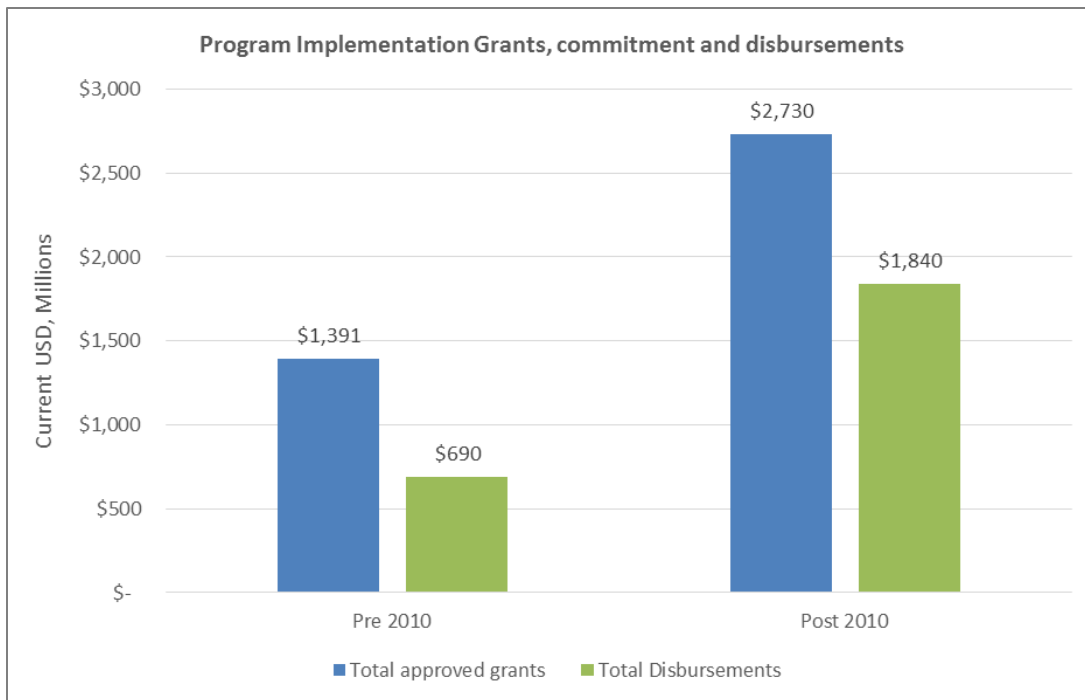
Program Implementation Grants, commitment and disbursements

Current USD, Millions

Pre 2010: Total approved grants $1,391; Total Disbursements $690
Post 2010: Total approved grants $2,730; Total Disbursements $1,840

■ Total approved grants ■ Total Disbursements

Finding 13: **By 2012, the Global Partnership established itself as the fifth largest financier of basic education, disbursing US$ 354 million.[118] Despite this development, there is no strong evidence to suggest that it has generated significant additional donor funding for basic education.**

Since reaching a peak in 2009, aid disbursements to basic education have decreased by 9%, from US$ 6 billion to US$ 5.4 billion in 2013 (2012 constant US$.)[119] From 2010 to 2013, bilateral aid disbursements, which account for 67% of total aid to basic education, decreased by 5% (US$ 198 million). Similarly, multilateral aid to basic education decreased by 33% between 2010 and 2013. This decrease stands in contrast to the steady increase in aid to basic education during the pre-2010 period. According to interviews with GPE donors, the decline in aid to basic education was caused by many factors, including: that education champions have not adequately "made the case" for education, competing demand for aid by other sectors (especially health), and reallocation to other education sub-sectors.

Among GPE's major donor partners, 12 decreased aid to basic education between 2010 and 2013.[120]

Exhibit 5.3 Aid to Basic Education, 2002-2013[121]

Source: OECD-DAC CRS

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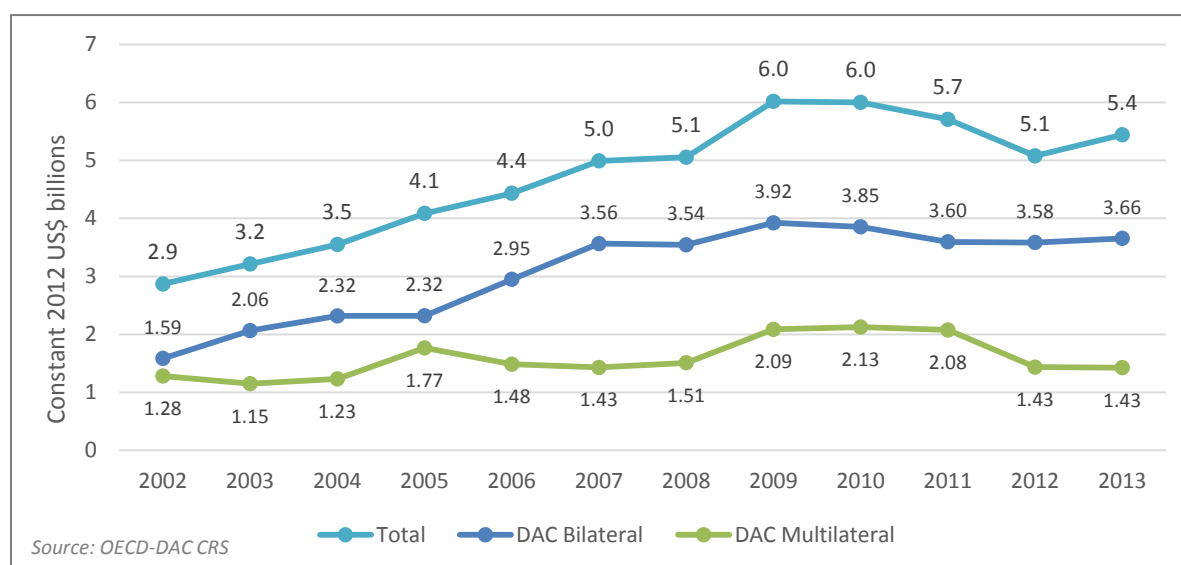
[118] The top five donors, in order, according to our calculations are as follows: US, UK, EU Institutions, IDA and GPE (OECD-DAC).

[119] Aid figures are calculated using GMR methodology: basic education = 50% of aid to education at level unspecified + 10% of general budget support + basic education. Total figures include only multilateral and DAC countries.

[120] Aid figures from Russia are not included due to lack of data. South Korea, GPE's 21st donor partner, is not included in this analysis.

[121] GPE did not report to the DAC at the time of analysis. However, GPE disbursements are subsumed within the DAC database because donors indirectly report GPE contributions under "bilateral or regional unspecified" lines. Total aid includes disbursements from non-DAC members such as UAE and Kuwait, whose aid is not captured under the bilateral lines. As a result, DAC Bilateral and Multilateral lines do not add up to the total aid figures in Exhibit 5.3.

Despite the decline in total aid to basic education between 2010 and 2013, GPE disbursements increased by 33%, from US$ 251.9 million to US$ 334.2 million. As a result, GPE has become an increasingly important financier for basic education among its grant-receiving partners. GPE disbursements as a percent of total aid to basic education among GPE grant-receiving countries increased from 12% in 2004 to 18% in 2013 (see Exhibit 5.4). On average, GPE disbursements as a share of total aid to basic education increased slightly from 19% pre-2010 to 21% post-2010.

Exhibit 5.4 Aid to Basic Education and GPE Disbursement among DCPs[122]

Aid to Basic Education among GPE grant receiving DCPs, disbursements in constant 2012 USD, millions										
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Number of DCPs who received a										
GPE disbursement	5	9	12	16	15	23	24	31	31	40
Aid to basic education	133.5	316.7	319.5	457.5	631.4	1086.5	914.8	1208.5	1291.3	1513.9
GPE Disbursements	18.5	69.8	60.9	133.7	220.1	232.7	251.9	375.9	353.9	334.2
GPE + Aid to basic education	152.1	386.5	380.3	591.2	851.4	1319.1	1166.7	1584.4	1645.3	1848.0
GPE Share of total	12%	18%	16%	23%	26%	18%	22%	24%	22%	18%
Source: OECD-DAC CRS										

Despite notable increases from countries such as Australia and the UK, the total volume of aid from GPE donor partners has decreased since 2010.[123] The largest decrease in funding was from the Netherlands, which decreased from 7.3% of total disbursements in 2006-09 to 2.5% post-2010.

Taking into account all GPE donor countries, between 2010 and 2013, average disbursements to basic education among GPE donor members decreased from US$ 224 million to US$ 208 million per year. Similarly, the average contribution to GPE among the same donors also decreased by US$ 8 million, from US$ 29 million to US$21 million - a decrease driven primarily by the EC, Sweden, and Spain.

For some donors, their decrease in bilateral aid to basic education coincided with increased GPE commitments, as some donors perceived GPE as a channel to extend their geographic reach as they ramped down total funding. This is the case in countries such as Belgium and Denmark, where increases in GPE contributions represented a significant portion (nearly half) of the total decrease in bilateral aid to basic education, suggesting at least some degree of substitution. For Canada, the EU, Spain, Italy, Netherlands, and Sweden, aid to basic education and GPE contributions both decreased, while only Australia, Japan, Switzerland, the UK, and the US increased contributions to the Global Partnership *and* increased their aid to basic education (see Exhibit 5.5).

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[122] Only countries who received a GPE disbursement that year were included in the analysis. Analysis used the same methodology as the GMR. Although GPE resources are subsumed within DAC data, very little is captured at the country level. Most GPE contributions are reported by donors under "bilateral and regional unspecified" lines and not under countries. Micro data also checked for double counting.

[123] Japan's large 2013 figure is due a significant increase in general budget support, accounting for over 50% of Japan's total aid figure.

Exhibit 5.5 Donor Contributions to GPE and Aid to Basic Education[124]

Aid to basic education and GPE, GPE donor members, constant 2012 USD, millions

	Aid to basic education, disbursements				Contributions to GPE				Combined
	2010	**2013**	**% change 2009-2013**	**Net change**	**2010**	**2013**	**% change 2009-2013**	**Net change**	**Total Change**
Belgium	30.5	20.3	-34%	-10.2 ⅄	7.2	11.6	61%	4.4 ⋏	-5.9 ⅄
Canada	231.36	147.2	-36%	-84.2 ⅄	24.9	0.0	-100%	-24.9 ⅄	-109.1 ⅄
Denmark	58.61	13.0	-78%	-45.6 ⅄	26.2	50.9	94%	24.6 ⋏	-21.0 ⅄
EU Institutions	464.8	376.0	-19%	-88.8 ⅄	106.7	3.1	-97%	-103.6 ⅄	-192.4 ⅄
France	378.87	189.5	-50%	-189.4 ⅄	1.8	23.0	1159%	21.2 ⋏	-168.2 ⅄
Germany	312.42	250.4	-20%	-62.1 ⅄	6.9	9.3	34%	2.4 ⋏	-59.7 ⅄
Ireland	33.79	17.0	-50%	-16.8 ⅄	5.2	6.9	33%	1.7 ⋏	-15.1 ⅄
Italy	20.35	19.1	-6%	-1.3 ⅄	4.2	2.0	-51%	-2.1 ⅄	-3.4 ⅄
Netherlands	264.63	45.9	-83%	-218.7 ⅄	50.3	41.2	-18%	-9.1 ⅄	-227.8 ⅄
Norway	205.55	187.2	-9%	-18.4 ⅄	19.1	39.5	107%	20.4 ⋏	2.0 ⋏
Spain	119.00	33.4	-72%	-85.6 ⅄	82.4	0.0	-100%	-82.4 ⅄	-168.0 ⅄
Sweden	70.80	63.0	-11%	-7.8 ⅄	50.1	15.2	-70%	-34.9 ⅄	-42.7 ⅄
Australia	135.54	219.8	62%	84.3 ⋏	19.6	30.6	56%	11.0 ⋏	95.3 ⋏
Japan	351.11	612.5	74%	261.4 ⋏	1.2	5.1	306%	3.8 ⋏	265.2 ⋏
Switzerland	16.01	34.6	116%	18.6 ⋏	1.4	7.0	400%	5.6 ⋏	24.2 ⋏
United Kingdom	445.2	646.2	45%	201.0 ⋏	88.3	96.5	9%	8.2 ⋏	209.3 ⋏
United States	667.46	667.5	0%	0.0 ⋏	0.9	21.0	2147%	20.1 ⋏	20.1 ⋏
Total	**3806.0**	**3542.5**	**-7%**	**-263.6** ⅄	**496.6**	**362.9**	**-27%**	**-133.7** ⅄	**-397.3** ⅄

Source: OECD-DAC (2015)

If averages across years are taken, the picture is moderately more encouraging. Among the same group of donors, while there was a decrease in the average annual aid to basic education from the period 2007-2010 to the period 2011-2013, average annual GPE contributions actually increased in between the two periods (see Exhibit 5.6). However, these contributions were modest relative to the broader decline.

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[124] GPE contributions are subsumed within the DAC database. To prevent double counting, GPE contributions were subtracted from aid to basic education data.

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Exhibit 5.6 Donor Contributions to GPE and Aid to Basic Education- Averages

Aid to basic education and GPE, GPE donor members, constant 2012 USD, millions

|	Aid to basic education, disbursements				GPE Contributions				Combined
	Average 2007-2010	Average 2011-2013	% change	Net change	2007-2010	2011-2013	% change	Net change	Total Change
Belgium	35.9	19.2	-46%	-16.7 ⅄	2.9	10.5	256%	7.5 ⅄	-9.1 ⅄
Canada	223.43	165.00	-26%	-58.4 ⅄	14.5	15.3	5%	0.7 ⅄	-57.7 ⅄
Denmark	39.74	33.62	-15%	-6.1 ⅄	18.5	55.1	198%	36.6 ⅄	30.5 ⅄
EU Institutions	413.2	405.1	-2%	-8.1 ⅄	32.2	9.1	-72%	-23.1 ⅄	-31.2 ⅄
France	321.25	230.55	-28%	-90.7 ⅄	8.0	22.0	174%	13.9 ⅄	-76.7 ⅄
Ireland	38.85	25.03	-36%	-13.8 ⅄	12.6	5.7	-55%	-6.9 ⅄	-20.7 ⅄
Italy	24.94	23.64	-5%	-1.3 ⅄	6.6	1.9	-71%	-4.7 ⅄	-6.0 ⅄
Netherlands	330.06	95.64	-71%	-234.4 ⅄	86.7	39.7	-54%	-47.0 ⅄	-281.4 ⅄
Norway	209.70	182.18	-13%	-27.5 ⅄	25.6	37.1	45%	11.5 ⅄	-16.1 ⅄
Spain	120.19	56.30	-53%	-63.9 ⅄	83.4	8.9	-89%	-74.4 ⅄	-138.3 ⅄
Sweden	84.36	66.04	-22%	-18.3 ⅄	21.7	27.9	29%	6.2 ⅄	-12.1 ⅄
Australia	155.12	226.56	46%	71.4 ⅄	6.5	41.5	538%	35.0 ⅄	106.4 ⅄
Germany	234.09	297.48	27%	63.4 ⅄	5.3	8.0	50%	2.7 ⅄	66.1 ⅄
Japan	322.89	382.78	19%	59.9 ⅄	1.2	3.7	204%	2.5 ⅄	62.4 ⅄
Switzerland	22.68	30.25	33%	7.6 ⅄	1.0	5.2	415%	4.2 ⅄	11.8 ⅄
United Kingdom	435.6	569.9	31%	134.3 ⅄	96.9	131.3	35%	34.4 ⅄	168.6 ⅄
United States	621.07	667.5	7%	46.4 ⅄	0.390985	7.266763	1759%	6.9 ⅄	53.3 ⅄
Total	**3633.0**	**3476.7**	**-4%**	**-156.3 ⅄**	**424.2**	**430.2**	**1%**	**6.0 ⅄**	**-150.3 ⅄**

Source: OECD-DAC (2015)

Interviewed global stakeholders and DCP representatives on the Board members consistently noted both the declining trend in aid to education and the lack of GPE influence in preventing such a decline. GPE's inability to prevent the Netherlands, once a significant donor to basic education and a major contributor to the GPE fund, from moving away from education was cited by several stakeholders as an example of GPE's weak leverage. In addition, three donors commented that the Partnership had not influenced their decisions to reduce aid levels. As one donor put it "there is no direct link between GPE's existence and our bilateral funding."

With some exceptions, stakeholders consulted for the 18 country case studies underscored GPE's inability to consistently catalyze new funding from donors for basic education. In Nicaragua, important bilateral donors have withdrawn from the education sector during the period of GPE membership, with the same happening in Zimbabwe (EU). In Vietnam, government and LEG representatives did not think that the Global Partnership had led to additional external funding for basic education. As noted above, such decisions tend to be a function of broader shifts in donor priorities, with little influence exerted by GPE.

Notably, as shown in Exhibit 5.7 below, total aid to eligible non-members has increased since 2010, whereas aid to basic education for GPE members has decreased over the same time period.

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Results 4 Development

Exhibit 5.7 Aid to Basic Education among GPE Members and Non-Members

Source: OECD-DAC CRS
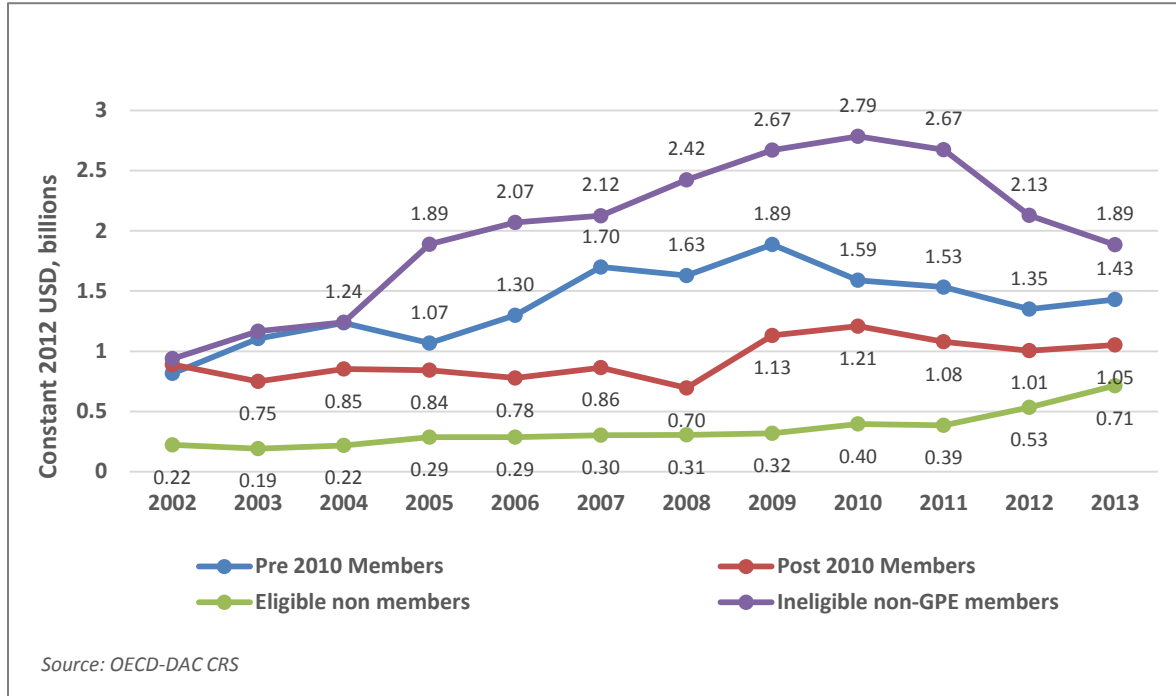
However, in some countries the Partnership appears to have facilitated an increase in external aid to education. LEG members in Malawi commented that new donors Norway and the EC entered the education sector partly due to GPE's involvement and in DRC, GPE was instrumental in attracting Educate a Child funding. In Cambodia, SIDA has begun to contribute additional funding for a school grant program that was previously funded by GPE. Yet, these examples still appear to be the exception rather than the rule.

