BOD/2020/06 DOC 04
Meeting of the Board of Directors
June 9-11, 2020
Via Kudo
For Decision

OPTIONS ON STRATEGIC ASPIRATION AND OBJECTIVES

Please note: Board documents are deliberative in nature and, in accordance with the GPE Transparency Policy, are considered public documents only after their appraisal by the Board. It is understood that constituencies will circulate Board documents among their members prior to Board consideration for consultation purposes.

1. Objective

1.1 This paper sets out options on Vision, Mission, Goal, Objectives and Rallying Cry for GPE 2025.

2. Recommended Decision

BOD/2020/06-XX —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.

Vision, Mission, Goal

- Approves GPE's revised ***Vision*** statement as:

Option A: Original text: "A world that invests in quality education for every child as the foundation for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable future" or;

Option B: "A world that invests in/*ensures inclusive and equitable* quality education for every child/*all/girl and boy/learner/child and youth* as the foundation for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable future."

Mission

- Approves GPE's revised ***Mission*** statement as:

Option A: Original proposed text: "To end the learning crisis by mobilizing partnerships and investments that transform education systems in developing countries, leaving no one behind" or;

Option B: To end the learning crisis/*To improve the quality of learning (or education)* by mobilizing partnerships and investments that transform/*strengthen* education systems in developing countries, leaving no one behind."

- Recommends that the revised Vision and Mission statements are valid beyond the five-year GPE 2025 Strategy timeline.
- Approves GPE 2025's revised ***Goal*** as:

Option A: Original proposed text: To accelerate learning outcomes through equitable and inclusive education systems fit for the 21st century.

Option B: To accelerate/*improve holistic* learning outcomes through equitable, inclusive, *gender-responsive* and *resilient* education systems fit for the 21rst century.

- Re-affirms the following ***priority areas***[1] 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, as agreed in December.)
- gender equality and inclusion
  quality teaching
- strong organizational capacity
- equity and efficiency of spending

[1] As per the Board's direction in December 2019 and re-affirmed in consultations. The Board December discussion and subsequent consultations also stressed the importance of domestic financing and strengthening the capacity of education systems. This has been reflected as 'equity and efficiency of spending'; and 'strong organizational capacity'.

Objectives

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

Option A: Original proposed text:

1. Strengthen planning for system-wide impact
2. Mobilize coordinated action and financing to enable transformative change
3. Adapt and learn to drive results at scale

Option B:

1. Strengthen *gender-sensitive* planning, *policy development, and implementation*, for system-wide impact
2. Mobilize coordinated action and financing to enable transformative change/*achievement of nationally defined priorities.*
3. *Build capacity*, adapt and learn to drive results at scale

Approves an additional ***enabling objective*** as:

Option A: Original proposed text:

Mobilize global partners and resources for results

Option B:

Mobilize global *and local partners* and resources for *sustainable* results

- Requests the Secretariat to (a) develop a measurement strategy either through indicators or a set of evaluations to align with the proposed country level objectives; (b) further develop the components of the proposed enabling objective.

Next Steps – Vision, Mission, Goal, and Objectives

- Requests the Secretariat to prepare a high-level strategy paper for the September Board meeting.

Rallying cry

- Affirms the usefulness of a GPE Partnership Rallying Cry and notes that this should be developed to be included in the Case for Investment and as part of the forthcoming replenishment campaign, while aligned with the strategy.

Next steps- Rallying Cry

- Requests the Secretariat to develop options that are measurable, aligned with SDG4 indicators, gender disaggregated and inspiring. The Secretariat should bring options to the Board for decision in the September.

3. Background

3.1 During the December 2018 Board meeting, the Board of the Global Partnership for Education took a decision which instructed the GPE CEO to produce a "*plan, timetable, and process for development of GPE's next strategic plan" for consideration by the Board in June 2019."* A Board Working Group (BWG), composed of the Board Chair, Vice Chair and representatives from each of the constituency categories of the Board was created to provide oversight of process. The Board Working Group met in March, April and May 2019 and provided input on strategy development including the proposed parameters for the Board discussion, governance arrangements and timeline. Based on what was recommended by the BWG, the Board launched the process for developing GPE's next Strategic Plan in June 2019.

