GUIDELINES FOR EFFECTIVE ENGAGEMENT IN FRAGILE AND CONFLICT-AFFECTED CONTEXTS

For Decision

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this paper is to seek the approval of the Board of Directors of the **Guidelines for Effective Engagement in Fragile and Conflict-Affected Contexts**. The Guidelines, attached as **Annex 1** to this paper, provide a framework for how the Global Partnership for Education (the "Global Partnership" or "GPE") adapts its processes and modalities to support educational needs in fragile and conflict-affected contexts.

2. RECOMMENDED DECISION

The Secretariat requests that the Board of Directors approve the following decision:

BOD/2012/11-XX — Guidelines for Effective Engagement in Fragile and Conflict-Affected Contexts: The Board of Directors approves the Guidelines for Effective Engagement in Fragile and Conflict-Affected Contextsas set out in Annex 1 of BOD/2012/11 DOC 09.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The GPE Strategic Plan 2012–2015 sets out as one of its objectives "Fragile and conflict-affected states able to develop and implement their education plans". At the country level, achieving this objective will require some adaptations to GPE endorsement and funding mechanisms to be fit for purpose, ensuring that education sector plans are informed by comprehensive conflict analysis, providing increased support for better coordination and plan development, and bridging the gap between emergency response and development.

3.2 The Global Partnership aims to support the development of sustainable education systems that provide a good quality education to all boys and girls. This implies providing effective support that takes into account the political context as well as institutional capacity, working closely with partners on the ground to help developing countries develop relevant, sustainable and results-oriented education sector plans. The Global Partnership needs to be proactive in addressing education needs in fragile and conflict-affected states on the basis of international best practice principles, including the principles of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee for working in fragile states and the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergency's (INEE) Minimum Standards.[1]

3.3 In order to work effectively in fragile contexts, and based on past experience, a number of adaptations to GPE processes have been made or are under development. These include the proposal on Accelerated Global Partnership for Education Support in Emergency and Early Recovery Situations, which was reviewed and generally supported by the Financial Advisory Committee, subject to certain consideration raised by the member from the Multilateral and Regional Banks constituency (see BOD/2012/11 DOC 07), the development of Guidelines for Transitional Education Sector Plans,[2] the introduction of the Managing Entity role as an alternative to Supervising Entities, and a process to enable a change from Supervising Entity to Managing Entity in situations where a grant has been approved but exceptional events warrant such a change.

4. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

4.1 Many of the Global Partnership's current developing country partners and those countries seeking to join the Global Partnership face critical emergency and early recovery situations. The adaptations to fragile contexts that have been made to GPE processes in the past have evolved over time, often in response to particular situations. The Guidelines seek to bring these adaptations into a clear, comprehensive framework in line with the principles of the GPE Charter and the Strategic Plan 2012-2015.

[1] http://www.ineesite.org/index.php/post/know_updated_inee_minimum_standards_handbook/

[2] The guidelines for transitional ESPs are currently under development by the Secretariat in cooperation with the International Institute of Educational Planning of UNESCO, and the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies.

4.2 In September 2012, the Global Partnership co-hosted the UN General Assembly side event entitled *Education Cannot Wait: Call to action by global leaders to help children in crisis affected countries.*[3] As a co-host of the event, the Global Partnership should be in the forefront to follow up its Call to Action with concrete measures that strengthen support for education in fragile and conflict-affected states.

5. SUMMARY AND JUSTIFICATION FOR ELEMENTS OF THE GUIDELINES

5.1 The Guidelines set out specific adaptations of GPE processes in fragile and conflict-affected states. They include special principles and procedures relating to development of plans, applying for program implementation funding, and addressing emergency situations mid-implementation, including the need to revise programs. Some particular issues regarding the guidelinesare noted below.

Application of the Guidelines: Definition of Fragile and Conflict-Affected Contexts

5.2 Methods for defining and classifying fragile and conflict-affected contexts vary widely. To date, the Global Partnership has relied on the World Bank's harmonized list of fragile situations[4] for its decision-making. However, this list does not capture the range of fragile, conflict-affected, post-conflict or politically unstable states that require adaptations in GPE processes. For instance, Mali is not currently on the list, yet its context clearly requires adaptations in GPE processes. Furthermore, the World Bank list is updated annually whereas the GPE country-level processes can best be supported if classifications are updated in real-time.

5.3 There are two types of situations where adaptations to the Global Partnership's standard processes may be needed:

- Countries that have been in fragile or conflict-affected situations for an extended period of time. These countries often have weak institutions, a lack of data, and often lack strong Local Education Groups, requiring adaptations in the regular GPE processes.

[3] http://www.globalpartnership.org/news/367/22/Education-Cannot-Wait-A-Call-to-Action-by-Global-Leaders-to-Help-Children-in-Crisis-Countries/d,Whats%20New/

[4] http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EXTLICUS/Resources/FCS_List_FY12_External_List.pdf

- Countries changing from relative stability to fragility or conflict (such as Madagascar in 2009, Guinea in 2008, and Mali in 2012). In these situations, conflict or political change – often in the form of a *coup d'état* or other unconstitutional change of government — demands effective adaptations of the Global Partnership's engagement to minimize loss of achievements in the education sector and optimize the stabilizing role the Global Partnership can play in education sector development.

