Management Response for:

Education Out Loud Mid-Term Review

June 2022

The GPE Secretariat welcomes the Mid-Term Review of Education Out Loud (EOL) submitted by external consultants Cowan Coventry and Abrehet Gebremedhin in June 2022, and thanks them for the useful analysis and lessons it provides. The review offers timely and important information on GPE's support to civil society organizations through Education Out Loud from 2019-2021. Its findings will inform the assessment of whether EOL is on track to deliver on its intended objective of strengthening civil society participation in education advocacy and inclusive sector dialogue and will provide evidence for making decisions on the scope and nature of GPE's future support for civil society. The GPE Secretariat considers the findings of the Mid-Term Review to be fair overall and agrees with the recommendations made under the domains of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability. The Secretariat notes that some recommendations can be pursued during the current implementation period, while others will only be applicable through adaptations made in the program if an extension is approved.

Please refer to **Annex 1** for further details on the timetable and responsibilities for the different actions.

Note: The review lays out some recommendations for the Secretariat's consideration for some of the following recommendations that are outlined in detail in the review report. The numbering of the recommendations corresponds with the numbering of the action items.

I. Recommendations on improving the relevance of Education Out Loud

Management response: The Secretariat agrees with this set of recommendations:

1. In the event of EOL being extended, GPE to consider some design changes to ensure that its funding modalities target and support CSOs and coalitions that have the credibility and competencies to make an impact within the GPE 2025 operating model. This could include a more differentiated grant funding to enable it to support a wider range of CSOs to advocate for and monitor inclusive education, and the provision of three-to-four-year grants across all OCs.
2. In the event of EOL being extended, the GA to retain, reconfigure and rename the Year Zero process and reconsider its competitive element. The principal focus should be to

provide an opportunity for grantees to learn and innovate to enrich their proposed approach and generate synergies across the portfolio.

3. Grant agent to develop regional learning plans to strengthen grantees' thematic capacities in line with possible opportunities within the GPE 2025 operating model e.g., monitoring education financing and government performance in the sector. This could involve initial assessments of the capacities of NECs (National Education Coalitions) to contribute effectively to the Compact process and other relevant policy fora and supported by learning partners; facilitated by peer learning, drawing on grantees with a strong track record in these areas; and by knowledge sharing relevant research.
4. GPE EOL Team and grant agent to devise a communications plan to raise the profile and level of understanding of EOL among GPE country teams. This might include producing tailor-made communications on EOL for country teams; developing a guidance note on the opportunities for civil society to play a role in the GPE 2025 operating model; and clarification of GPE Secretariat responsibilities of to support country partners in accessing EOL as a strategic resource in GPE.
5. Grant agent to develop an EOL gender and social inclusion policy and use it to broaden and deepen the understanding and application of the concept by grantees across the portfolio. This work could be supported by regional learning partners and peer learning and draw on grantees with a strong track record in this area.

The GPE Secretariat:

1. agrees and recommends that the Performance, Impact and Learning Committee recommend to the Board that the grant agent develop a proposal for a costed extension with recommended adaptations (including more differentiated funding windows and longer-term grants) based on the evidence from the MTR.
2. will request adaptations to improve the year zero process, and reconsideration of its name in any future proposal for EOL.
3. agrees with the recommendation and will work with the grant agent and regional learning partners to identify further opportunities within GPE 2025 to assess and address relevant learning needs.
4. Agree and this is in process. The Secretariat is working with the grant agent to implement a communication plan, which includes targeted information dissemination through webinars, meetings and customized information and communication materials for country teams. The GPE EOL Team is also joining country teams where relevant to provide targeted support.

5. agrees and will request that the grant agent consider this recommendation.

II. Recommendations on <u>improving efficiency of implementation</u>

Management response: The Secretariat agrees with this set of recommendations:

1. In the event of EOL being extended, GPE/GA to review the efficiency and utility of some key grant management processes, - for example, better synchronization of Call for Proposals to facilitate synergies between OCs; reduction in time from Call for Proposal to grant approval (simplified concept note and approval process); and a revised communications framework to produce more tailored communications to share distilled learning and stories of change in EOL.
2. GPE/GA to facilitate synergy and avoid duplication of effort among key stakeholders in knowledge sharing by reviewing:

Roles and current status of GCE, KIX and EOL at a global level in knowledge creation and dissemination in the context of the new operational model;

- Roles and working practices of RMUs and RCs to ensure learning and capacity development is planned and coordinated efficiently at regional level;
- GA working practices to ensure that its support to learning and knowledge sharing across the program is efficiently coordinated e.g. by developing a joint workplan for GMU and RMUs; reviewing issues and lessons emerging from grantee reports; sharing and discussing issues emerging from the matrix meetings; and providing opportunities to discuss with other stakeholders more strategic issues such as how EOL should approach global learning and maximize synergies with GCE and KIX.