3.2 In December 2019, the GPE Board discussed and took a decision on development of the Partnership's next strategy. As a part of that decision, the Board reaffirmed its commitment to SDG 4 and agreed to an overall mandate for GPE, including supporting 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 (see box below). The Board also requested that the Secretariat "develop draft language on proposed vision, mission, goals, and objectives of GPE 2025; and options on

allocation and eligibility for specific GPE funding mechanisms for consideration by the Board in March 2020."

BOD/2019/12-12: <u>Strategic Plan</u>: The Board of Directors:

Recognizes the scale of the education challenge, the urgent need to respond, and the key role GPE plays within the education architecture.

Strategic aspiration

1. Re-affirms GPE's commitment to SDG 4.
2. Re-affirms our commitment to equity, inclusion, and learning, including the central role of quality teachers and teaching, and the importance of gender equality;
3. Recognizing the majority of education financing comes from domestic resources, GPE will support national governments in the planning, sustainable financing, monitoring and reviewing of holistic education systems for system-wide impact based on the principle of leave no one behind.
4. Recognizing that the detailed use of GPE resources will be determined by country level data, evidence, inclusive dialogue, and country context, noting the importance of building strong foundations from the early years, GPE implementation financing focuses on the poor and the most marginalized, and prioritizes at least one year of pre-primary education and 12 years of education and training.
5. Reaffirms that GPE's geographic footprint should be broadly consistent with that approved in 2017, namely Low Income, Lower Middle Income, and IDA eligible small island and landlocked developing states noting these countries account for the overwhelming majority of the World's out-of-school children, and those not learning;
6. Recognizes that how GPE operates in these countries will need to adapt to context and ensure alignment and coordination at global and national levels with other actors in the education sector;
7. **Requests the Secretariat to develop draft language on proposed vision, mission, goals, and objectives of GPE 2025; and options on allocation and eligibility for specific GPE funding mechanisms for consideration by the Board in March 2020.**

Ways of working

8. Agrees with the broad direction proposed by the strategic shifts on ways of working; specifically to explore how to better focus on delivery, leverage the power of inclusive partnership, and be a learning organization.
9. Requests the GPE Secretariat to prepare for the March Board retreat options to operationalize them;

Oversight

10. Agrees the Board oversight approach to strategy development detailed in BOD/2019/12 DOC 05.

3.3 During the January- March 2020 period, the Secretariat began the work of conceptualizing options for Board discussion in March. This included putting in place a robust consultation process using pulse questions which sought feedback from the Board on a number of key issues related to strategy development; reviewing the various streams of evidence available including the initial findings from the independent summative evaluation and country level evaluations; hosting a meeting with developing country partners in February 2019 to get their feedback on initial proposals for the Board; and holding a Ministerial Advisory Group call to do the same (Aide Memoires from November 2019 and February 2020 in annex 1). Following the cancellation of the March 2020 Board retreat (due to the COVID pandemic), the Secretariat put in place a staged approach to take forward the strategy discussions. Through that approach the Board considered key components of the GPE 2025 strategy over the period from March- June 2020. During each stage, the Secretariat shared a variety of materials including podcasts and presentations and requested Board feedback through a survey. In the absence of a March Board retreat, input provided through the survey was considered to be a formal intervention of the Board.

3.4 In January 2020, GPE hired external consultants to undertake a brand audit, conducting interviews with members of the Board and partnership. The consultants observed a gap between Ministerial ambition for GPE, and how GPE is described by interviewees. It was noted that the development of a new vision and mission provided an opportunity to signal urgency, leadership and provide a clear sense of GPE's unique identity.

4. Process for survey input analysis and option creation

4.1 Three surveys were shared with Board members to inform strategy development: the first asked for input on the proposals for the *strategic aspiration* of GPE 2025:the vision, mission, goal, and rallying cry; the second solicited input on the proposed *objectives;* and the third on *changes to the operational model*. Options in this paper reflect input provided through the first two surveys, next steps on the operational model will be discussed in a separate board document and are not for decision in June.

4.2 All Board constituencies responded to the first survey on vision, mission, goal, and rallying cry. All constituencies except one responded to the second survey on objectives. Based on the input provided and to develop revised proposals on the vision, mission, goals, objectives, and rallying cry for discussion and decision by the Board in June, the Secretariat used a series of criteria to narrow the proposed modifications provided through Board member survey input.

