UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN OF THE GPE STRATEGIC PLAN

For Information

1. PURPOSE

As part of its responsibility to report to the GPE Board of Directors on an annual basis, the Global Partnership for Education ("GPE") Secretariat collects and aggregates information on activities undertaken to support the achievement of the Strategic Objectives outlined in the Implementation Plan of the GPE Strategic Plan. The purpose of this paper is to provide the Board of Directors with a summary update of these activities (for each Strategic Objective), during the period May-October 2013.[1]

2. RECOMMENDED DECISION

This paper is for information only. No decision is being sought at this time from the Board of Directors.

3. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

3.1 In May 2013, the Board of Directors approved the Implementation Plan of the GPE Strategic Plan. The Implementation Plan represents a more detailed and actionable breakdown of the Strategic Plan and includes outcomes, actions, indicators and timelines associated with each of the five Strategic Objectives.

3.2 In order to help execute the activities outlined in the Implementation Plan, Technical Focal Points from the GPE Secretariat have been identified for each Strategic Objective. In addition, several GPE partners have volunteered to play leadership roles in

[1] The Board of Directors approved the Implementation Plan of the GPE Strategic Plan in May 2013. The updates captured in this paper cover the 6-month period following approval of the Implementation Plan.

helping drive progress under activities associated with each of the five Strategic Objectives.

3.3 To increase collaboration and participation across the Partnership, the GPE Secretariat proposed establishing Communities of Practice[2] for each Strategic Objective. These Communities of Practice are designed to help source relevant knowledge from across the entire spectrum of GPE's stakeholders. Through these Communities of Practice, the intent is to enhance a sense of joint ownership, coordination and knowledge-sharing, with a targeted focus on delivering the activities that underlie each Strategic Objective.

3.4 Terms of Reference (ToR) for each of the five Communities of Practice have been drafted and are tailored to the unique needs of each of the five Strategic Objectives.

3.5 Although significant progress in implementing activities outlined in the Implementation Plan over the past 6-month period is evident, success in achieving the totality of the outcomes described under the five Strategic Objectives will require a significant amount of sustained engagement, coordination, and collaboration from across an array of stakeholders at the country and global levels in the remaining period leading up to 2015.

4. BACKGROUND

4.1 The GPE Strategic Plan 2012-2015 was approved by the Board of Directors at its audio-conference meeting in July 2012. The Strategic Plan Working Group established five Thematic Groups,[3] one for each Strategic Objective, and tasked them with outlining a framework of activities that would be necessary to achieve the five Strategic Objectives.

4.2 At the direction of the Strategic Plan Working Group, the Thematic Groups engaged in extensive consultations with stakeholders across the Partnership. The recommendations made through these consultations ultimately helped to inform the

[2] Please note that "Communities of Practice" and "Technical Working Group" are used interchangeably. However, for the purposes of this report, "Communities of Practice" is employed to characterize both.

[3] Each Thematic Group was co-led by one developing country partner and one donor, civil society, or multilateral partner.

development of the Implementation Plan, which was approved by the Board of Directors in May 2013.

5. SUMMARY OF PROGRESS BY STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

5.1 This section describes a series of activities that have been initiated in support of achieving each of the five Strategic Objectives. It is important to note that many of these activities will continue to be in progress until the conclusion of the Strategic Plan period in 2015, according to the timelines listed in the Implementation Plan. It is not possible to capture all of the different activities in this paper, so this following list is not exhaustive, merely a sample of major initiatives.

5.2 Strategic Objective 1: Fragile and Conflict-Affected States able to develop and implement their education plans

- Save the Children has agreed to lead the Community of Practice associated with this Strategic Objective. Other stakeholders that have expressed interest in participating in various capacities include: Afghanistan, Australia, Canada, BACKUP Education, VSO, Plan International, UNICEF and the World Bank.
- Many of the specific activities associated with this Strategic Objective will be coordinated through the existing mechanisms of the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies ("INEE") and its members, particularly including the UNICEF/Save the Children – led cluster on education in emergencies.
- GPE Secretariat in collaboration with USAID launched a study to review approaches, methodologies and tools that are currently used to conduct conflict and fragility analyses (including but not exclusive to the education sector). A first draft of the findings of this study was presented to the INEE Working Group on Education and Fragility on September 30-October 1, in Washington DC.
- South Central Somalia submitted a request to the GPE for accelerated funding for emergencies and early recovery in the amount of US$ 1.38 million. This request was discussed during the Financial Advisory Committee ("FAC") audio-conference on 12 September 2013 and a recommendation was submitted to the GPE Board of Directors. The Board of Directors approved the grant request during the Board audio-conference call on 7 October 2013.

