METHODOLOGY FOR PROJECTED RESULTS FOR THE 2030 GPE CASE FOR INVESTMENT

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Abbreviations

EYS	expected years of schooling
GDP	gross domestic product
GER	gross enrollment ratio
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
LAYS	learning-adjusted years of schooling
MPL	minimum proficiency level
PPP	purchasing power parity
ODA	official development assistance
TaRL	Teaching at the Right Level
U5MR	under-5 mortality rate

Methodology for Projected Results for the 2030 GPE Case for Investment

1. Introduction

This document presents an updated case for investment for the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), designed to quantify the expected returns from proposed investments over the 2025–2030 replenishment period. Building upon the methodology used in the previous case for investment (GPE 2021), the analysis incorporates key refinements to more accurately reflect current conditions, data availability and methodological advancements in educational economics.

Specifically, the document details how planned GPE financing will translate into improvements in educational outcomes measured by learning-adjusted years of schooling (LAYS). These learning improvements are further converted into projections of increased enrollment, completion rates, children achieving minimum proficiency levels, economic growth, poverty reduction and various additional social benefits, including reductions in child marriage, early childbearing, child mortality and an increase in school meals provision.

Some headline results illustrate the transformative potential of these investments. GPE funding is projected to generate approximately 204 million additional enrollments and 31.4 million additional completers between 2026 and 2030. Furthermore, the anticipated educational improvements could translate into substantial long-run economic growth, significant reductions in poverty and marked improvements in social outcomes, particularly benefiting low-income countries.

The document is structured to guide readers through each analytical component systematically:

- Section 2 explains the conversion of GPE finance into additional LAYS.
- Section 3 outlines the projection of enrollment and completion rates from LAYS.
- Subsequent sections detail projections on proficiency gains, economic and poverty outcomes, impacts on child marriage and childbearing, reductions in child mortality and increased school meals.
- A sensitivity analysis explores the robustness of these projections.
- An appendix provides detailed data sources for transparency and reproducibility.

Readers may navigate directly to sections of interest for in-depth explanations and supporting analyses.

2. Translating GPE Finance into Additional Learning-Adjusted Years of Schooling

In line with the 2020 methodology, the starting point is the empirical link between public education spending and learning-adjusted years of schooling (LAYS). Miningou's (2017) cross-country stochastic-frontier analysis shows that, once inefficiencies are accounted for and education aid is considered part of public expenditure, a 10 percent rise in per school-age child spending is associated with approximately a 2.3 percent increase in LAYS. Miningou's estimated parameters, combined with an average efficiency score of 0.72 for GPE partner countries, provide the benchmark used to convert additional financial resources into learning outcomes.[1] According to the most recent expenditure and LAYS data for 89 GPE partner countries, the average cost is roughly US$67 per additional LAYS in low-income countries and approximately $445 in lower-middle-income settings. An alternate approach, where data from meta-analyses of the cost-effectiveness of education interventions would be used to estimate the learning that could be "bought" by GPE and other sources of financing, was also considered. However, the available meta-analyses are focussed on specific interventions rather than on "systems change", where several, aligned interventions are combined with policy and institutional strengthening, which better describes GPE's approach. Therefore, Miningou's estimates, which quantify the "systemic" association between spending and LAYS were used.

2.1 Two GPE Funding Channels and Their Assumed Effectiveness

For the 2025–2030 period, the partnership intends to allocate **$4.6 billion through its core fund to country grants (out of $5 billion raised) and mobilize an additional $10.4 billion via the Multiplier mechanism**.[2] Given that core grants undergo stringent screening, appraisal and performance tracking by the Secretariat, they are presumed to support the most cost-effective interventions documented globally. The cost per additional LAYS under this optimized scenario is set at $34, closely aligning with estimates in the global education literature—such as the $33.30 per LAYS for Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL) identified in *Education*

[1] Miningou's estimates cannot be updated with more recent learning data since the World Bank's Harmonized Learning Outcomes Database, which provides the learning component of LAYS, has not been updated since 2017. Compared with other sources of comparable learning data, such as SDG 4.1.1, the Harmonized Learning Outcomes Database provides by far the widest coverage of GPE countries. Therefore, we continue to use Miningou's estimates.

[2] The assumption that an additional $10.4 billion will be mobilized through the Multiplier mechanism relies on a 5:1 ratio of additional financing mobilized to GPE Multiplier grants (assumed to be $2.1 billion under a $5 billion replenishment scenario). This is higher than the ~$8.4 billion assumed at a conservative 4:1 ratio in GPE Board documents on funding allocations under GPE 2030. The actual ratio of additional financing mobilized to GPE multiplier grants under GPE 2025 was 4.7:1 up to June 2024.

Finance Watch 2023 (World Bank, UIS, and UNICEF 2023). Although some pilot studies report significantly lower costs per LAYS, such as $2.41 in Kenya (Angrist et al. 2023), these figures reflect ideal conditions unlikely to scale universally.

The $34 benchmark is competitive when compared with other highly recommended interventions cited by the Global Education Evidence Advisory Panel (2023), including structured pedagogy ($22–$25 per LAYS), technology-assisted TaRL ($25 per LAYS) and mass deworming ($20 per LAYS). Even broader "good buy" interventions such as merit-based scholarships ($33 per LAYS) and reduced travel times (approximately $15 per LAYS) reinforce the prudence of the selected benchmark, given that their median and average cost-effectiveness are approximately $24.6 and $31.7 per LAYS, respectively. Further, GPE supports policy and institutional change in partner countries which may have system-wide impacts at a relatively low cost. Nonetheless, $34 is an aspirational target, and the realized cost-effectiveness will vary across contexts.

In contrast, additional financing mobilized through Multiplier grants, jointly programmed with other financiers, reflect a mix of investments over which GPE exerts only indirect influence. Consequently, their learning yield mirrors the cost-effectiveness achieved by countries with their own resources, derived from the Miningou elasticity adjusted by the 0.72 efficiency factor.

2.2 Calculating the Domestic Cost per LAYS

Baseline public spending per individual ages 5 to 24 is combined with Miningou's coefficients (a first-order elasticity of 0.323 and a –0.013 quadratic term capturing diminishing returns) and the common efficiency parameter for each partner country. The resulting incremental cost-effectiveness of additional LAYS is contingent upon expenditure levels and initial LAYS values in 2025, reflecting the concave relationship documented by Miningou.

Projecting Baseline LAYS for 2025

The projection of baseline LAYS for 2025 involves a two-step process. First, expected years of schooling (EYS) data are forecasted up to 2025 using country-specific trends calculated from historical data spanning 1990 to 2023. For countries with at least 10 data points, country-specific trends are applied; otherwise, regional trends are employed. For countries without available EYS data, imputations are performed using gross domestic product (GDP) per capita, years of schooling, regional dummies and a linear year trend.

Next, the ratio between LAYS and EYS—which captures the quality component inherent in LAYS—is computed. Where this ratio is missing, it is imputed similarly using GDP per capita, years of schooling, regional dummies and year trends. The

resulting ratio is then projected to 2025 using regional trends. Finally, projected LAYS for 2025 are derived by multiplying the projected EYS by the corresponding projected quality ratio.