5.4 The Guidelines will apply to countries on the World Bank's harmonized list,[5] as well as to additional countries deemed fragile or conflict-affected by the GPESecretariat, based on relevant international and national data. The Secretariat will provide its justification to the Board of Directors and advise the Local Education Group accordingly.

Implementation Modalities

5.5 The Global Partnership's guiding principle is to provide financial support for implementing programs through the most aligned modality proven effective in a given context. The default is to use a Supervising Entity that on-grants program implementation funds to the government. This default is not likely to be appropriate in most fragile and conflict-affected contexts, as government systems are often weak and in some cases barely functional. In certain cases, governments are actively engaged in conflict and/or are not recognized by the development partners. In such cases, the do no harm principle applies to avoid exacerbating tensions or conflict.

5.6 Therefore, the Guidelines set out the expectation that the Global Partnership will rely on capable and trusted partners serving as Managing Entities to ensure that basic educational services can be delivered, while at the same time working to strengthen education systems.

5.7 While the use of Managing Entities will be the default position, Local Education Groups may present a rationale for the use of a Supervising Entity mode, if the situation warrants.

[5] http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EXTLICUS/Resources/FCS_List_FY12_External_List.pdf

6. IMPLICATIONS FOR SECRETARIAT RESOURCES

The recommended Guidelines incorporate actions that are already being implemented or are in the work plans of the Secretariat that form the basis of the current approved budget for 1 July 2012 to 31 December 2013.

7. NEXT STEPS

Once approved, the Guidelines will be published on the GPE website and disseminated widely to GPE partners by the Secretariat.

ANNEX 1:

GUIDELINES ON WORKING IN FRAGILE AND CONFLICT-AFFECTED CONTEXTS

1. INTRODUCTION

The Global Partnership for Education Strategic Plan 2012–2015 defines support for education in fragile and conflict-affected states as a core objective of the Global Partnership for Education (the "Global Partnership" or "GPE"). These Guidelines provide a framework for how the Global Partnership will engage in fragile and conflict-affected contexts.

2. APPLICATION OF THE GUIDELINES

These Guidelines apply to all IDA-eligible countries that appear on the World Bank's harmonized list of fragile and conflict-affected situations. However, to ensure timely and adequate support to countries, the Secretariat will use other sources of information, international and national, to determine whether these Guidelines should apply to a country not on the list. In addition, under paragraph 7.2, the suspension of activities by a Supervising Entity or Managing Entity due to emergency will lead to the automatic application of these Guidelines. Once the Secretariat determines that these Guidelines apply to a country that is not on the harmonized list, the Secretariat will immediately provide its justification to the Board of Directors and advise the Local Education Group or Development Partner Group accordingly.

3. PRINCIPLES OF THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP

Some of the Global Partnership's guiding principles as set out in the Charter need particular adaptations in fragile and conflict-affected states:

- ***Country Ownership***. If governments are fragmented, not recognized by the international community or are seen to represent a particular section of the population to the detriment of another, working with government can be problematic. In these cases, the Global Partnership needs to optimize technical collaboration with education administration in order to maximize institutional capacity building and the sustainability of interventions. Particular attention should be given to conflict analysis and to the "do no harm" principle.

- ***Support linked to performance***. Fragile and conflict-affected states will face greater challenges in achieving results. A progressive approach will need to be taken in order to set realistic, achievable benchmarks so that countries can gradually move towards improved results. In cases where situations change from stable to unstable, the need to support children's education takes precedence over the need for countries to demonstrate progress.

- ***Keeping transaction costs down.*** Ensuring results in fragile and conflict-affected states usually requires higher transaction costs than in stable contexts. Therefore, supervision and management fees may need to be adjusted based on a realistic assessment of costs.[6] In addition,support in these contexts will frequently requirea greater involvement of the Secretariat.

4. DEVELOPING EDUCATION SECTOR PLANS

Transitional Education Plans

4.1 Development of an education sector plan (ESP) is at the core of the Global Partnership's country-level process. Countries to which these Guidelines apply are given the option of developing transitional ESPs. A transitional ESP is suitable for countries where the education sector operates in an especially challenging and complex context such as where countries are emerging from conflict. A transitional ESP gives governments and development partners the opportunity to develop a plan for a transition period, focusing on recovery and rebuilding the education sector. As a key activity of the transitional ESP, the country should develop a more comprehensive education plan, based on the required data and information.