The CC was requested to review the criteria and provide any input before it was applied. The criteria included the following:

1. The modification responds to the majority view (for example, the majority of respondents agreed to the direction of the new vision, so the Board will only work on decision language options that go in that direction).
2. The modification does not roll back decisions made in December.
3. The modification represents a substantive change versus wordsmithing.
4. The modification would be better handled in the text of the strategy.
5. The final option proposed with the modification will respond to the call of the DCP Ministers per the two aide memoires.

For the objectives and rallying cry, a final criterion would be that there is an adequate and broadly acceptable way to measure the option finally selected.

4.3 Using these criteria, the Secretariat proceeded to analyze the input and identify where there were overlaps, issues of note, and potential options suggested by Board members. In some cases, wording included in the vision (for example: reference to inclusive and equitable) was proposed via input for inclusion in the mission or the goal. As such, when evaluating the options included in this document, the Board should consider how the full strategic framework will read once completed. Lastly, **it is important to note that while the options included below represent the Secretariat's attempt to interpret the significant feedback received, Board members may choose to develop and discuss alternatives with other constituencies and propose them to the Board for the June meeting.**

5. Vision

5.1 The Board pre-read shared on March 10 included the following proposed vision for GPE 2025: "A world that invests in quality education for every child as the foundation for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable future." The vision was composed to detail "what we want to see happen." The proposed vision aims to capture the essence of SDG 4 while at the same time being specific for the Partnership. It was also pitched to respond to the call from the Ministerial advisory group during the December meeting to "be bold and aspirational." During their meeting in February 2020, developing country partners (DCPs) reiterated that they seek an ambitious plan that will help deliver transformed education systems for the 21st Century. Only

through such change will significant progress be made to ensure improved learning for all children.

5.2 Survey feedback on the proposed vision showed that 85% of Board members were supportive of the vision as proposed (50%) or with modifications (35%). All developing country partners were supportive of the vision as proposed. A full compilation of feedback received through the survey is included in annex 2. The majority of comments received (8 constituencies did not leave comments on the vision) stressed the importance of GPE's vision aligning with SDG 4, and suggested modifications to strengthen this alignment. Two respondents argued for keeping the vision at is, one of whom also provided a compromise option that was aligned with the majority view.

5.3 Analysis of the modifications suggested found that the most requested change was to fully bring in the concepts of "inclusive and equitable" to the vision to be aligned with SDG 4. In addition, some constituencies sought to broaden the reference to "every child" to include "every child and youth", "every learner", or "all." Finally, a couple of constituencies suggested that the word "invest" be substituted with "ensure" to fully represent the spirit of SDG 4.

5.3 As such, the options proposed for Board discussion and decision in June are below. The italicized words represent potential changes where the Board may wish to retain all, some or none of the changes in the final formulation of the vision. Points for consideration in relation to the options proposed are noted as well:

Option A: Original text: "A world that invests in quality education for every child as the foundation for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable future"

Option B: "A world that invests in/*ensures inclusive and equitable* quality education for every child/*all*/*girl and boy*/*learner*/*child and youth* as the foundation for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable future"

- Inclusive and equitable are currently included in the proposed goal. If the Board selects Option B the Board may consider whether to retain it in both places or select a different formulation of the goal.
- Per the Board decision from December, GPE financing will focus on the poor and the most marginalized, prioritizing at least one year of pre-primary education and 12 years of education and training, but the vision for the partnership may be broader than that.

The UN defines youth as being aged 15 - 24, without prejudice to other definitions by Member States. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child define a child as being under the age of 18.

Under either option selected, the strategy narrative will begin with a prominent statement explicitly affirming GPE's commitment to the achievement of SDG 4.

6. Mission

6.1 The proposed mission for GPE 2025 was "to end the learning crisis by mobilizing partnerships and investments that transform education systems in developing countries, leaving no one behind." The mission aims to detail "what we do to achieve our vision" and highlights GPE's role in supporting countries to improve their education systems. It responds to the Ministerial Aide Memoire which called for a "a shift from business as usual so that our collective efforts transform the learning experience and drive nations forward." At the DCP meeting in February, participants noted that they see the partnership as being far more than simply a funding mechanism. The new plan must underline and promote the value-added of the dynamic nature of partnership.