GPE's lack of additionality was also manifested in its inability to meet its 2015-2018 replenishment target; only 60% of the target was reached. Interviewed Board members, including donor members, suggested that Board members could have put more pressure on their governments in the run-up to the replenishment.

While disbursements spiked in 2015 (to $523 million), continued growth is not expected in the near future. Foreign exchange losses of US$ 200 million as well as US$ 600 million needed to finance grants approved between 2012 and 2014 have absorbed much of the US$ 2.1 billion pledge. As a result, the value of allocations in the 2015-2018 period are expected to be lower than those in 2012-2014. In addition, the original $2.1 billion pledge did not include the UK's conditionality and uncertainty regarding the timing of the EC contributions. [125] The total has been recalculated to reflect this in recent Financial Forecasts, and the recalculations indicate that there is a wider funding gap than initially estimated. .

Notably, the steady increase of GPE disbursements has coincided with a decrease in International Development Association (IDA) financing to member countries.[126] Among GPE member countries,

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[125] The analysis of UK conditionality derives from interviews with the GPE Secretariat, Board members, and the UK. Information regarding the timing of the EC contributions stem from Secretariat interviews.

[126] Throughout the report the evaluation team used DAC data to permit consistent cross-donor comparisons. If one uses World Bank data only, the analysis does not show a decline in IDA Basic Education disbursements. This is due to differences between DAC and World Bank data, including the use of different exchange rates,

IDA aid decreased from US$ 500 million in 2007 to US$ 250 million in 2012.[127] CSOs, numerous global stakeholders, and donors who were consulted were nearly unanimous in their assertions of IDA substitution.

Decreases in IDA funding have been most pronounced in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), where most GPE financing is directed. From 2004 to 2009, SSA accounted for 45% of total IDA disbursements to basic education. Since 2010, the share fell to 28% for SSA countries, while 52% of IDA financing for basic education has flowed to Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Vietnam.

Analysis of 11 sub-Saharan countries that joined GPE prior to 2006 shows that decreases in IDA disbursements to basic education coincided with increases in GPE disbursements.[128] The trend is similar for 12 sub-Saharan countries that joined GPE between 2006 and 2009. IDA financing to basic education in SSA countries has decreased at a rate of 9% per year since 2006 to US$9 million in 2013, with GPE disbursements increasing from US$ 3 million to US$ 81 million during the same time period. Differentials between IDA and GPE funds for basic education are particularly large in Central African Republic, Cote d'Ivoire, Liberia, and Zambia.[129]

IDA has also decreased in non-SSA countries, but the rate of decline has not been as steep. As shown in Exhibit 5.8, in eight non-SSA countries that joined GPE before 2006, steady levels of GPE disbursements coincided with a decline in IDA. Among nine non-SSA countries that joined GPE between 2006 and 2009, IDA has remained steady as GPE significantly increased disbursements.

Exhibit 5.8 IDA and GPE Disbursements for basic education to GPE Members pre-2006 (Three year moving average)[130]
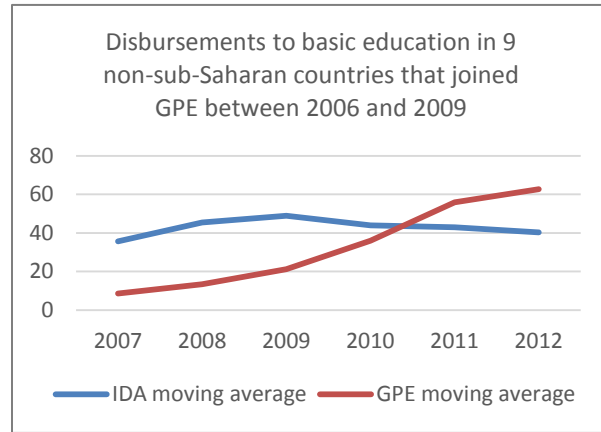

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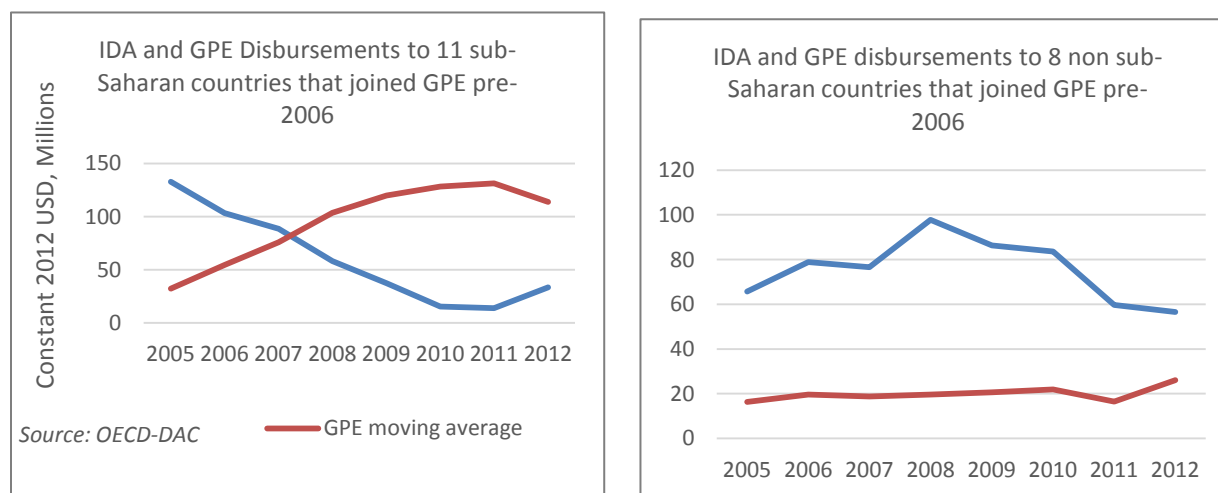
differences in defining Basic Education, and differences in the reporting period with the DAC using the calendar year and the WB the fiscal year.

[127] This idea is supported in a 2013 RESULTS report, *Is the World Bank Reaching Out-of-school children?*, which highlights that 43 GPE developing country partners will cease receiving funding from IDA after 2013.

[128] 11 countries are Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mauritania, Mozambique, and Niger.

[129] RESULTS Report 2013, *Is the World Bank Reaching Out-of-School Children?, pg 14.*

[130] IDA disbursements (by calendar year) are from DAC-CRS using GMR's methodology for calculating basic education.

Disbursements to basic education in 12 sub-Saharan countries that joined GPE between 2006 and 2009

Constant 2012 USD, Millions

150
100
50
0

2006 2007 2008 2009 2010 2011 2012

IDA moving average

Source: OECD-DAC

Disbursements to basic education in 9 non-sub-Saharan countries that joined GPE between 2006 and 2009

80
60
40
20
0

2007 2008 2009 2010 2011 2012

IDA moving average GPE moving average

While IDA substitution has not been universal, stakeholders asserted that its likely occurrence is attributable to the fact that World Bank Vice Presidents and country managers make decisions based on how to best allot a fixed allocation of IDA financing among the different sectors they manage. If GPE funding helps cover basic education, World Bank managers rationally reallocate funds in competing sub-sectors or sectors such as tertiary education, health, or transport. Commendably, the GPE Board and World Bank Executive Directors have discussed IDA-GPE substitution and exploring methods to reduce its incidence.

Evidence of substitution also exists in relation to the contributions of small donors with few bilateral channels to DCPs, as they are keen to use multilateral channels like GPE to more efficiently allocate their aid. Denmark and other Scandinavian countries, for example, view the Partnership as a convenient channel to expand the geographic reach of their funding. According to Denmark, GPE, like other multilateral institutions, allows its aid to reach a wider net of countries and education issues, such as girls, out-of-school children, and fragile and conflict affected countries. Netherlands argued that its withdrawal from Burkina Faso and Zambia would be mitigated by an increase in GPE financing to those countries.

Finding 14: **Domestic financing to basic education has increased since 2010. While GPE's influence on this increase remains uncertain, if DCP pledges made at the 2014 replenishment conference are executed, GPE will have made a positive contribution towards mobilizing new domestic resources for education.**

Analysis of DCP budget allocations following GPE's first pledging conference in 2011 presents a mixed picture. According to the GMR 2015, Mozambique and Zimbabwe managed to increase domestic resources available for education since 2011. However, Afghanistan, Bhutan, Lesotho, and Mali all pledged to increase domestic resources to education but actually decreased resources between 2011 and 2013[131].

Apart from pledges, analysis of prior trends suggests that until now GPE membership has had a marginal effect on increasing education expenditures as a percent of government spending. Once a country joined GPE, education expenditures as a percent of government spending increased on average by 1%.[132] Changes in education expenditures as a percent of government expenditures for these countries are presented in Exhibit 5.9.

---

[131] Development Finance International, 2014

[132] Only countries with data for at least two years before and after they joined the GPE were included in the sample.

Regression analyses show that education expenditures as a percent of government spending is on average 0.24% higher in countries that receive GPE funding than in countries that do not. Nevertheless, attributing any of this increase to GPE is difficult – stakeholders consulted expressed differing views on whether GPE has influenced domestic allocations of DCPs. As described in Box 24, GPE is attempting to increase this influence through the introduction of the new funding model.

> **Box 24: New GPE Funding Model 2014**
>
> In 2011, 35 countries that received GPE grants spent less than 20% of their national budgets on education. Moreover, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Eritrea, Nigeria, Pakistan, and Zimbabwe spent under 10% of their budgets on education.[133] In order to meet this target, considerable extra domestic resources will need to be mobilized in short order.
>
> The new GPE funding model, adopted in mid-2014, calls for grant-receiving countries to spend at least 20% of their national budgets on education. More analysis of the new funding model can be found in section 6.3.

Exhibit 5.9 Spending on Education before and after joining the Global Partnership
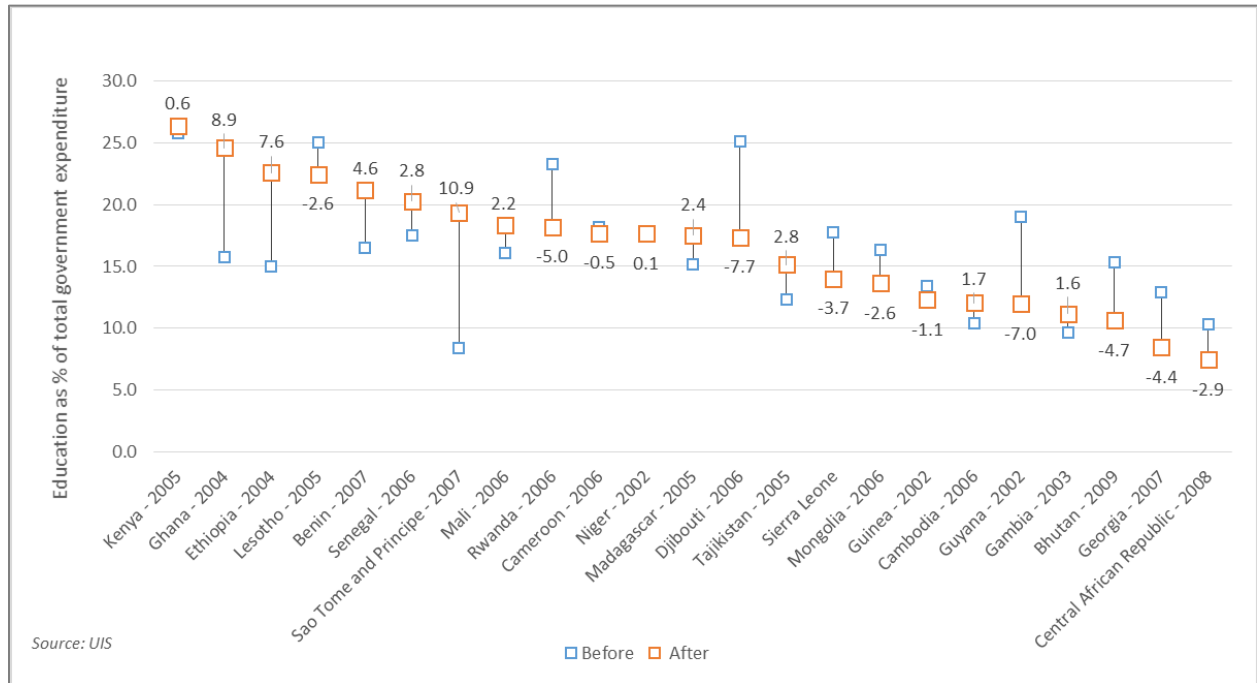
DCP pledges made at the 2014 GPE replenishment conference, estimated at US$ 26 billion, have been praised by many as a significant success in GPE's efforts to mobilize resources for education. Using education expenditures as a percent of GDP, simple linear trend analysis shows that the 2014 DCP pledges would positively alter the slope of 18 out of 22 country trend lines – meaning that the noted commitments, if translated into action, would surpass the forecasted level of growth in domestic financing for education.

---

[133] David Archer (2014): The Sustainability of the Global Partnership for Education: The Role of Domestic Resource Mobilization. Available at: http://www.actionaidusa.org/sites/files/actionaid/tax_and_gpe_article_-_david_archer_12.06.14.pdf

However, these figures represent *pledges*; they will need to be carefully monitored to gauge whether GPE has truly influenced what is allocated to basic education. Moreover, the intended sub-sectors are not evident for all pledges, nor is it clear whether certain pledges would represent new resources. Lastly, some pledges – such as that of Pakistan, which committed to increasing its spending on education from 2% of GDP to 4% -- appear unrealistic.

Finding 15: GPE has allocated an increasingly high proportion of its resources to fragile and conflict-affected states (FCAS), which has helped mitigate the impact of the global decline in aid to basic education in these settings.

The 2010 evaluation recommended that the FTI develop a coherent, flexible response to fragile states, which led to a directional shift on the part of GPE to provide additional support to these countries. Since

> **Box 25: FCAS that are GPE members**
>
> Since 2010, 16 new FCAS joined GPE – 6 fragile, 3 conflict-affected and 7 categorized as both.
>
> Among the 28 FCAS that are GPE partners, 11 are fragile, 5 are conflict-affected, and 12 are considered both.

2010, 16 additional fragile and conflict-affected states (FCAS) have become GPE member countries (see Box 25) and disbursements to FCAS have more than doubled; total annual program implementation grant (PIG) funding directed to FCAS increased from US$ 101.4 million in 2011 to US$ 203.7 million through the first ten months of 2014. In 2014, funding to FCAS exceeded that to non-FCAS.

Exhibit 5.10 GPE Disbursements to FCAS and non-FCAS members

Source: GPE disbursement data
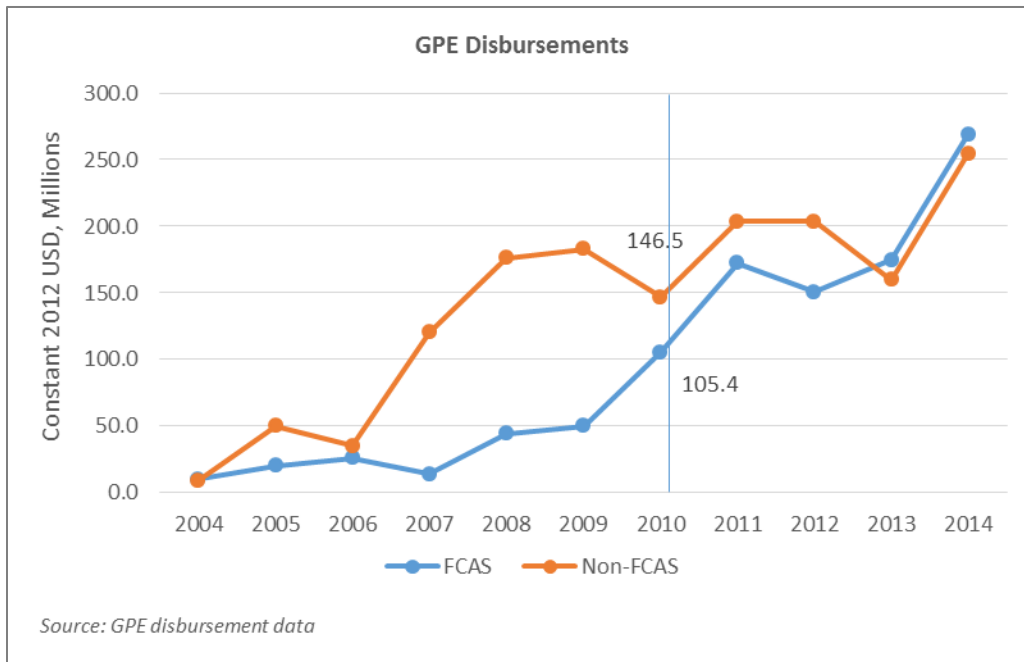
The average program implementation grant (PIG) amount allocated to FCAS increased by 62% post-2010. Since 2010, the average PIG for FCAS (US$ 42.6 million) has been higher than the average PIG to non-fragile states (US $35.8 million).

The top recipients of GPE financing to FCAS were located in SSA. In the post 2010 period, four countries (Uganda, Pakistan, Nigeria, and the DRC) received PIGs worth 100 million each. The size of these grants are considerably larger than

> **Box 26: Strengthened focus on FCAS**
>
> Notably, according to interviews, for some smaller donors, GPE's strengthened focus on FCAS fits well with their development strategy and has been used to support the case for contributing to the Partnership.

the pre-2010 period, where the top recipients, Nepal, Madagascar, and Ethiopia were allocated US$120 million, US$ 75 million, and US$ 69.5 million respectively.

The considerable increase in the Partnership's engagement in and support to FCAS may, however, be somewhat inflated as the Partnership's categorization of FCAS combines the World Bank's fragile context list 2013/14 and UNESCO's conflict-affected list 2002-2013. The combined list contains more countries (categorized as either fragile, conflict-affected, or both) than either of the WB and UNESCO lists. Moreover, as shown in Exhibit 5.10, in 2010 and 2012, the largest share of funding within the broadly defined FCAS category has gone to fragile states, which encompass a fairly diverse set of countries, including some with seemingly low levels of political fragility. This raises an important question as to whether the countries in greatest need (i.e. conflict-affected) are receiving an adequate share of GPE resources. In 2010, 2012, 2013, 2014 for example, conflict-affected states received 30%, 10%, 3%, and 16% of total FCAS aid respectively (though countries categorized as both fragile and conflict –affected received significant shares during these years).