2.3 Geographic Allocation of GPE Resources

While the final allocation of the $15 billion envelope (core GPE grants plus additional financing leveraged) across low-income countries and lower-middle-income countries will depend on the extent to which countries avail of highly innovative funding opportunities through the Multiplier, at least 50 percent of core GPE grants will be allocated to low-income countries (per the GPE Board decision on partner country eligibility and allocation for GPE 2030 funding). We assume the 70 percent of the $15 billion envelope will flow to low-income countries and present the results of alternate allocations in the sensitivity analysis (section 11). Within each group, annual grant shares are proportional to the share of global education official development assistance (ODA) that countries already receive, an approach that mirrors the absorptive-capacity logic used in the 2020 case for investment (GPE 2021) and preserves alignment with existing aid architecture. Grant flows are expressed on a per child basis by dividing by the population ages 5 to 24; they are then added to baseline public expenditure before the Miningou conversion is applied.

2.4 From Dollars to Learning Outcomes

In each projection year, the model first estimates the learning gains that would arise from the continued growth of domestic spending alone, using the elasticities above. It then adds the LAYS financed by the Multiplier at the domestic unit cost and those purchased by the core grant at the lower of the $34 benchmark or the domestic cost. To ensure strict attribution, any learning that would have been realized under the domestic-finance-only scenario is subtracted so that only the increment genuinely catalyzed by GPE is reported.

It is estimated that GPE will fund about **170 million LAYS, at an average cost of $88.1 per LAYS**. The extent to which increased funding translates into LAYS is subject to risks, principally the extent to which institutional capacity and the policy environment in partner countries allows them to absorb external funding and convert it to LAYS at the rates described above.

3. Projecting Enrollment and Completion Rates from Learning-Adjusted Years of Schooling

Building on the learning gains identified in section 2, this section describes the methodology used to convert estimated improvements in learning-adjusted years of schooling (LAYS) into projections of gross enrollment ratios and completion rates

at primary, lower-secondary and upper-secondary levels. These projections are then translated into head counts for each GPE country over the 2026–2030 period.

3.1 Modeling Framework

The central premise is that countries achieving higher LAYS typically experience broader education access and smoother progression through their school systems.

Predicting Gross Enrollment Ratios

Predicting gross enrollment ratios (GERs) involves complexity due to the presence of overage and underage enrollments, causing a GER to frequently exceed 100 percent. Typically, a GER initially rises significantly above 100 percent as educational systems develop and more children enroll, but eventually it declines and stabilizes near 100 percent as overage enrollments and repetitions decrease.

To model this, GERs are predicted in two distinct steps:

1. **Net enrollment rate**: The relationship between LAYS and net enrollment rate is modeled using a fractional-logit specification that incorporates a quadratic term for LAYS. This approach captures diminishing marginal gains as systems approach universal enrollment. The model is estimated using data from low-, lower-middle- and upper-middle-income countries (2010–2020) (table 1).
2. **Overage rate**: Defined as the gap between gross and net enrollment rates, this rate is modeled using an exponential-decay function. This reflects the empirical pattern whereby countries initially exhibit substantial overage enrollment, which decreases as LAYS improve (table 2).

The net enrollment rates and overage rates are then combined to derive the predicted GERs (figure 1).

Predicting 2025 Baseline Gross Enrollment Ratios

Gross enrollment ratios for 2025 are projected using regional trends derived from historical data. For each country, the latest available GER serves as an anchor from which projections are generated using regional growth rates estimated through regression analysis. In cases where data gaps remain, interpolations and further regression-based imputations that incorporate gross domestic product (GDP) per capita are employed to ensure robust and complete country-level estimates.

Table 1: Fractional-logit regression of net enrollment rate on LAYS and LAYS squared by education level

	Primary	Lower secondary	Upper secondary
LAYS	0.526 [0.208]	0.528 [0.218]	0.398 [0.230]
LAYS squared	-0.013 [0.018]	-0.005 [0.018]	-0.001 [0.017]
Constant	-0.411 [0.567]	-1.470 [0.643]	-1.907 [0.749]
Observations	382	382	382
Pseudo R^2	0.065	0.109	0.084

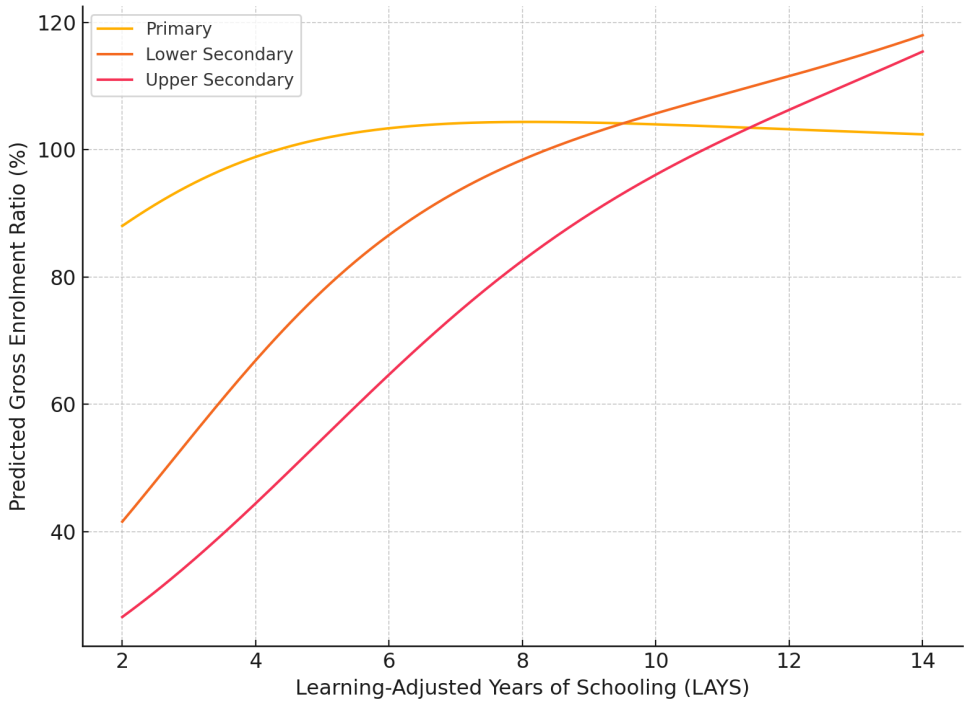
Note: Robust standard errors clustered by country in brackets. LAYS = learning adjusted years of schooling.

Table 2: Exponential-decay regressions of overage on LAYS by education level

Parameter	Primary	Lower secondary	Upper secondary
Alpha (Initial overage rate (predicted when LAYS = 0))	0.324 [0.092]	0.016 [0.007]	0.013 [0.009]
Beta (Decay rate: speed at which overage rate declines as LAYS rises)	-0.156 [0.043]	-0.178 [0.062]	-0.190 [0.077]
Observations	382	382	382
R^2	0.583	0.312	0.205

Note: Robust standard errors clustered by country in brackets. LAYS = learning adjusted years of schooling.

Figure 1: Predicted gross enrollment ratios across LAYS by education levels



Predicting Completion Rates

Completion rates, bounded between 0 and 1, are modeled using a fractional-logit specification, directly relating completion rates to LAYS separately at primary, lower-secondary, and upper-secondary levels (table 3).

