NOVEMBER 30, DECEMBER 1 AND 3, 2020

MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE | BOD/2020/11/12 DOC 11 | FOR DECISION

GPE 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN

Please note: Board documents are deliberative in nature and, in accordance with the GPE Transparency Policy, are not public documents until the Board has considered them. It is understood that Board members will circulate Board documents among their constituency members prior to Board consideration for consultation purposes.

Objective

1. This document provides the full GPE 2025 strategy narrative for decision by the Board.

Recommended Decision

2. **BOD/2020/11/12-XX—Strategic Plan:** The Board of Directors
   I. Approves the GPE 2025 strategic plan as set out in BOD/2020/11/12 DOC 11
   II. Requests the Chair and CEO to finalize the strategy narrative informed by the feedback received and decisions made at the November 30 – December 3, 2020 Board meeting.

Background

3. In December 2019, the GPE Board discussed and took a decision on development of GPE's next strategy. The Board reaffirmed its commitment to the fourth Sustainable Development Goal (SDG4) and agreed to an overall mandate for GPE. This included support for planning, sustainable financing, monitoring and reviewing of holistic education systems for system-wide impact based on the principle of 'leave no one behind' and a focus of GPE financing on the poor and the most marginalized, prioritizing at least one year of pre-primary education and 12 years of education and training. The Board also requested that

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the Secretariat "develop draft language on proposed vision, mission, goals and objectives of GPE 2025."

4. During the period from December to June 2020, the Secretariat facilitated a robust consultation process including dedicated conversations with stakeholders and a number of surveys designed to solicit broad input on the strategy areas under development. Based on those consultations, the Board discussed and decided upon the GPE 2025 strategic framework including the vision, mission, goal and objectives during the June 2020 Board meeting (full decision in box below).

BOD/2020/06-07— **Strategic Plan:** The Board of Directors:

Recognizes that GPE is developing a new strategy in a time of unprecedented global change, and there are significant risks that, as a result of the COVID 19 pandemic, the education progress achieved over the last decade will be lost, and education inequities will widen. Business as usual will not suffice. GPE 2025 will have to respond to new education challenges – and opportunities - that will unfold over the period of the new strategy. GPE 2025 must be able to support partner countries as they seek to strengthen the resilience of their education systems, and grasp opportunities for system wide education transformation, that will leave no one behind.

• Approves GPE's revised ***Vision*** statement as: "A quality education for every child".
• Approves GPE's revised ***Mission*** statement as: "To mobilize partnerships and investments that transform education systems in developing countries, leaving no one behind".
• Approves GPE 2025's revised ***Goal*** as: **"**To accelerate access, learning outcomes and gender equality through equitable, inclusive and resilient education systems fit for the 21st century."
• Re-affirms the following ***priority areas*** as critical to the achievement of GPE 2025's Goal and requests the Secretariat to (a) develop a measurement strategy either through indicators or a set of evaluations to align with these (or other) priorities; (b) ensure that GPE's revised operating model is designed to support progress in these (or other) priority areas, whilst recognizing that the detailed use of GPE resources will be determined by country level data, evidence, inclusive dialogue and country context. The proposed priority areas are:

- ✓ learning/early learning
- ✓ access (12 years plus at least 1 year of pre-primary education)
- ✓ gender equality and inclusion
- ✓ quality teaching
- ✓ strong organizational capacity
- ✓ equity, efficiency and volume of domestic financing

• Approves GPE 2025's ***Country level objectives*** as:

- Strengthen gender- responsive planning, policy development for system-wide impact,
- Mobilize coordinated action and financing to enable transformative change,
- Strengthen capacity, adapt and learn to implement and drive results at scale".

• Approves an additional **enabling objective** as: "Mobilize global and national partners and resources for sustainable results".

5. At its September 2020 meeting, the Board endorsed a summary outline of the strategy narrative, including highlighting areas for greater emphasis or clarity. The Board decision also noted that some of the strategy narrative referred to operating model and financing and funding decisions, which were still under consultation. Decisions regarding the operating model and funding and financing are being presented to the Board at the

same time as this strategy narrative. The Board is therefore requested to approve the draft strategy narrative subject to revisions that may be required as a result of decisions made on the operating model and funding and financing.

Next Steps

6. The Secretariat will finalize the strategy narrative taking into account Board discussions on the operating model and financing and funding and the Board Chair will do a final review before publication.

Annexes:

Annex 1: GPE 2025: Strategic Plan
Annex 2: How we work
Annex 3: Priority areas at a glance

ANNEX 1:

GPE 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN

1. INTRO

1.1 [FOREWORD BY BOARD CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR]

1.2 [FOREWORD BY CEO]

1.3 [GPE 2025 Principles + Strategy at a glance]

2. CONTEXT

2.1 Education is a human right

We all deserve and should be guaranteed an education, irrespective of who we are, what we call ourselves, where we live, and whom we love. More than seventy years ago, this fundamental truth was enshrined in the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. Since the founding of the United Nations, the international community has repeatedly recognized education as a right and an enabler that allows us to exercise our other human rights and fully participate in society.[1]

With the aim of translating these ideals into improvements in children's lives, in 2015 global education leaders and policymakers endorsed the *Education 2030 Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action*. They saw education as the bridge between the world as it is and as we want it to be.

Education is key to human development and plays a foundational role for the more peaceful, prosperous, sustainable and resilient future envisioned by the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The importance of 12 years of free, publicly funded education is captured in SDG4: "to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all". Investments in education strengthen the fight to end poverty and curb climate change, save lives and create a better common future for all. In short, education is the embodiment of our greatest hopes and dreams.

[1] *UNESCO Convention Against Discrimination in Education* (1960); *International Covenant on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination* (1965); *International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights* (1966); *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women* (1979); *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (1989); *International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families* (1990); *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* (2006)

2.2 Progress on global education is now at risk

The unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 threatens to deny hundreds of millions of children their right to access an education and realize their potential. At its peak, the pandemic affected more than 800 million students in developing countries and it is the developing world where the enduring impact of the pandemic will be felt.[1] This ongoing threat has laid bare vast inequities in education systems and between education systems across the world that threaten to undermine decades of progress.