Exhibit 5.11 GPE Disbursements to FCAS, 2004-2013
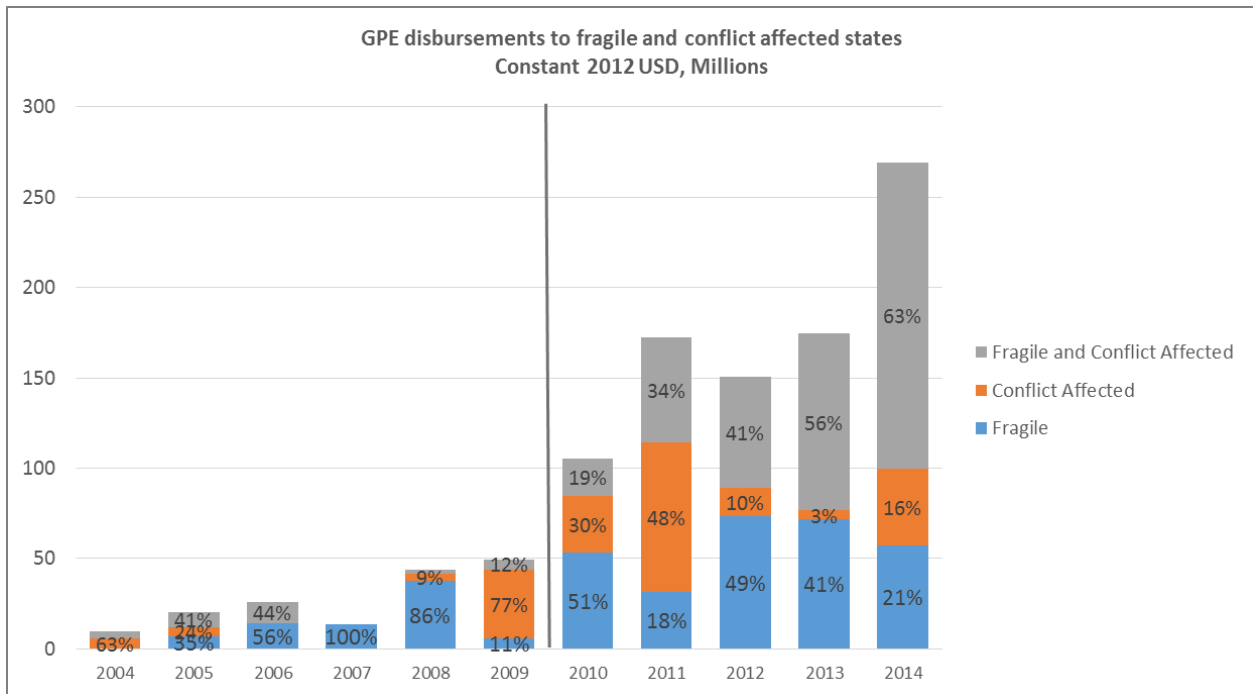
Since 2010, aid to basic education in GPE-supported FCAS decreased by 15% from US$ 1.6 billion to US$ 1.4 billion. The decrease has been more pronounced in GPE fragile countries, with aid falling by 22% (US$ 69 million) since 2010. In comparison, aid to conflict-affected countries decreased by 3% (US$ 15 million). Aid to basic education among non-FCAS GPE members decreased by only 5%, revealing a faster rate of decline for GPE FCAS than for non-FCAS GPE countries. Exhibit 5.12 shows GPE contributions to its FCAS partners in relation to other donor support for basic education in

these countries.[134] In 2013, GPE accounted for 11% of total aid (23% in fragile states and 1% in conflict-affected countries) in these settings. See also Box 27.

> **Box 27: GPE vs. IDA disbursements**
> While GPE has significantly increased disbursements to FCAS, IDA has decreased disbursements to basic education among GPE FCAS by US$2.8 million a year.

Exhibit 5.12 Aid to Basic Education among GPE Fragile and Conflict-Affected Members, 2004-2013

Source: OECD-DAC CRS
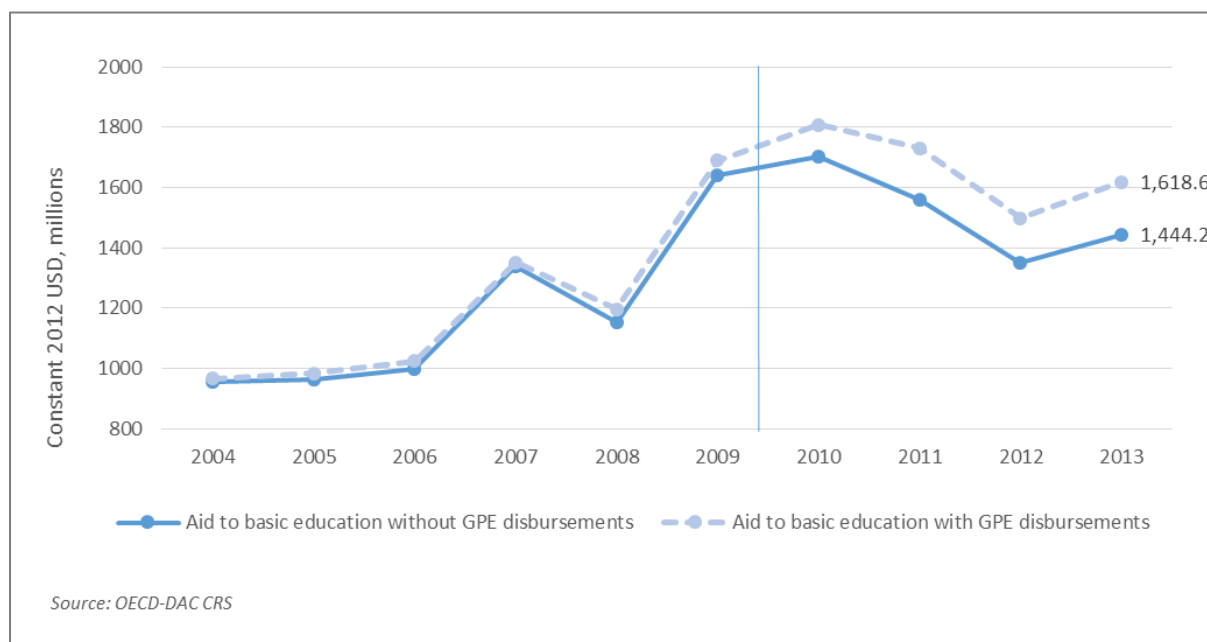
There are no noticeable differences between FCAS and non-FCAS with respect to the efficiency of the processes needed to acquire funding (see Exhibit 5.13). Since 2010, the average time from approval to first disbursement decreased in both FCAS and non-FCAS. Within FCAS, however, there is considerable variance in the time between approval and first disbursement: Sierra Leone, for

> **Box 28: The GPE Guidelines for Accelerated Support in Emergency and Early Recovery Situations**
> Approved by the Board in November 2012,[135] the Guidelines allow for bridging emergency interventions with long-term development activities. Under this mechanism, up to 20% of the amount available for a country can be provided as accelerated funding, which can be obtained in approximately 7-8 weeks from initiating the process. Until now, accelerated funding has been used a few times, for example in Yemen, where about $10 million of the country's $82.6 million GPE grant were provided for school rehabilitation in emergency-affected areas.[136]

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[134] Most donors report their contributions to GPE under regional or bilateral unspecified lines. As with previous country level analyses, it is assumed that little or no GPE flows are captured at country level. Under this assumption, including GPE disbursements into total aid figures would require adding GPE disbursements to DAC reported data on basic education at the country level.

[135] Available under https://www.globalpartnership.org/content/guidelines-accelerated-support-emergency-and-early-recovery-situations.

[136] According to the GPE website, accelerated funding has also been provided in the Central African Republic, and (South Central) Somalia.

example, had a delay of 24 months while Timor Leste received its first disbursement four months after approval. See Box 28. According to the GPE 2014 Portfolio Review, the primary reason for post-2010 delays (for both FCAS and non-FCAS) in the time for program development is a more robust GPE quality assurance process, which is meant to ensure program relevance and alignment to GPE priorities and national education strategies.[137]

Exhibit 5.13 Time Required for FCAS and non-FCAS to obtain GPE Funding

Average time for FCAS to develop a GPE program, get Board approval, and obtain first disbursement, in months											
	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Pre-2010	Post-2010
Development to approval	5.8	5.4	4.9	7.0	7.2	4.5	10.0	10.4	16.8	5.8	9.8
Approval to first disbursement	38.0	23.5	17.9	17.6	14.1	12.9	11.7	9.8	10.3	24.3	11.8
Source: Adapted from GPE Portfolio Review 2014											

Average time for Non-FCAS to develop a GPE program, get Board approval, and obtain first disbursement, in months											
	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Pre-2010	Post-2010
Development to approval	7.2	7.2	9.1	7.7	5.9	8.3	8.8	9.2	16.7	7.8	9.8
Approval to first disbursement	17.6	21.6	22.6	20.3	19.6	19.3	9.6	9.3	9.9	20.5	13.5
Source: Adapted from GPE Portfolio Review 2014											

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[137] GPE Portfolio Review 2014

6 GPE at the Country Level

6.1 Overview

This chapter presents evaluation findings on the relevance and effectiveness of the Global Partnership at the country level, and on GPE country-level partnership, governance and management. It explores if and how the changes implemented since 2010 have affected GPE performance.

6.2 Context and Relevance

Finding 16: **The Global Partnership's country-level approach, which supports the development and implementation of sound education sector plans, allows it to tailor its support to the needs of diverse national contexts, including in fragile and conflict-affected states (FCAS).**

In the period reviewed, the GPE portfolio included 59 developing countries. The characteristics of each national context determined what GPE was able to achieve, as well as what types of financial and technical support were most appropriate and relevant. As shown in Box 29, countries accessed the types of GPE grant(s) most relevant to their needs.

> **Box 29: Types of GPE Grants Accessed**
>
> Of the 18 countries studied for the evaluation, 16 had received Program Implementation Grants. In 11 of the 16 countries, the PIG was the only type of GPE grant applied for and received.
>
> Cambodia and Senegal received both an EPDG and a PIG. Madagascar and Uganda have accessed all three types of GPE grants. [138]
>
> Honduras had not yet applied for any GPE funding.

Consultations conducted in the 18 country reviews indicated that the Partnership's strategic goals and objectives as formulated in the 2012-2015 Strategic Plan were sufficiently broad that countries could use GPE funding to address their existing (or emerging) national priorities in basic education. All programs funded through PIGs during the period addressed at least two of the four GPE Strategic Goals, with the largest number of programs relating to Goal 1 (Access for All) and Goal 4 (Building for the Future).[139]

The relevance of GPE support[140] to different stakeholder groups varied, depending on their roles and interests in each country.

- **National governments** – Consulted DCP government representatives in the 18 studied countries felt that the Global Partnership is most relevant in providing financial resources for sector planning and/or implementation. Other potential benefits, such as enhancing the

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[138] Education Plan Development Grant (EPDG) disbursements and allocations have steadily **decreased** since EPDG establishment in 2012, while those for Program Development Grants (PDG) have **fluctuated**. Decrease in demand for EPDG does not necessarily imply a decrease in the relevance of funding, as EPDGs are tied to the development of education sector plans, which typically cover 3-5 years. Of the 30 EPDGs approved since 2012, 16 were for FCAS. Please note that both the PIG and EPDG were renamed in 2014.

[139] The bulk of GPE funding was targeted towards Access for All (Goal 1) and Learning for All (Goal 2). The smallest amount of resources was allocated to Goal 3, Reaching every Child. See Volume IV, Appendix 6 (Review of GPE Documents and Grants).

[140] "GPE support" refers to the totality of GPE funding and related funding criteria, as well as technical support provided through the Secretariat, Supervising/Managing Entities, or Coordinating Agencies.

country's regional or global reputation for education reform, or learning from other countries, were noted only rarely.

- **Development Partners** (Donors) – While donor representatives at the country level agreed that GPE-supported processes are generally relevant to their own country strategies and commitment to aid effectiveness, they also noted that donor priorities in a country can change. As such, donors' interests and priorities at the country level may not always be fully aligned with their global level commitment to the GPE Charter. In Tanzania and Uganda, for example, several bilateral agencies had temporarily shifted away from supporting pooled or sector modalities towards bilateral project support.

- **Civil Society** –GPE funding to National Education Coalitions (NEC) channelled through the Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF) has been either the sole source or the main source of funding for NECs in 5 of the 18 studied countries.[141] Accordingly, these NECs regarded the CSEF funding as highly relevant, as it allowed them to be operational and participate in sector dialogue processes.[142] In addition, GPE (through the Secretariat, SE/ME and CA) specifically promotes the inclusion of teacher representatives in LEGs.

- **Private Sector/Foundations** –GPE relevance to these groups appears to lie primarily in its potential to promote and support their inclusion in sector dialogue processes. The envisaged contributions that these actors can or should make as part of Local Education Groups is not clear (see section 6.4.3).

6.3 GPE Effectiveness

In assessing GPE effectiveness at the country level, the evaluation examined how changes since 2010 have affected GPE contributions to strengthening country capacity for education sector planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of ESP implementation. .

Finding 17: **While GPE helped strengthen education sector planning processes and contributed financially to the implementation of sector plans, there is insufficient data to assess the Partnership's longer term effects on national capacities for ESP planning and implementation.**

<u>Education sector planning[143]</u>

GPE grants and processes related to the grant application contributed to the development of new or strengthened (sub)sector plans or interim plans in 9 of the 18 studied countries.[144] See examples in Box 30. One country (Honduras) has not yet applied for GPE funding. In the remaining 8 countries, existing sector plans were considered sufficiently strong to not require improvements.

---

[141] Nicaragua, Tanzania, Vietnam, Zimbabwe, and Madagascar

[142] The CSEF has been engaged with existing or emerging NECs in all 18 countries reviewed for this evaluation, although not always for the whole period under review. For example, in Uganda the NEC did not apply for a grant under the second round of CSEF funding. See also Volume IV, Appendix 4.

[143] In this context, education sector planning encompasses the development or improvement of an ESP, as well as processes around developing programs to implement elements of the plan.

[144] Cambodia (PDG, PIG), DRC (PIG), Madagascar (EPDG, PDG, and PIG), Malawi (EPDG), Rwanda (PIG), Tanzania (PIG), Uganda (EPDG, PDG, and PIG), Yemen (PIG), and Zimbabwe (EPDG, PIG). In Ghana, which joined the FTI in 2004, one stakeholder noted FTI's positive influence on ESP development and quality (i.e. prior to the period under review).

The 2010 evaluation of the FTI noted that Education Sector Plan appraisal and endorsement process had tended to place donors at the forefront, with limited engagement of national actors. Data collected for this interim evaluation show a somewhat improved situation. In 11 of the 18 studied countries[145] consulted national and international stakeholders agreed that planning processes

> **Box 30: Country Examples**
>
> In **Tanzania,** the PIG application process provided an incentive for national actors to pull together previously fragmented sub-sector action plans into one structured and realistic plan for basic education. The process also resulted in the recommendation by the Tanzania Development Partner Group to review and revise the existing sector plan (this has not yet been addressed).
>
> In **Madagascar**, a GPE EPDG supported the development of an interim education plan that was instrumental in keeping donors working on education issues in a coordinated way during the political crisis. The subsequent PDG and PIG supported the development of interventions to implement aspects of the plan.

conducted in relation to GPE grant applications and/or the development of GPE-funded programs had been more participatory and inclusive than in the preparation of previous sector initiatives. This was seen as beneficial in terms of both the quality and broader ownership of the resulting plans/programs.[146] In Tanzania and Zimbabwe, GPE-supported sector planning processes included representatives from the Ministry of Finance as well as from other line ministries, a factor that had been noted as lacking in the 2010 FTI evaluation.

The 2010 FTI evaluation also observed that a lack of clarity about FTI procedures had resulted in high transaction costs (e.g. in a number of countries with existing ESPs, parallel plans were developed for the FTI, meaning extra work). In the current evaluation, country-level stakeholders described GPE procedures as clear, and there were no reported cases of duplicating ESPs.

National government stakeholders in five countries[147] noted that the initial sector review and program planning processes connected to GPE grant applications had strengthened individual

competencies as well as their unit's or ministry's collective capability for results-oriented and evidence-based (sub)sector planning. In the absence of comparators (e.g. subsequent sector planning work conducted by these stakeholders or organizations), it is not possible to verify this self-reported change. See also Box 31.

> **Box 31: External support vs. LEG support**
>
> The 18 studied countries varied in the extent to which they used and relied upon the services of external consultants and/or the Supervising Entity for the development of grant applications and/or operational plans for the GPE-funded program.
>
> While some countries (e.g. Cambodia, DRC, Moldova, Nicaragua, and Zimbabwe) strongly relied on external support, in other countries (e.g. Ethiopia, Senegal, Tanzania) the LEG was more directly involved. In these cases, national stakeholders reported that the experience strengthened their individual and collective capacity for systematic and evidence-based planning, as well as for fostering collaboration among country-level actors.

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[145] Afghanistan, Cambodia (to some extent), DRC, Ghana, Malawi, Moldova, Rwanda, Tanzania, Vietnam, Yemen, and Zimbabwe

[146] In the DRC and Rwanda it was noted, however, that the resulting process, while more participatory than others in the past, had still been largely driven by education sector donors. In three countries (Senegal, Madagascar and Ethiopia), sector planning processes were already participatory and did not require or visibly benefit from GPE influence.

[147] Afghanistan, Ghana, Tanzania, Vietnam, Zimbabwe

The GPE Secretariat is currently finalizing a review of Education Sector Plans mainly developed under the FTI to develop a baseline on ESP quality, which is intended to inform future GPE capacity development activities in this regard, and allow for more regular monitoring of ESP quality.

Education Sector Plan implementation

In 14 of the 18 studied countries,[148] consulted government and LEG representatives reported that GPE funding made a notable difference in the national government's ability to implement priorities outlined in the country's ESP that otherwise would not have been addressed or incompletely addressed. To ensure this, country applications for Program Implementation Grants are required to describe existing amounts of domestic and external funding for education and identify funding gaps, identify the percentage of the funding gap the Partnership will be able to address, and how the GPE-funded program will either expand or complement initiatives funded through domestic or external resources.

GPE funding allowed some countries to expand initiatives to more geographic areas, including remote areas; in some countries (e.g. Malawi) it allowed the government to address important issues such as purchasing teaching and learning materials; in others (e.g. Afghanistan), it allowed the country to address issues that until then had received no or only minimal funding from other donors (e.g. training female teachers, and community-based education). In Yemen, GPE funding was considered critical in keeping the education sector going during periods of crisis when the government was not able to maintain basic levels of education investments.

This perception of the relevance of GPE funding appears to be independent of GPE grant's share of total aid to education in a country, as shown in Exhibit 6.1 below.