5.3 **Strategic Objective 2: All Girls in GPE endorsed countries successfully complete primary school and go to secondary school in a safe, supportive learning environment**

- The United Nations Girls' Education Initiative ("UNGEI"), UNICEF and France have agreed to lead the Community of Practice associated with this Strategic Objective. Other stakeholders that have expressed interest in participating in various capacities include: Australia, Canada, Sweden, GIZ, USAID, the MacArthur Foundation, Brookings Institution, Plan International and VSO.
- A letter of intent was signed between the GPE and UNGEI in May 2013 to work together on girls' education and gender equality at the global and country levels. This message was communicated to all the Coordinating Agencies in GPE developing country partners.
- A consultant has been identified to develop an effective and practical gender analysis tool for use by Local Education Groups in the development, revision and monitoring of their education sector plans. This tool will be consistent with and supplement the GPE guidelines for education sector plan preparation and appraisal.
- France is financing four projects aimed at fighting gender-based violence in schools in the following four GPE developing country partners: Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Mali and Niger. These projects are being implemented by UNICEF.
- A regional workshop on gender-based violence in schools in West Africa is currently planned for the end of October 2013 in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. The objective of this workshop will be to reinforce capacity-building at the national level by sharing and capitalizing on best practices around data collection and policy development strategies among different stakeholders (Ministries, teachers, civil society, and communities). Ultimately, the goal of this engagement is to foster agreement on a concrete regional strategy and action plan, aimed at reducing gender-based violence in schools in West Africa.

5.4 **Strategic Objective 3: Dramatic increase in the number of children learning and demonstrating mastery of basic literacy and numeracy skills by grade 3**

- USAID and DFID have expressed interest in leading the Community of Practice associated with this Strategic Objective. Other stakeholders that have expressed interest in participating in various capacities include: Australia, Canada, VSO, Sweden, Swiss Development Cooperation ("SDC"), GIZ/BMZ, Open Society Foundation, UNICEF, Pearson and the Hewlett Foundation.
- An All Children Learning workshop for the Middle East North Africa region is being planned for December 2013. The workshop will be held in Rabat, Morocco. The workshop will aim to share best practices and develop action plans for early grade literacy and numeracy in countries in which Arabic is used as the language of instruction. USAID, the World Bank, the Islamic Development Bank, GIZ, ISESCO and the GPE Secretariat are involved in the planning process.
- As a follow up to the All Children Reading regional workshops that were held in Kigali and Bangkok, the GPE is working on developing internal capacity to monitor and measure learning outcomes using an early grade reading country tracker. This tracker is being designed to capture the current status of early grade reading at the country level, highlight gaps, and determine the type of assistance that may be most impactful/relevant.
- A Francophone Regional Workshop – "Moving the Early Childhood Development Agenda Forward in Africa: From Policy Analysis to Implementation" – was held during 7-10 May 2013 in Dakar, Senegal. This workshop was convened by the World Bank and supported by UNICEF and UNESCO. Participants included delegates from eight countries (Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Cote D'Ivoire, Guinea, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, Togo), and representatives of several partner organizations
- During 5-6 June 2013, the GPE Secretariat and the World Bank co-hosted a meeting on Early Childhood Development ("ECD"). This meeting was convened by the ECD Consultative Group with participation from UNESCO, UNICEF, Save the Children, USAID, the Open Society Foundation, Plan International and other key organizations. The main objective of this meeting was to better promote Early Childhood Care and Education ("ECCE") within the Post-2015 Development Agenda. Participants reviewed their engagement in the Post-2015 process,

provided updates, discussed existing ECCE indicators and benchmarks, and shared information on work being conducted by parallel groups. Agreement was reached on next steps and priority areas of action.

- The Office of the UN Special Envoy for Global Education and the GPE Secretariat organized six "Learning for All" ministerial meetings in the margins of the United Nations General Assembly ("UNGA") in New York from 23-25 September 2013. Discussed at these meetings were challenges and concrete steps to accelerate progress toward ensuring that all children have access to school and good quality education. The countries that participated in the meetings were: Somalia, Timor-Leste, Chad, Myanmar, Afghanistan and Pakistan. Minister of Education, Minister of Finance and representatives from other line ministries, development partners, CSOs and youth advocates also attended these meetings. The first Learning for All Ministerial meeting was held in April 2013 and was convened by the World Bank President, U.N. Secretary-General and U.N. Special Envoy for Global Education. The meetings brought together Ministers of Education and Finance from seven developing countries representing half of the world's out of school children. Countries that participated in this meeting were: Bangladesh, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Haiti, Nigeria, South Sudan and Yemen.
- The GPE Secretariat participated in the Early Childhood Peace Consortium launch, organized by Yale University, UNICEF and the UN Secretary General on 20 September 2013. The purpose of this launch was to bring together partners interested in creating a movement for sustained peace through early childhood years. The Consortium's objective was to initiate a call to action to ensure that the latest knowledge is used to influence peace-building discourse and create sustainable peace and human development.
- On 13 September 2013, the Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education ("MTB-MLE") Network, with support from the GPE Secretariat, launched an international initiative to develop a collaborative research agenda on language and education issues. The goal of this initiative was to provide information, ideas and guidance to researchers, academics, donors and program implementers on research needs related to language use in education in policy and practice.