Appraisal and Endorsement of the ESP

4.2 The use of a consultative process in the development of an ESP, whether comprehensive or transitional, is of particular importance in fragile and conflict-affected contexts, as is analysis to ensure that the ESP is conflict-sensitive. The ESP appraisal and

[6] As set out in the Report of the Financial Advisory Committee (BOD/2012/11 DOC 07), the Secretariat is collecting information from currently eligible agencies regarding supervision and management costs for GPE grants, including in fragile and conflict-affected states. The Secretariat will provide such information to the FAC for review in June 2013. The FAC is recommending an interim decision for Board approval that Supervising Entities in fragile and conflict-affected states be able to apply for up to US$200,000 per year for a supervision allocation provided they provide a justification and costed supervision plan.

endorsement process should analyse the extent to which the ESP addresses the needs of the whole country, and whether the plan has a good balance between service delivery and (institutional) capacity development. Reference should be made to the Guidelines on the development of Transitional Education Sector Plans.[7]

5. ACCELERATED FUNDING IN EMERGENCY AND EARLY RECOVERY SITUATIONS

The development of an ESP—even a transitional plan—usually takes from several months to a year, which is not conducive to providing assistance in emergency and early recovery situations. Local Education Groups in countries that are eligible and do not already have access to program implementation funding from the Global Partnership, may apply for Accelerated Funding in Emergency and Early Recovery Situations.[8]

6. MODALITIES FOR PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

6.1 The default modality for implementation of a program supported by the Global Partnership is to use capable and trusted partners as Managing Entities to ensure that basic educational services can be delivered, while at the same time working to strengthen education systems. The selection of a Managing Entity should be guided by the Terms of Reference for Managing Entities, with particular attention to the agency's ability to operate in the fragile and conflict-affected context and provide rapid scale-up of support.

6.2 A guiding principle for Managing Entities is to optimize capacity building by working through national systems, ensuring technical collaboration with ministries of education and strengthening civil society.

6.3 While the use of Managing Entities will be the default position, Local Education Groups may present a rationale for the use of a Supervising Entity mode if the situation warrants.

[7] These guidelines are currently under development.

[8] The guidelines for this new proposed system were considered by the Financial Advisory Committee at its meeting in October 2012, and while most members are generally in support of the guidelines, some issues were raised by the FAC member from the Multilateral and Regional Banks constituency during and after the meeting and the FAC Chair would like to discuss these concerns in the context of these guidelines. Please refer to the guidelines in the FAC Report (BOD/2012/11 DOC 07).

7. RESPONDING TO EMERGENCIES IN COUNTRIES WITH AN ACTIVE PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION GRANT

7.1 When a program implementation grant has already been approved for a country and the context changes from (relative) stability to instability, such as when there is a *coup d'état* or conflict breaks out, there must be flexibility to revise a GPE-supported program, including the modality of support and the content of programs, to changing circumstances.

7.2 The following paragraphs are procedures that will apply in these situations.

a. Notification: If an emergency situation leads a Supervising or Managing Entity to suspend activities in a country, the Supervising or Managing Entity will inform the LEG and the Secretariat in writing within 24 hours. Upon such notification, these Guidelines will become applicable immediately (if not already applicable) and the Board of Directors will be informed accordingly.

b. Communication with countries under suspension: From the moment of the notification of suspension, Secretariat communications to the country will be directed through the Coordinating Agency to the Development Partner Group rather than the Local Education Group (LEG). The Development Partner Group will determine the extent to which formal or informal communications are advisable with current authorities or *de facto* governments.

c. Assessment period: For a period of two to four weeks following the notification, the Secretariat will monitor the situation in the country to determine if there is a reasonable likelihood of stabilization. No decision will be taken regarding grant signature or other program implementation or monitoring activities during this period. The Secretariat will engage in discussions with the Development Partner Group about possible alternative arrangements for program implementation.

d. Determination of appropriate course of action for previously approved programs: At the end of the assessment period, the Secretariat will meet with the Development Partner Group, to discuss whether the previously approved program can be implemented as planned, or whether restructuring or redesigning the approved program is necessary. In the event that the previously approved program was to be implemented in Supervising Entity mode, the application of these Guidelines

means that the default mode is the Managing Entity mode as set out in paragraph 6.1 above. As stated in paragraph 6.3 above, the Development Partner Group may present a rationale focusing a Supervising Entity model and relying on national financial management systems if the situation warrants.

e. Program restructuring / Redesign:

In cases where:

i. the Development Partner Group has determined that, due to the emergency context, the program needs to be revised, the Secretariat will work with the Development Partner Group to develop a timeline that is reasonable given the country context and will inform the FAC and the Board of Directors.

ii. the program is already under implementation, the Policy on Revisions to Programs will apply, noting the need for the Financial Advisory Committee to act in a timely way. Anticipated timelines under the Policy on Revisions may be abbreviated upon agreement of the FAC Chair and Chair of the Board of Directors.

iii. the allocation has been approved but the grant agreement has not been signed and/or activities have not yet commenced, the Secretariat will review the revised program under the Quality Assurance Review process using an accelerated timeline if possible. In these contexts, the FAC review process and Board approval process may take place outside of the regular allocation approval process and timelines.