Predicting 2025 Baseline Completion Rates

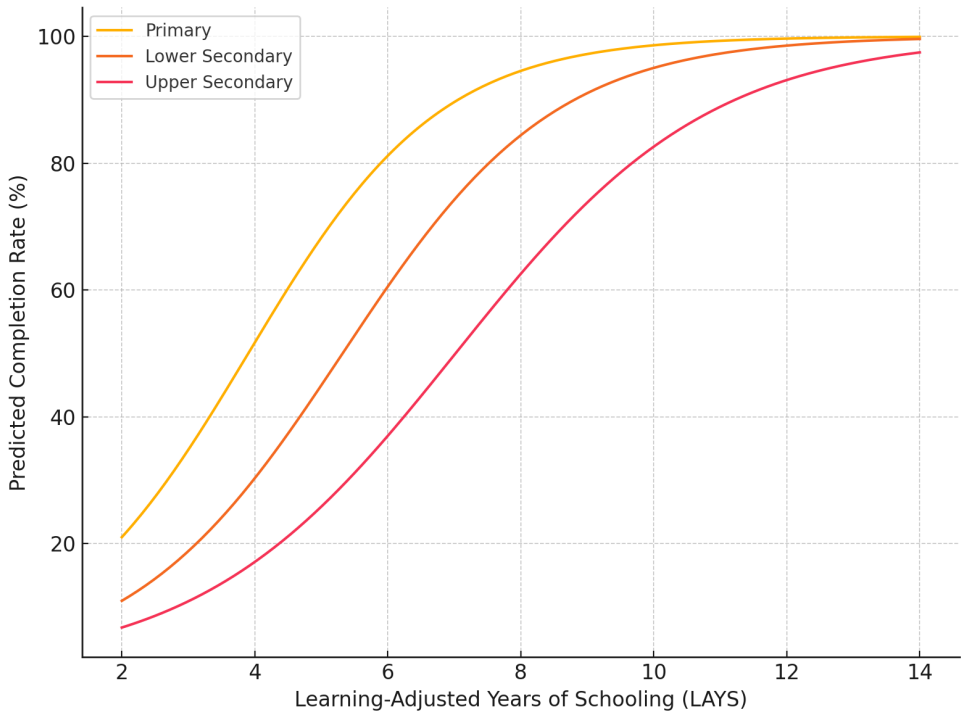
Completion rate predictions for 2025 begin with UNESCO-modeled estimates (available for 86 of 89 GPE countries). For countries lacking UNESCO-modeled data, available national completion rates are substituted. Remaining gaps are filled using regression-based imputation linking completion rates to GERs, expected years of schooling and regional controls, followed by interpolation to ensure continuity. The projected 2025 values serve as anchors for subsequent analyses.

Table 3: Fractional-logit regressions of completion rate on LAYS by education level

	Primary	Lower secondary	Upper secondary
LAYS	0.696 [0.044]	0.630 [0.040]	0.522 [0.042]
Constant	−2.716 [0.261]	−3.352 [0.251]	−3.667 [0.282]
Observations	382	382	382
Pseudo R^2	0.201	0.187	0.146

Note: Robust standard errors clustered by country in brackets. LAYS = learning adjusted years of schooling.

Figure 2: Predicted completion rates across LAYS by education levels



3.2 Anchoring to the 2025 Baseline and Generating Scenarios

Because projections start in 2026, all predicted GERs and completion rates are anchored to each country's projected 2025 values, so the incremental gains in enrollment or completion due to an increase in LAYS are added to the 2025 value. Two trajectories are constructed:

- **Baseline path**: LAYS increases financed by domestic resources only.
- **GPE path**: The baseline plus the extra learning gains made possible by the GPE core fund and the additional financing leveraged through the Multiplier.

The gap between the two isolates the impact that can be attributed to GPE.

3.3 From Rates to Head Counts

For each country, level and year, incremental GERs and completion rates are multiplied by the relevant school-age population—6–11 for primary, 12–14 for lower secondary and 15–17 for upper secondary—using the latest UN demographic projections for 2026–2030.

The projections indicate that domestic finance together with official development assistance (ODA) (including GPE) will generate roughly 204 million additional children enrolled between 2026 and 2030. Almost half of this expansion, 97.6 million, occurs in lower-secondary education, with upper secondary close behind at 80

million and primary contributing 25 million (table 4). The lower numbers for primary enrollment are because, in most countries, gross primary enrollment rates are already high.

By income group, lower-income countries account for about 93.8 million of the total gain, trailing the 102.9 million in lower-middle-income economies, while upper-middle-income countries add about 7 million. Within this aggregate, the uplift attributable solely to GPE support (including additional financing leveraged) comes to 10.0 million additional enrollment—around 5 percent of the global enrollment increase—distributed as 4.2 million in upper secondary, 4.1 million in lower secondary and 1.7 million in primary, with roughly four-fifths of these gains benefiting lower-income countries (table 5).

A parallel pattern emerges for completion. Higher learning quality is expected to yield about 31.4 million additional graduates, split almost evenly across primary (11.1 million), lower secondary (10.1 million) and upper secondary (10.3 million) (table 6). GPE core financing and additional financing leveraged alone adds an estimated 5.1 million completers—about 1 in 6 of the global total—with 2.1 million finishing primary, 1.7 million lower secondary and 1.3 million upper secondary, and some 80 percent of the GPE boost accruing to lower-income contexts (table 7).

Table 4: Increase in enrollment attributable to domestic finance, ODA and GPE between 2026 and 2030

	Primary	Lower secondary	Upper secondary	**All levels**
Lower income	15,900,000	47,100,000	30,800,000	**93,800,000**
Lower middle income	7,693,000	48,700,000	46,500,000	**102,893,000**
Upper middle income	1,616,000	1,844,000	3,608,000	**7,068,000**
All countries	**25,209,000**	**97,644,000**	**80,908,000**	**203,761,000**

Note: ODA = official development assistance.

Table 5: Increase in enrollment attributable to GPE between 2026 and 2030

	Primary	Lower secondary	Upper secondary	**All levels**
Lower income	1,500,000	3,277,000	3,181,000	**7,958,000**
Lower-middle income	220,000	778,000	906,000	**1,904,000**
Upper-middle income	5,300	59,000	98,000	**162,300**
All countries	**1,725,300**	**4,114,000**	**4,185,000**	**10,024,300**

Table 6: Increase in completion attributable to domestic finance, ODA and GPE between 2026 and 2030

	Primary	Lower secondary	Upper secondary	**All levels**
Lower income	7,994,000	5,972,000	3,817,000	**17,783,000**
Lower middle income	2,950,000	3,603,000	4,816,000	**11,369,000**
Upper middle income	136,000	484,000	1,651,000	**2,271,000**
All countries	**11,080,000**	**10,059,000**	**10,284,000**	**31,423,000**

Note: ODA = official development assistance.

Table 7: Increase in completion attributable to GPE between 2026 and 2030

	Primary	Lower secondary	Upper secondary	**All levels**
Lower income	1,780,000	1,364,000	963,000	**4,107,000**
Lower middle income	286,000	317,000	339,000	**942,000**
Upper middle income	10,000	24,000	44,000	**78,0000**
All countries	**2,076,000**	**1,705,000**	**1,346,000**	**5,127,000**

4. Estimating the Number of Additional Children Reaching Minimum Proficiency

This section explains how the extra learning-adjusted years of schooling (LAYS) quantified in section 2 translate into a head count of children who move above the internationally agreed minimum proficiency level (MPL) in foundational reading and mathematics by 2030.

4.1 A Parsimonious Learning-to-Proficiency Link

Following the logic used in the 2020 case for investment methodology note (GPE, 2020), a single cross-country relationship is employed that maps the average LAYS into the share of children who master the basics. For reading at the end of primary, the best-fitting curve is:

$$\text{ShareMPL} = 0.0053 \times \text{LAYS}^{2.1991}$$

This accounts for roughly 45 percent of the observed variation across the 40 countries for which both variables are available.