Exhibit 6.1 GPE Disbursements as a Percentage of Total Aid to Basic Education in country

Source: OECD-DAC & GPE Secretariat

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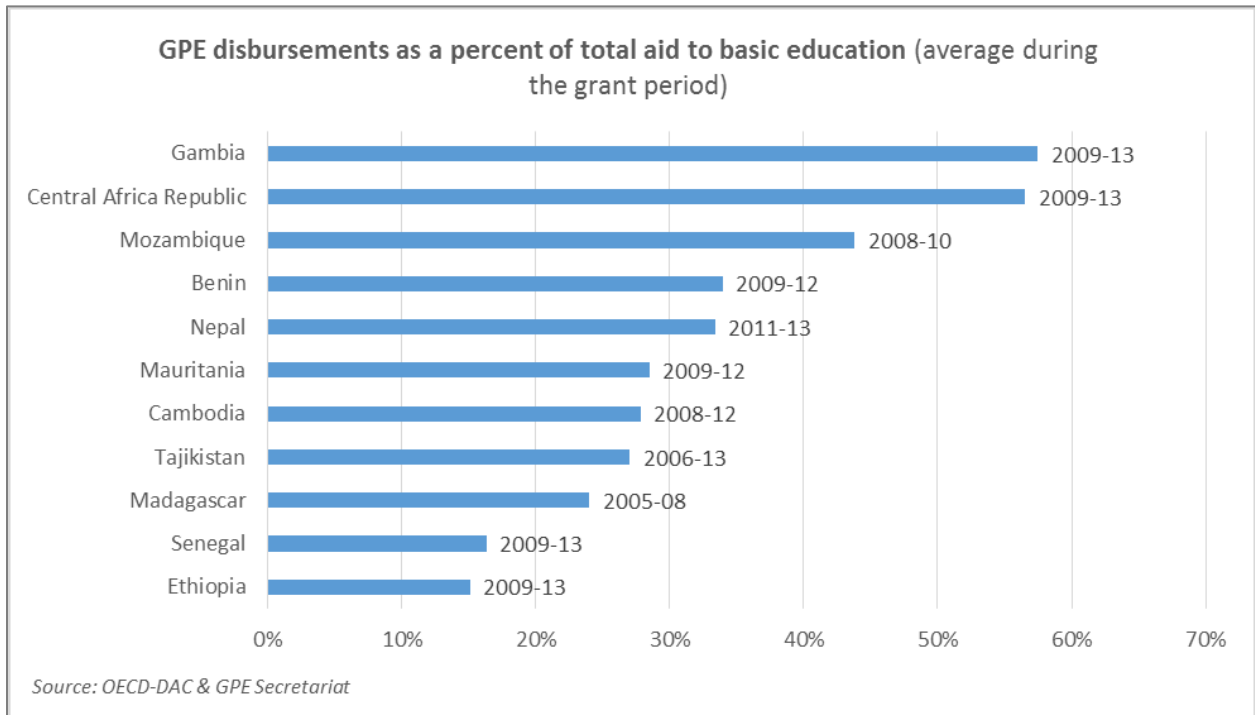
[148] Afghanistan, Burundi, Cambodia, DRC, Ethiopia, Ghana, Madagascar, Malawi, Nicaragua, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, Yemen, Zimbabwe

Consulted government representatives and LEG members in two countries[149] stated that while GPE funding was valued in filling certain gaps, it was inadequate in terms of addressing overall needs, for which it constituted a mere "drop in the bucket." In this context it is relevant to note that while the average size of PIGs has increased since 2010,[150] the mean GPE allocations per primary school aged child and per out of school child in DCPs have decreased since 2010 due to the addition of population rich countries to the Partnership.[151]

The 2010 FTI evaluation noted that insufficient attention had been paid to the need for ongoing capacity development during sector plan implementation. This was partly because under the FTI capacity development activities had to be funded through grants from the separate EPDF, which had resulted in missed opportunities as many actors had not been aware of this facility. With the creation of the GPE Fund in 2011, support for capacity development was no longer separate from other financial support. As a result, approximately 13% of total PIG amounts during the period under review were allocated to institutional capacity building, and another 16% for in-service training of teachers and school heads, with the aim to influence relevant system capacity for sector plan implementation. Related allocations cover a wide range of activities, including: technical assistance, workshops, and training aimed at improving sector wide management; capacity building to improve the governance of ministries of education; and efforts to help strengthen public financial management. To date, however, the Partnership has not systematically collected or shared data on the effects of these activities on DCP system capacity.[152]

Evaluation data show various misalignments of sector plans and related (GPE-funded) programs with the implementation capacity of the respective Ministry of Education.[153] In 8 of the 18 visited countries, capacity gaps in government entities contributed to **delays** in implementing GPE grants. [154] In other countries, MoE capacity gaps had mixed effects (see Box 32).

> **Box 32: Effects of MoE Capacity Gaps**
>
> In several countries, gaps in the capacity of the Ministry of Education were related to specific issues, and did not necessarily affect implementation of the overall GPE-funded program or ESP. For example:
>
> In the DRC, disbursement rates of the GPE grant have been high overall as considerable amounts were allocated to components that the government was able to handle well (e.g. textbooks and school construction). Other components with smaller allocations but that are potentially more important for structural reform of the sector have not performed as well (e.g. in-service teacher training).
>
> In Ethiopia, MoE stakeholders noted capacity gaps in specific areas, such as addressing the needs of students with disabilities.

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[149] Afghanistan and Uganda.

[150] The average size of all PIGs has increased from $30.2 million pre-2010 to $39.2 million since 2010. The average grant amounts allocated to fragile states increased by 59% post 2010.

[151] See Volume IV, Appendix 6 (Document and Grant Review) for details.

[152] Implementation completion reports compiled by Supervising Entities provide information on whether the objectives of PIG-funded programs have been met, but are not meant or suited to capturing longer term effects on overall system capacity. The GPE Results for Learning Reports compiled by the Secretariat provide examples of promising individual achievements that are likely to positively influence country capacity for ESP implementation and/or monitoring, but these have not systematically captured such effects across the GPE portfolio or reported on GPE attribution or contribution to the noted changes.

[153] Similar issues were noted to varying degrees in Afghanistan, Burundi, DRC, Ethiopia, Madagascar, Nicaragua, Tanzania, Uganda, Yemen, and Zimbabwe.

[154] However, delays in grant implementation have also been due to design issues in the respective program, or other factors such as political instability, security concerns, and seasonal weather patterns. See GPE Secretariat 2014 Portfolio Review.

Consulted stakeholders, especially in FCAS[155] stressed the need to assess and identify ways to strengthen national implementation capacity more thoroughly than had been done during GPE grant preparation and approval.

Finding 18:   GPE has made promising contributions to strengthening country capacity for education sector monitoring. Nevertheless, effective and reliable monitoring is still often limited by a lack of reliable data.

As part of GPE's commitment to the principle of mutual accountability, GPE funding criteria emphasize the expectation that DCPs will monitor and report on education sector progress through regular joint sector reviews (JSR). In 5 of the 18 studied countries, the Partnership contributed to such reviews (see Box 33).

> **Box 33: GPE support for Joint Sector Reviews**
>
> In Nicaragua and Zimbabwe, GPE funding requirements were instrumental in the first JSRs
>
> In Cambodia and Tanzania, GPE grant requirements helped revive dormant JSR processes
>
> In Burundi, input from the GPE Secretariat strengthened existing JSR processes.

The 2014 GPE Secretariat Portfolio Review noted, however, that among 56 countries receiving Program Implementation Grants at the time, eight countries (14%) had **not** had a Joint Sector Review during the previous year. In Nicaragua, the conduct of the sector review did not include Civil Society actors. In Vietnam and Tanzania, sector review findings have not been documented consistently and shared effectively and in timely ways. See Box 34.

The Sector Monitoring Initiative (SMI), which derived from a GPE Secretariat commissioned study of 67 JSR reports in 2011, noted considerable room for improvement in JSR conduct and resulting products. Since then the GPE Secretariat, IIEP and other partners organized five regional workshops to present lessons and good practices in systematic ESP monitoring, introduce the GPE/IIEP guidelines for Education Sector Plan Preparation and Appraisal, and develop a collaborative process for periodic updates of the guidelines. According to the GPE Secretariat, the workshops have led to improved monitorability of ESPs, as noted in a comparison of 50 existing ESPs reviewed in 2013 and 13 new ones reviewed

> **Box 34: IHP+ support for Joint Health Strategy Assessments**
>
> In a similar manner to GPE support for Joint Sector Reviews, IHP+, one of the comparator organizations, supports collaboration on shared health strategies via the Joint Assessment of National Health Strategies (JANS), and provides guidance and tools on how countries can effectively conduct such assessments. JANS has been viewed favorably since its inception: it is seen as an effective tool to bring together stakeholders to strengthen strategies, and is now being used as a public good by countries on an informal and formal basis. Good documentation of the JANS process, findings and impact has also been seen to be crucial, as this inspires trust and confidence in the resulting sector strategy.

in 2014.[156] The SMI has also been instrumental in implementing modifications to GPE country processes, e.g. the expectation that ESPs include a multiyear action plan that establishes a clear link between the ESP financing framework and planned activities.

Despite these promising developments, a persistent challenge to effectively monitoring ESP implementation lies in the often limited availability and reliability of education sector data. The 2014 GPE Secretariat Portfolio Review noted that 20 out of 56 countries (36%) had either no

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[155] E.g. in Afghanistan, Burundi, and Yemen.

[156] Data on SMI from GPE Secretariat SMI Update paper, 06 April 2015.

system or a less than functional Education Management Information System. Similarly, this evaluation noted limitations in data availability or reliability in 6 of the 18 studied countries.[157] The new GPE funding model 2015-2020 is hoped to address some of the noted challenges by providing incentives for DCPs to strengthen their education data collection and management information systems(MIS) in order to demonstrate progress in equity, efficiency, and learning outcomes (see next finding).

CSEF funding to National Education Coalitions (NEC) has made notable contributions to strengthening national capacity for education sector monitoring. In their grant proposals, most CSEF grantees note the intent to use the funding to conduct sector monitoring as well as research and advocacy activities.[158] According to the 2014 GPE Secretariat Civil Society Review, most recipients are now actively engaged in monitoring sector activities, budget tracking and analysis,

and are using findings to advocate and develop proposals for inclusion in plans, polices and budgets. At the same time, as noted in the UNESCO Supervision Report (June 2014) GCE as the global CSEF Secretariat has not yet systematically tracked whether and how individual activities have resulted in, or contributed to, specific changes in policy, legislation or practice. See Box 35.

> **Box 35: NEC monitoring or related advocacy activities and effects in sample of 18 countries**
>
> CSEF funding has enabled civil society actors in Senegal to play a stronger role in sector monitoring. In Uganda, CSO representatives are part of a LEG sub-group tasked with taking the lead in monitoring GPE-grant implementation, but the group has not yet taken up its work as grant implementation has been delayed. CSEF-supported NECs in Nicaragua, Ethiopia, Rwanda, DRC, Tanzania and Zimbabwe do not yet play a more visible role in sector monitoring than before receiving CSEF funding.

Finding 19: **The new results-based GPE funding model approved in June 2014 is suited to enhance country performance in achieving measurable results aligned with GPE Strategic Goals. Its implementation has some operational implications and risks that the Secretariat is still working on how to address.**

The 2010 FTI evaluation noted that fund allocation criteria were neither consistent nor strategic, and that determining the size of allocations based on an assessment of the 'financing gap' to achieve EFA goals was subject to interpretation and negotiation, rather than a transparent and objective criterion.[159] The evaluation recommended the adoption of measures to ensure greater transparency based on clearer eligibility criteria, a defined procedure of funding rounds, and advance indications of funding amounts potentially available to partner countries.[160]

In 2012 the Partnership introduced a funding model that addressed these recommendations. The model was centred on a Needs and Performance Framework to determine fund allocation, and

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[157] Afghanistan, DRC, Ethiopia, Nicaragua, Rwanda and Tanzania. For example, in Nicaragua LEG members and civil society representatives noted that due to capacity gaps in the national Ministry of Education (MINED) it was not possible to quickly access and aggregate data from decentralized systems. This in turn had compromised the reliability of the most recent sector review that was undertaken without wide stakeholder consultation. Similarly, stakeholders in Ethiopia noted that the existing EMIS was not suited to produce reliable and relevant data to inform disbursements, and in Zimbabwe the existing system does not provide reliable data on education budget expenditures.

[158] See CSEF 2013-2015 Progress Report to UNESCO for the period 01 January to June 2014. Available at: http://www.campaignforeducation.org/docs/csef/reports/CSEF%20progress%20report%20jan-june%202014.pdf

[159] Cambridge et al, 2010, p. xx.

[160] Ibid, p. xxv.

introduced a stronger weighing of fragility as a criterion for funding eligibility. It allowed the Partnership to publish indicative country allocations in advance of application rounds which positively affected the predictability of funding. According to consulted DCP government representatives in most of the 18 focus countries, being aware of the amount of funding they were eligible to apply for helped them to better plan for the next GPE grant cycle. Only two of the four comparator organizations that include a grant making function (GEF and the Global Fund) have a similar maximum allocation formula, while neither IDA nor other major bilateral donors have similar provisions. As shown by document review and consultations with stakeholders at the country level, the publication of indicative allocations led to a subsequent increase in GPE grant applications. While some national stakeholders consulted for this evaluation said that they did not fully understand or, in one case, did not fully agree with the criteria used to determine country allocations made under the 2012-2014 funding model,[161] all respondents acknowledged the transparency and objectivity of related processes.

The large number of grant applications following the publication of indicative allocations also presented challenges. The GPE Board assumed that approximately 25% of eligible countries would not submit a proposal, and that the Partnership would be able to raise additional funds beyond the US$ 1.5 billion pledged at the Copenhagen replenishment conference in 2011. Both assumptions proved to be incorrect, leading to an over commitment of approximately US$ 600 million. At the same time, GPE donors were increasingly demanding evidence of results of GPE support at the country level. While the 2012-2014 funding model took country performance into account for the allocation of funds, this was based on assessing achievements already in place at the time of grant applications. The model did not provide any incentives for countries to achieve measureable results when implementing their GPE-funded programs.

These factors contributed to the development of the new, results-based GPE funding framework approved in 2014. A comparison of the key characteristics of the new funding model and the previous model (2012-2014) are outlined below.

Exhibit 6.2   Comparison of GPE Funding Models 2012-2014 and 2015-2018[162]

Element	Needs and Performance Framework (2012-2014)	New Funding Model (2015 onwards)
Eligibility	IDA Classification	Combination of dimensions of Poverty, Education Vulnerability, and Fragility.
Allocation Formula	Allocations based on country needs (primary completion rate, population of school aged children, fragility, per capita	Allocations based on countries' needs as illustrated by its poverty level, education

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[161] For example, in Ethiopia – a country with a large population - government and non-government actors were critical of the $ 100 million cap on Program Implementation Grants, as they felt that grant size should be proportional to the size of a country's student population.

[162] Sources: GPE (undated): The Needs and Performance Framework for Education Plan Implementation Grants, available at: http://www.globalpartnership.org/content/needs-and-performance-framework-education-plan-implementation-grants; GPE (2014): Operational Framework for Requirements and Incentives in the Funding Model; GPE (2015): Slide presentation on the Evolution of Country Facing Activities; Report of the Country Grants and Performance Committee, Parts 1 and 2 (BOD/2014/05—DOC 03 and DOC 11); GPE Factsheet: The New Funding Model (2014).

Element	Needs and Performance Framework (2012-2014)	New Funding Model (2015 onwards)
	income, gender parity in school completion, volume of other external education financing) and performance (total education spending as percentage of GDP, performance on governance, progress in primary completion rate)	vulnerability (number of children out of school) and fragility.
Requirement to access GPE funding	Endorsed Education Sector Plan (ESP) • This requirement sometimes resulted in the rushed development and endorsement of ESPs, leading to poor ownership of and poor quality ESPs. • Monitoring of achievements under the ESP hindered by lack of reliable sector data • No incentives to mobilize additional domestic and external financing for ESP implementation	An eligible country can receive 70% of its maximum country allocation (MCA) based on a credible education sector plan (or transitional plan) endorsed by national and international partners, an education sector analysis, the availability of relevant education sector data (or a strategy to obtain data) in accordance with the GPE data strategy,[163] and a commitment to increase domestic spending on education up to at least 20% of the national budget, and to tap into additional external financing to implement the ESP.
Incentives	No link between financing and results in implementing ESP and related GPE-funded program.	Yes. To receive the remaining 30% of the MCA, an eligible country must demonstrate results in three elements of the education system: equity, efficiency and learning outcomes.

The revised eligibility criteria under the new funding model have expanded the number of eligible countries to 66, however, how many of these the Partnership will be able to fund during the period 2015-2018 will depend on the level of GPE resources.[164] At the December 2014 Board Meeting, the Governance, Ethics, Risks and Finance Committee shared its latest calculations of available resources for MCAs under the new funding model[165] based on the assumption that Maximum Country Allocations (MCA) will be capped at US$ 100 million, as was the case under the 2012-2014 model. Examples of how the new funding model is expected to affect MCAs compared to previously approved PIG amounts are shown in Box 36.

> **Box 36: Estimated Effect of New Funding Model on MCAs**
>
> MCAs will remain the same as in previous PIG for example in Ethiopia and the Democratic Republic of Congo at $100 million each.
>
> MCAs will be higher than in the past e.g.in Afghanistan (from $ 55.7 million to $100 million), and Zimbabwe (from $23.6 million to $29.4 million)
>
> MCAs will be lower than current/previous allocations in all lower-middle income countries such as Nicaragua (from $16.7 million to $4.5 million), but also in other countries, including FCAS such as Uganda (from $100 million to 87.4 million), Niger (from $84.2 million to $57.2 million) and Eritrea (from $25.3 million to 17.2 million).
>
> The main reason for these changes is the fact that the allocation formula under the New Funding Model includes weighting of the number of out of school children, GDP per capita, and conflict/fragility.

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[163] BOD/2013/11-11

[164] Source: GPE (2014): Questions and Answers about GPE Fund Allocations to Developing Country Partners After Replenishment Conference.

[165] BOD/2014/12 DOC 04, page 22f.

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Results 4 Development

Consulted stakeholders in most of the 18 countries studied were vaguely aware of the new GPE funding model but often uncertain (and therefore sometimes concerned) about how it would be rolled out and with what effects. This is not surprising, given that the Secretariat is still working out the details of the model's implementation. Most stakeholder concerns related to:

- Overall levels of available funding, in countries that are expecting lower than previous amounts.

- Whether countries will be able to access any GPE funding if they do not yet fulfill the criteria for the first 70% of the MCA.

- Whether the GPE Secretariat or others (e.g. GPE partners on the ground) can provide assistance to help them put in place improvements required to meet these criteria.

- How the Partnership will ensure that results indicators put in place in each country to access the remaining 30% of funding are fair and realistic; and how it will verify that country reporting against these indicators is truthful.

In addition, the GPE Secretariat has identified a number of risks that, based on the experience with results-based financing in other organizations (including the Global Fund and GAVI), need to be monitored closely. These include the possibility that focusing on activities related to the indicators linked to accessing the variable 30% of GPE funding could occur at the expense of planned activities relevant to other parts of the full ESP.

The Partnership is only starting to apply its new funding model, and both Board and Secretariat are aware of the need to closely monitor this process.

6.4 GPE Country Level Partnership, Governance and Management

6.4.1 Overview

This section reflects on how the Global Partnership manifests at the country level in terms of aid effectiveness and how it is governed and managed.

6.4.2 Aid Effectiveness

As highlighted in its Charter, the Partnership adheres to the principles of aid and development effectiveness (country ownership, alignment, harmonization, managing for results, and mutual accountability) as agreed upon in Paris (2005), Accra (2008) and Busan (2011). These principles are expected to remain relevant under the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals.

Finding 20: At the country level, GPE commitment to the principles of aid effectiveness is manifest most visibly in the Partnership's role related to promoting and supporting country ownership.

The 2010 evaluation of the FTI was critical of the Initiative's success in delivering on its aid effectiveness agenda. It noted that this agenda had been poorly communicated at the country level and that the FTI had not consistently adopted the most aligned aid modalities due to its heavy reliance on the World Bank.[166] Data collected for this evaluation mirror some of these observations, but also provide insights on positive developments as outlined below.

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[166] Cambridge et al, 2010, p. xviii.

In 2011 the GPE Secretariat conducted a Monitoring Exercise on Aid Effectiveness in the Education Sector both to capture information on how partner countries were faring in view of the Paris Declaration indicators, but also to support awareness building and learning about aid effectiveness among GPE member countries. The Exercise involved government and non-government stakeholders from almost 40 developing country partners.[167] While national and international stakeholders consulted for this evaluation in only 4 countries[168] were aware of the Partnership's commitment to the aid effectiveness agenda, stakeholders in all 18 countries expressed (often positive) views on its role and performance in relation to specific aid effectiveness principles, as outlined below.

Ownership: In most of the 18 countries the majority of consulted stakeholders attested to strong national ownership of the GPE-funded program(s). While in some countries stakeholders referred to government ownership only (e.g. Nicaragua), stakeholders in most other countries also referred to a sense of ownership of the broader education community, including CSOs and (if present) private sector representatives involved in the respective LEG (see also Box 37).