Before the pandemic hit, more children had access to basic education and each new generation spent more time in school than the previous one:

- Since 2000, some 75 million more children have been enrolled in pre-primary education, 89 million more in primary education and 138 million more in secondary education.[2]
- The global primary school completion rate was estimated at 85 percent in 2019, up from 70 percent in 2000.[3]
- The proportion of children and youth not attending primary and secondary school declined from 26 percent in 2000 to 19 percent in 2010 and 17 percent in 2018.[4]

As countries look to build back from the devastating impacts of the pandemic, the pace of recovery in the developed and developing world is expected to be uneven; within developing countries, the exacerbation of entrenched inequalities will further reduce opportunities for the most vulnerable children and youth. Being denied just five months of learning could translate to $10 trillion dollars in lost income over time for this generation of students. It is the broader economic impact of COVID-19 that is potentially the most devastating to education itself.[5] Up to 500 million more people may be pushed into poverty by the pandemic.[6] Twenty-four million children and young people may never return to school at all[7] and government budgets will be severely challenged.

Also at risk is the progress the world has made in girls' education since the adoption of the *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action* in 1995. Globally, female enrollment accounted for 55 percent of the total increase in primary and secondary enrollment between 1995 and 2018.[8] Between 1995 and 2018, the percentage of countries with gender parity in education rose from 56 percent to 65 percent in primary and from 45 percent to 51 percent in lower secondary.[9] Now, the heightened risk of teenage pregnancy, child marriage and gendered responses to family financial crises could see millions of secondary school-aged girls drop out of school.

The world's collective efforts to support the most marginalized children are more important now than they have ever been.

2.3 Persistent challenges continue

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, the world was falling well short of delivering quality learning to all children. Close to a quarter of a billion children were excluded from education, a number that has increased significantly due to COVID. The children most likely to be left behind live in the poorest households, in rural areas and in countries affected by fragility and conflict. Children with disabilities are disproportionately excluded from education in many countries.

→ **Gender has a significant impact on access to education.** Only 29 percent of low-income countries and 63 percent of lower-middle-income countries have achieved gender parity in primary enrollment.[10] The situation in lower secondary is less encouraging with only 16 percent of low-income countries and 33 percent of lower-middle-income countries having achieved parity in enrollment.[11] Less than two-thirds of girls in low-income countries complete their primary education and only one in three complete secondary school.[12] Beyond gender parity, girls and boys face specific gendered barriers that stand in the way of progress towards gender equality in and through education.

→ **Children with disabilities are much more likely to be excluded than those without.** Children with disabilities are less likely to start school with access often limited by a lack of understanding about their needs; and those who do get to school face too few trained teachers and insufficient classroom support, learning resources and facilities.

→ **Displacement can seriously jeopardize a child's education.** Almost half of school-age refugee children are out of school.[13] Further, of the refugee children who do start primary school, less than half make it to secondary school.[14] Refugee girls are less than half as likely as boys to go to secondary school.[15]

→ **Children suffer where schools struggle to provide safe, healthy environments.** Educational inequalities widen in schools with violent and unsafe environments and where children are at risk just getting to and from school. According to UNESCO in 2019, around one in three students had been physically attacked in the past year.[16]

→ **Too few children have access to pre-primary education.** Enrollment in pre-primary education has increased globally over the past decade, but 175 million children (or 50 percent) still do not have access to these crucial years of education.[17] In low-income countries, only one in every five children has access to pre-primary education.

Even children in school are often not learning what they need to thrive in the 21st century.

→ **Children struggle to learn basic skills.** Fifty-three percent of all children in school in low- and middle-income countries cannot read and understand a simple story by age 10.[18]

→ **There is a disconnect between what education systems are teaching and the needs of rapidly changing economies.** Curricula are not relevant to students' lives. Rote memorization of factual knowledge is still expected, and pedagogy is outdated. In order to succeed, children require 21st century skills such as the ability to think critically, communicate effectively, collaborate with diverse peers, solve complex problems, adopt a global mindset and engage with information and communications technologies.

Education systems often lack the capacity to prioritize and drive action needed to meaningfully improve holistic learning outcomes and instigate larger societal change.

→ **Evidence-based policy dialogue and prioritization of reforms remains weak in many contexts.** Data systems, the basis for policy and priority development, still require extensive strengthening in most countries. The capacity to implement reforms at the central and de-centralized level needs strengthening.

→ **Gender norms, values, attitudes and practices remain entrenched.** Discriminatory laws and social norms are pervasive in too many countries, institutions are not gender-responsive and sexual violence continues at high levels.

→ **The learning crisis is a teaching crisis.** Almost 69 million more teachers are needed; 24.4 million for primary and 44.4 million for secondary education.[19] Quality teaching necessitates a range of interventions which are often lacking: sound teacher preparation and professional development, recruitment and retention of good teachers, effective teacher management and deployment, and fair remuneration, incentives, career development and working conditions.

→ **Education financing gaps are growing.** UNESCO estimated a staggering pre-COVID funding gap of $148 billion annually to achieve SDG4 and this is likely to increase by up to one-third as domestic and international resources are strained even further by the impact of the pandemic.[20]