6.2 Survey feedback on the mission found that 90% of Board members were supportive of the proposed mission with the majority (60%) supportive of the proposal with modifications. Three out of the 6 DCP constituencies (50%) were supportive of the proposed mission, while the other 50% were supportive with modifications including those detailed here. While there was a diversity of views represented, a majority of Board comments (approximately 60%) suggested that beginning the mission with what is perceived as a negative reference (i.e. the learning crisis) did not set the hopeful tone required. Some constituencies further felt that a focus on learning did not fully capture the aim of a holistic "education." Some constituencies suggested that instead of "transforming" education systems GPE should aim to "support," "improve" or "strengthen" education systems. There were specific constituency suggestions to add a range of new elements, including knowledge, data, efficient and effective education systems, sustainable financing. The majority of respondents suggested minor modifications to the original option, and one respondent warned against overloading the mission statement.

6.3 As such, the options proposed for Board discussion and decision in June are below. The italicized words represent potential changes where the Board may wish to retain all, some or none of the changes in the final formulation of the mission, with points for consideration noted as well:

Option A: Original text: "To end the learning crisis by mobilizing partnerships and investments that transform education systems in developing countries, leaving no one behind."

Option B: To end the learning crisis/*To improve the quality of learning (or education)* by mobilizing partnerships and investments that transform/*strengthen* education systems in developing countries, leaving no one behind."

- The formulation which uses the term strengthen versus transform may be perceived as incremental and not necessarily in line with the Ministers' challenge, put to GPE in their Aide Memoire, to raise the Partnership's level of ambition.

7. Goal

7.1 The proposed goal for GPE 2025 was "To accelerate learning outcomes through equitable and inclusive education systems fit for the 21st century." The goal aims to denote where GPE will focus its efforts. It similarly responds to the Ministerial Aide Memoire which highlighted the "opportunity to accelerate impact so that **all** children and youth can receive a quality education."

7.2 Survey feedback on the goal found that 90% of Board members were supportive of the proposed goal with the majority (50%) supportive of the proposal with modifications. Five of the 6 (83%) DCP constituencies were supportive of the goal as proposed with one proposing modifications. The two constituencies that did not support the goal suggested that including more than one goal in GPE 2025 would better represent the breadth of the Partnership's priorities. Analysis of the modifications found that a couple of constituencies suggested bringing the concept of resiliency into the goal, in response to the COVID crisis. There was a suggestion to add 'gender responsive' education systems. Additionally, a couple of constituencies suggested that a focus on 21st century skills requires GPE to strengthen "holistic learning outcomes" and suggestions for an emphasis on the early years of education. Finally, a couple of constituencies thought that using a term like "strengthen" or "improve" versus "accelerate" would better bring in the concept of system strengthening.

7.3 As such, the options proposed for Board discussion and decision in June are below. The italicized words represent potential changes where the Board may wish to retain all, some or none of the changes in the final formulation of the goal:

Option A: Original text: To accelerate learning outcomes through equitable and inclusive education systems fit for the 21st century.

Option B: To accelerate/*improve holistic* learning outcomes through equitable, inclusive, *gender-responsive* and *resilient* education systems fit for the 21rst century.

The proposal on the goal also included reference to the proposed priority areas which would contribute to the achievement of the goal and be essential in monitoring progress towards the goal. They are: learning/early learning; access; gender equality and inclusion; quality teaching; strong organizational capacity; equity and efficiency of spending. While there was no survey question relating to the proposed priorities under the goal area, some respondents picked up on these as being important issues which reflected the language agreed in the December Board discussions. Pending discussions on the goal, the Secretariat proposes developing a core measurement strategy either through indicators or a set of evaluations to align with these (or other) priorities.

8. Rallying Cry

8.1 The majority of Board members (60%) were supportive of GPE adopting a rallying cry for the next strategic period. The remaining 40% of constituencies were equally split with 20% having no opinion and 20% not being in support of a rallying cry at this time. Five of the 6 DCP constituencies (83%) supported GPE adopting a rally cry while one had no opinion but suggested that alignment to SDG 4 was important to ensure effective priority setting at national levels. Those not in support and some in support suggested that either (a) the rallying cry should be developed later in the process, perhaps as a part of replenishment preparation and after the bulk of the strategy development had concluded; or (b) that while a rallying cry is needed, it should be developed in conjunction with other actors to represent the whole sector.