> **Box 37: Factors noted by stakeholders that facilitate ownership of GPE-funded programs**
>
> GPE-funded programs address national priorities rather than a separate set of GPE-donor preferences
>
> Program implementation led by the government, using (at least some) country systems and processes rather than setting up parallel structures
>
> The active involvement of diverse national stakeholders in developing the GPE-funded program

In 13 of 18 countries[169] government representatives did not consider the GPE-funded program a stand-alone donor project, but rather an integral part of the government-led work on basic education. In the DRC, however, the national government has not yet fully aligned its own resources with the priorities outlined in the GPE-supported ESP.[170]

Modality of funding: The number of GPE implementation grants channeled through a project modality increased from 37 grants (79%) in 2008 to 49 grants (83%) in 2014.[171] Currently, only two GPE-funded programs use general budget support.[172] This development is likely due to a number of reasons including the growth in the share of fragile and conflict-affected states (FCAS) within the GPE portfolio[173], and the fact that in FCAS project-based funding is often perceived as the safest mechanism in view of existing fiduciary oversight capacity, implementation systems, and higher risk of project failure. In addition, there has been growing pressure for donors at both global and country levels to demonstrate if and how their financial inputs lead to results on the ground. According to consulted donors at both country and global levels, project-based aid is widely seen to

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[167] GPE (2012): Making Education Aid More Effective. Monitoring Exercise on Aid Effectiveness n the Education Sector. Synthesis Report.

[168] Ethiopia, Nicaragua, Tanzania, Zimbabwe.

[169] Burundi, DRC, Ethiopia, Ghana, Madagascar, Moldova, Nicaragua, Rwanda, Senegal, Tanzania, Vietnam, Yemen, Zimbabwe.

[170] See DRC country case study in Volume II for details.

[171] In Uganda, the GPE grant uses a project modality, but funding is disbursed using results-based financing (RBF); i.e. resources are released based on the achievement of agreed upon milestones. As grant implementation is not yet underway, the evaluation team was unable to elicit information on benefits and drawbacks of this financing approach.

[172]Source: GPE Secretariat 2014 Portfolio Review.

[173] Of the 19 countries that joined the GPE since 2010, 6 are categorized as fragile, 3 as conflict affected, and 7 as both fragile and conflict affected states.

better allow this kind of results attribution (or contribution) in all, not only fragile or conflict affected, contexts. See also Box 38.

Use of country systems: The 2014 GPE Secretariat Portfolio Review shows that GPE grants actively contribute to the use of national systems to varying degrees, with 69% using one or more of the assessed dimensions[174] in addition to being aligned with national plans.[175] In four countries, government representatives expressed appreciation that the Partnership actively promoted and supported the use of country systems and processes.[176] Government stakeholders in Ghana and Zimbabwe noted that the Partnership (i.e. the SE/ME) did not yet use national systems although, in their view, these systems were sufficiently strong.[177] Some donor LEG members in Ethiopia and Tanzania noted that while they theoretically support the use of country systems, they have concerns that it sometimes leads to slower implementation and potential lack of quality of results.

Harmonization: In six of the reviewed countries the evaluation found evidence of positive GPE effects on the coordination of actors involved in basic education.[178] See examples in Box 39.

Managing for results: The Partnership has aimed to better ensure that GPE-funded programs address clearly defined and monitorable results, targets and indicators through its revised grant application criteria, the Quality Assurance Review conducted by the Secretariat, and technical assistance from the respective Supervising/Monitoring entities. As noted above, it is hoped that the new GPE funding model will address remaining weaknesses in the quality of ESPs and GPE-funded programs, as well as gaps in the availability of relevant and reliable education sector data.

> **Box 38: Use of Project Modality**
>
> While the GPE Board and Secretariat expressed concern over the high use of the project modality, some consulted DCP representatives and LEG members in the 18 studied countries noted that the project modality was appropriate in some national contexts due to recent experiences with corruption and the resulting heightened caution from both donors and civil society.

> **Box 39: Country Examples**
>
> In **Madagascar**, the GPE grant for the development of the interim education plan was considered fundamental in retaining some donors in the education sector and working towards agreed objectives in a very unstable political context. Donors coordinated their support to the 22 regions in Madagascar based on the interim education plan developed with GPE support.
>
> In **Tanzania**, the participatory and sector (rather than project) focused process of developing the GPE grant proposal created an opportunity and incentive for different actors to critically review their respective contributions to and alignment with the identified (sub)sector priorities. Also, the GPE grant provides a substantial amount of government-led implementation resources, which allows the government to (re)claim the "drivers' seat" for sector reform and proactively try to rally different actors around the re-defined national agenda. The GPE-funded program is now widely seen by development partners as a framework for jointly pursuing more clearly defined and agreed upon progress. This is further supported by the fact that the GPE-funded program is national in scope, whereas other donor-funded initiatives tend to be more limited.

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[174] These dimensions were: whether GPE-funded programs were on plan, on budget/system and Parliament, on treasury, on procurement, on accounting, on audit, or on report. For the dimensions of 'on report' and on budget/system and Parliament, insufficient data were available to make an assessment.

[175] Out of 59 reviewed grants, 29 use an account at the Treasury or Central Bank, 21 use the national accounting system, and 18 are included in the government's audit process and reports.

[176] Cambodia, Ethiopia, Madagascar, Tanzania

[177] In Zimbabwe, the ME agreed with this view, but not all consulted LEG members agreed.

[178] Burundi, Madagascar, Malawi, Moldova, Tanzania, and Uganda

6.4.3 Local Education Groups (LEG)

The 2010 evaluation of the FTI recommended strengthening the LEGs for the critical role that they play for country-level processes.[180] The Partnership has since made efforts to highlight and further clarify the LEG's role as the centre of GPE country-level processes. It has also addressed this recommendation indirectly through CSEF grants to strengthen CSO capacity to effectively participate in LEGs and/or sector dialogue processes. See Box 40.

> **Box 40: Sector Dialogue Mechanisms**
>
> In 15 of the 18 visited countries the LEG function was taken up by existing sector dialogue mechanisms.[179] Some of these groups kept their original names, and some renamed themselves as a LEG.
>
> While GPE encourages countries to use and build on such existing mechanisms, in Uganda, the GPE application process led to the creation of an LEG as a new group(distinct from another existing sector dialogue mechanism) focused solely on GPE grant-related issues. Similarly, in Afghanistan, several country-level stakeholders expressed concerns about the relevance of the LEG, which they saw as duplicating other existing coordination bodies.

Finding 21: **While progress has been made in diversifying LEG membership, sometimes due to GPE efforts, ensuring continuous and quality participation of civil society actors and private sector stakeholders remains a common challenge.**

GPE's Results for Learning Report 2014 noted that the number of countries reporting that CSOs are represented in their LEGs rose from 16 in 2010 to 43 in 2013. This positive trend was confirmed by this evaluation. In 6 of the 18 countries studied, the Partnership was acknowledged for influencing the composition of LEGs by increasing the number and types of CSOs represented and supporting their meaningful participation.[181] According to most consulted government, donor and non-government stakeholders CSO participation positively influenced LEG legitimacy, as well as the quality of LEG discussions and decisions due to the greater diversity of (sometimes government-critical) perspectives. In five countries, CSO participation in the LEG was enabled through CSEF grants as the sole or main source of funding to National Education Coalitions.

Despite this progress, in 5 of the 18 countries studied, challenges were noted in ensuring continuity and/or quality of CSO participation following GPE grant approval.[182] This reflects observations in the 2014 GPE Secretariat Civil Society review (p 5-6). These challenges include limitations in CSO capacity, the extent to which NECs are truly representative of different and often specialized education civil society actors (e.g. in Rwanda, Vietnam), the willingness of other actors, in particular national governments, to engage with and draw upon the strengths of CSOs both before and after GPE grant approval,[183] and the extent to which government critical CSOs were allowed to partake in the LEG (e.g. in the DRC). However, as shown in Box 41, the composition of the LEG does not necessarily determine whether or to what extent a wide range of stakeholders is involved in sector planning processes.

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[179] Burundi, Cambodia, DRC, Ethiopia, Ghana, Honduras, Madagascar, Malawi, Moldova, Nicaragua, Senegal, Tanzania, Vietnam, Yemen, and Zimbabwe

[180] Cambridge Education et. al 2010, p. xxiii.

[181] Ghana, Tanzania, Madagascar, Uganda, Vietnam, Zimbabwe

[182] DRC, Ethiopia, Nicaragua, Rwanda, Uganda

[183] Ethiopia, Nicaragua, Uganda

Program Implementation Grant application documents show very little representation of the private sector on LEGs across the 59 countries. This was confirmed in the 18 country case studies, which noted that the private sector is often either not represented on the LEG,[184] or

> **Box 41: LEG Composition and Effects**
>
> In Senegal, the formal LEG as a regular consultative group only involves donors, and does not include civil society or private sector representatives. Nevertheless, processes for ESP development have been highly consultative and, as confirmed by different stakeholder groups, conducted in a spirit of partnership. Similar observations were made in Honduras.

that the selection of private sector representatives is limited to private education providers.[185] Of the 18 countries, only Senegal has, to our knowledge, made efforts to reach beyond the education sector, e.g. chambers of commerce. This mirrors observations on the representation of private sector stakeholders on the GPE Board (see section 4.3.1).

GPE Secretariat country leads and Coordinating Agencies have made some efforts to actively 'push' for expanding sector dialogue mechanisms and processes to include a wider range of actors. The success of such efforts has depended on the national context.

Finding 22: **In most countries studied for this evaluation, the Local Education Group is led by the national government representative and is involved in the development of the education sector plan and/or preparation of GPE grant documents. In some countries, the LEG is less active after GPE grant approval and its role in implementation and monitoring is not clear to LEG members.**

In 3 of the 18 countries studied for the evaluation,[186] the LEG was largely driven by donor representatives. In the other 15 countries, the national government (usually through the Ministry of Education) already led or had assumed leadership for the LEG during the period under review. While in some countries, this shift is likely to have been furthered by the Global Partnership, available data are insufficient to verify this.

In most of the 18 case study countries, the LEG was involved in the development or initial review of the country's ESP, and/or in the development of the GPE-grant application and PIG program document. The extent and nature of LEG involvement varied from hands-on involvement in thinking through and writing the plan or program document (e.g. Ethiopia, Senegal, Tanzania, Vietnam) to merely providing feedback on a draft of the document prepared by the Supervising/Managing Entity and/or the DCP government (e.g. Nicaragua, Uganda, Zimbabwe). In 6 of the 17 countries with GPE grants,[187] however, the LEG was notably less active and visible once the GPE grant was approved.[188] The 2010 FTI evaluation made a similar observation. In all of these countries, one or more consulted LEG members, as well as SE/ME and CA representatives noted that the LEG's role in the subsequent implementation and monitoring of the ESP and/or the GPE grant was not fully clear to them. In the remaining 11 countries consulted stakeholders had not noted a significant difference in LEG engagement pre and post GPE grant approval, and raised no questions about the group's responsibilities.

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[184] Afghanistan, Cambodia, Honduras, Madagascar, Malawi, Uganda and Yemen

[185] Tanzania, Burundi, Madagascar

[186] DRC, Madagascar, Yemen. According to some, but not all, consulted LEG members also in Vietnam.

[187] 17 instead of 18 as Honduras has not yet applied for a GPE grant.

[188] Cambodia, Ethiopia, Madagascar, Nicaragua, Tanzania, Uganda

6.4.4 Supervising/Managing Entities

The Terms of Reference for Supervising and Managing Entities were revised in 2012 to ensure their alignment with the GPE Strategic Plan and to clarify their roles and responsibilities as agencies other than the World Bank were taking on these roles and required orientation. As shown in Box 42, the two entities have similar, but not identical, responsibilities.

Of the 55 grants active in late 2014, 41 are supervised/ managed by a Supervising Entity and 14 by a Managing Entity. In the 18 countries visited for the evaluation, 15 grants have a Supervising Entity and three have a Managing Entity. Therefore, the following findings largely focus on the role of Supervising Entities and refer to Managing Entities only where relevant and as supported by evaluation data.

> **Box 42: Supervising and Managing Entity Responsibilities[189]**
>
> SE: Develop a program proposal with DCP
> ME: Prepare Grant application
>
> SE/ME: Enter into a financial procedures agreement with the World Bank as the GPE Fund Trustee to arrange for transfer of funds to the country level
>
> SE/ME: Exercise fiduciary responsibilities
>
> SE: Monitor implementation of the GPE grant
> ME: Program implementation and monitoring
>
> SE/ME: Reporting and Grant revisions
>
> The main difference between an SE and an ME is that an SE transfers received funds to the implementing agency (usually the national government), while an ME is responsible for using the grant to implement the agreed upon program

Finding 23:   At the country level, the Global Partnership has reduced its reliance on the World Bank, more so in fragile and conflict-affected states than in other contexts.

The 2010 evaluation recommended that the FTI further increase the number of organizations acting as Supervising Entities (SE) and Managing Entities (ME) to decrease reliance on the WB in this role. It also suggested selecting SE/ME organizations with a stronger comparative advantage than the WB for supporting fragile states.

The Partnership has since expanded the number and type of organizations eligible to act as SE (from three in 2010 to eight in early 2014 and eleven in early 2015).[190] As shown in Exhibit 6.3, from 2010-2014 the World Bank has still acted as SE for the vast majority (71%) of active GPE grant amounts, however, this share is considerably reduced from 95% during the period 2002-2009.

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[189] As per 2012 TOR

[190] Three international CSOs were approved in early 2015 to serve as Supervising Entities: Save the Children UK, Save the Children US, and Concern Worldwide. The organizations can routinely take on the SE role grants up to US$ 5 million; for larger grants GPE requires an additional in depth assessment of the capacity of the local country office to supervise funds during the Quality Assurance Review phase of proposal development.

Exhibit 6.3 Grant Amounts supervised per Supervising Entity 2002-2009 and 2010-2014
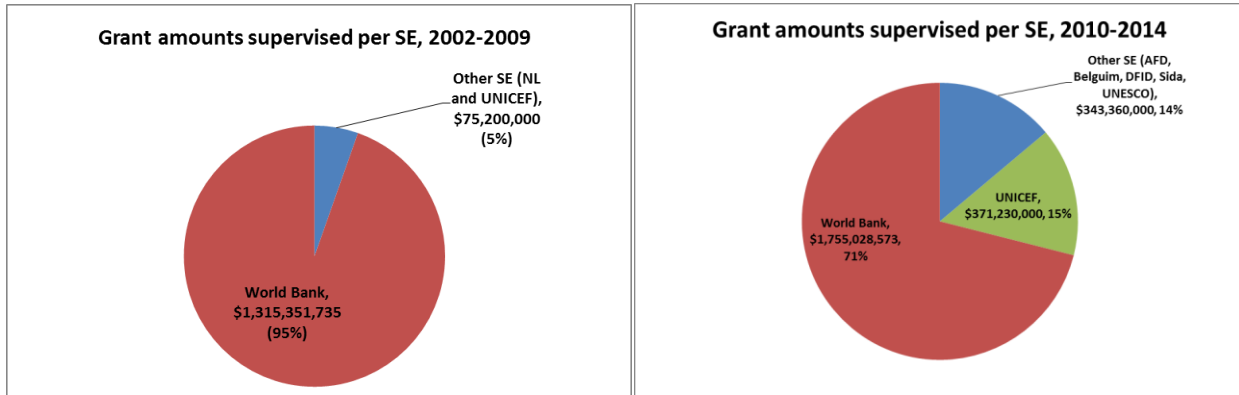
The stronger diversification of SEs is particularly visible in Fragile and/or Conflict Affected States (FCAS) as shown in Exhibit 6.4 below, where UNICEF is now acting as SE or ME in 5 out of 11 fragile states, and in 4 out of 9 countries that, according to the GPE Secretariat, are categorized as both fragile and conflict affected. While GPE is thus drawing more upon UNICEF's capacity and expertise in these challenging settings, the WB is still acting as SE not only in most countries overall (41 out of 55), but also in most countries categorized as fragile, conflict affected, or both.

Exhibit 6.4 Current Supervising Entities in FCAS and non-FCAS
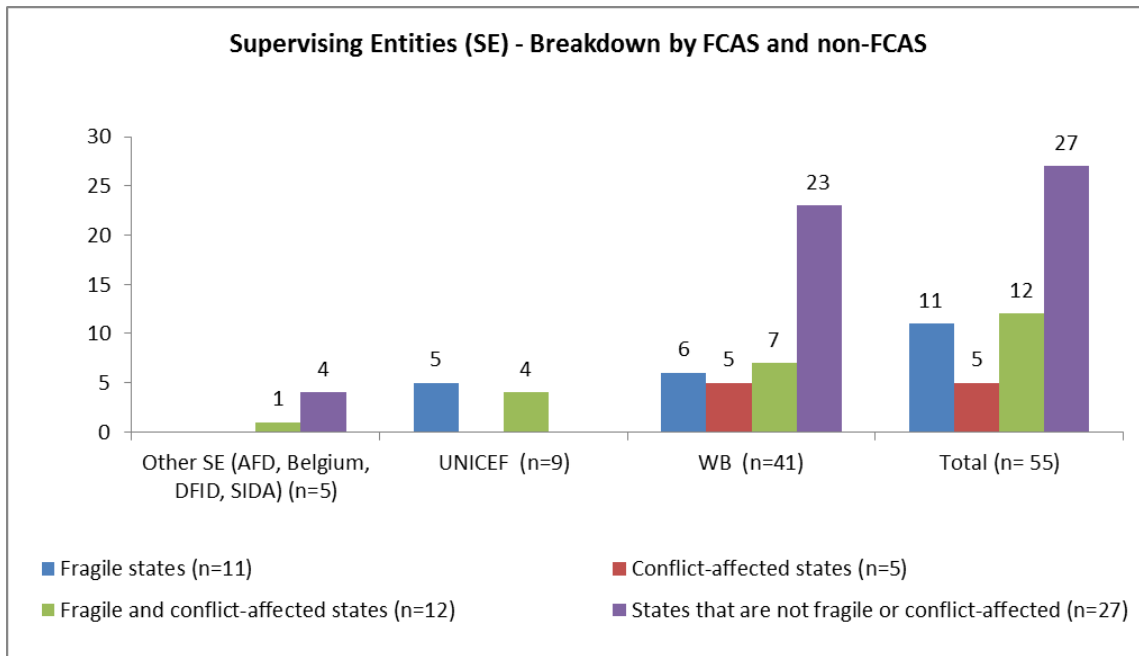
Overall, the strong reliance on only one partner (the WB) for taking on the SE role has been replaced by reliance on two partners (the WB and UNICEF), with other organizations still playing a marginal role in this regard. This is due in part to the limited number of other agencies that fulfill all required criteria as outlined in the SE/ME Terms of Reference, and that have both the **institutional capacity and political leverage** in the respective country to be willing and able to take on this role.

The lack of choice has had some effects on SE selection in some countries. For example, in 3 of the 18 countries studied, the SE appears to have been assigned the role quasi by default [191] and in five countries[192] the government selected the SE/ME without consulting the LEG.[193] In Tanzania, where there was a real choice between different contenders, the effects appear to be positive in terms of the perceived legitimacy of the agency selected (SIDA). However, this one example is insufficient to assess the importance of competitive selection compared to, for example, factors such as an agency's track record and reputation in the country's education sector.

Finding 24: Supervising Entities have provided widely appreciated support to the process of developing GPE grant proposals. The nature and extent of SE involvement in supporting and monitoring GPE grant implementation varies, as do stakeholder expectations of their responsibilities in this regard.

Most of the stakeholders consulted in the 18 countries knew which agency was the SE/ME in their country and were at least broadly familiar with its responsibilities.[194] As regards SE performance, document review and stakeholder consultations indicate a positive overall assessment with some variations in terms of different SE responsibilities.

- In all of the 15 countries that have a Supervising Entity, consulted government representatives and LEG members were largely positive about SE contributions in supporting the development of the GPE program proposal. This support varied by country, ranging from the SE taking the lead (or hiring a consultant) for drafting the proposal,[195] to the SE taking a more hands-off approach and supporting the LEG in driving the proposal process (e.g. Tanzania).

- The SE responsibility to enter into a transfer agreement with the World Bank (as GPE Fund Trustee) appears to have been carried out without major obstacles. Similarly, consultations at country level elicited no concerns about SE (or ME) fiduciary responsibilities in relation to the GPE grant. Short delays due to the WB as Supervising Entity applying the full range of World Bank rules and regulations related to program appraisal were noted only in Uganda.