The GPE Secretariat:

1. agrees and will request that the grant agent consider this recommendation.
2. agrees with the recommendation and will follow up with the grant agent to ensure the review is completed.

III. Recommendations for on <u>improving effectiveness</u>

Management response: The Secretariat agrees with this set of recommendations:

1. The grant agent should consider how best it can support grantees to provide evidence of change at outcome level. This may include the use of indicators, purposive case studies and other approaches, and the use of appropriate tools.

2. GPE Secretariat and grant agent to review how synergies between OCs can be facilitated in EOL planning and implementation processes in the current period and in any future extension.

The GPE Secretariat:

1. agrees with the recommendation and notes that the grant agent has begun working with global learning partners to identify relevant tools and to collect such evidence of change.
2. will coordinate with the grant agent to review these synergies.

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Annex 1 - Key Recommendations and Actions Timetable

Evaluation recommendations on <u>improving the relevance of Education Out Loud</u>					
Improvement	**Key action(s)**	**Time frame**	**Responsible**	**Follow up**	
				Status as of [August 2023]	**Comments**
In the event of EOL being extended, the grant agent to retain, reconfigure and rename the Year Zero process and reconsider its competitive element.	The principal focus should be to provide an opportunity for grantees to learn and innovate to enrich their proposed approach and generate synergies across the portfolio.	December 2022	Grant agent with input from GPE EOL team	**Complete.** Year zero provision has been removed from the grant design. Greater emphasis has been put on learning opportunities and synergy across portfolios in the extension period.	
Grant agent to develop regional learning plans to strengthen grantees' thematic capacities in line with possible opportunities within the GPE 2025 operating model e.g., monitoring education financing and government performance in the sector.	This could involve initial assessments of the capacities of NECs (National Education Coalitions) to contribute effectively to the partnership compact process and other relevant policy fora and supported by learning partners; facilitated by peer learning, drawing on grantees with a strong track record in these areas; and by	March 2023	Grant agent with input from GPE EOL team	**Complete.** Regional learning plans have been developed to inform and improve the practices of EOL grantees and related civil society organizations to enhance their effectiveness and strategic impact through social accountability in	

	knowledge sharing relevant research.			policy formulation and implementation in the education sector, including contributing effectively to the partnership compact process . Relevant regional learning partners have been selected for strengthening grantees' thematic capacities. As a part of these learning plans, learning collaboratives have also been established to facilitate peer to peer learning among the grantees.	
In the event of EOL being extended, GPE to consider some design changes to ensure that its funding modalities target and support CSOs and coalitions that have the credibility and	A more differentiated grant funding to enable it to support a wider range of CSOs to advocate for and monitor inclusive education, and the provision of three-to-four-year grants across all OCs.	December 2022, when the extension proposal will be considered by the Board.	Grant agent with input from GPE EOL team	**Complete.** In consultation with the GPE Secretariat, the grant agent has streamlined the funding modalities according to the	

competencies to make an impact within the GPE 2025 operating model.				approved extension proposal. These include differentiated grant funding suitable for wider range of grantees, stronger emphasis on learning and capacity building, longer-term grants to allow space for demonstrating the impact of advocacy .	
GPE EOL Team and grant agent to devise a communications plan to raise the profile and level of understanding of EOL among GPE country teams.	Producing tailor-made communications on EOL; developing a guidance note on the opportunities for civil society to play a role in the GPE 2025 operating model; and clarification of GPE Secretariat responsibilities of to support country partners in accessing EOL as a strategic resource in GPE.	2023	Grant agent and GPE EOL team	**Ongoing.** The Secretariat is working with the grant agent to implement a communication plan, which includes targeted information dissemination through webinars, meetings and customized information and communication materials for key GPE stakeholders including ministry	

