GPE 2025 – Strategic Plan Outline

A. Summary Outline

1. INTRO:

- Foreword by CEO and Chair
- GPE Principles + GPE 2025 – at a glance

2. SECTION ONE: CONTEXT

- Education is a human right and a driver of human development - an essential investment in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals
- COVID has exacerbated deep inequities that exist and persist in society – we are at a critical point in time where more of the same will not suffice. This is an opportunity for governments and their partners to be bold, education must be transformed to build the resilience and strength the world needs to recover and thrive in the face of an uncertain future.
- We urgently need to equip future generations with the skills they will need – from early childhood, foundational skills such as literacy, numeracy to the wider range of holistic learning outcomes needed for the 21st century.
- GPE's new strategy responds to the call from the leaders of education in our developing partner countries for "**A shift from business as usual so that our collective efforts transform the learning experience and drive nations forward**".
- It is more important than ever to act fast, be responsive to country context, and drive for continual improvements in what we do and how we do it to achieve impact at scale.
- This strategic plan, GPE 2025, provides a platform to bring GPE's unique assets and ways of working – partners, technical expertise and finance – together in support of ambitious education transformation in the most vulnerable parts of the world.

3. SECTION TWO: OUR STRATEGY – WHAT WE DO

- GPE is a partnership and fund dedicated to improving education results at scale through the transformation of education systems .
- Our vision is "A quality education for every child"
- Our mission is "To mobilize partnerships and investments that transform education systems in developing countries, leaving no one behind"
- Our goal is "To accelerate access, learning outcomes and gender equality through equitable, inclusive and resilient education systems fit for the 21st century"
- Our priority areas are learning; early learning; quality teaching, access; gender equality; inclusion; strong organizational capacity; equity, efficiency and volume of domestic financing.

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- We will pursue transformation through 4 objectives – 3 country level and 1 global level enabling objective that together will work to catalyze and sustain impact at scale within education systems.

4. SECTION THREE: HOW WE WILL WORK – GPE IN PRACTICE

- Supporting education transformation is at the heart of how GPE 2025 will work in practice. This means acting locally and globally to focus on delivery, harness the power of inclusive partnership, learn and adapt to transform education outcomes for the most vulnerable children. We seek to work in a flexible and adaptive way to respond to different country contexts, including fragile and conflict affected states - putting into practice GPE's Effective Partnership Principles.

- The Partnership will work closely with countries to transform education systems through systematically identifying context-specific bottlenecks and supporting and incentivizing transformative reforms, underpinned by learning and adaptation.

- We know that a one size fits all approach does not work. We seek to work in a flexible and adaptive way to respond to different country contexts, build local partnerships and minimize transaction costs - putting into practice GPE's Effective Partnership Principles.

- Key components of how we work: strong, inclusive country-level partnerships; alignment to national policies and priorities, sharpened focus of GPE funding for transformative and systemic change; timely data to drive implementation, learn lessons and course correct; strategic capabilities to reinforce country capacity, access to innovative finance.

- Noting that Government expenditure is the most significant and sustainable source of funding for education, we will focus on improving the volume, equity and efficiency of domestic expenditures.

- GPE's core assets work together to support education transformation led by national governments: tailored grant packages and incentives, ability to crowd in financing, knowledge sharing and learning to improve planning and implementation, our ability to funding for innovation and local advocacy.

- Whilst every country is different – in terms of needs, challenges and capacity – there are common education challenges across many of GPE's developing partner countries which need to be addressed in order to accelerate progress towards the achievement of SDG4. GPE will give priority attention to those areas, which, based on evidence, could have the most transformative impact.

5. SECTION FOUR: A LEARNING PARTNERSHIP

- We will utilize a balanced approach between supporting learning and the use of evidence at country level, to enable adaptive management and strengthen the capacity to drive results; and strategic monitoring, learning and evaluation for accountability, transparency and aggregate results.