Evaluation data on SE responsibilities for monitoring and reporting on grant implementation are more varied. Differences relate not only to the assessment of SE performance, but also to stakeholder (including SE) expectations about the role and responsibilities of SEs during these stages.

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[191] UNICEF in Afghanistan, and the World Bank in Ethiopia and Nicaragua

[192] Cambodia, Madagascar, Malawi, Vietnam (SE: World Bank) and Yemen (ME: UNICEF). LEG members in Yemen did not oppose the choice of UNICEF as ME (it was widely seen as an advantage to have UNICEF as ME due to UNICEF's strong country presence), but commented on the lack of LEG consultation for this selection.

[193] The SE Terms of Reference state that the SE is nominated by the developing-country partner and the rest of the LEG, subject to approval by the Board of Directors in consultation with the Trustee. The developing-country partner government should initiate discussion within the LEG regarding the most appropriate SE to meet the country needs. Managing Entities should be designated by the LEG or DPG, when possible under the leadership of the developing-country partner government.

[194] In Ethiopia not all stakeholders distinguished between the World Bank's role as SE for the GPE grant, and its similar role in relation to the pooled fund that the GPE grant contributes to.

[195] Cambodia, Ghana, Nicaragua, Madagascar, Moldova, Yemen

- In several countries (e.g. Cambodia, Senegal, Tanzania) national actors involved in grant implementation acknowledged that the regular monitoring reports compiled by the SE provided constructive feedback and alerted them to issues requiring attention. Similarly, in Uganda, national stakeholders expressed appreciation for the World Bank's anticipated role in monitoring grant implementation, which, in their view, would complement parallel efforts conducted by the Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Education, thereby ensuring comprehensive coverage of potential issues.[196]

- In 4 of the 18 studied countries[197] consulted LEG members noted, however, that in their view the World Bank as the Supervising Entity was not sufficiently proactive in informing the LEG on the progress of grant implementation and related challenges.

Data from the 18 studied countries indicate that differences in the SE approach (i.e. "hands on" or "hands off") are based on three main factors: i) the national context, particularly national capacity for education sector and program planning, implementation and monitoring; ii) characteristics of the agency that is acting as SE in terms of its internal processes, thematic priorities, and approach to development assistance; and iii) the experience, technical background, social and communication skills of the individual(s) who represent the SE agency on the ground. See Box 43.

> **Box 43: GPE Visibility**
>
> Stakeholder consultations in 18 countries indicate that GPE-funded programming is sometimes perceived as part of the regular country-level work of the agency acting as SE or ME. This is the case in some countries in which the World Bank is the SE (e.g. Uganda), but also in countries where UNICEF is the ME (e.g. Zimbabwe).
>
> In Ethiopia, however, while the World Bank is the SE, the GPE-supported program is clearly seen as separate from the WB's own portfolio. This implies that the sometimes limited visibility of the Partnership at the country level is primarily a question of whether the SE effectively communicates the distinction between their agency's role as the SE/ME and its other work in that country.

In terms of the SE's role in providing technical assistance, evaluation data indicate a discrepancy between stakeholder expectations and the SE's formal responsibilities as per its Terms of Reference. [198] The TOR for Supervising Entities do not explicitly spell out technical or capacity development responsibilities beyond the process of developing the GPE grant proposal. Nevertheless, consultations with country-level stakeholders, GPE Secretariat staff, and Board members indicate widespread expectations that the SE's role in monitoring grant implementation should entail technical assistance and capacity development support. In some countries, e.g. Ethiopia and Vietnam, the World Bank in its role as SE was specifically acknowledged as a strong technical partner that was supporting grant (and overall ESP) implementation. In Afghanistan, on the other hand, the SE (UNICEF) is providing some technical assistance, but does not have the financial and human resources to address capacity gaps to the extent desired by national partners.

Finding 25:   The SE/ME model as currently applied is not fully aligned with the GPE partnership principles of mutual accountability and national ownership.

The 2010 evaluation of the FTI raised questions regarding the FTI's reliance on the WB in the SE role, but did not comment on the overall purpose and rationale of the SE/ME role. As confirmed by

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[196] Grant implementation in Uganda has not yet begun.

[197] Cambodia, Malawi, Senegal, and Uganda.

[198] Comparators have distinct modalities of offering technical assistance. For example, while the Global Fund does not offer direct technical support, it works closely with partners such as PEPAR, Roll Back Malaria, and WHO to facilitate such assistance.

a review of GPE Board meeting reports, country-level consultations, and interviews with Secretariat leaders there are, however, a number of questions regarding the alignment of the current SE model with GPE partnership principles, in particular those related to mutual accountability and national ownership.

- Supervising and Managing Entities are not accountable to the DCP government or the LEG, but only to the World Bank as the GPE Fund Trustee and, to a limited extent to date, to the GPE Secretariat.[199]

- There is currently no system in place for assessing SE performance or implementing measures to identify and deal with an underperforming SE.[200] While the DCP government or LEG could decide to not re-select the organization to continue in the SE role in a subsequent GPE grant, this is not an option in all countries given the lack of alternative candidates.

- Administrative costs related to the SE and ME functions vary by agency.[201] For example, agency fees have ranged from 0 - 8% of the grant amount allocated to the country. To date, a cap has been put into place only for recently approved international NGOs.

- The currently used terminology of Supervising (and Managing) Entity does not reflect the notion of partnership. In its 2014 GPE Portfolio Review, the Secretariat recommended a more collaborative term such as Partner Agency that better highlights the envisaged government leadership.

> **Box 44: Comparison with other organizations**
>
> The Global Fund's Country Coordinating Mechanisms (CCM) have a number of similarities to LEGs in that they are country level, multi stakeholder partnerships that develop and submit grant proposals to the Global Fund. The chairs of CCMs are elected from within the group; an interviewee noted that though this seat has been traditionally dominated by the Ministry of Health, it has been slowly diversifying to other stakeholders. CCM funding is provided to improve oversight, increase participation and engagement from constituency members, and encourage capacity building.
>
> CCMs oversee grant implementation, and, for this purpose, often nominate public or private organizations as fund recipients to implement the grant. These Principal Recipients are required to regularly report on grant use and achievements to independent consultancies in each country known as Local Fund Agents. These organizations serve as the Global Funds "eyes and ears" on the ground.

In addition, the criteria for determining an organization's eligibility as a SE/ME are based on a review of its overall (global) capacity, in particular its fiscal capacity. However, this does not automatically guarantee that an agency has sufficient capacity at the country level, as senior SE representatives are often based in Washington rather than at the country level. Related concerns were noted, for example, in Yemen, the DRC, and Senegal.

In this context, national stakeholders in Senegal, as well as the Secretariat leadership team, questioned whether it is necessary for all SE responsibilities to be fulfilled by an international agency (or international NGO), or whether some or all of them could be taken on by national actors, at least in cases where appropriate capacity exists. See Box 44.

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[199] Guidelines for SE/ME reporting to the GPE Secretariat have recently been revised and it is hoped that these will result in more coherent and regular direct reporting.

[200] LEG members in Burundi and Malawi explicitly noted that they would like to see a framework in place to assess the performance of SEs.

[201] Administrative costs include supervision allocations and agency Fees, both of which are identified in grant applications separately from the allocation to the country.

6.4.5 Coordinating Agencies

Finding 26: **Coordinating Agencies in most of the 18 studied countries have made valuable contributions to assisting DCPs especially during the early stages of their engagement with the Global Partnership. However, solely appointing donor agencies to fulfill the coordination function may undermine the aim of strengthening LEGs.**

As for SE and ME, the Terms of Reference for Coordinating Agencies (CA) were revised in 2012 to ensure alignment with the new GPE Strategic Plan 2012-2015. See Box 45.

As per its Terms of Reference, the CA is appointed by the LEG. In 4 of the 18 studied countries, however, the CA role rotates on an annual basis and is taken on by whichever agency acts as Chair of the Development Partner Group.[202] In Vietnam the CA was selected by the national government without LEG consultation.

Summarized below are evaluation data on the visibility and contributions of Coordinating Agencies in the 18 studied countries in relation to their responsibilities.

> **Box 45: Coordinating Agency Responsibilities as per TOR**
>
> - **Facilitating communication** between the government and the development partner group, and between the LEG and the Secretariat
> - **Fostering a strong local education group**
> - **Coordinating initial dialogue** for the country to join GPE
> - **Coordinating the appraisal and endorsement** of the education plan
> - **Coordinating applications** to the GPE Fund
> - **Facilitating monitoring and evaluation**-of the LEG's role of monitoring the education plan's implementation; and ensuring that LEG is informed of progress in grant implementation
> - **Facilitating general reporting** to the GPE Secretariat about education sector progress
> - **Reapplying for GPE support**
> - **Informing the Secretariat** regarding changes in government contacts
> - **Changing the CA,** including informing the Secretariat of changes, and supporting the transition to a new CA.

- Facilitating communication – In 14 of the 18 countries the CA has played a visible and appreciated role in fostering communication between national actors and between national actors and the GPE Secretariat. In six countries[203] the need for this role decreased after GPE grant approval, as a good deal of communication took place directly between the GPE Secretariat and the DCP governments.

- Fostering a strong LEG - In 8 of the 18 countries[204] the CA was noted for its successful efforts to bring different actors together in the LEG (or in ESP-related consultation processes), and to promote and foster meaningful involvement of civil society and, where applicable, other education sector stakeholders. In three countries the CA has not played a strong role in this regard, largely due to contextual challenges.[205]

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[202] Burundi, Ghana, Malawi, Uganda. This also used to be the case in Tanzania. Stakeholders in both Tanzania and Afghanistan noted that having both a lead donor and a CA led to overlap of responsibilities and confusion.

[203] DRC, Malawi, Senegal, Tanzania, Uganda, Zimbabwe.

[204] Cambodia, Ghana, Madagascar, Moldova, Senegal, Tanzania, Uganda, Yemen

[205] DRC, Nicaragua, Zimbabwe

- In three countries, the CA was clearly acknowledged for having been instrumental in facilitating and coordinating the initial dialogue between the GPE Secretariat and the DCP government. [206]

- In four countries, stakeholders were aware of CA contributions to facilitating monitoring and general reporting to the GPE Secretariat about education sector progress, in particular by playing an active role in organizing and conducting Joint Sector Reviews and sharing JSR reports with the GPE Secretariat.[207]

- In Vietnam, national actors appreciated CA support in reapplying for GPE support. In other countries where this was relevant, this role appears to be seen primarily as a responsibility of the Supervising or Managing Entity.

- Finally, in all countries other than Nicaragua and Yemen the CA was seen to perform well in informing the GPE Secretariat of changes at the country level.

The main factors that influence how and how well CAs are able to perform their role are the same as those noted above for Supervising Entities.[208] One additional factor, however, is that the CA does not receive fees from the Partnership. In three countries this was noted as a burden to the agency, and a limitation to its ability to actively engage beyond its regular work as a development partner.[209]

Consultations with LEG members (including CA representatives) and government stakeholders showed that in 9 of the 18 studied countries the CA's role and value added were less clearly understood than the role of the SE (or ME). [210] This is partly because some areas of responsibility of the two roles overlap, e.g. in keeping the LEG informed of progress in GPE grant implementation. Uncertainty over the value added by the CA role was most pronounced in, but not limited to countries where responsibilities of the CA overlapped with those of the Chair of the Development Partner (i.e. donor) group, but where these two positions were not filled by the same agency (Afghanistan, DRC, Tanzania). Existing GPE guidelines for the CA role strongly imply, but do not explicitly recommend merging these two roles.[211]

While acknowledging the overall positive feedback on the work of Coordinating Agencies that has derived from the country case studies, the evaluation team raises the question whether all of the responsibilities currently assigned to the CA role necessarily have to be fulfilled by a donor, rather than by a national actor or the LEG as a whole. Limiting the coordinating function to be played by

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[206] DRC, Tanzania, Vietnam

[207] Cambodia, Ethiopia, Nicaragua, Vietnam

[208] These are: i) the national context (e.g. the extent to which there was a need to initiate contact between the DCP and the GPE, and the extent to which the LEG or equivalent dialogue mechanisms were inclusive and communicated well); ii) characteristics of the agency fulfilling the CA role, iii) the profile (skills/experience/personality) of the individual representing the agency on the ground.

[209] Cambodia, Ghana, Vietnam

[210] Afghanistan, Burundi, DRC, Ghana, Malawi, Moldova, Tanzania, Uganda (not by all stakeholders) and Zimbabwe (only initially)

[211] The GPE Country Level Process Guide (2012), section 3.1.1, notes that "usually, education sector collaboration mechanisms involve the selection of a lead or coordinating partners, often on a rotating basis". It is unclear, however, whether this information is provided as a justification for the CA role, or whether it is intended as a suggestion to merge the roles of CA with any existing lead/coordinating roles. The CA Terms of Reference (2012) state that "generally, a lead or coordinating development partner facilitates collaboration and communication among partners and with the government. Where this is not done, countries are asked to name a coordinating partner upon joining the GPE."

donor agencies only may in fact be detrimental to the intent to support strong Local Education Groups and national ownership as it removes (part of the) responsibility for the effective functioning of the LEG from the group and places it instead on a traditionally advantaged international actor. The current CA model does not allow for context-specific modifications.

6.4.6 Role of the GPE Secretariat at the country level

Finding 27: **Since 2010 the GPE Secretariat has made notable efforts to improve its technical support for country-level processes. These changes are starting to have visible positive effects, especially in the grant application process. While the Secretariat is aiming to play a stronger support role during ESP implementation and monitoring, the nature and value-added of this role has not yet been clearly defined.**

The 2010 FTI evaluation observed that, as a result of being understaffed, the GPE Secretariat had not always been able to ensure frequent communication with country-level stakeholders or provide the required technical input, especially during ESP appraisal and GPE program design.[212]

Since 2010 the Secretariat has made various efforts to strengthen its capacity and efforts around supporting country-level processes. These include the development or revision of guidelines,[213] the introduction of a three-phase Quality Assurance Review (QAR) process for grant applications, and an increase in country-facing staff from 19 in 2012 to 22 in 2014. The Secretariat was also responsible for operationalizing and communicating the various changes to the GPE funding model that were made during the period under review.

Notable effects of the changes made since 2010 have included:

- A reduction in the average grant processing time: The time from grant application to program start has been reduced from nine months and 19 days during the period 2003-2009 to five months and 17 days since 2010. Similarly, the average time between grant application approval and first disbursement has been reduced from approximately 16 months between 2006 and 2009 to 11.6 months since 2010.[214]

- A steady increase in the cumulative disbursement rate per year since 2010: Despite increases in allocations, on average, the disbursement rate has been above 50% since 2010, as compared to the prior period, which had a cumulative disbursement rate below 50%, suggesting that there have been improvements in GPE's efficiency in disbursing committed funds.[215]

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[212] Cambridge Education et al 2010, p.76.

[213] For example the Country Level Process Guide (2012); Guidelines for Education Sector Plan Preparation and Appraisal (2012) in collaboration with IIEP; as well as separate guidelines for Education Plan Development Grant, Program Implementation Grants, and Program Development Grants (all 2013, revised 2015).

[214] Please also see Volume IV, Appendix 6 (Review of GPE Documents and Grants) for an analysis of grant processing times by geographic region.

[215] Please see Volume IV, Appendix 6 (Review of GPE Documents and Grants) for further details. In comparison: the Climate Investment Fund's Disbursement Report for the period July-December 2013 indicates cumulative disbursement rates for different CIF projects as ranging between 20% and 48%. At the same time, GAVI has been able to disburse approximately 90% of all funds approved since its inception in 2000. These variations illustrates that it is difficult to merely compare disbursement rates without taking into account the nature of what allocated funds are being used for, by whom, and what specific challenges affect disbursement rates.

- An increase in the average time spent on individual grant proposals (reflecting the strengthened care placed on ensuring quality proposals through the QAR).

- An increase in the number of country visits conducted by Country Support Team (CST) members per year (from 9 in 2011 to approximately 80 in 2014).

- An increase in the average number of country visits per staff member (from 3 in 2012 to around 3.6 in 2014).

- An increase in the average staff time per developing country partner on an annual basis by more than 50% over the period 2011-2013.[216]

The effect of these changes is still difficult to assess given that several changes (e.g. within the CST) have been fairly recent. In addition, comparisons of the Secretariat's support before and after the noted changes is difficult. This is the case not only for countries that joined the Partnership after 2010, but also those that joined at an earlier time, given that very few of these countries have undergone grant applications and/or implementation and monitoring processes both before and after 2010.

The following observations therefore focus on: i) areas for improvement noted in the 2010 FTI evaluation; ii) the relevance and effects of guidelines or processes introduced since 2010; and iii) feedback from country-level stakeholders on the relevance and effects of support provided by the Secretariat during the period under review.

- In several countries, visits from GPE Secretariat staff have been instrumental in eliminating misunderstandings about the Partnership and its funding criteria. In Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda this contributed to the countries applying for GPE funding.[217]

- Overall feedback on guidelines and tools for country-level processes developed or revised by the Secretariat since 2010 was explicitly positive in four countries (Ethiopia, DRC, Rwanda, Tanzania), while in others consulted stakeholders did not comment on them, thereby implying that at least the guidelines were not seen to be wanting.

- Consulted stakeholders in eight countries[218] expressed their overall appreciation for the technical support received from GPE country leads, especially during the process of developing and submitting GPE grant applications. Feedback provided as part of the QAR was repeatedly described as relevant and constructive, resulting in sometimes "painful" but valuable revisions to draft proposals. In Malawi, consulted stakeholders noted that they had received two visits from the Secretariat country lead to support them for their second GPE grant application, whereas there had been no visit for their first application.

- In three countries,[219] Secretariat country leads played valued roles as facilitators or counsellors. For example, LEG members in these countries turned to them to express critical views related to the SE's performance, which they had been hesitant to bring up directly with the SE. Similarly, the SE and LEG in Uganda turned to the country lead to convince the government that it needed to comply with the spending allocations as agreed upon in the GPE grant document. By intervening, the country lead took pressure off the SE and CA who, due to their country presence and other work on the ground, were conscious

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[216] 2014 GPE Secretariat portfolio review.

[217] While Honduras has not yet applied for GPE funding, stakeholders noted that Secretariat staff had helped address previous misunderstandings about funding eligibility and criteria.

[218] Cambodia, Ethiopia, Ghana, Madagascar, Moldova, Senegal, Tanzania, Uganda

[219] Afghanistan, Ethiopia, and Uganda. In Ethiopia this role is now more often played by the CA.

of the need to guard their good relationship with the government. Consulted stakeholders in Nicaragua and Honduras noted, however, that their country leads had not been able to ensure government compliance with the principles of participatory and inclusive sector planning.

- While the role of Secretariat staff as external actors thus has benefits, the fact that they were not permanently on the ground was also noted as a limitation in their ability to provide meaningful, context-relevant, and timely input to emerging needs during ESP (or grant) implementation and monitoring. In some countries, the high turnover of country leads[220] and their sometimes insufficient ability to operate in the local language limited their ability to effectively support country processes. In only one country (Tanzania) national stakeholders clearly identified the GPE Secretariat as the 'face' of the Partnership, while in several others (Cambodia, DRC, Nicaragua, Rwanda, Senegal) GPE remains strongly associated with the World Bank.

During the period 2012- 2013 the CST was largely focused on supporting and managing the large number of grant applications received following the publication of indicative country allocations in 2012. As of 2014, the CST has aimed to engage more strongly in supporting efforts around ESP implementation and monitoring. This shift in priorities is reflected in the stated objectives of country visits conducted by Secretariat staff, which in 2014 illustrate a stronger focus on ESP implementation and sector monitoring than on GPE grant related issues.