4.2 Baseline Calibration in 2025

For every country, the MPL rate in 2025 has been estimated using regional trends in MPL and the last known value of MPL for the country. The value of MPL for countries with missing values was imputed using a model with the imputed LAYS for this country, year, the logarithm of the gross domestic product (GDP) per capita in purchasing power parity (PPP) and regional dummies.

4.3 Projecting Proficiency Shares and Head Counts to 2030

Each year between 2026 and 2030, the model updates the country's LAYS by adding the increment financed through domestic spending, the GPE core fund and additional financing leveraged through the Multiplier, as described in section 2. The updated LAYS is then fed through the proficiency curve, producing a new share of children who are expected to read and count at the minimum standard. Because the curve is convex, learning gains yield larger proficiency jumps when starting from a low base—an empirical regularity that is especially relevant for the bulk of GPE partner countries. The change in the proficiency share is then multiplied by the relevant school-age population to obtain the head count.

4.4 Attribution to GPE Finance

For each year, the model records two proficiency head counts: a baseline path that reflects domestic spending alone and a GPE path that layers on the grant-financed LAYS gains. The difference between the two is the number of additional children reaching the MPL attributable to GPE. Summed over 2026–2030, it is estimated that

additional funding coming from domestic finance, official development assistance (ODA) and GPE (including additional financing leveraged) could lead to an increase of 105 million children reaching the MPL, with 14.3 million attributable to GPE alone (table 8).

Table 8: Additional student reaching minimum proficiency level (millions)

	Attributable to domestic finance, ODA and GPE	Attributable to GPE
Lower income	46.1	10.8
Lower middle income	44.3	3.2
Upper middle income	15.1	0.4
Total	**105.5**	**14.4**

Note: ODA = official development assistance.

5. Translating Learning Gains into Long-Run Economic Growth and Private Earnings

The macroeconomic projection builds on the classical insight that countries grow more slowly as they approach the technological frontier yet can accelerate when the quality of their human capital improves, an idea formalized in the conditional convergence literature launched by Barro and Sala-i-Martin in the early-1990s and subsequently refined by countless growth-accounting exercises. In operational terms, the baseline path for every country is generated from a panel regression that explains annual gross domestic product (GDP) per capita growth between 1990 and 2023 by the log of GDP per head lagged one year and a full set of regional dummies; the negative coefficient on the lag term captures convergence, while the regional intercepts absorb persistent differences in institutions, endowments and terms of trade. These estimated parameters anchor the “no GPE” growth rate that is applied from 2030 onward.

To quantify the incremental effect of better learning, a second, cross-sectional equation—modeled on Hanushek and Woessmann’s (2012) cognitive-skills specification—relates each country’s average annual growth over 1990–2023 to its initial GDP level and its stock of learning-adjusted years of schooling (LAYS). Reestimating that specification on an updated 173-country sample yields a statistically robust semielasticity indicating that one additional LAYS in the labor force is associated with roughly 0.75 percentage point faster GDP per capita growth each year after controlling for initial income and region (table 9). The result is consistent with the broader literature that finds test-score improvements to be far more powerful predictors of growth than school attainment alone.

Table 9: Cross-country growth rate regression

Variable	Coefficient
LAYS	0.748 ***
GDP per capita in 1990 (log)	–1.487 ***

Note: N=173. Include regional dummies. GDP = gross domestic product; LAYS = learning-adjusted years of schooling; *p < 0.10; **p < 0.05; ***p < 0.01

It is assumed that incremental learning gains financed by GPE, as computed in section 2, begin impacting cohorts ages 5 to 24 in 2028, who enter the labor market starting in 2031, retiring by 2087. Using UN medium-variant population projections disaggregated by single-year age groups, the share of the labor force (ages 18 to 64) carrying the additional learning can be accurately calculated each year. The "effective LAYS boost" for each cohort in the labor force is derived by multiplying this share by the total incremental LAYS funded by GPE.

These gains are converted into incremental GDP growth using the 0.75 coefficient, with an annual depreciation rate of 2 percent after 2030, capturing both skill obsolescence and gradual dilution of the treated cohort by newer entrants. The baseline and GPE-enhanced GDP paths are projected iteratively from 2031 to 2087, compounding baseline growth rates with incremental gains from improved learning. The difference between these two GDP trajectories represents the economic returns attributable to GPE funding (including additional financing leveraged). Annual increments are discounted back to 2030 at a 10 percent discount rate (with a 5 percent rate used for comparison) to obtain **a net present value of approximately $840 billion of extra GDP attributable to GPE, equivalent to an increase in GDP of 0.5 percent** (table 10). The increase in GDP will be higher in low-income countries (+2.4 percent) than in lower-middle-income (+0.28 percent) and upper-middle-income (+0.25 percent) countries.

This total GDP increment can also be expressed in terms of private earnings. Following the World Bank (2018), 60 percent of GDP is attributed to private earnings, yielding approximately **$504 billion in additional private income generated by GPE funding**.

Table 10: Increase in GDP and private earnings attributable to GPE

	GDP (US$, billions)		Private earnings (US$, billions)		Benefit-cost ratio (private earnings)		Increase in GDP (%)	
Discount rate	*5%*	*10%*	*5%*	*10%*	*5%*	*10%*	*5%*	*10%*
Lower income	1,760	447	1,060	268	101	25.5	3.5	2.4
Lower middle income	1,120	291	673	175	174	45.2	0.4	0.28
Upper middle income	389	102	234	61	368	96.1	0.37	0.25
Total	**3,269**	**840**	**1,967**	**504**	**131**	**33.6**	**0.75**	**0.51**

Note: GDP = gross domestic product.

The calculated benefit-cost ratio of approximately 34 at a 10 percent discount rate is high but remains consistent with recent benchmarks identified in the literature. For instance, a What Works Hub report (Kaffenberger, Melville, and Agarwal 2025) underscores the potential substantial economic returns from educational investments, particularly in foundational learning, highlighting similar or even more optimistic ratios when targeting cost-effective learning interventions. Thus, the estimated benefit-cost ratio presented here aligns with credible evidence from rigorous global research.

To maintain conservative attribution, only incremental LAYS explicitly financed by GPE are included, with domestic learning gains incorporated in baseline scenarios, avoiding double counting. The conditional convergence model accounts for long-term productivity trends but does not capture short-term macroeconomic fluctuations. Furthermore, the chosen discount rate of 10 percent is intentionally conservative, sitting at the upper bound of common practice. Therefore, while we project the benefits of GPE's interventions over a long horizon (2031 to 2087), the impact of the latter years on the estimated economic returns is small because of discounting, allowing for skills obsolescence and accounting for the declining share of "treated" individuals over time.

Collectively, these steps provide a transparent and robust connection between classroom-level improvements and macroeconomic outcomes, clearly demonstrating the potential of GPE-funded education interventions to significantly boost economic growth and private earnings over the coming decades.

6. Projecting Poverty Reduction from GPE-Induced Growth

The poverty reduction projections use a distribution-neutral growth assumption, meaning that as average incomes rise, every centile of the income distribution moves upward proportionately, maintaining constant inequality but allowing poverty rates to decrease with overall economic expansion. This method directly applies the annual real gross domestic product (GDP) per capita growth rates from section 5 to each country's latest observed income distribution.

The analysis begins with the most recent income or consumption distribution data from the World Bank's Poverty and Inequality Platform (PIP), presented in centile groups. For countries lacking recent distribution data, an imputation is made using average distributions from countries with similar income levels.