8.2 The majority of respondents (60%) did not support the proposal to focus the rallying cry on girls' education, although a number of respondents suggested that gender or girls' education was extremely important for the partnership, and some respondents supported a focus on more marginalized girls, while others felt poverty was only one factor of exclusion. There were some suggestions to focus on access, equity, inclusion or transition, while one respondent suggested more of a campaign slogan which could capture several key elements. While there was a diversity of options for rallying cry suggested, the two mentioned by more than one constituency include:

(a) A rallying cry aligned with the SDG 4 framework and indicators included therein. A couple of constituencies suggested that SDG indicator 4.1.1 focused on minimum proficiency levels in reading and mathematics could be used.

(b) A rallying cry aligned with the World Bank's Learning Poverty indicator.

On balance, the Secretariat concludes that there is support for a GPE Partnership Rallying Cry, but that this should be developed as part of the forthcoming replenishment campaign, aligned with the strategy. The Secretariat proposes further work is needed to develop options that are measurable, aligned with SDG4 indicators, gender disaggregated and inspiring.

9. Objectives:

9.1 Objectives proposed for GPE 2025 include three country-level objectives and one enabling objective. They seek to respond to the Ministerial *Aide Memoire* which noted that "the Partnership must leverage its collective resources and knowledge in support of a country's own national education plans, reinforcing and strengthening national systems and capacities." The three country-level objectives proposed are: (1) Strengthen planning for system-wide impact, (2) Mobilize coordinated action and financing to enable transformative change, and (3) Adapt and learn to drive results at scale. The enabling objective is: Mobilize global partners and resources for results and includes five key components: mutual accountability, learning partnership, advocacy, strategic capabilities and finance.

9.2 Input on the objectives was solicited through a separate survey than the strategic aspiration components. A full compilation of all input received is included in annex 3. The first question of the survey asked whether Board members are in support of the three country-level objectives. Survey feedback found that 85% of the respondents were in support of the objectives with the majority (52.5%) supportive of the proposals with modifications. The five DCP constituencies that responded to the survey supported the proposed objectives. A significant proportion of the feedback noted important areas for inclusion in the eventual strategy narrative. Some constituencies also wrote that without first defining the vision, mission, and goals, it was difficult to give feedback on the proposed objectives. A couple of constituencies also emphasized the importance of continuing to support education plan development even though the support to planning envisaged under objective 1 might be broader than that. In contrast, one constituency suggested that reference to planning be taken out of objective 1 and that the emphasis should be on policy development and implementation. Other suggestions included highlighting the importance of gender sensitive planning, capacity building and country ownership in the objectives.

9.3 Based on the input received, the following options are proposed for Board discussion and decision. The italicized words represent potential changes where the Board may wish to retain all, some or none of the changes in the final formulation of the objectives:

Option A: Original text:

4. Strengthen planning for system-wide impact
5. Mobilize coordinated action and financing to enable transformative change
6. Adapt and learn to drive results at scale

Option B: Option B includes many suggested word changes. Some or all of these can be adopted as the final option.

4. Strengthen *gender-sensitive* planning, *policy development, and implementation,* for system-wide impact
5. Mobilize coordinated action and financing to enable transformative change/*achievement of nationally defined priorities.*
6. *Build capacity,* adapt and learn to drive results at scale

9.4 The second question of the objectives survey asked if Board members are supportive of the proposed enabling objective. Most Board members (90%) were supportive of the proposal with 47.5% supportive of the proposal with modification. All five DCP constituencies supported the proposed objective. The two constituencies not in support as well as some other constituencies suggested that reference to global partners should be expanded to include those at local level as well. To emphasize GPE's country-driven approach and strong systems, "sustainable" results was suggested. Finally, a couple of constituencies also suggested terminology to be included in the final strategy narrative including on fostering evidence and furthering alignment.