				officials and development partners. The GPE EOL Team is also joining country teams and coordinating with the grant agent where relevant to provide targeted support to grantees for their inclusion and effective participation in national policy dialogue.	
Grant agent to develop an EOL gender and social inclusion policy and use it to broaden and deepen the understanding and application of the concept by grantees across the portfolio. This work could be supported by regional learning partners and peer learning and draw on grantees with a strong track record in this area.	Develop EOL gender and social inclusion guidance.	December 2023	Grant agent with input from GPE Secretariat	**Ongoing.** A gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) policy guidance note has been prepared by the grant agent and will be launched in 4th quarter of 2023. Additionally, in 2023 the EOL learning framework and the EOL MEL framework will be reviewed to ensure coverage of	

				GESI issues. Finally, EOL Restricted Call for Proposals in 2023 have ensured that applicants address GESI perspectives in their submissions.	
Evaluation recommendations on improving <u>efficiency of implementation of Education Out Loud</u>					
Improvement	**Key action(s)**	**Time frame**	**Responsible**	**Follow up**	
				Status as of [August 2023]	**Comments**
In the event of EOL being extended, GPE/GA to review the efficiency and utility of key grant management processes.	Better synchronization of Call for Proposals to facilitate synergies between OCs; reduction in time from Call for Proposal to grant approval (simplified concept note and approval process); and a revised communications framework to produce more tailored communications to share distilled learning and stories of change in EOL.	2023	Grant agent and GPE EOL team	**Complete.** The grant agent has completed the three restricted calls for proposals for EOL in 2023 to ensure that the expected 80 grantees will all be implementing EOL funded projects with similar timelines during 2024-26. This would provide much better opportunities for shared learning and occasionally joint action. As the entire portfolio is	

				being designed and decided upon within a short timeframe from June to September 2023 this will also provide the grant agent with detailed information on potential synergies across the estimated 80 grantees.	
GPE/GA to facilitate synergy and avoid duplication of effort among key stakeholders in knowledge sharing -	Review: • Roles and current status of GCE, KIX and EOL at a global level in knowledge creation and dissemination in the context of the new operational model; • Roles and working practices of RMUs and RCs to ensure learning and capacity development is planned and	December 2023		**Ongoing**. In 2022 a key document was prepared identifying roles and responsibilities among key stakeholders in EOL, notably the GCE and Regional Coalitions. This will continue to inform the division of labor in support of NEC efforts.	

	coordinated efficiently at regional level; • GA working practices to ensure that its support to learning and knowledge sharing across the program is efficiently coordinated e.g. by developing a joint workplan for GMU and RMUs; reviewing issues and lessons emerging from grantee reports; sharing and discussing issues emerging from the matrix meetings; and providing opportunities to discuss with other stakeholders more strategic issues such as how EOL should approach global learning and maximize synergies with GCE and KIX.			Similarly, the EOL grant agent is working closely with the KIX grant agent to identify areas of common priorities, such as policy uptake of research-based evidence and good practices in priority areas identified by partner countries.	

Evaluation recommendations on <u>effectiveness of Education Out Loud</u>					
Improvement	**Key action(s)**	**Time frame**	**Responsible unit(s)**	**Follow up**	
				Status as of [August 2023]	**Comments**
The grant agent should consider how best it can support grantees to provide evidence of change at outcome level. This may include the use of indicators, purposive case studies and other approaches, and the use of appropriate tools.	Once applicant proposals for the extension have been reviewed and grant agreements signed the grant agent will work with individual grantees to ensure that their reporting and documentation efforts focus on change at the outcome level. This may also involve learning efforts across grantees.	December 2023	Grant agent with input from EOL team	**Ongoing.** The application proposals for the extension have been reviewed. The grant agreements will be signed by December 2023.	

		December 2023			
GPE Secretariat and grant agent to review how synergies between Operational Components (OCs) can be facilitated in EOL planning and implementation processes in the current period and in any future extension.	A series of interactive meetings including planning sessions with grantees from different OCs have been initiated to facilitate joint planning and leveraging synergies in implementation. This will continue as a regular feature during the EOL extension.	Ongoing during extension period.	Grant agent with GPE EOL team		First series of meetings at regional level (Asia, Africa and Latin America) have already taken place in preparation for the implementation during costed extension period.