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B. Detailed Outline

- **Foreword by CEO and Chair** (1 page)
- **GPE Principles + GPE 2025 – at a glance** (2 pages)
- **SECTION ONE: CONTEXT** (2 pages)
- **Education is a human right and a driver of human development - an essential investment in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals**
    - Education as a human right: *education as a human right and required to exercise other human rights; the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; the Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action.*
    - Foundational importance of education with respect to achievement of all sustainable development goals and peaceful, progressive societies: *link between SDG 4 and achievement of other SDG goals including eradicating poverty, improving health, promoting sustainable growth, preventing inequality and injustice, and working in partnership.*
- **COVID has exacerbated deep inequities that exist and persist in society – we are at a critical point in time where more of the same will not suffice. This is the time to be bold; education must be transformed to build the resilience and strength the world needs to recover and thrive in the face of an uncertain future.**
    - Progress made since 2015: *e.g. on access, gender equity*
    - But major challenges in education persist and have been exacerbated by COVID
        - Widening inequities – exclusion from education and learning driven by poverty, gender, location, disability; impact of school closures and disrupted learning for girls and boys; conflict affected and fragile states at greater risk of falling behind.
        - Large financing gaps – likelihood of both domestic and international financing being constrained because of COVID, at a time when it is essential to protect and expand education financing, while increasing the efficiency and equity of spending, in order to safeguard future generations and leave no one behind.
        - Insufficient numbers of trained teachers–with a growing youth population; gaps in teacher pedagogical skills and teacher support are a major bottleneck to improving learning; impact of COVID on teachers and teaching.
    - In light of these challenges and the gap with the SDG targets, education systems need to undergo transformative, not incremental, change.
        - Strong education systems are those that achieve education outcomes at scale and address systemic inequities. A strong education system is built on data and evidence, seeks constant improvement through innovation and learning, secures and supports coherence across many actors in order to deliver education results.

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  - Unwavering commitment and leadership by teachers, governments, districts and within schools is a critical ingredient in education reform.

- **We urgently need to equip future generations with the skills they will need – from early childhood, foundational skills such as literacy, numeracy to the wider range of holistic learning outcomes needed for the 21st century.**
  - A gap between what children are learning, and the learning they will need for the future
  - Role of education in supporting wider societal aspirations – such as addressing climate change, gender inequality, health outcomes, resilient and stable societies
- **GPE's strategy responds to the call from the leaders of education in our developing partner countries for "A shift from business as usual so that our collective efforts transform the learning experience and drive nations forward".**
  - To really help countries deliver on their aspirations for a 21st century education for their students, transformative change in and across education systems is needed. This is not something that can be done piecemeal or with a series of tweaks to the edges of a system
  - Transformative change at scale – change that will ensure all young people no matter where they are born has a 21st century education – will only ever be led by governments.
  - But to do this, governments need (i) access to knowledge and evidence to identify potential solutions that can help transform their system, (ii) to understand and unblock obstacles to implementation of change at scale, and (iii) timely data to drive implementation, lesson learning and course correct.
  - GPE's strategy will support national governments to lead transformative education reform by systematically working with partners to identify potential solutions or innovations, understand key bottlenecks to effective implementation, and bring together partners in support of government leadership, to achieve impact at scale.
  - GPE stands ready to support nationally led system transformation, tailored to country contexts. We will learn and adapt our systems and processes to respond quickly and effectively while limiting transaction costs for partners.
- **GPE 2025, provides a platform to bring GPE's unique assets and ways of working – partners,technical expertise and finance – together in support of ambitious education transformation in the most vulnerable parts of the world**
  - GPE 2025 is a unique opportunity to support education system transformation.
  - As a Partnership - bringing beneficiary countries together with donors, multilaterals and civil society and harnessing the combined capacity to address bottlenecks;
  - As a Fund - able to mobilize global funding and to invest through multiple tools customized to country needs and to incentivise national action and commitment.