9.3 As there were few concrete modifications offered, the following options are proposed for Board discussion and decision:

Option A: Original text:

- Mobilize global partners and resources for results

Option B:

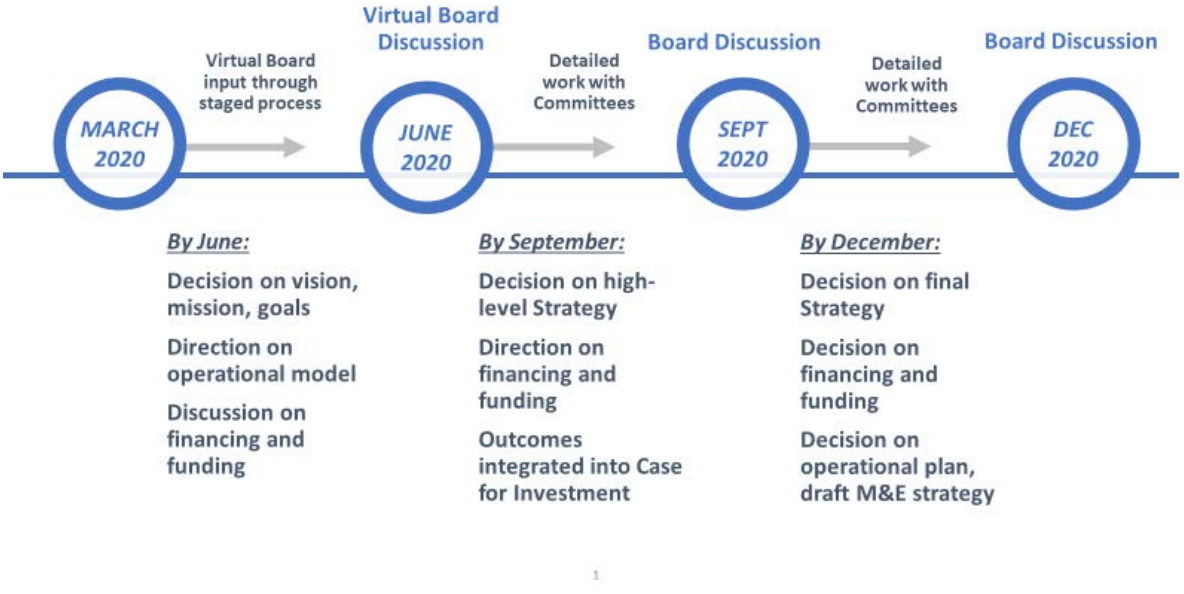
- Mobilize global *and local partners* and resources for *sustainable* results

9.5 The survey on objectives also asked Board members to note any additional components that should be included as part of the enabling objectives. There was an extremely broad range of responses to this question with no two constituencies submitting the same recommendations. One constituency suggested that the Board should come back to the question once the components are more fully fleshed out. The Secretariat would like to proceed with that recommendation.

9.6 Finally, the survey asked whether Board members believed the proposed objectives would help in advancing partnership priorities including on gender, domestic financing and teaching and teachers. While over 70% of respondents said yes or yes with some additions, many respondents (including those who said no) suggested that this question would be better addressed after the objectives are agreed upon and elaborated.

10. Next steps

- As detailed in BOD-2020-04, the high-level timeline for GPE 2025 is the following:



Following the June Board meeting and decisions on the vision, mission, goal, objectives and rally cry indicator, the Secretariat will proceed to develop a high-level strategy paper for discussion by the Board in September. This paper will take into account the final findings of the Independent Summative Evaluation, and comments provided through these strategy surveys.

The Coordinating Committee will continue to provide oversight and input as that document is developed.

- Other aspects of strategy development will proceed through the CC and Board committees. As noted in BOD-2020-04, the distribution of assignments among committees is anticipated to be per the list below. All committees will need to pay attention to the partnership priorities already agreed by the Board and seek opportunities to advance these within their respective work programs. These assignments may change following the June Board discussion.
    - CC- High level strategy paper; enabling objective components (in consultation with other committees); options on the rallying cry
    - SIC- Strategy narrative and evidence base; results framework and indicators
    - FRC- Financing and funding; Contributions and Safeguards Policy
    - GPC- Operational model improvements; further progress on EPR
    - GEC–Implications for governance arrangements; oversight of governance review

Under the current plan, the full strategy and associated changes to the operational model and financing and funding will be completed by December 2020.

Annex 1: Ministerial Aide Memoires

Annex 2: Strategic Aspiration Survey- Compilation of Input

Annex 3: Objectives Survey- Compilation of Input