The Secretariat is still in the process of defining the specific responsibilities of the CST team under the envisaged stronger engagement in and support for ESP implementation and monitoring that was indicated by interviewed Secretariat leaders.[221] While the Terms of Reference for Senior Country Education Specialists were revised in 2015, they do not elaborate on whether and what types of additional or modified types of support Secretariat staff will provide. Activities conducted and tools developed under the Sector Monitoring Initiative are likely to play a role in this regard. It is not yet clear, however, whether the CST envisages that individual country leads will or should play a role in providing hands-on technical assistance, or how their role will relate to and complement the roles of Supervising/Managing Entities and Coordinating Agencies. The nature of the CST's future engagement at the country level beyond grant approval and supervision will, however, be important for determining and justifying the number of staff required for filling these roles.

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[220] Nicaragua and Honduras have had four different country leads since 2010, and Vietnam has had five since 2011.

[221] Seven of 18 consulted GPE Board members were unsure about how the roles and contributions of the CST, SE/ME and CA related to each other, especially in terms of providing technical assistance and supporting capacity development.

7 Conclusions and Recommendations

7.1 Conclusions

Overall, the evaluation found that the GPE Board and Secretariat have made serious efforts to address the recommendations of the 2010 evaluation and other areas for improvement identified since then. These changes have strengthened the Partnership both operationally and strategically.

However, the Partnership has not yet clearly defined what constitutes 'success' in view of its broad mission; this has implications for the Partnership's future direction. At present, there is a considerable disconnect between the Partnership's ambitious mission and its narrow financing base. The GPE Board and Secretariat are likely to address this challenge as they develop the new Strategic Plan for 2015-2020.

GPE at the Global Level

Conclusion 1: The Partnership has maintained its relevance in evolving global and national contexts by reformulating its strategic priorities, establishing indicative country allocations, and revising its funding criteria.

Based on findings 1, 2, 3, 15, 16, 19, 23

The Partnership's focus on basic education was relevant during the period reviewed and is likely to remain so under the new global Sustainable Development Goals. In its first Strategic Plan for 2012-2015, the Partnership clarified its strategic priorities and emphasized the importance of improving not only access to education, but also the quality of education. It also focused GPE resources more strategically on geographic areas most in need and least well-funded through other sources, including on fragile and conflict-affected states (FCAS). It adjusted its funding criteria to better serve all countries, and informed current and potential member countries of the maximum grant allocations for which they might be eligible. The Partnership also made progress towards consolidating GPE financing from all but one donor under a single GPE Fund while phasing out the previously established Catalytic Fund.

Together, these factors contributed to an additional 19 countries joining the Partnership since 2010, 16 of which are categorized as FCAS. GPE has also more than doubled its disbursements to FCAS and the largest share has gone to states categorized as fragile. While the growth in GPE membership is positive, the addition of population rich countries such as Pakistan has meant that mean GPE allocations per primary school aged child and per out of school child in DCPs have decreased since 2010.

Conclusion 2: The Partnership has insufficiently defined how it will translate its mission of "galvanizing and coordinating global efforts to deliver a good quality education" into practice. This has negatively affected the Partnership's ability to demonstrate progress towards results.

Based on findings 4, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13

While GPE Board members and Secretariat staff widely agree that the Partnership is 'more than just a fund,' it is not clear what 'more' constitutes. This lack of clarity is reflected in the following:
- The absence of an overarching Theory of Change
- The absence of an agreed upon Results Framework

- The absence of a shared understanding of the Partnership's envisaged role and comparative advantage in advocating for education at the global level and in knowledge generation and dissemination
- The absence of an agreed-upon understanding of the size and role of the Secretariat
- The absence of a clear definition or framework explaining how GPE will leverage the strengths of its partners not only at the country, but also at the global level.

As a result, consulted stakeholders have diverging views on what they consider evidence of the Partnership's success. Some focus on its ability to generate funding for basic education, while others are primarily interested in evidence of GPE contributions to education outcomes at the country level. Another consequence is that the Partnership has limited ability to track and demonstrate progress towards higher level results. The GPE Board and Secretariat acknowledge these weaknesses and expect they will be addressed in the new Strategic Plan 2015-2020.

While there is considerable pressure from some donors for a rigorous impact evaluation of the Partnership, the feasibility of such an evaluation will be affected by the current deficiencies in the Partnership's ability to clearly define, monitor, and demonstrate progress towards results, and the absence of a counterfactual.

Conclusion 3: Changes in GPE governance have had positive effects on the legitimacy and efficiency of the Board.

Based on findings 6, 7

Since 2010 the GPE Board has become more representative, most notably in the participation of developing country partners. There is room for improvement in ensuring the participation of Southern civil society organizations, and in clarifying the rationale for involving private sector representatives and defining related selection criteria.

The four newly created Board committees have had some positive effects on Board efficiency, but could be used more effectively if they had some operational decision-making authority, which would allow the Board to focus more on strategic rather than operational matters.

Conclusion 4: The GPE Board has insufficiently defined what it means to operate as a global partnership, and has not fully translated the principle of mutual accountability into practice.

Based on findings 4, 5, 9, 11, 12

The GPE Compact (2013) broadly defined the roles and responsibilities of different types of partners but it is not clear how the Partnership will leverage the strengths of individual partners. A Mutual Accountability Matrix was drafted in 2011 but never formally adopted or implemented.

The current partnership framework has not been used consistently to monitor partner compliance with non-financial commitments (such as harmonizing procedures) and, until recently, did not include any negative consequences for partners who did not honour their commitments. The new GPE Funding Model does stipulate consequences of non-compliance with financial commitments, but only for developing country partners.

Conclusion 5: There is no strong evidence yet of Partnership contributions to filling the financing gap for basic education.

Based on findings 13, 14

The Partnership's ability to mobilize new external resources has been constrained by the overall global decline in aid to basic education since 2009. To strengthen resource mobilization, the GPE Secretariat introduced and held two pledging conferences (in 2011 and 2014) but pledges and

actual contributions from donors have fallen short of envisaged targets. Furthermore, even if the pledge goals were reached, the financing gaps would remain sizeable: the average annual financing gap (between available domestic resources and the amount needed to reach post-2015 targets) across all low and lower-middle income countries between 2015 and 2030 is estimated to be US$ 22 billion.

There is considerable evidence that existing GPE financing is largely not additional to what would have been available without the Partnership. Some donors have reallocated some or all of their bilateral funding for basic education to the Partnership and IDA allocations to GPE countries decreased from US$ 500 million in 2007 to US$ 250 million in 2012.

Increases in domestic resources from developing country partners (DCPs) have been marginal and cannot be directly attributed to the influence of the Partnership. Many of the pledges made by DCPs at the 2011 Replenishment Conference were not fulfilled. At the 2014 Replenishment Conference, DCPs pledged US$ 26 billion, some of which, if adhered to, would represent new but modest resources for education.

Conclusion 6: There is a severe mismatch between the Global Partnership's broad and ambitious mission on the one hand and its limited financial resources and ability to systematically leverage the strengths of its partners on the other hand.

Based on findings 3, 4, 11, 12, 13, 14

GPE members and external partners see the Partnership's considerable geographic reach and diverse governance as positive assets in terms of its credibility, legitimacy, and potential to convene partners and optimize their influence on global progress in basic education. Some stakeholders expect the Partnership to take stronger global leadership for the (sub)sector, but it is not yet seen to be filling this role.

This is due in part to the Partnership's limited resources. While GPE funding allocations have not yet addressed some underserved areas of basic education, such as adult and youth literacy, the Partnership is facing considerable pressure from some members and global stakeholders to expand its support e.g. to encompass secondary and/or higher education and education in humanitarian crisis situations. The financing required for such thematic expansions would be sizable.

In addition, the Partnership has not systematically leveraged the strengths of its partners to exert influence and contribute to global level results, such as generating and disseminating global public goods and strengthening the global visibility of education.

GPE at the Country Level

In most of the GPE countries reviewed for this evaluation, it is too early to assess the effects of organizational changes made since 2010. This is because some countries only joined the Partnership within the past five years, and other countries that joined earlier have not yet undergone grant application and implementation processes before and after the reforms that would allow for meaningful comparisons. The following conclusions need to be understood against this backdrop.

Conclusion 7: Reforms implemented since 2010 have had some positive effects on GPE contributions to strengthening country capacity for education sector planning. Whether and how this will lead to improved education outcomes remains to be verified.

Based on findings 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 27

Although the Partnership is seen primarily as a funding mechanism at the country level, it is also valued for promoting evidence-based, participatory and inclusive sector planning processes. It has supported the development or revision of Education Sector Plans (ESPs) and related GPE-funded programs that address national priorities.

The Partnership has made financial contributions through grants, and technical and normative contributions through grant application criteria and participatory processes for ESP and grant proposal development. The GPE Secretariat has provided guidance for GPE grant application processes, reduced processing time, and provided more direct support to DCPs for their grant applications including through more frequent country visits. GPE partners have provided support by acting as Supervising/Managing Entities and Coordinating Agencies.

Since 2010 the Partnership has put more emphasis on developing Local Education Groups (LEG) and has made contributions to diversifying their membership. LEGs have generally been actively involved in developing ESPs and GPE grant proposals, but are less involved in ESP and grant implementation and monitoring. The consistent and meaningful participation of civil society organizations and private sector representatives in LEGs is an ongoing challenge.

GPE contributions have focused on the planning stages of the education policy cycle, with limited verifiable effects on the implementation and monitoring of ESPs. DCP representatives and LEG members in several countries, especially in FCAS, expressed the desire for more GPE technical assistance in ESP implementation and monitoring.

While some GPE donors are eager to see evidence of GPE contributions to education outcomes, there are practical and theoretical issues to be resolved. The practical issue is whether the Partnership can realistically make direct contributions to such outcomes given its financial resources. The theoretical issue is whether sound ESPs lead to improved learning outcomes – an assumption that has not yet been tested, and which relates to the Partnership's Theory of Change.

Conclusion 8: The current uniform models for Supervising/Managing Entities and Coordinating Agencies are not fully aligned with the principles of national ownership and mutual accountability.

Based on findings 24, 25, 26

The Partnership is committed to furthering the Aid Effectiveness agenda. It has promoted ownership of GPE-funded interventions by either the national government or the LEG and has made notable contributions to enhancing harmonization and coordination among donors and education stakeholders at the country level.

The Partnership has expanded the number of agencies acting as Supervising Entities (SEs) and Managing Entities (MEs) (as of early 2015, there were 11) and UNICEF is now supervising 15% of active grant amounts. Nevertheless, GPE continues to rely heavily on the World Bank as an SE/ME. SEs and MEs have contributed to country-level processes, especially GPE grant application processes.

Coordinating Agencies (CA) have provided valuable support, especially in the period leading up to GPE grant approval. However, the current CA model, which relies on donor agencies to take on this coordination function, may stifle rather than promote strong Local Education Groups in some countries.

The current models for Supervising/Managing Entities (SE/ME) and Coordinating Agencies (CA) are not fully aligned with the principles of national ownership and mutual accountability. Organizations fulfilling these roles are not accountable to the national governments or LEGs they work with, and the present model does not allow context-specific adaptations.

7.2 Recommendations

The following recommendations are grouped according to the 'big picture' findings that emerged from the interim evaluation and are accompanied by specific recommendations in each group. Since the interim evaluation was conducted while the Partnership was developing the new GPE Strategic Plan, the GPE Board and/or Secretariat may already have taken, or be about to take, steps that address some of these recommendations. Of the four groups of recommendations, the first two are considered imperative, while the third and fourth are considered desirable.

Recommendation 1: **The GPE Board should agree on where and how the Partnership aims to add value, what constitutes 'success' in view of its mission, and the types of results for which the Partnership can realistically hold itself accountable.**

Based on conclusions 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7**; Priority:** Imperative**.**

As part of its Strategic Planning process, the GPE Board should clearly define what the Partnership is, and what it will hold itself accountable for in the period 2015-2020 in terms of its grant-making role and other possible roles and areas of contribution. Related discussions and decisions should be realistic in relation to the amount of resources that the Partnership is likely to mobilize during the planning period.

Recommendation 1.1: The GPE Secretariat, in collaboration with the Board, should continue to develop and finalize a theory of change (or one theory each for the global and the country level) that spells out the goals and objectives of the Partnership and the types of changes it intends to influence.

- The theory of change (ToC) should clearly identify what the Partnership is aiming to influence, including: a) the elements or stages of the depicted change processes that the Partnership is able to influence directly and how this can be achieved, and b) the elements or stages in which it is likely to have an indirect effect. This will be important for determining what the Partnership will hold itself accountable for, and what types of changes it will define as outputs and outcomes. For example, depending on how GPE contributions and resulting effects are conceptualized in the ToC, elements of sector planning may be regarded as either outputs or outcomes.

- The theory (or theories) should identify the main underlying assumptions that link the elements of the Theory of Change by elaborating on the anticipated 'how' of the targeted change processes.

- The theory/theories of change should specify the Partnership's role and contributions at both country and global levels, and clarify how the two are anticipated to influence and benefit from each other.

Recommendation 1.2: The GPE Board should decide the future directions of the Partnership's grant-making function in terms of thematic and geographic scope and priorities.

Findings of this interim evaluation do not point to a single 'right' decision as regards the future scope and foci of the GPE grant making portfolio, as each option has benefits and drawbacks – as shown in the table below.

Exhibit 7.1 Options for the Global Partnership's future grant making function

Option	Benefits	Drawbacks
Keep status quo of GPE's grant-making function	• Relatively broad geographic reach • Relevance (focus on basic education) • Stability: Dramatic reformulation of the grant-making approach may not be judicious, given the constant change that marks GPE's history	• Some grants too small to likely make a difference or warrant effort of grant application • Important areas of Basic Education not covered • Unfulfilled expectations/pressure on GPE to take on bigger role, become 'the' global mechanism for education • Neglected opportunities to address underserved populations (e.g. refugees, children affected by conflict, young illiterate mothers)
Expand the grant-making function to encompass all of education	• Coherence with GPE's approach to endorsing sector plans and with likely SDGs • Further legitimize GPE's role as a voice for global education	• Dependent on significant additional resources; danger that if those do not materialize that GPE spreads itself too thin • The broader the portfolio, the harder to demonstrate GPE value added/contributions to results
Expand to humanitarian settings	• With 1.4% of global humanitarian assistance directed to education, could significantly increase the share of education aid in such settings • Likelihood of attracting new (possibly earmarked) funding for this specific purpose	• Administrative capacity required to host a separate fund • Potential for substitution if donors channel their current contributions to humanitarian aid through the Global Partnership and do not add additional funds. • Lack of specific technical capacity in humanitarian situations • Issue is possibly outside the Partnership's core comparative advantage
Reduce the Partnership's geographic and/or thematic scope	• Increase the impact of grants, more fully closing financing gaps in a select set of countries • Better able to track and demonstrate contributions to results	• Could undermine the Partnership's desire to become 'the' global mechanism for education overall • Important areas of Basic Education not covered

Board deliberations should be guided by GPE's forthcoming theory/theories of change, while taking into account the following:

■ Realistic expectations as regards the Partnership's future ability to generate contributions to the GPE fund(s). If the Partnership chooses to expand its current grant-making function, either geographically or thematically, it should only do so if it can be certain to attract additional resources (i.e. currently available resources should not be further fragmented). This should also be considered even if the GPE Board decides to maintain the Partnership's current scope/foci: as it currently stands, some grants may not be sufficient to make a catalytic impact, particularly in light of the transaction costs required to attain GPE funding. If, however, the Partnership is able to attract significant additional financing, an

expansion of its thematic and/or geographic scope may be possible, and may in fact advance GPE objectives, e.g. by reaching a greater share of the poor including in middle-income countries, and/or by financing areas of underinvestment such as education in humanitarian settings.

- The evolving global context, particularly in terms of: GPE's coordination role within the Sustainable Development Goals; SDG-related risks of declining attention of donors and other education stakeholders to basic education; EFA goals that until now have been neglected by both the Global Partnership and other education actors, such as adult and youth education; increasing demands for (and likely available funding for) supporting education in humanitarian settings; evolving geographic and/or thematic priorities of current and potential education donors, paying attention to the needs of donor orphans; the increasing role of the private sector in education delivery, and private sector interests and roles in education as an influencer for the job market; the continued learning crisis.

- The administrative capacity of the Secretariat and/or GPE partners to host one or more additional thematically or geographically earmarked funds, and the likely costs of adapting existing to required capacities.

- The technical capacity of the Secretariat and/or GPE partners e.g. related to working in humanitarian settings, and, related to this, the broader question of the Partnership's comparative advantage

Given the uncertainty regarding the future size of the GPE Fund, it may be advisable to create a "tiered" strategic plan that provides a menu of possible future approaches based on the amount of resources mobilized. This could prevent the current mismatch between resources and ambition.

The continuing decline of aid to fragile and conflict-affected countries, and the large proportion of out of school children who are located in these states, make a strong case to continue or even intensify GPE support to FCAS. If the Board decides to do so, it should more clearly distinguish between fragile contexts and conflict-affected contexts when making decisions about what types of support are most appropriate, and what supervisory arrangements are appropriate in each case.

Recommendation 1.3: The GPE Board should decide whether the Partnership will continue to aspire to fill a global role beyond resource mobilization and grant-making, and, if so, what this role will entail, how it will be implemented, and with what envisaged results.

- The Board should reach agreement about whether and how the Partnership intends to fulfill its envisaged roles of being a 'global leader, advocate and convener' for education beyond its fundraising and grant making contributions. This encompasses decisions over the Partnership's role(s) in i) knowledge generation and/or dissemination as a strategy for building partner capacity; ii) advocacy for education; and iii) convening partners e.g. to agree on education norms and standards.

- In its deliberations the GPE Board should take into account that the comparative advantage of aid in general is likely to increasingly shift towards support for cross-border and global contributions such as knowledge generation, sharing, and adaptation; supporting technical cooperation among countries; and fostering innovation.[222] In this context, the nature of GPE as a global partnership with diverse membership can constitute a comparative advantage, if systematically used to influence not only country-level, but also regional and global developments.

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[222] As discussed in section 3.2.

- There needs to be a clear understanding of whether and how any global role that the Partnership wants to play will complement and draw upon its country level and grant-making work, e.g. in relation to capturing and disseminating relevant knowledge.
  – For example, in the view of the evaluation team, the Global Partnership has the potential to use its country level engagement to elicit and share emerging and highly relevant knowledge on how to best support fragile states and/or conflict-affected states, including in view of strengthening national planning and implementation capacity. The degrees of fragility, and the reasons for this fragility, vary between the countries currently categorized as FCAS. To date there is limited evidence and knowledge within and beyond the Partnership on what works and does not work in trying to support the creation or rebuilding of education systems and institutions in fragile states, or the particular challenges in conflict-affected settings. This includes insights into how to best support capacity development in rapidly changing and challenging environments. The Partnership could support global learning by systematically capturing, analyzing and sharing insights on both successes and failures emerging from its support to fragile and possibly from conflict-affected member countries.
  – To date, GPE's efforts to address the global funding gap for education have focused on asking donors for resources to fill gaps. There may be room for the Partnership to play a stronger role in exploring and sharing insights on the various ways in which countries (both developing and developed) have successfully addressed funding gaps in education and other sectors and in utilizing innovative financing techniques.
- Institutional arrangements and capacity must match the Partnership's envisaged global role(s). This is not limited to ensuring that the GPE Secretariat has the required capacity, but also requires clarifying how the Partnership can and will draw on the abilities and strengths of its various partners. This in turn implies the need to reflect upon the extent to which the evolution of the Partnership is dependent on trust among constituencies and individual partner organizations.
- Resources allocated to any global role(s) should be sufficient to make a significant contribution.