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- **<u>SECTION TWO: OUR STRATEGY – WHAT WE DO</u>** (approximately 4 pages)
- **GPE is a partnership and fund dedicated to improving education results at scale through the transformation of education systems .**
- **GPE is committed to SDG4 (full statement)**
- **Our Vision is "A quality education for every child"**
    - In support of SDG 4, GPE is committed to accelerating progress on equity, inclusion, and learning, including the central role of quality teachers and teaching, and the importance of gender equality.
- **Our mission is "To mobilize partnerships and investments that transform education systems in developing countries, leaving no one behind"**
    - We will focus our efforts on transforming education through strong and resilient systems, capable of mitigating and responding to shocks, leading reform, mobilising national and international partners and financing, innovating and learning (priority area: strong organisational capacity).
    - A transformed education system is one in which education actors (teachers, students, administrators, parents and communities) and inputs (curricula, learning materials, schools) act coherently in pursuit of a reform objective, such as improved learning.
    - Achieving coherence within a complex system requires clarity of aim and purpose, sound problem analysis, use of evidence and research to develop solutions, and deliberate monitoring and course correction to optimize progress.
    - By supporting financing, data, capacity development, planning and implementation, aligned behind national priorities and leadership, we will work with countries to transform their education systems, leaving no one behind.
    - GPE will also mobilise inclusive partnerships and financial and technical investments in support of clear nationally identified education reform priorities, sustained implementation and monitoring.
    - Partnerships will be with national governments, donors, civil society, teachers, philanthropy, the private sector, technical agencies and key multilateral institutions based on the principle of mutual accountability and transparency.
- **Our goal is "To accelerate access, learning outcomes and gender equality through equitable, inclusive and resilient education systems fit for the 21st century"**
    - We recognise that an inclusive education system is one which supports all children – regardless of ability, socio-economic background, and gender – to reach their full potential and ensure the well-being and safety of all children (priority area: inclusion).
    - Building solid learning foundations from the early years is critical. We will work with governments to expand high-quality opportunities for child friendly and playful early learning, improving foundational learning in areas such as literacy and numeracy, and support government efforts to improve the wider range of holistic learning outcomes

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children and adolescents will need for the future (priority area: early learning + learning).

- Gender equality will be at the heart of what we do, and how we operate. This means recognising that girls and boys face different barriers to education and quality learning and will therefore need different approaches and solutions. In countries where girls' education is lagging, we will work to accelerate progress (priority area: gender equality).
- Teachers and quality teaching are at the heart of improving learning. We will work with governments, teachers and national partners to improve equitable access to quality teaching (priority area: teaching quality)
- GPE implementation financing will focus on the poor and the most marginalized (priority area: inclusion). We will give priority to at least one year of pre-primary education and 12 years of education and training (priority area: access).
- In line with our core principle of country leadership, the detailed use of GPE resources (financial and otherwise) will be determined by country level data, evidence, inclusive dialogue, and country context, in line with national priorities.
- A key focus will be working with governments to increase the efficiency, equity and volume of domestic financing for education (priority area: domestic financing).

- **We will pursue our vision, mission and goal through 4 objectives which will support education transformation at scale.**
  - Our objectives are designed to support national partners to systematically focus on the delivery of transformative change, underpinned by objectives which aim to:
    - Strengthen problem diagnosis, identify potential leapfrog solutions, and organize our engagement around priority sector reforms and/or scalable solutions;
    - Strengthen the "backbone" of the partnership, especially at the country level, by supporting intermediation to facilitate access to potential solutions, financial mobilization, and peer learning linked to targeted changes, and by focusing on implementation as well as planning;
    - Support alignment between transformative solutions and opportunities and international aid, while capturing and codifying learning
    - Galvanize global capabilities, partnerships and resources in support of country priorities.