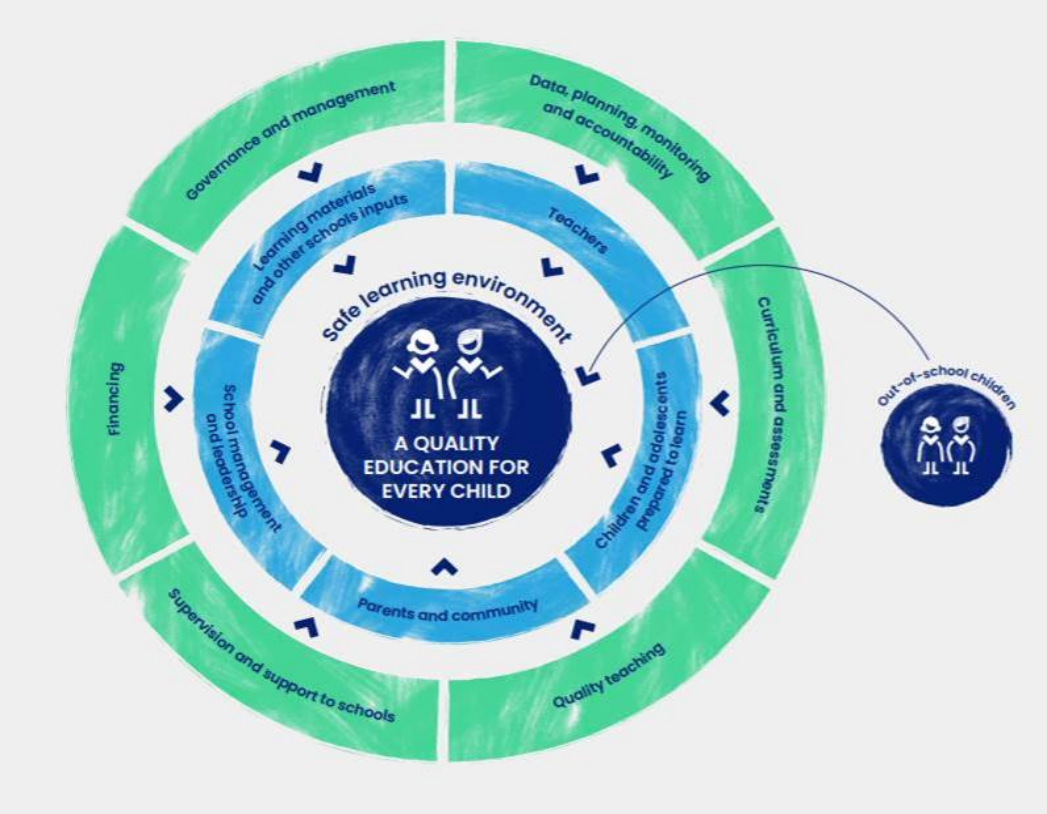
2.4 Transformative change is needed

"We see an opportunity to **accelerate impact** so that all children and youth can receive a quality education…In the face of a very real crisis, we envision **a shift from business as usual** so that our collective efforts **transform the teaching and learning experience**."

- GPE Partner Country Education Ministers Aide Memoire, October 2020

Education systems need to be transformed, not tweaked. The world needs bold actions, not more of the same, to create strong education systems that achieve education outcomes at scale and address systemic inequities. Dynamic and robust education systems are built on data and evidence, seek constant improvement through innovation and learning, and secure and support coherence by many actors in order to deliver results. To foster this kind

of transformative change, education systems need the unwavering commitment and leadership at all levels from national government through to local schools.



What is a strong education system?

Education systems are composed of multiple actors and components that must work together to facilitate learning. Strong education systems are responsive and resilient, reaching all girls and boys with quality learning opportunities. Teaching and learning are at the heart of the education endeavor. Prepared learners, teachers and quality teaching, safe learning environments, and leadership and local accountability all play an important part. GPE works to strengthen and support education systems holistically to develop policies, prioritize and implement reforms, align external support with those priorities and jointly monitor and hold accountable all partners to achieve system-wide change.

Sustainable change must be led by government, aided by local and international partners. Governments are the only actors with the capacity and scope to truly transform education systems but to do so, they need to: (i) identify obstacles to change at scale (ii) obtain

knowledge and evidence to identify potential solutions, (iii) align actors behind transformative solutions and (iv) gather timely evidence to drive implementation, highlight important lessons, and enable course corrections. To support governments and other partners, GPE fosters inclusive policy dialogue and catalyzes transformation at scale in education systems by:

- Supporting the coordination and alignment of national and international efforts.
- Ensuring that priorities are evidence based and transparently decided.
- Funding programs that drive transformation.

2.5 *GPE 2025*: An urgent and ambitious response

GPE supports national governments to lead transformative, large-scale education reform by drawing on the breadth and strength of the partnership to identify key bottlenecks to progress, and potential solutions or innovations. *GPE 2025* will support shifts toward inclusion, quality, and efficiency in education and present the global community with a unique opportunity to propel this transformation. This strategy provides a platform to bring together GPE's unique assets and ways of working—its alliances, technical expertise and finance—in support of ambitious education transformation in the most vulnerable parts of the world. As a **partnership**, GPE will bring together donors, multilateral institutions, civil society, teacher representatives and the private sector behind partner country government's reform plans. As a **fund**, GPE will provide the finance to catalyze reforms and invest to support national action and commitment.

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WHO WE ARE

GPE is the largest global fund solely dedicated to transforming education in lower-income countries and is a unique, multi-stakeholder partnership. We work to deliver quality education so that every girl and boy can have hope, opportunity and agency. GPE is fully committed to achievement of SDG4. We coordinate closely with other actors in the education sphere at global, regional, and country level, and bring our substantial resources to bear in pursuit of that goal. Our results-driven approach includes:

Supporting the poorest countries with the greatest need. GPE supports countries with high numbers of out-of-school children and weak school completion rates. We focus on reaching the children that are most marginalized and vulnerable including girls, children with disabilities, and those who live in countries that are characterized by extreme poverty and/or conflict. Almost half of GPE partner countries are affected by fragility and conflict.

Strengthening mutual accountability and increasing alignment behind systemic reform. GPE is rooted in mutual accountability, the principle that within the partnership we hold each other accountable for implementing our goals and objectives. GPE supports mutual accountability at country level in part by strengthening formal stakeholder collaborative forums (Local Education Groups); these exist in most countries and should include participation of teacher organizations, civil society and the private sector. GPE's emphasis on strengthening mutual accountability serves to reinforce government leadership and reduce fragmentation by incentivizing alignment behind government reform priorities.

Driving capacity development and prioritized implementation. GPE works with developing country partners to strengthen their planning, policy development, and monitoring capacity on a demand driven basis by providing access to GPE finance, technical guidance and expertise. Partner countries have access to results-based financing to support implementation, accelerated funding for crisis situations and opportunities to leverage additional resources through Multiplier grants. They also benefit from knowledge-sharing and financing for innovation through GPE's Knowledge and Innovation Exchange (KIX). GPE's fund for advocacy and social accountability, Education Out Loud (EOL), enhances civil society capacities to engage in education sector planning, policy dialogue and monitoring and to promote transparency and accountability in national education policy.

Raising more and better financing for education. GPE focuses on leveraging more and better domestic financing as the most significant and sustainable form of funding for education. Built into the GPE model are a series of incentives and requirements aimed at improving the volume, equity and efficiency of domestic financing for education. Results-based financing is used in most GPE implementation grants to drive the delivery of transformative programs. At the global level, GPE serves as a platform for raising international financing for education. GPE works with the full spectrum of actors—donors, developing country partners, the private sector, philanthropic organizations, and key multilateral institutions—to raise increased international financing for education that is aligned to country systems and sector policies and plans. This includes innovative finance mechanisms such as the GPE Multiplier, which provides matching funds for education including from non-sovereign donors.