From this established baseline in 2031, the model projects two income trajectories. In the baseline scenario, each centile's real income grows according to the GDP trajectory without GPE funding. In the GPE-enhanced scenario, incomes grow at the higher rate reflecting the additional economic growth stimulated by learning improvements. By uniformly applying growth factors across all income groups, the Lorenz curve and inequality are held constant, aligning with empirical findings that suggest growth typically benefits all income levels proportionately (Dollar and Kraay 2002).

Following this scaling, poverty counts are calculated annually from 2031 to 2087, identifying the number of individuals whose income falls below the World Bank's defined poverty thresholds of $3 and $4.20 per day, which correspond respectively to the poverty lines for lower-middle-income and upper-middle-income countries (World Bank 2025). These thresholds are widely recognized benchmarks representing international poverty standards updated in June 2025.

Population projections used in this analysis are derived from the United Nations' 2024 medium-variant scenario. The difference in poverty counts between the baseline and GPE-enhanced scenarios indicates the number of people lifted above poverty thresholds specifically due to GPE's contribution to improved education and subsequent economic growth.

Key results from this analysis are significant: by 2087, GPE funding (including additional financing leveraged) is projected to lift approximately 22.7 million individuals above the $3 poverty line and 18.7 million above the $4.20 threshold.

Low-income countries particularly benefit, with poverty reductions of about 22.1 million at the $3 threshold and 16.8 million at the $4.20 threshold (table 11).

Table 11: Number of poverty cases at $3 and $4.2 averted attributable to GPE

	Poverty at $3	Poverty at $4.2
Low income	22,100,000	16,800,000
Lower middle income	633,000	1,864,000
Upper middle income	0	2,400
Total	**22,733,000**	**18,666,400**

Two important caveats should be emphasized. First, the assumption of distribution-neutral growth is conservative, as improvements in basic education typically reduce inequality, suggesting actual poverty reductions could exceed these projections. Second, the analysis is subject to measurement error inherent in income distribution data; however, PIP's rigorous approach—fitting micro-level survey data to non-parametric Lorenz curves—helps minimize such risks.

By grounding the projection in detailed income distributions rather than a single elasticity, the method captures country-specific nuances in inequality and transparently connects macroeconomic benefits (section 5) with concrete poverty alleviation outcomes.

7. Estimating the Impact of GPE Finance on Child Marriage and Early Childbearing

The projection of child marriage and adolescent fertility outcomes proceeds in three stages that mirror the logic adopted for learning, enrollment and poverty while drawing directly on the instrumental-variable estimates reported in *Missed Opportunities: The High Cost of Not Educating Girls* (Wodon et al. 2018). That study finds that every additional year of secondary schooling completed by girls reduces the likelihood of entering marriage before the age of 18 by **6.1 percentage points** and the probability of becoming a mother before 18 by **5.8 percentage points** across a panel of 15 developing countries. The present exercise applies those elasticities to the incremental years of schooling generated by GPE finance (including additional financing leveraged) and thus translates the upstream learning dividend into concrete life-course benefits for adolescent girls.

7.1 Establishing Baseline Trajectories to 2030

Baseline ("no GPE") rates of child marriage are taken from the UNICEF global compilation of Demographic and Health Surveys and Multiple Indicator Cluster

Surveys; when national observations are missing, rates are imputed by regressing the most recent country years in the database on log GDP per capita (PPP), the adolescent fertility rate and a full set of regional dummies, then predicting forward to 2025. From that anchor year, the series is extended to 2030 by letting each region follow its own linear trend, thereby preserving the historical pace of decline without presupposing accelerated reforms. Early childbearing rates are constructed in parallel: adolescent fertility rates from the 2024 revision of the UN World Population Prospects are first rescaled so that, in the overlap year, they reproduce the UNICEF share of women ages 20 to 24 who report a live birth before 18; the rescaled series is then projected to 2030 along the same regional slopes used for child marriage.

7.2 Translating the Learning Dividend into Additional Years of Secondary Schooling

Section 2 quantified the total stock of learning-adjusted years of schooling (LAYS) that GPE finance is expected to generate by 2030. Because the elasticities in Wodon et al. (2018) pertain specifically to secondary education, the model allocates the LAYS increment proportionally to the share of enrolled pupils that are in lower- and upper-secondary grades, a share that is itself predicted for 2030 from the relationship observed between the secondary enrollment ratio and a country's expected years of schooling in the UNESCO/World Bank panel. To convert quality-adjusted LAYS into conventional "years of schooling," the increment is divided by the country-specific ratio of LAYS to expected years at the baseline, thereby recognizing that one LAYS corresponds to more than one calendar year in systems where learning outcomes are still weak.

7.3 Applying the Wodon Elasticities

For every country, the additional secondary years obtained above are multiplied by -6.1 percentage points (child marriage) and -5.8 percentage points (early childbearing), yielding the absolute percentage point reduction in the respective prevalence rates attributable to GPE. If the computed reduction exceeds the projected baseline rate, the improvement is capped at zero so that prevalence never becomes negative—an adjustment that matters only in a handful of low-prevalence middle-income countries where the baseline trend is already steep.

7.4 Converting Rates into Head Counts of Cases Averted

The prevalence rates, with and without the GPE-induced reduction, are applied to the female cohort ages 12 to 18 in 2030, which approximates the population at risk of both outcomes. Cohort size is derived from the UN demographic projection and halved to obtain the number of girls. Multiplying the prevalence by cohort size gives, first, the projected number of girls who would marry before 18 and, second, the

number who would give birth before 18 under each scenario. The difference between the baseline and the GPE path constitutes the estimate of **child marriages prevented (3.3 million)** and **early births averted (3.2 million)** (table 12).

Table 12: Number of child marriage and early childbearing cases averted attributable to GPE (including additional financing leveraged)

	Child marriage	Early childbearing
Low income	2,569,542	2,508,900
Lower middle income	630,075	596,160
Upper middle income	74,344	69,146
Total	**3,273,961**	**3,174,206**

8. Projecting Child Deaths Averted through GPE-Induced Improvements in Women's Education

The child-mortality projection traces a well-documented causal pathway: when girls stay in school longer, they become healthier and better-informed mothers, and their children's chances of surviving to age 5 rise markedly. Two rigorously identified estimates anchor the projection. First, Gakidou et al. (2010) use four decades of country-panel data to show that each additional year of maternal schooling lowers the under-5 mortality rate (U5MR) by **9.5 percent**. Second, a sister fixed-effects study exploiting 215 Demographic and Health Surveys from 52 low- and middle-income countries—Le and Nguyen (2024)—finds a more conservative **4.3 percent** reduction, thereby purging most unobserved family heterogeneity. These two coefficients define the high and low bounds carried forward into the sensitivity analysis.

8.1 Defining the Beneficiary Cohorts and the Projection Horizon

All girls ages 5 to 24 during 2026–2030 can benefit directly from the learning gains financed by GPE; they were born between 2004 and 2023. The youngest among them can have children up to age 49, so births influenced by the intervention can occur as late as 2072, which sets the terminal year of the projection window. Baseline fertility and child mortality rates come from the 2024 revision of the UN World Population Prospects and are used to project the number of under-5 deaths in the absence of GPE intervention.