5.5 **Strategic Objective 4: Improve teacher effectiveness by training, recruiting, and retaining teachers and supporting them to provide a good quality education**

- Education International ("EI") and UNESCO have agreed to lead the Community of Practice associated with this Strategic Objective. Other stakeholders that have expressed interest in participating in various capacities include: DFID, Australia, JICA, Norway, SDC, UNICEF, VSO and Canada.
- On 4 October 2013, the GPE Secretariat participated in a World Teachers Day event organized by UNESCO and in a round table event entitled "A call for teachers: Better Quality Education for a Better World." The GPE Secretariat also participated in the "Unite for Quality Education" event organized by Education International in New York.
- During the period from 1-5 October 2013 (in Paris and Brussels), the GPE Secretariat held meetings with UNESCO, the International Institute for Educational Planning ("IIEP") and Education International to discuss areas for further collaboration and coordination in implementing activities related to this Strategic Objective.
- The GPE Secretariat will participate in a policy dialogue forum of the International Task Force on Teachers for Education for All, from 26-29 November 2013 in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo. The theme of the policy dialogue forum will be "The Management of Teacher Education: Trends in Policy and Practice: What works, why and for whom?"
- Among the 18 Global and Regional Activities ("GRA") approved by the Board of Directors, there are five GRA proposals which focus on teachers. These five activities represent nearly one third (US$ 9,239,820) of the total amount of funding approved (US$ 32,912,628).

5.6 **Strategic Objective 5: Expand the volume, effectiveness, efficiency, and equitable allocation of external and domestic funding and support to education in GPE endorsed countries**

- Australia has agreed to take a leadership role in the Community of Practice associated with this Strategic Objective. Other stakeholders that have expressed interest in participating in various capacities include: Ireland, DFID, the World

Bank, Denmark, UNICEF, Open Society Foundation, Firelight Foundation, Pearson and Plan International.

- The GPE launched its second Replenishment Campaign in the margins of the UN General Assembly in September 2013. The aim of the Replenishment Campaign will be to mobilize billions of dollars to support basic education in the world's poorest countries. A pledging conference has been scheduled for June 2014 in Brussels and will be hosted by the European Commission.
- Operational guidelines for the Results-Based Financing pilot project were prepared and are focused on learning outcomes and based on four guiding principles – country ownership, complementarity, minimal additional requirement, and transparency. Countries will be invited to participate in the pilot project on a voluntary basis. The effective selection process of the pilot project is planned for January 2014, and will start with the dissemination of the operational guidelines to all education stakeholders (notably Ministries of Education, LEGs, SEs, MEs, etc.). The operational guidelines were presented to the FAC on 16 October 2013 and the FAC will have a further audio-conference on the issue.
- The GPE Secretariat prepared a paper outlining the indicative allocation options for funding for developing country partners that will apply for Program Implementation Grants in 2014. This paper will be presented to the FAC in October 2013 and will be submitted to the Board of Directors for approval in November 2013.
- The GPE Secretariat conducted four Sector Monitoring Initiative regional workshops in 2013. The first workshop was held from 25-28 February 2013 in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso and the second workshop from 28 April to 1 May 2013 in Cape Town, South Africa. Similarly, the GPE Secretariat held the third and fourth Sector Monitoring Initiative regional workshops for the Asia-Pacific and Eastern Europe, Middle East and Central Asia regions, and for the Anglophone Africa regions in August 2013 in Bangkok, Thailand and Dakar, Senegal, respectively. The main objective of these workshops was to strengthen the monitoring and evaluation aspects of the implementation of Education Sector Plans. More specifically, these workshops were organized in a series of plenary sessions and sub-working groups around four themes: (i) monitoring of the implementation of the Education Sector Plans in terms of M&E; (ii) development

of “monitorable” ESPs, (iii) organization of the Joint Sector Reviews; and (iv) effectiveness of LEGs. These workshops provided opportunities for government partners and other stakeholders to share experiences and ideas, identify common concerns and issues as well as country-specific problems and seek solutions. Representatives from around 56 developing country Ministries of Education and Local Education Group members (development partners and CSOs) participated in these workshops.

6. IMPLICATIONS FOR SECRETARIAT RESOURCES

The work on the Implementation Plan, including the staffing needed at the Secretariat was incorporated into the GPE’s Secretariat work plan and budget for CY 2013.

7. NEXT STEPS

The Secretariat will continue to provide monthly updates on implementation on the GPE website and will also provide a full progress report against the process indicators included in the Implementation Plan at the next face-to-face meeting of the Board of Directors in June 2014.