3. *GPE 2025* – OUR STRATEGY

3.1 Introduction

Driving **education system transformation is at the heart of how GPE works** and *GPE 2025* will help developing country partners achieve change by leveraging global and national relationships in support of their priority reforms and activities. *GPE 2025* is aligned with, and directly addresses **SDG4.**

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015, provides a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future. At its heart are the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are an urgent call for action by all countries. Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4) is the education goal. It aims to "ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all."

3.2 Our vision

GPE's vision is **a quality education for every child.** In pursuit of SDG4, we are committed to accelerating progress on equity, inclusion and learning, including the central role of quality teachers and teaching and the importance of gender equality.

3.3 Our mission

GPE's mission is **to mobilize partnerships and investments that transform education systems in developing countries, leaving no one behind.**

GPE will support the transformation of holistic education systems for system-wide impact based on the principle of 'leave no one behind'. We will focus GPE financing on the poor and the most marginalized, prioritizing at least one year of pre-primary education and 12 years of education and training.

A transformed education system is strong and resilient; it is capable of mitigating and responding to shocks. Transformed education systems drive prioritized implementation of reforms, engage national and international partners and mobilize financing. A transformed education system also innovates and learns. Education actors (teachers, students, administrators, parents and communities) and inputs (curricula, learning materials and schools) act coherently in pursuit of reform objectives, such as inclusive and improved learning. An education system is complex and making meaningful change requires clarity of aim and purpose, sound problem analysis, use of evidence and research to develop solutions, the capacity to implement at all levels, and deliberate monitoring and course correction to optimize progress. GPE understands and appreciates this complexity and *GPE 2025* maps how it will work in all these critical areas.

By providing financing and investing in data and evidence, capacity development, planning, monitoring and implementation—all aligned behind national priorities and leadership—GPE will support countries to transform their education systems to ensure quality and inclusive learning for all. GPE will mobilize inclusive partnerships and financial and technical investments in support of (i) clear, nationally identified education reform priorities, (ii) sustained implementation and (iii) monitoring and learning from evidence. We will foster and sustain effective country-level partnerships with national governments, donors, civil society, teachers, philanthropies, the private sector, technical agencies and key multilateral institutions based on the principles of mutual accountability and transparency.

3.4 Our goal

GPE's goal is to **accelerate access, learning outcomes and gender equality through equitable, inclusive and resilient education systems fit for the 21st century.**

While every country is different in terms of needs, challenges and capacity, there are areas across many of GPE's developing partner countries where increased support and investment will accelerate progress towards the achievement of SDG4. GPE will support countries to prioritize those areas that, based on evidence, can have the most transformative impact, including on gender equality, learning, access, inclusion, early learning, teachers and teaching, finance, and organizational capacity. In each area, we will seek to raise the profile and importance of equity and quality, incentivize increased domestic investment, get evidence and data into the hands of policy makers, facilitate opportunities to share best practice and support progress monitoring.

3.5 Our objectives

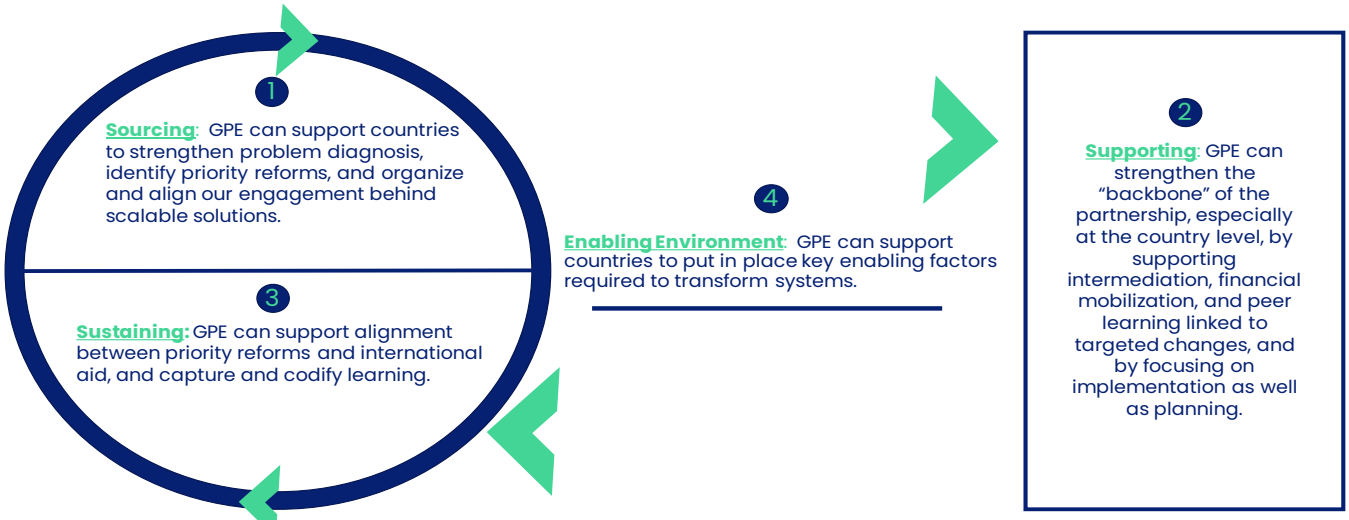
GPE will pursue its vision, mission and goal through four objectives that support education transformation at scale; these comprise three country-level objectives and one enabling objective. Taken together, the three country level objectives describe a system transformation approach that sources, supports and sustains transformative reforms with potential for impact at scale. The enabling objective aims to reinforce country capacity for system transformation by leveraging the GPE's strategic capabilities. GPE's country level objectives are:

- **Strengthen gender-responsive planning and policy development for system-wide impact**
- **Mobilize coordinated action and financing to enable transformative change**
- **Strengthen capacity, adapt and learn, to implement and drive results at scale**

Our enabling objective is to: **mobilize global and national partners and resources for sustainable results**

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GPE 2025 supports education system transformation



3.5.1 At the country level

Objective 1: Strengthen gender-responsive planning and policy development for system-wide impact

Coherent, evidence-based and prioritized plans and policies are essential to build effective systems that reach even the most vulnerable with a quality education. We will support governments to develop gender-responsive education sector plans and policies. Specifically, this will include:

- Providing access to advice, expertise and finance in support of planning, policy development, prioritization and monitoring for results.
- Assessing whether policies and plans identify and address gendered barriers to education and identifying actions to improve gender equality.
- Determining whether policies and plans identify and address multiple forms of exclusion, many of which intersect (e.g., children with disabilities, refugees or other excluded groups).
- Strengthening evidence-based diagnosis of critical implementation bottlenecks and identifying potentially scalable, transformative solutions.
- Facilitating knowledge sharing and the collection of data and evidence to enhance solution design, planning and monitoring.
- Enhancing inclusive policy dialogue and joint sector monitoring, including through local education groups or similar inclusive, government-led fora.