Recommendation 1.4: The GPE Board should clearly articulate the value-added of being a partnership and how it will make use of the combined contributions of its partners to better fulfil its mission.

- This should include reviewing and revising the GPE Charter where and as needed to define more precisely the specific contributions that different types of partners are (likely) able to make towards the achievement of the GPE mission and objectives. While some may be financial contributions, others may be contributions to enhancing access of certain groups to education, improving the quality of education, or strengthening the efficient use of available resources for (basic) education. As discussed in Recommendation 2, the GPE partnership framework also needs to be strengthened to clearly define partner accountability.
- The GPE Board should elaborate on the specific benefits that different types of partners are likely to gain from being a GPE member. For example, what are the potential benefits to and contributions from DCPs that are no longer eligible to receive GPE funding?
- Finally, the GPE Board should clearly identify similarities and differences between how the Partnership is expected to function at global and country levels respectively, and with what specific benefits in fulfilling the GPE mission.

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Results 4 Development

Recommendation 2: **The Global Partnership should develop a Strategic Management Framework that is based on the new Strategic Plan and that includes a results framework, monitoring plan, formal feedback mechanisms, and an evaluation plan.**

Based on conclusions 2, 4, 6, 7**; Priority:** Imperative

Strategic plans provide roadmaps for the overall direction of an organization. The new GPE Strategic Plan should capture and communicate the decisions related to Recommendation 1 above. At the same time, any strategic plan runs the risk of becoming outdated during the period it covers, and this risk is higher if an organization is working in multiple, complex and often rapidly changing contexts. We therefore recommend that the Partnership develop a Strategic Management Framework, as reflected in the following specific recommendations.

Recommendation 2.1: Based on the agreed theory (or theories) of change, the GPE Secretariat should develop a Results Framework to define the Partnership's envisaged contributions to results.

- The main purpose of the results framework would be for the Partnership to track its planned contributions in areas that are within its (likely) area of influence and for which it will be accountable.

- The results and indicators in the framework should be based on the GPE theory or theories of change, and should include quantitative and qualitative targets to be achieved during the period covered by the new Strategic Plan.

- The GPE Secretariat should review the results framework on a regular basis to ensure its continued relevance and utility. Adjustments to results, indicators and targets should be made with approval from the Board if and as needed to ensure that the Partnership continues to collect relevant data on its performance.

Outlined below are a number of suggestions for issues that the Partnership may want to hold itself accountable for. Depending on the new GPE theory/theories of change, this list could be longer or shorter. The notion of accountability is not limited to the performance of the GPE Board and Secretariat, but encompasses contributions made by all GPE partners at both global and country levels.

At the global level, the Partnership could hold itself accountable for its:

- Performance as a partnership, based on monitoring partner compliance with commitments for financial and non-financial contributions at global and country levels. This could be based on and use the information elicited through the feedback loops suggested in 2.3 below.

- Contributions towards mobilizing new resources for basic education.

- Contributions to the more effective use of resources, e.g. by providing evidence of how GPE's role in coordinating investments of different agencies has contributed to preventing or reducing duplication of efforts.

- Contributions to creating, facilitating the creation of, or transmitting Global Public Goods, e.g. in relation to relevant global policy decisions, standards, norms, experimentation, or agreements on (basic) education or related sub-themes. Establishing a firm link between GPE interventions and results in these areas should not be limited to the activities of the GPE Board Chair and Secretariat, but also take into account the work of the broader GPE membership. For example, if the Partnership decided to advocate for a specific issue or

decision, is there evidence that this position has been put forward by each/most of its partners in a consistent way; and is it likely that this has contributed to subsequent changes in related global norms, standards or practices?

At the country level accountability could span:

In all countries:

- GPE performance as a partnership at the country level, e.g. by tracking evidence of national ownership of processes around ESP development and implementation. This could include tracking the extent to which national government resources are put forward to support ESPs, and/or eliciting information on changes in the extent to which GPE donor partners at country level are aligning their individual projects/programs with GPE-supported education sector plans.

- Global Partnership financial contributions to closing estimated funding gaps for basic education (or related sub-issues) in the targeted countries, and the timeliness of GPE disbursements intended to close funding gaps)

- Global Partnership contributions to education sector planning. This would require linking changes in the quantity and quality of education sector plans with GPE financial and/or technical contributions (e.g. through grant application processes and related guidelines and through technical assistance either from the Secretariat or partnership members). Related efforts could build on existing GPE Secretariat initiatives related to assessing and tracking the quality of ESPs.

- Global Partnership contributions to mitigating gaps in national capacity for ESP implementation and/or monitoring. This could entail capturing the respective LEGs role and contributions to ESP implementation and monitoring. Tracking results deriving from funding provided through the CSEF could also be relevant.

In fragile and conflict-affected countries, GPE contributions to:

- The development/appraisal of transitional Education Sector Plans

- Generating or disseminating learning on what works and what does not

- Expediting the allocation and disbursement of funding to conflict-affected contexts.

Recommendation 2.2: The GPE Secretariat should develop a draft monitoring plan for Board approval to facilitate the use of the Results Framework.

- The monitoring plan should identify what types of data the Secretariat will collect at what intervals, how, and by whom (i.e. Secretariat, SE/ME, DCP governments, LEG) to track progress towards the results outlined in the results framework.

- The monitoring plan should be developed as soon as possible after the new Strategic Plan and Results Framework have been approved in order to allow for the timely collection of baseline data (as required).

- The monitoring plan should address the weaknesses in tracking the performance of individual GPE grants and the overall grant portfolio that were noted in the 2014 Organizational Review and this evaluation, e.g. in relation to consistently tracking comparable information on envisaged and actual grant disbursements in each country.

- The scope of GPE monitoring activities does not need to be limited to the issues in the Results Framework. However, its current resources do not permit the Partnership to make direct contributions to, and hold itself accountable for, changes at the level of education

outcomes. If the Partnership decides to continue its efforts to collect and publish information on changes in education outcomes in its member countries, it needs to be very clear on:

– The purpose of doing so (e.g. is it monitoring data in relation to specific bottlenecks such as teacher training that are being addressed through GPE-funded programs as a means of ensuring accountability of GPE partners at the country level? As a means to test assumptions underlying the GPE Theory of Change?).

– The Partnership's comparative advantage and value added in capturing and/or publishing data that are not directly linked to demonstrating GPE contributions to results. This will require defining how the Partnership will complement or leverage the work of other actors (including of some GPE partners such as UIS, UNICEF) in relation to capturing and publishing education data at global and country levels.

Recommendation 2.3: The Global Partnership should develop formal feedback mechanisms to better monitor its performance as a partnership.

■ Feedback loops should be developed to systematically collect information on the performance of the accountable units or bodies that are noted in the GPE Theory (or Theories) of Change. At a minimum regular feedback should be elicited on the constituencies represented on the Board and the Secretariat, and ideally also on Local Education Groups, and Supervising/Managing and Coordinating Agencies.

■ These feedback mechanisms should allow the Partnership to monitor partner compliance with financial and non-financial commitments. This would require a clear understanding of the types of financial and other contributions at both global and country levels that each (type of) partner organization or constituency has committed to making.

■ The Partnership may want to consider using a system of report cards for gathering information on the activities or performance of each of these groups/bodies, either through self-assessment or peer-review. Feedback does not necessarily have to be evaluative, but can be descriptive.

■ Applying feedback mechanisms should not be the responsibility of the Secretariat, but that of all partners and units/bodies in the GPE Theory of Change.

Recommendation 2.4: The GPE Board should reconsider the plan to conduct an Impact Evaluation, currently envisaged for 2017.

In the view of the evaluation team, an impact evaluation will not be meaningful in the absence of a fully elaborated Theory of Change and clarity about what types of results the Partnership can and wants to hold itself accountable for, the lack of baseline and performance data, and the absence of a relevant counterfactual. We therefore recommend that the GPE Board reconsider the current plan to conduct a GPE impact evaluation in 2017.

In the event that the Board decides to pursue an impact evaluation in 2017, it should consider whether an assessment of the "collective impact" of all partners might be a more appropriate way to approach this, rather than focusing on the isolated effects of partners' contributions to the GPE Fund and Board.[223]

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[223] "Collective Impact" is a framework to tackle deeply entrenched and complex social problems. It is a structured approach to making collaboration work across government, philanthropy, non-profit organizations and citizens to achieve significant and lasting social change. See, for example, John Kania and Mark Kramer: Collective Impact. Stanford Social Innovation Review. Winter 2011. Available at http://www.ssireview.org/articles/entry/collective_impact

Recommendation 2.5: The Secretariat should develop an evaluation plan that incorporates an independent external evaluation in or around 2020, as well as one or more periodic evaluations between 2016 and 2020.

- The GPE Board should approve the conduct of an independent external evaluation of the Global Partnership at the end of the period covered under the new Strategic Plan. We suggest that this not be an impact evaluation, but a more modest assessment of GPE performance in terms of its relevance, effectiveness and efficiency by 2020, focusing on those areas that the Partnership identifies in its new Theory of Change as lying within its area of influence. By using an evaluation approach such as Contribution Analysis, which draws upon an existing Theory of Change, such a review should be able to provide evidence and a line of reasoning from which stakeholders could draw plausible conclusions on whether and how the Partnership has contributed to its intended results.

- In addition, the GPE evaluation plan should identify one or more periodic evaluations to be conducted during the period 2016-2020. These evaluations can be internal or external. They do not necessarily have to be commissioned by the Board, but may, instead, be requested by the Secretariat. Periodic evaluations can obtain information on the overall performance of the Global Partnership, or they can be used to elicit evidence on specific aspects of the Partnership's (or Secretariat's) work.

Recommendation 3:   The Global Partnership should further clarify the respective roles and responsibilities of the Board Committees and the Secretariat.

Based on conclusions 2 and 3**; Priority:** Desirable

Recommendation 3.1: The GPE Board should assign clearly defined decision-making powers to either the Coordinating Committee or to all of the other three Committees (in which case it should dissolve the Coordinating Committee). This would allow operational decisions to be made in between biannual meetings of the full Board, and would permit the Board to focus primarily on strategic issues.

The expected benefits and potential drawbacks of different options related to this recommendation are outlined in the table below.

Exhibit 7.2 Benefits and drawbacks of assigning decision making powers to Board Committees

Option	Benefits	Drawbacks
Status quo	• All Board members are able to contribute to most Board decisions regardless of their participation in any of the Committees. • CGPC has authority to approve material revisions to grants and requests for accelerated funding	• Board spends time on operational decisions and does not consistently pay attention to strategic issues. • Some Board members and Secretariat staff question the raison d'être of the Coordinating Committee • Risk of perceived imbalance among Committees if only CGPC has decision making authority • Inefficient use of talents and expertise among Board members
Assign decision making authority to the Coordinating Committee	• Frees full Board to focus on strategic issues • Clarifies role and responsibilities of the CC	• Different CC members may not be equally informed about issues put forward by the three other sub-committees

Option	Benefits	Drawbacks
		• Risk of CC (and CGPC, provided that its recently granted decision making authority is not revoked) being perceived as exercising too much authority with respect to Board's and Partnership's direction
Assign (additional) decision making authority to the SPC, GERF and CGPC and dissolve CC	• Frees full Board to focus on strategic issues • Allows all three Committees to take selected decisions in a timely fashion • Efficient use of talents and expertise among Board members • Leaner structure with 3 instead of 4 Committees	• Not all decisions taken by all Board members, leading risk of disagreement in larger Board. • Defining reasonable boundaries of decision making responsibilities of each Committee may be challenging • Absence of Coordinating Committee may make it more difficult for the Board Chair to interact with Committee Chairs in between Board meetings

Recommendation 3.2: The Partnership should revisit and agree upon the nature and scope of the role that the Secretariat is expected to play at both global and national levels, and ensure that it has the resources to do so.

The Secretariat's role in grant management and supervision is relatively clear, and the recent organizational review led to improvements in its capacity and performance in this regard. There is, however, an urgent need to clarify the Secretariat's expected value-added and its roles in:

- GPE contributions to policy dialogue, global advocacy for education, and the creation or transmission of global and/or cross-country public goods.

- Resource mobilization (distinguishing Secretariat responsibilities from the responsibilities of GPE Board Members and the broader partnership).

- At the country level, more clarity is required regarding the role and envisaged contributions of Secretariat staff beyond ESP development and GPE grant approval, i.e. during their implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. Deliberations in this regard should consider to what extent, on what issues, and at what points in time Washington-based staff can or should provide hands-on technical assistance and capacity building advice, and what other types of meaningful support Secretariat country leads might provide (e.g. by monitoring and/or providing feedback on the activities of GPE country-level partners, including SE/ME, CA, and LEG).

Recommendation 4: The GPE Secretariat should develop a proposal for review by the GPE Board on how to make Supervising Entity and Coordinating Agency arrangements more flexible and adaptable to varying national contexts.

Based on conclusions 1**,** 4 and 8**; Priority:** Desirable

In their current form, a Supervising Entity (SE) and Coordinating Agency (CA) may not both be required in all countries and/or during all stages of the grant cycle.

Recommendation 4.1: The Secretariat, in consultation with DCPs, should explore other options for Supervising Entities.

In consultation with DCPs that are interested in changing the current SE arrangement, the Secretariat should explore options to ensure financial accountability for GPE grants, other than having an international agency (donor, development agency, or Northern NGO) act as the SE. For example, in some national contexts, existing government systems may be sufficiently strong and reliable to take on this role.

Similarly, the Secretariat and interested DCPs should explore other possible options for fulfilling SE functions related to providing technical assistance during grant proposal preparation and communication. This could include reviewing the roles of all GPE partner organizations represented in the respective country, some of which may already be supporting education planning processes in the country.

If there are alternatives to the current SE arrangement that are likely to ensure the same or similar levels of confidence among all relevant actors, the Partnership should consider using them if: a) a member country expresses the wish to do so because the alternative is better aligned with the principles of national ownership and mutual accountability than the use of an SE, and b) if the alternative is more cost effective than the use of an SE.

Recommendation 4.2: The GPE Secretariat, in consultation with DCPs, should explore whether in some countries there are alternative ways of ensuring the fulfilment of CA functions.

As regards the role of the Coordinating Agency, the Secretariat should consider if some CA responsibilities related to communication with the Secretariat could be transferred either to the LEG as a whole, or to a national (i.e. non-donor) actor selected by the LEG. This approach should be limited to countries in which both the government and the LEG would prefer such an arrangement to the current one, and where these actors can make a specific proposal as to how the CA responsibilities would be fulfilled.

In many countries the CA role may very well continue to be played by the lead donor, provided that the LEG and national government agree, but alternative arrangements would not prevent the lead of the donor education group (where such a mechanism exists) to actively support the effective functioning of the LEG.

List of Findings

Finding 1: Major progress has been made in basic education in developing countries but is now somewhat stalled, and there is a risk that under the new Sustainable Development Goals global attention to basic education may decrease. The Partnership's foci on access to and quality of basic education and on allocating external and domestic funds strategically have been, and are likely to remain, relevant in this evolving context.

Finding 2: Since 2010, the Global Partnership has undergone (and continues to undergo) extensive changes that address previously noted areas for improvement. The GPE Board and Secretariat have managed parts of the change journey well, although aligning the pace and scope of change with organizational capacities and monitoring the effects of changes on GPE performance have been challenges.

Finding 3: Since 2010, the GPE Board and Secretariat have clarified the global Partnership's strategic priorities and purpose.

Finding 4: Until recently, the GPE Board has given insufficient attention to reaching agreement over where, how and why the Partnership has the potential to add value.

Finding 5: Since 2010, the Secretariat and Board have made some efforts to ensure partner compliance with the GPE Compact and partnership principles. Nevertheless, current accountability requirements are not consistently applied, and ask more from developing country partners than from donors.

Finding 6: Changes to the GPE Board have strengthened DCP representation and participation in GPE governance. Room for improvement remains in ensuring equal, strong and meaningful representation and participation of all GPE constituencies.

Finding 7: The creation of four Board Committees has strengthened the effectiveness and efficiency of the Board. Nevertheless, the structure is not yet used to its full potential.

Finding 8: At the global level GPE has established itself as an entity whose programmatic work is (and is seen to be) more independent from the World Bank than in 2010.

Finding 9: Diverging views on the size, structure and technical capacity of the GPE Secretariat indicate a lack of clarity about its role and value added to the functioning of the Partnership.

Finding 10: Despite some improvements in monitoring and reporting at sector and grant level, the Global Partnership's ability to track and demonstrate its contributions to results has remained weak.

Finding 11: Efforts to support the development of global or cross-country public goods have been negatively affected by differing views within the Partnership on its role in supporting such goods, and by the absence of a coherent strategy that articulates GPE's comparative advantage in this area.

Finding 12: GPE has made some contributions to enhancing the global visibility of education but has not notably used its convening power to leverage the strengths of its partners in related advocacy work.

Finding 13: By 2012, the Global Partnership established itself as the fifth largest financier of basic education, disbursing US$ 354 million. Despite this development, there is no strong evidence to suggest that it has generated significant additional donor funding for basic education.

Finding 14: Domestic financing to basic education has increased since 2010. While GPE's influence on this increase remains uncertain, if DCP pledges made at the 2014 replenishment conference are executed, GPE will have made a positive contribution towards mobilizing new domestic resources for education.

Finding 15: GPE has allocated an increasingly high proportion of its resources to fragile and conflict-affected states (FCAS), which has helped mitigate the impact of the global decline in aid to basic education in these settings.

Finding 16: The Global Partnership's country-level approach, which supports the development and implementation of sound education sector plans, allows it to tailor its support to the needs of diverse national contexts, including in fragile and conflict-affected states (FCAS).

Finding 17: While GPE helped strengthen education sector planning processes and contributed financially to the implementation of sector plans, there is insufficient data to assess the Partnership's longer term effects on national capacities for ESP planning and implementation.

Finding 18: GPE has made promising contributions to strengthening country capacity for education sector monitoring. Nevertheless, effective and reliable monitoring is still often limited by a lack of reliable data.

Finding 19: The new results-based GPE funding model approved in June 2014 is suited to enhance country performance in achieving measurable results aligned with GPE Strategic Goals. Its implementation has some operational implications and risks that the Secretariat is still working on how to address.

Finding 20: At the country level, GPE commitment to the principles of aid effectiveness is manifest most visibly in the Partnership's role related to promoting and supporting country ownership.

Finding 21: While progress has been made in diversifying LEG membership, sometimes due to GPE efforts, ensuring continuous and quality participation of civil society actors and private sector stakeholders remains a common challenge.

Finding 22: In most countries studied for this evaluation, the Local Education Group is led by the national government representative and is involved in the development of the education sector plan and/or preparation of GPE grant documents. In some countries, the LEG is less active after GPE grant approval and its role in implementation and monitoring is not clear to LEG members.

Finding 23: At the country level, the Global Partnership has reduced its reliance on the World Bank, more so in fragile and conflict-affected states than in other contexts.

Finding 24: Supervising Entities have provided widely appreciated support to the process of developing GPE grant proposals. The nature and extent of SE involvement in supporting and monitoring GPE grant implementation varies, as do stakeholder expectations of their responsibilities in this regard.

Finding 25: The SE/ME model as currently applied is not fully aligned with the GPE partnership principles of mutual accountability and national ownership.

Finding 26: Coordinating Agencies in most of the 18 studied countries have made valuable contributions to assisting DCPs especially during the early stages of their engagement with the Global Partnership. However, solely appointing donor agencies to fulfill the coordination function may undermine the aim of strengthening LEGs.

Finding 27: Since 2010 the GPE Secretariat has made notable efforts to improve its technical support for country-level processes. These changes are starting to have visible positive effects, especially in the grant application process. While the Secretariat is aiming to play a stronger support role during ESP implementation and monitoring, the nature and value-added of this role has not yet been clearly defined.