<u>Three Country Level Objectives</u>

1. ***Strengthen gender- responsive planning and policy development for system-wide impact***

- Build capacity for:

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- Government-led identification of specific reform areas that have the potential to result in sustained transformational change. Strengthen problem diagnosis to identify potential scalable transformative solutions
- Evidence-based identification of critical implementation bottlenecks and potential solutions; context specific gender analysis
- Use of data and evidence in the design, planning and monitoring of solutions (link to KIX and EOL and other partnership assets)
- Gender-responsive sector planning and policy development informed by data and evidence

2. Mobilize coordinated action and financing to enable transformative change

- Including:
  - Focus on building support and financing to unblock the barriers to transformative change
  - The use of context-based incentives and requirements to drive key system enablers, such as data and increased equitable and efficient domestic financing
  - Mobilizing increased and better aligned external financing and access to innovative financing opportunities
  - The use of results-based financing to drive transformative reform in identified priority areas
  - Identifying partnership solutions and incentivizing alignment and harmonization to support transformation at scale in identified priority areas
  - Support for government leadership to consult and engage with key stakeholders critical to the delivery of reform (inclusive policy dialogue)
  - Support for country-level advocacy and social accountability platforms to push for sustained education sector financing and improved outcomes (links to EoL)
  - Identify opportunities for cross-sector collaboration in support of transformation at scale

3. Strengthen capacity, adapt and learn, to implement and drive results at scale

- Including:
  - Implement with a focus on removing barriers to transformative change to achieve results
  - Support for capacity building to strengthen and support resilient systems
  - The use of results-based financing to drive transformative reform in identified priority areas

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- Promoting and supporting adaptive management, by joint monitoring of sector performance, gathering evidence, and course correcting based on evidence

One Global Level Enabling Objective

4. Mobilize global and national partners and resources for sustainable results

- Supporting and sustaining country level transformation requires global and local level action. The purpose of the global level enabling objective is to galvanize global and regional capabilities and resources needed to support the achievement of country reform priorities. As a global partnership, GPE has a unique role in supporting and brokering access to global and regional resources and capabilities.
- The main components of the global enabling objective act together to support the achievement of country level objectives and allow for opportunities and efficiencies in tackling education challenges that transcend national borders.
- Including:
  - More and better finance, responsive to national priorities and aligned with country systems, potentially including innovative financing mechanisms; using GPE's convening power to focus resource mobilization on specific countries, regions or issues; investing in cross sectoral partnerships and funding raising efforts focused on lynchpin issues. Continued focus on improving the volume, equity and efficiency of domestic expenditures.
  - Strategic Capabilities: Ensuring the capabilities needed to deliver on country-level objectives are in place through dedicated technical or knowledge related regional or global partnerships, cross sectoral synergies and/or mechanisms, and support for innovation – focused on issues where global or regional global or regional action would accelerate national progress.
  - Learning Partnership: building on KIX and existing knowledge sharing platforms, targeted and responsive/demand driven support for South-South peer learning, especially for new or unanticipated issues. Greater use of capacities of global partners to monitor impact-level results, strengthen country capacity for evidence, and reduce duplication.
  - Advocacy: building on Education Out Loud, the ability to coalesce the partnership around key strategic issues where combined global or regional advocacy will influence outcomes and country level.
  - Mutual Accountability: the effectiveness of the partnership depends on decentralized mutual accountability, but this can require global action and advocacy with partners, including identifying and seizing opportunities for greater alignment, deepening links between global partnership commitments and country level action, supporting efforts for greater transparency and accountability including between governments and citizens.

[Section to be further refined in line with operating model and funding and financing decisions]

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5. **SECTION THREE: HOW WE WILL WORK – GPE IN PRACTICE (**approximately 4 pages)

- Supporting education transformation is at the heart of how GPE 2025 will work in practice. This means acting locally and globally to focus on delivery, harness the power of inclusive partnership, learn and adapt to improve outcomes for the most vulnerable children. We seek to work in a flexible and adaptive way to respond to different country contexts, including fragile and conflict affected states - putting into practice GPE's Effective Partnership Principles

- **Key components of how we work**: strong, inclusive country-level partnerships; alignment to national policies and priorities; sharpened focus of GPE funding for transformative and systemic change; timely data to drive implementation, learn lessons and course correct; strategic capabilities to reinforce country capacity.