8.2 Converting LAYS Increments into Additional Years of Maternal Schooling

Section 2 quantified, for every partner country, the stock of learning-adjusted years of schooling (LAYS) that GPE finance is expected to generate over 2026–2030. Because the child-mortality elasticities drawn from Gakidou et al. (2010) and Le and Nguyen (2024) are expressed per additional year of schooling, the full LAYS increment is first converted into its "raw years" equivalent. This is done by dividing the quality-adjusted gain by the country-specific ratio of LAYS to *expected years of schooling* observed in the 2025 baseline. The resulting figure represents the extra number of schooling years that the future cohort of mothers will actually complete, after allowing for the fact that, in systems where learning remains below the international benchmark, one LAYS corresponds to more than one year spent in class. It is this additional calendar schooling—rather than a level-specific subset—that is subsequently fed into the mortality equations, ensuring that every unit of learning purchased by GPE is translated consistently into the demographic gains estimated later in the module.

8.3 Computing Child Deaths With and Without the GPE Intervention

For every country-year tt between 2031 and 2072, the model

1. **Counts births to treated women**. Age-specific fertility rates are applied to each beneficiary subcohort that is of reproductive age in year t; summing across ages yields the total number of births exposed to the learning dividend.
2. **Applies U5MRs**. In the baseline path, births are multiplied by the UN-projected U5MR. In the GPE path, the same U5MR is scaled down multiplicatively by either 9.5 percent (Gakidou et al. 2010) or 4.3 percent (Le and Nguyen 2024).
3. **Derives deaths averted**. The difference between the two death counts gives the number of under-5 deaths prevented in year t. Summing across 2031–2072 yields the headline total.

The number of under-5 deaths averted is between 2 million, determined using the conservative Le and Nguyen (2024) estimate, and 4.4 million, determined using the more optimistic Gakidou et al. (2010) estimate (table 13). In both cases, about 9 out of 10 under-5 deaths averted would happen in low-income countries because of the large share of GPE funding in low-income countries, the relatively larger impact of extra funding in those countries and the high burden of child deaths.

Table 13: Number of under-5 deaths averted attributable to GPE (including cofinancing leveraged) according to estimates for Gakidou et al. (2010) and Le and Nguyen (2024)

	Gakidou et al. (2010)	Le and Nguyen (2024)
Low income	3,875,714	1,834,761
Lower middle income	542,241	240,903
Upper middle income	15,532	7,125
Total	**4,433,488**	**2,082,789**

9. Projecting Additional School Meals Delivered as a Result of GPE-Financed Enrollment Gains

The school nutrition calculation is deliberately straightforward so that it remains fully transparent and clearly linked to the enrollment gains derived earlier in the results chain. The only data source required is the **2022 World Food Programme global school-feeding inventory**, which reports for 156 countries the proportion of pupils in government and government-aided **primary** schools who received at least one nutritionally adequate meal or snack on each school day in the reference year. That coverage ratio, recorded at the closest equivalent of grades 1–6, is taken as the baseline feeding rate for 2025–2030.

Section 2 has already produced, for every country and year between 2026 and 2030, the increment in **gross primary enrollment** attributable to GPE finance. The school meals module therefore applies a single transformation: the extra head count of pupils of primary school age is multiplied by the country-specific feeding coverage rate. The result is the **annual number of additional children who will receive a daily school meal thanks to the partnership's impact on access to basic education.** Because the calculation is anchored to gross rather than net enrollment, it automatically captures both on-time entrants and overage pupils, mirroring the way most national school feeding programs allocate resources.

The results show that an **additional 307,000 primary school students** will benefit from school meals in the 2026–2030 period thanks to GPE's intervention.

10. Number of Beneficiaries, Textbooks, Classrooms and Teachers Trained

10.1 Beneficiaries

The number of GPE beneficiaries has been computed using the median unit cost for one beneficiary for the 2021–2025 period ($17.05) and the estimated fund

allocated for each country. The number is capped at the school-age population (ages 5 to 24) by country.

The projected number of GPE core grant beneficiaries for the 2026–2030 period is 748 million, about 1 school-age child out of 4 in GPE countries.

10.2 Textbooks

Using GPE grant data from 2021 to 2025, it has been estimated that GPE spent 4.44 percent of its budget on textbooks for an individual cost per textbook of $2.05. Using the same parameters, it is projected that with its core financing ($4.6 billion), **GPE should buy 99.6 million for the period 2026–2030 and 324.9 million with $15 billion**. This amounts to about 1 textbook for two school-age children in GPE countries (695 million).

10.3 Classrooms

Using GPE grant data from 2021 to 2025, it has been estimated that GPE spent 12.88 percent of its budget on classroom construction for an individual cost per classroom of $8,126. It is estimated that making these classrooms climate resilient will increase costs by 15 percent but will create $4 of social benefit, through avoided losses and damages, for each dollar spent (Hallegate, Rentschler, and Rozenberg 2019). Using these parameters, GPE will build 206,740 classrooms in the 2026–2030 period, resulting in $7.7 billion of social benefit.

10.4 Teachers Trained

Using GPE grant data, the median unit cost of teacher pre-service training is estimated to be $104.45, while the unit cost of in-service training is estimated at $78.33. GPE spent 12.98 percent of these funds on teacher training for 2020–2025, of which 38.7 percent was spent for pre-service training and 61.3 percent for spent in-service training.

Assuming a total of $15 billion for the five years, GPE might train:

- 7,213,872 teachers for pre-service training; and
- 3,047,391 teachers for in-service training, assuming that teachers need to be trained every year.

If those teachers teach 40 students a year, it means

- 288,554,880 students will benefit from teachers pre-service trained every year; and
- 121,895,640 students will benefit from teachers in-service trained every year.

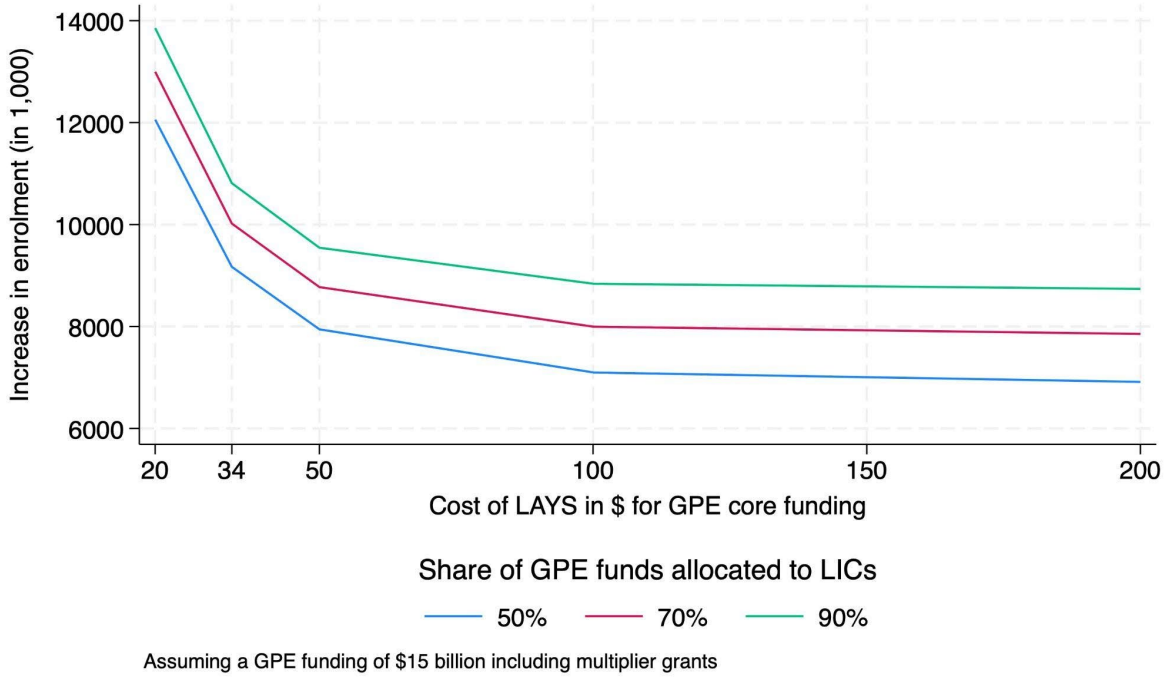
So, a total of 410,450,520 students will benefit from trained teachers each year thanks to GPE funding. This is about 60 percent of the GPE countries' school-age population.