Gender-responsive sector planning, policy and monitoring will be assessed as a requirement for GPE support, and financial incentives for progress in this area will be offered in countries where gender responsive planning and policy is a major challenge. Governments can access GPE capacity building support, in line with in-country policy and planning cycles, to drive improvements.

Objective 2: Mobilize coordinated action and financing to enable transformative change

GPE, as a fund and partnership, is built on the principle of decentralized mutual accountability and the idea that coordinated action and financing, aligned behind government priorities, is essential for sustained transformation in education outcomes. Under this objective, we will support increased efficiency, effectiveness and alignment of education programs and financing by:

- Catalyzing progress in the enabling factors for system transformation through capacity strengthening, requirements and incentives: (i) the volume, equity and efficiency of domestic finance on education; (ii) gender responsive sector planning, policy and monitoring; (iii) data and evidence, and (iv) sector coordination.
- Enabling countries to deliver system transformation by making focused, evidence-based investments in programs that unlock system bottlenecks to achieve results.
- Supporting governments to secure joint action and financing by all partners, aligned to country systems and national priorities.

GPE will assess domestic financing and inclusive sector coordination as requirements for GPE support, and it will offer financial incentives for progress where challenges in these areas impede system transformation. Partnership compacts will define how GPE's engagement—as a fund and a partnership—will align behind countries' system transformation priorities. Roles, responsibilities, and actions agreed in these compacts will be the basis for decentralized mutual accountability through country-level coordination mechanisms. Governments can access GPE capacity building support to strengthen sector coordination if needed.

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

GPE is built on the principle of country ownership and leadership; national governments must lead education system transformations. To achieve this, governments need access to reliable and timely data and evidence, have the capacity to act upon the best available data and evidence and have the capacity to generate and use learning to adaptively manage education systems. GPE will assist by:

- Providing expanded financial support for capacity building to strengthen and support resilient systems, including through enhanced data systems.

- Promoting and supporting adaptive management through jointly monitoring sector performance, gathering implementation data and making course corrections as needed.
- Supporting evidence-informed policy and program implementation, and capacity development for the uptake and use of evidence.

GPE will assess data and evidence as a requirement for GPE support and it will offer financial incentives for progress where there are major challenges. Partner countries will be supported to strengthen their data systems where needed. Monitoring, evaluation and learning at country level will be embedded in all aspects of GPE's instruments, to drive systematic, evidence-based action on the delivery of impact at scale. If evidence is lacking in rolling out a new approach or innovation, GPE will aid countries in the to design of appropriate evaluations to inform implementation, make course-corrections and share new evidence across the partnership.

3.5.2 At the global level

Enabling Objective: Mobilize global and national partners and resources for sustainable results

Supporting and sustaining country-level transformation requires actions at both the global and local levels. As a partnership encompassing governments, donors, multilateral agencies, civil society organizations, teachers' organizations, non-sovereign donors and the private sector, GPE can draw upon significant capabilities to back country-level education transformation. GPE will further leverage the power of this partnership by harmonizing efforts, strengthening alignment and purposefully engaging in strategic partnerships behind country-level objectives. We will seek to create opportunities and efficiencies in tackling education challenges that transcend national borders. These components are wide-ranging and include:

- Raising more and better finance that is responsive to national priorities and aligned with country systems, including through access to innovative financing mechanisms.
- Investing in the capabilities needed to deliver on country-level objectives through dedicated regional or global partnerships that respond to country demand (whether technical or programmatic), cross-cutting sector synergies and mechanisms and support for innovation.
- Strengthening the learning partnership by building on the Knowledge and Information Exchange (KIX) and existing knowledge-sharing platforms. GPE will also facilitate peer learning among partner countries, particularly when they confront new or unanticipated issues. GPE will rely more systematically on the capabilities of its global partners to monitor results, strengthen country capacity for evidence-gathering and reduce duplication.

- Engaging in advocacy by building on Education Out Loud, coalescing the partnership around key strategic issues where combined global or regional advocacy will influence national outcomes.
- Emphasizing, incentivizing and monitoring decentralized mutual accountability. GPE will foster and encourage this accountability by deepening links between global partnership commitments and country-level action and supporting efforts for greater transparency and accountability between governments and their citizens.

3.6 Priority areas

GPE's vision, mission, goal and objectives together will help countries to achieve results at scale in the following priority areas: (i) **access** to education; (ii) **learning**; (iii) **gender equality**; (iv) **inclusion**; (v) **early learning**; (vi) **quality teaching**; (vii) **the volume, equity and efficiency of domestic financing**, and; (viii) **strong organizational capacity**. Although the exact package and focus of GPE engagement in each country will vary according to context, GPE will give priority to accelerating and measuring results in these areas. Annex 2 describes how GPE works—the GPE Operating Model. Annex 3 provides further detail on how GPE will support transformation in the priority areas through the application of the key elements of the Operating Model although this is by no means exhaustive. Progress will be tracked in GPE's Results Framework (June 2021).

4. MONITORING, EVALUATION, AND LEARNING

At its core, GPE's effectiveness as a partnership is grounded in our ability to learn from our shared experiences. Under *GPE 2025*, we will pursue a balanced approach between two aims: (i) supporting learning and the use of evidence at the country level to enable adaptive management and strengthen the capacity to drive results; and (ii) strategic monitoring, evaluation, and learning for accountability, transparency and aggregating results at the partnership level. This effort will include embedding evidence-based learning at the country level to drive timely decision-making and adaptive management for improved performance across GPE. Our approach will include:

- A monitoring and annual reporting system, with a set of key indicators at the grant, sector and partnership levels for accountability and to inform ongoing implementation.
- A system of reviews and evaluations to provide a foundation for evidence-based learning, testing innovations and guiding a range of decisions and actions by our various partners.
- A GPE-wide results framework as well as reporting to integrate key information from both the monitoring and evaluation streams of work, complemented by nuanced annual reporting that can lead to clear decisions and actions.