- Including [to be further refined as operating model is developed]:

  - **Strategic country-level partnership framework**

    - Identifies how GPE can most effectively support inclusive and evidence-based policy dialogue, system diagnostics, transformative reforms, alignment to national policies, harmonization of donor funding, sector planning, monitoring and learning

    - Agrees context specific requirements, incentives and results-based financing to drive improvements in domestic financing and other key enabling factors

    - Identifies transformative reforms including on gender equality and steps to improve partner alignment in support of these

    - Sets the strategic direction for GPE partnership engagement at country level and agrees how GPE assets can be deployed in support of government reform priorities for at scale impact.

  - **Focused GPE Funding for Transformative and Systemic Change**

    - Expanded and streamlined support to strengthen system capacity to develop and implement transformative reform

    - Focused investments in programs to unlock system bottlenecks

    - Differentiated funding modalities aligned to country needs and priorities

    - Flexible approach to grant allocations, requirements and incentives to improve policy development and implementation

  - **Embedded learning to drive implementation and performance**

    - Evidence-based program design and learning to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of interventions Generating in time data and evidence for learning and decision-making, accountability and transparency

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- **Strategic capabilities to reinforce country capacity**
  - Strategic partnerships with organizations with the capacity to accelerate the delivery of GPE 2025 priorities
  - Mechanisms to support knowledge generation and innovation in response to country needs
  - Support for global and local advocacy to strengthen accountability in education systems
  - Support for collaboration across sectors to remove bottlenecks
  - Innovative finance to leverage resources needed for transformational change
  - GPE's core assets work together to support education transformation led by national governments: tailored grant packages and incentives, ability to crowd in financing, the ability to connect knowledge and practice with planning and implementation, our ability to fund innovation and local advocacy.
- **Building effective partnerships is at the heart of how we work together – putting into practice GPE's Effective Partnership Principles**
  - Increase decentralized mutual accountability by strengthening country level monitoring, coordination and alignment, supported by a strategic country level partnership framework
  - Drive national ownership and strengthen the capacity of education stakeholders by supporting identification of priorities at country level, fostering evidence based and inclusive dialogue on key enabling issues (such as domestic finance) and transformative reforms, and developing flexible requirements and incentives to access our implementation grants.
  - Rebalance the country-level model to focus on implementation and sector policy dialogue through a country level partnership framework that elevates policy dialogue, and supports joint sector monitoring and learning, focus implementation grants – and incentives - on unblocking critical system bottlenecks, and strengthening the focus on implementation and continuous monitoring.
  - Reduce GPE processes and transaction costs by introducing greater flexibility in our grant processes to better align with country policy cycles, and streamlining grant application, quality assurance and approval processes.

- Whilst every country is different – in terms of needs, challenges and capacity – there are common education challenges across many of GPE's developing partner countries which need to be addressed in order to accelerate progress towards the achievement of SDG4. GPE will give priority attention to those areas, which, based on evidence, could have the most transformative impact**.**
- In all areas we will seek to raise the profile and importance of the issues, get evidence and data into the hands of policy makers, facilitate opportunities to share best practice, and support monitoring of progress. Specific choices on what – and how – these priorities will

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be supported at country level will be determined through country level data, evidence, and inclusive policy dialogue.