11. Sensitivity Analysis

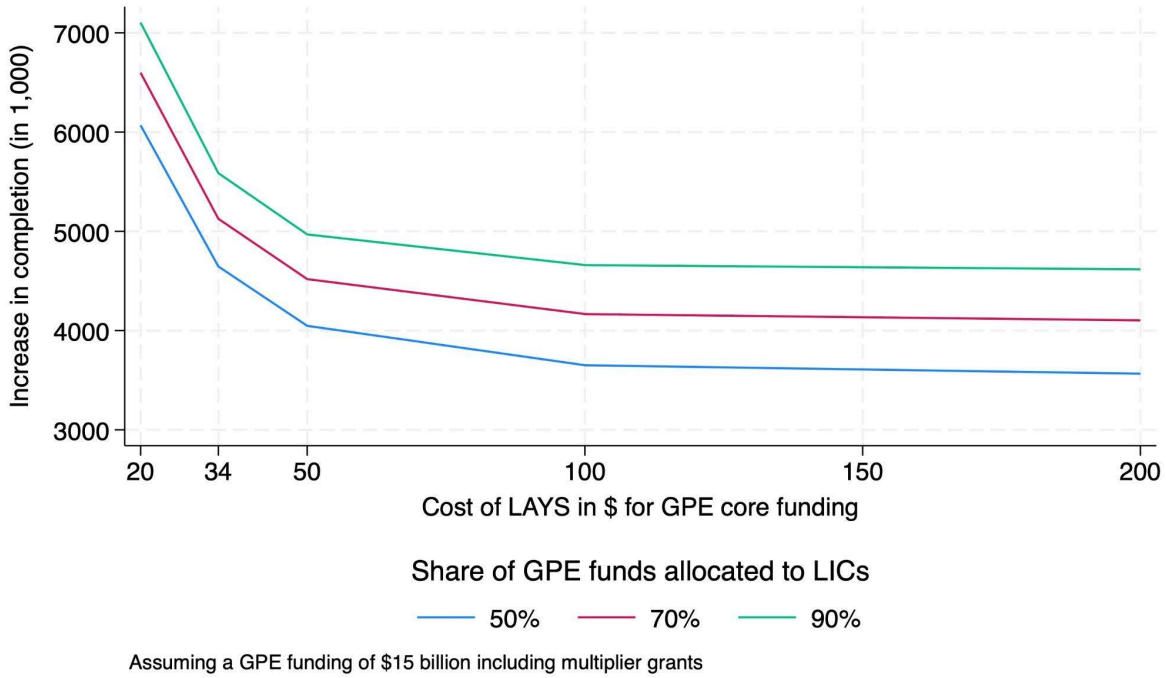
To estimate how sensitive results are to the choice of assumptions, projections have been estimated with different parameters for the cost-effectiveness of the core GPE funding (from $20 per learning adjusted years of schooling [LAYS] to $200, instead of $34), different allocation of funds between low-income countries and the rest (50 percent, 70 percent the central assumption and 90 percent) and different levels of fundings (from 25 percent of the funds to 200 percent).

11.1 Sensitivity to Different Levels of Cost-Effectiveness

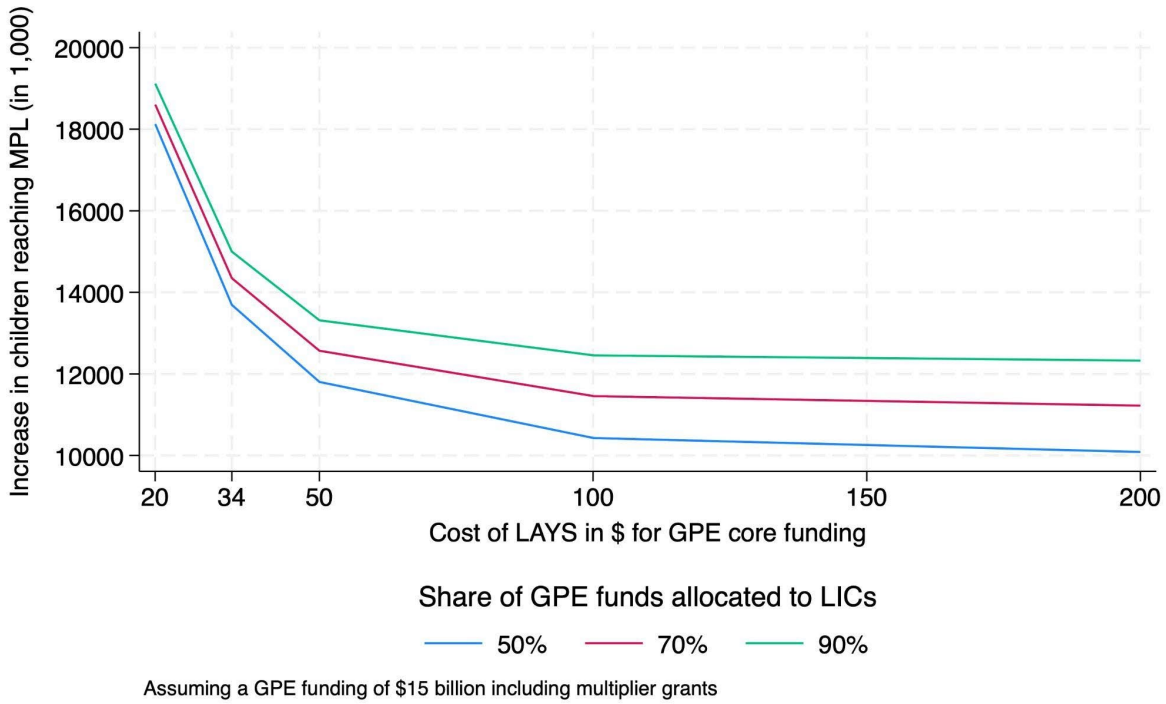
The figures below show that outcomes decrease rapidly when the cost-effectiveness of core funding increases. Going from $20 to $50, for instance, decreases the number of children to be enrolled from 13 million to 9 million (for an allocation of 70 percent). Past $50, the lines begin to flatten. This is notably because the core funding cost-effectiveness cannot be lower than the domestic one, and in very poor countries where most of the funds will be allocated, cost-effectiveness tends to be better.