- A knowledge-management and learning program that draws on the monitoring and evaluation work streams to mainstream evidence-based decisions across the partnership.

The data collected through these various streams will be shared in across the partnership, enabling adaptive management and program course correction where needed.

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ANNEX 2: HOW WE WORK: THE GPE OPERATING MODEL

[Pending board approval of GPE operating model and financing and funding proposals]

1. Overview

GPE's Effective Partnership principles are to:

1. Increase decentralized mutual accountability.
2. Drive national government ownership and strengthen its capacity.
3. Rebalance the country-level model to focus on implementation and sector policy dialogue.
4. Reduce GPE processes and transaction costs.

GPE is both an enabler and a catalyst of education transformation. Building on evaluations of *GPE 2020*, the *GPE 2025* operating model will assist developing country partners in transforming their education systems by leveraging GPE's global and national relationships in support of their priority reforms and activities. GPE 2025 is fully aligned to our "Effective Partnership" principles and will be implemented through the following key activities.

2. Leveraging our partnership to strengthen mutual accountability at country level and increase alignment (Compact)

The *GPE 2025* operating model will emphasize incentivizing and monitoring mutual accountability and drive government ownership. It will ensure that each government is empowered in its leadership role and that partner programs are aligned behind them. GPE will support a country-level partnership compact developed by local education groups describing specific transformation priorities within sector policies and plans. Partners will align their efforts to these compacts and decide on specific reform priorities to be targeted through GPE financing. The use of allocation-linked incentives and results-based financing will encourage partners and governments to improve alignment, to adopt key modalities to reduce fragmentation (e.g., pooled funds), support local education group inclusivity and to drive improvements in domestic financing, among other actions.

3. Strengthening capacity to support education systems transformation (Systems Capacity Grant)

GPE will expand support for national government capacity strengthening, including for the development of government led Education Sector Plans. Developing country partners will be able to access flexible funding for system-wide capacity strengthening across all aspects of GPE's country-level objectives through a systems capacity grant. Support will be

demand-driven and available for a wide range of planning and capacity building activities that span all aspects of creating and implementing transformative plans and policies.

4. Sharpening GPE investments to support education systems transformation (System Transformation Grant)

GPE 2025 envisions an operating model that is flexible to country contexts and respects—as a basic principle—government ownership. As such, GPE will provide access to differentiated funding options, including a system transformation grant, that is aligned to country needs and priorities. The bulk of GPE funding will be provided through a flexible approach to grant allocations based on context-specific requirements and incentives tied to key enabling factors for system transformation, specifically: volume, equity and efficiency of domestic finance; gender-responsive sector planning, policy and monitoring; accumulation of data and evidence; and sector coordination. GPE financing will be targeted to address specific, prioritized reforms identified in government-led partnership compacts between developing country partners and local education groups. In crisis situations countries may access funds through GPE's accelerated financing mechanism.

5. Mobilizing strategic capabilities to reinforce country capacity for system transformation (Strategic Capabilities)

GPE will collaborate with global and regional partners to provide countries with capabilities critical to education system transformation. Partner countries are often constrained in their ability to identify, access and integrate relevant innovation in sector reforms and to build capacity for their effective scaling. Owners of such strategic capabilities, in turn, often struggle to identify who needs their services, in gaining access to decision-makers and finding timely opportunities to contribute.

GPE will work to address specific constraints across multiple countries by offering access to regional and global solutions, including advisory services where global-level partner expertise can strengthen capacity where most needed. GPE will forge partnerships with organizations that can deliver solutions to challenges faced by multiple countries and will seek to convene partners and donors around key, intractable issues hindering education progress.

GPE's Knowledge and Information Exchange (KIX) will afford partner countries with access to innovations and expertise, while Education Out Loud (EOL) will strengthen civil society advocacy and government accountability in GPE partner countries. During the roll out of *GPE 2025*, there will be opportunities to strengthen the linkages between these mechanisms and GPE's new operating model. For example, a country's system diagnostics may conclude that an improved strategy for the expansion of early childhood education is needed, and that the regional KIX hub offers knowledge that can be adapted to effectively scale up early

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childhood education. Or, the diagnostics could indicate that greater transparency around resource utilization would help address system inefficiencies, and that an EOL grant to a civil society partner offers an opportunity to complement government monitoring systems.

GPE will also search for opportunities to invest across sectors to improve education outcomes, recognizing that development is not an isolated phenomenon; progress in one sector is intrinsically linked to gains in others. GPE actions will focus on areas in each country that impact children's access to education and ability to learn. This could include developing partnerships with key entities focused, for example, on water, sanitation and hygiene, nutrition, health and climate.

KNOWLEDGE AND INNOVATION EXCHANGE

The Knowledge and Innovation Exchange (KIX) is GPE's fund for meeting global public goods gaps in education. KIX connects the expertise, innovation and knowledge of GPE partners to help developing countries build stronger education systems. Through the sharing and funding of proven solutions and innovations, KIX: (1) ensures that evidence-based solutions get in the hands of national policy makers and directly feed policy dialogue and planning processes and (2) builds capacity to produce, integrate and scale knowledge and innovation in GPE partner countries. The International Development Research Centre is the grant agent for KIX.

EDUCATION OUT LOUD

Education Out Loud (EOL) is GPE's fund for advocacy and social accountability. The fund supports civil society to be active and influential in shaping education policy to better meet the needs of communities, especially of vulnerable and marginalized populations. EOL aims to enhance civil society capacities to engage in education sector planning, policy dialogue and monitoring and to promote transparency and accountability of national education sector policy. It also seeks to create a stronger global and regional enabling environment for civil society advocacy and transparency efforts in education. EOL is managed by Oxfam IBIS.

6. Serving as a platform to aggregate more and sustained financing for education from countries and donors (Finance)

Increased domestic financing for education is essential for sustained improvement in outcomes and is the cornerstone n GPE's strategy. GPE will continue to advocate at the country level for increased financing and support others seeking to do the same. Simultaneously, through key aspects of our operating model—including an incentives-based approach and the use of results-based financing—we will aid governments in both increasing domestic spending and ensuring that it is equitably and efficiently allocated to provide a quality education to all children.