- Including:
  - **Gender equality**
    - Identify gender-based barriers to education and safe learning for girls and boys in all contexts including through gender analysis that would identify specific gender issues including those related to cultural and harmful social norms
    - Support government-led reforms to address the root causes of inequality in learning and access for girls and boys, through gender diagnosis, planning and implementation.
    - Embed strategic and context specific use of GPE financing to incentivize progress on gender equity and equality, including accelerating progress on girls' education in countries where this is lagging.
    - Leverage strategic partnerships both at the country and global levels to support outcomes on gender equality. This will include engaging with partners outside the education sector.
  - **Early Learning**
    - Raise the profile of good quality, playful early childhood education so its recognized as an essential, and integral part of Education Sector Plans and policies.
    - Get evidence-based solutions in the hands of national policymakers to directly feed into policy dialogue, planning, budgeting processes and implementation.
    - Support at scale reform efforts to transform early learning experiences for children, with a focus on the most marginalised.
  - **Learning**
    - Support countries to achieve measurable improvements in learning – from early childhood, including foundational skills such as literacy and numeracy skills, and the wider range of holistic learning outcomes – by diagnosing and seeking to address key obstacles to improvement.
    - Get evidence-based solutions in the hands of national policymakers to directly feed into policy dialogue, planning, budgeting processes and implementation. Invest in evidence based and coherent interventions that will work together to accelerate progress in learning for all children.
    - Support learning assessment systems, and more regular monitoring of reform implementation, in order to learn and adapt.

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- **Access**
  - Support countries to tackle large inequities in access by supporting countries to identify combinations of solutions, based on data, evidence and diagnosis, with potential for a step change in improving access.
  - Invest in approaches that systematically remove barriers that prevent children from starting school and staying in school, including innovations that maintain continuity of learning where this has been disrupted, or is at risk from disruption.
  - Support tools and initiatives that provide countries with context specific data, evidence and learning to monitor and improve performance.
- **Inclusion**
  - Support approaches that can make schools more inclusive, safe, and promote health for all learners. This includes collecting more and better data so that the inclusion of children with disabilities, and issues such as violence, safety and health promotion in schools can be monitored more systematically within countries and across the partnership.
  - Partner with actors in the health and social protection sectors to better coordinate and leverage synergies.
  - Support for data generation and funding to incentivize countries to integrate refugee children into their education systems.
- **Quality teaching**
  - Identify system wide levers with potential to deliver focused reforms that improve teaching quality so that all children learn at expected levels, including improving the efficiency of resources, and generating data to maximize learning time.
  - Mobilize and align partner assets at country level in support of quality teachers and teaching, including ensuring that teachers and school leaders participate in sector policy dialogue.
  - Build system capacity to formulate and implement teacher policies, and gather data to measure if teaching and learning standards are achieved
  - Build strategic capabilities to address key obstacles to improving quality teachers and teacher, e.g. strengthen access to and use of evidence to sharpen investments to improve teacher and teaching quality; peer to peer learning; facilitating strategic partnerships
- **Strong organizational capacity**
  - Expanded support to strengthen education system capacity, including gender responsive diagnostics, analysis and planning, monitoring.
  - Strengthening local education groups, establishing and operating pooled funding mechanisms, supporting budget processes, Ministry of Finance engagement,

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public financial management systems. Convening country-level partners, including cross-sectoral partnerships.

- Supporting data and evidence, and implementation capacity for country led priority reforms.

- **Equity, efficiency and volume of domestic financing**

  - Focus on the volume, equity and efficiency of domestic financing, including through supporting data and diagnostics, strengthening country level dialogue on domestic financing and public financial management reforms, and supporting inter-ministerial coordination between MoE and MoF.

  - Deploy context specific incentives for increased and/or more efficient, equitable domestic financing identified through country level dialogue (including incentives linked to adequate funding of teachers)

  - Improve timeliness and availability of domestic financing data to foster adaptive learning, enhance equity and efficiency, and support transparency and accountability. This includes building capacity for CSO budget tracking at country level.

  - Leverage inter-sectoral partnership with global institutions from the social sectors, as well as think tanks, regional banks and the IMF to improve domestic financing for social sectors.

6. SECTION FOUR: A LEARNING PARTNERSHIP

- We will pursue a balanced approach between supporting learning and the use of evidence at country level, to enable adaptive management and strengthen the capacity to drive results; and strategic monitoring, learning and evaluation for accountability, transparency and aggregate results.

  - Embedding learning at the country level - to drive evidence-based learning, timely decision-making and adaptive management for improved performance across the Partnership. To strengthen accountability and transparency.

  - A strategic approach to monitoring, learning and evaluation – including consolidated results, annual reporting and strategic evaluations.

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