GPE will continue to work with donors and advocates globally to grow and aggregate international financing for education that is aligned to country systems and sector policies

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and plans. Under *GPE 2025*, we will provide opportunities for countries to access innovative finance mechanisms, using novel approaches to attract funding for their education systems, in addition to the GPE Multiplier and through the same delivery mechanisms. The menu of options available to countries (based on demand and suitability) will include: incentives for debt forgiveness operations that lead to increased education investment; offering matching funds to incentivize contributions from the business community and private foundations; assisting countries in convening partners to fundraise for education; offering substantial co-financing upfront to incentivize increased investment through the Multiplier; and facilitating country demand for impact bond modalities including though partnering with organizations with the relevant technical expertise.

7. Raising the profile and importance of investing in inclusive, quality education globally and nationally (Advocacy)

GPE will use its unique position as the largest funder of education systems globally to raise awareness of both key issues and impediments to ensuring access to a quality education for all children. We will continue to advocate with and influence global leaders and their citizenry to recognize the importance of developing quality education systems. Through continued support for EOL, we will reinforce civil society capacity to engage in education sector planning and policy development at national level and strengthen the enabling environment for civil society advocacy and transparency efforts in education globally and regionally.

8. Embedding monitoring, evaluation, and learning to drive systematic learning on the delivery of impact at scale (Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning)

Countries must have access to the data and evidence needed to ensure they are implementing effective and efficient sector policies and programs. Under *GPE 2025*, we will support the development and use of data and evidence needed for decision-making, accountability and transparency. It will also be imperative that the data will be available to countries in real-time to offer lessons learned and enable course correction.

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ANNEX 3: PRIORITY AREAS AT A GLANCE

Priority areas	Operating Model	Funding and Financing	Strategic Capabilities
Access GPE will expand access for the most marginalized children across all developing partner countries.	**Partnership compact**: Key area of focus **System capacity grant:** Finance development of tools and initiatives that provide countries with context-specific data, evidence and learning on who is out of school, specific barriers to access and learning for out of school children, and support development of policies that can accelerate progress. **Requirements and incentives:** Use of access data required in all contexts. Incentives for improved access data where this is a major challenge **System transformation grant**: Investments in policies and programs that advance access in relevant contexts. Results-based financing components incentivize countries to reach equity goals and deliver critical policy reforms in relevant contexts.	**Allocation:** Include access related metrics as a key determinant of the volume of GPE funding available for each country. **Accelerated funding:** Support for continuity of learning in certain contexts/populations and where this has been disrupted or is at risk from disruption.	**EOL**: Support for civil society groups to advocate on access issues.
Learning GPE will help countries achieve improvements in learning along each stage of a child's education, including early learning, foundational skills such as literacy, numeracy, socio-emotional learning, and the wider range of cognitive and non-cognitive skills identified necessary to prepare student for the 21st century.	**Partnership compact**: Aligning all country-level partners to focus on delivering equitable learning at scale. **System capacity grant:** Support for learning and teaching diagnostics and capacity strengthening for learning assessment systems (with this use required where learning assessment data is not effectively produced and used), and in areas critical for learning such as plans and policies for better teachers and teaching. Deepen the capacity for inclusive data collection to ensure countries can effectively monitor and report on learning outcomes, including for the most marginalized children, such as refugees. **Requirements and incentives**: Availability and use of learning assessment data required in all context. Incentives for improved learning assessment data where this is a major challenge. **System transformation grant**: Focused investments in policies and programs that are grounded in evidence-based theories of change that lead to equitable learning. Results-based financing components incentivize the delivery of critical policy reforms in these theories of change.	**Allocation:** Include learning related metrics as a determinant of the volume of GPE funding available for each country.	**KIX:** 3 global grants with a focus on learning, one with a focus on learning assessment.** **Strategic capabilities:** Potential partnerships to support countries in setting up and/or consolidating systems for distance learning.

ANNEX 3: PRIORITY AREAS AT A GLANCE

Priority areas	Operating Model	Funding and Financing	Strategic Capabilities
Gender equality GPE will support countries to systematically identify and address the gender-specific barriers to education that affect boys and girls differently, putting gender equality at the heart of planning and implementation of education systems.	**Partnership compact**: Joint policy dialogue on advancing gender equality in all contexts. **System capacity grant:** Support for gender diagnostics and disaggregated data, development of gender responsive education plans and policies (with these uses required where data and evidence, planning, and monitoring are not gender responsive). **Requirements and incentives**: Gender and inclusion diagnostics, gender responsive plans and policies required in all contexts. Data systems capable of gender-disaggregated monitoring required in all contexts. Use of incentives for gender responsive data and evidence, planning, and monitoring where major challenges are present. **System Transformation Grant:** Focused investments in policies and programs that can advance gender equality at scale. Strengthened quality assurance to ensure gender specific barriers are being systematically identified and addressed. Additional financing and specific incentives to address girls' education in a sub-set of highest need countries.	**Allocation**: Thematic top-up available to accelerate progress in girls ed where it is lagging (see OM). **Innovative financing:** Matching funds available to incentivize non-sovereign donors to contribute to the thematic fund.	**KIX:** One global grant focused on knowledge sharing, innovative approaches.** **EOL:** Support for civil society groups to advocate on gender related access issues. **Strategic capabilities: Consider** partnerships with entities outside the ed sector to diagnose, advocate and respond to harmful social gender norms and policies.
Inclusion GPE will support countries to transform their schools so that they cater to all children in a safe and healthy environment free of discrimination, including those with disabilities, refugees, internally displaced persons, and ethnic and linguistic minorities.	**Partnership compact**: Key area of focus; Support inclusive ed planning and policy development processes. **System capacity grant:** Support for diagnostics and data collection on the barriers to inclusion faced by vulnerable and marginalized sub-groups (e.g., children with disabilities, refugees and displaced populations). Support for incorporating inclusion strategies in sector plans and policies. **Requirements and incentives:** Progress on the availability and use of data on inclusion (disability, marginalized population, refugees, etc.) required in all contexts. Incentives for improved inclusion data where this is a major challenge. **System transformation grant**: Focused investments in policies and programs that advance inclusions based on contexts. Results-based financing.	**Allocation:** Completion included as a variable in needs-based index. **Accelerated funding**: Together with Education Cannot Wait, the World Bank and other partners, advocate for inclusion of refugees and internally displaced persons in national education systems and support	**KIX**: One global grant focuses on data for equity and inclusion.** **EOL:** Support for civil society groups to advocate on inclusion. **Strategic capabilities:** Explore potential partnerships in the health and social protection to coordinate around

ANNEX 3: PRIORITY AREAS AT A GLANCE

Priority areas	Operating Model	Funding and Financing	Strategic Capabilities
	components incentivize the delivery of critical policy reforms for inclusion in relevant contexts.	governments and their in-country partners to better coordinate and align the planning, financing and delivery of education assistance to refugees and their host communities; in relevant contexts offer **accelerated financing** to enable this.	a unified agenda on safe, healthy and inclusive schools.
Early learning GPE will incentivize countries to ensure all children have access to at least one year of high quality, pre-primary education.	**Partnership compact**: Key area of focus. **System capacity grant:** Capacity strengthening to monitor and collect data on pre-primary education and early learning outcomes. **System transformation grant**: Raise the profile of good quality, playful early childhood education so that it is accepted as an essential and integral part of education sector plans and policies. Support reform efforts to transform early learning experiences for children, including through increased domestic financing, with a focus on the most marginalized. Focused investments in policies and programs that advance early learning in relevant contexts, including recognizing the potential of early childhood education to identify children who may need additional support, such as children with physical or learning disabilities. Share evidence-based solutions with national policymakers to directly feed into policy dialogue, planning, budgeting processes and implementation. Results-based financing components incentivize the delivery of critical policy reforms for early learning in relevant contexts.	**Innovative financing:** Matching funds available to incentivize non-sovereign donors to contribute to early childhood care and education (ECCE) programs. (The option to utilize matching funds is available in all priority areas, depending on interest).	**KIX:** Two global grants focused on testing innovative approaches for ECCE.**

ANNEX 3: PRIORITY AREAS AT A GLANCE

Priority areas	Operating Model	Funding and Financing	Strategic Capabilities
Quality teaching GPE will invest in quality teachers and teaching in all partner countries, acknowledging that—beyond any other school-based factors—teacher effectiveness has been found to be the most important predicator of student learning.	**Partnership compact:** Align all country-level partners to focus on delivering equitable learning at scale and the critical role of teachers and quality teaching. Support inclusion of teachers and school leaders in compact development/sector policy planning and development. **System capacity grant:** Support for diagnostics and data on teachers and teaching quality, consolidate and share evidence on quality teaching; build the capacity of teachers' organizations to participate effectively in policy dialogue. **Requirements and incentives** Availability and use of data on teaching quality. **System transformation grant:** Focused investments in policies and programs that are grounded in evidence to support quality teachers and effective teaching, including professional development. Results-based financing components incentivize the delivery of critical policy reforms to address key obstacles to effective teaching.		**KIX**: Three global grants on teacher professional development and capacity building.** **EOL:** Support constituency-based networks such as teachers' organizations to participate in sector policy dialogue and development processes. **Strategic capabilities:** Build capabilities to address obstacles to quality teachers and teaching.
Equity, efficiency and volume of domestic finance GPE recognizes that the most significant and sustainable source of funding for education comes from government sources. COVID will have a significant negative effect on education financing as governments face triple economic shocks from the pandemic (declining national budgets, reduced donor funding and households pushed further into poverty). In this context, increasing the volume of domestic financing committed to education, will need to be accompanied by continued efforts to use resources more efficiently	**Partnership compact**: Support joint policy dialogue between ministries of education and finance on the equity, efficiency and volume of domestic finance for education, including identifying key system bottlenecks and encouraging reforms to address them (for example decentralized financing to sub-national levels or schools, teacher payroll reform, establishing equitable financing measures). **System capacity grant:** Work closely with partners to strengthen capacity to analyze the volume, equity and efficiency of education domestic financing, assess public financial management systems and track the use of domestic finance in education. **Requirements and incentives:** Assess the efficiency of domestic finance (both internal efficiency and PFM practices), its equitable use (whether domestic finance reaches the most marginalized), and the volume of domestic finance for education (against the current 20% benchmark and the	Support strategic dialogue between Ministries of Finance and Ministries of Education on issues related to public financial management including around taxation and revenue collection, debt management, austerity, macro-economic policies, and public sector wage bills.	**EOL**: Build capacity for civil society organizations' budget tracking at the country level. **Strategic capabilities:** Expand GPE's networks of engagement and develop stronger ties with new partners in the broader financing sphere, including the International Monetary Fund and regional development banks.

ANNEX 3: PRIORITY AREAS AT A GLANCE

Priority areas	Operating Model	Funding and Financing	Strategic Capabilities
and reach the most marginalized. Cognizant of the broader macroeconomic issues that impact resources available to the sector (taxation and revenue collection, debt management etc.), we will support countries to increase the equity, efficiency and volume of domestic financing for education.	role of adequate overall public expenditure by assessing education expenditure as a proportion of GDP and per capita expenditure) in all contexts. Accounting for contextual factors, where domestic financing for education is inadequate and declining, and no agreement can be reached on reversing this trend, GPE will withhold all—or part—of its financing for system transformation. Improve the timeliness and availability of domestic financing data to foster adaptive learning, enhance equity and efficiency and support transparency and accountability.		
Strong organizational capacity GPE investments will build and strengthen efficient, effective and resilient education systems.	**Partnership compact:** Support for reform prioritization process, sector coordination, improving alignment behind government priorities, including establishing pooling funding mechanisms where possible. Strengthen local education groups to allow for more participative engagement in education systems development, performance monitoring and delivery, enhancing decentralized mutual accountability. **System capacity grant:** Capacity strengthening at the national and de-centralized levels. Depending on context this could include support for data systems, gender-responsive diagnostics, analysis, policy development, planning monitoring, policy development, public financial management and sector coordination and alignment mechanisms. **Requirements and incentives** Requirements and incentives related to sector planning, policy, and monitoring; domestic financing, sector coordination and data and evidence.	Support for education budget processes, including engagement with Ministries of Finance. **Allocation:** Size of SCG linked to country capacity.	**KIX:** Three global grants focused on data systems development** **EOL:** Continued support for civil society capacity strengthening. **Strategic partnerships:** Support governments to convene country-level partners and develop partnerships that cut across sectors to leverage synergies and realize mutually beneficial opportunities.

* Combination of SDG 4 indicators, sector performance indicators, GPE specific indicators used to measure progress in each area

** KIX grants to be updated following completion of regional calls for proposals, early 2021.

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