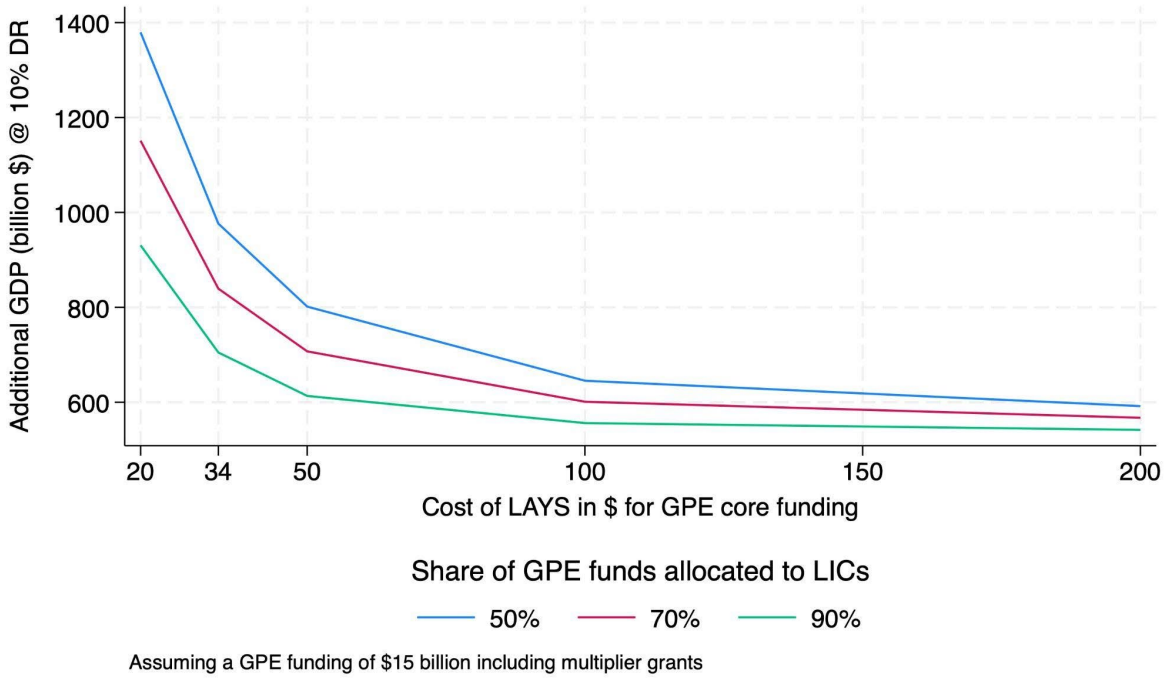
Note: LICs = low-income countries; LAYS = learning-adjusted years of schooling.



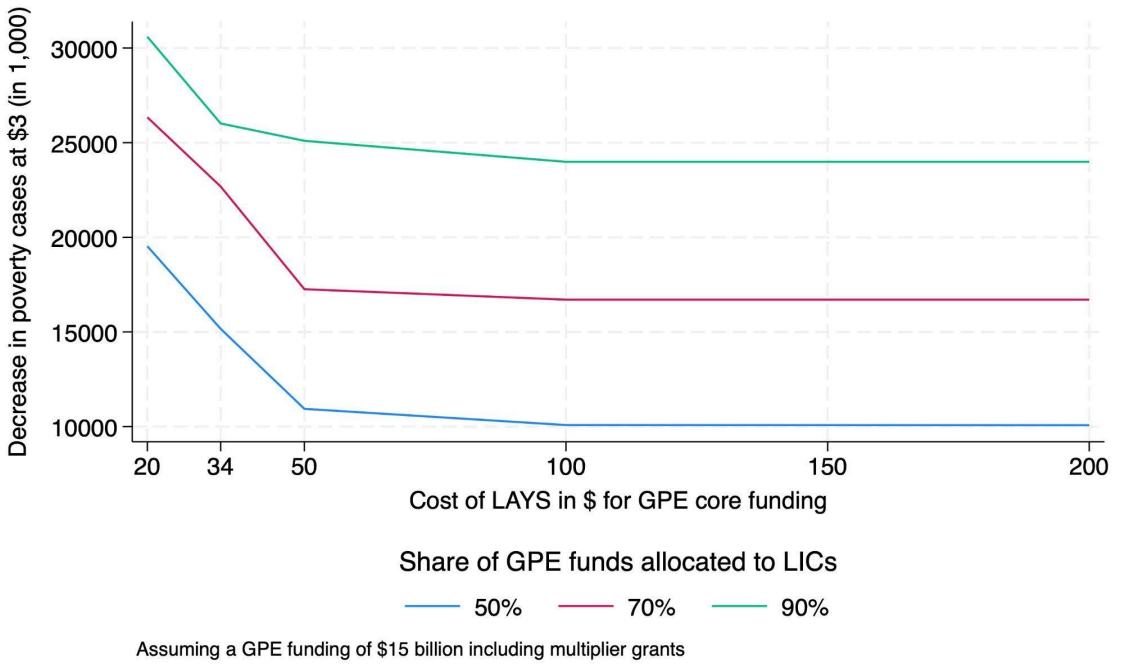
Note: LICs = low-income countries; LAYS = learning-adjusted years of schooling.



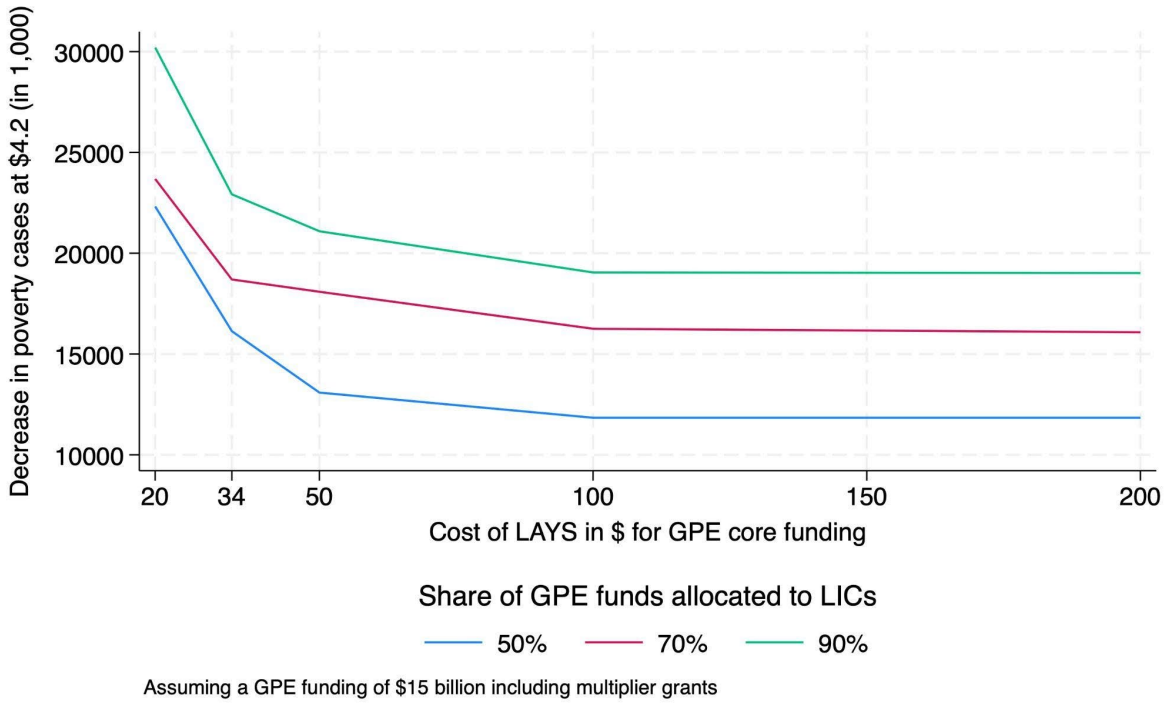
Note: LICs = low-income countries; LAYS = learning-adjusted years of schooling; MPL = minimum proficiency level.



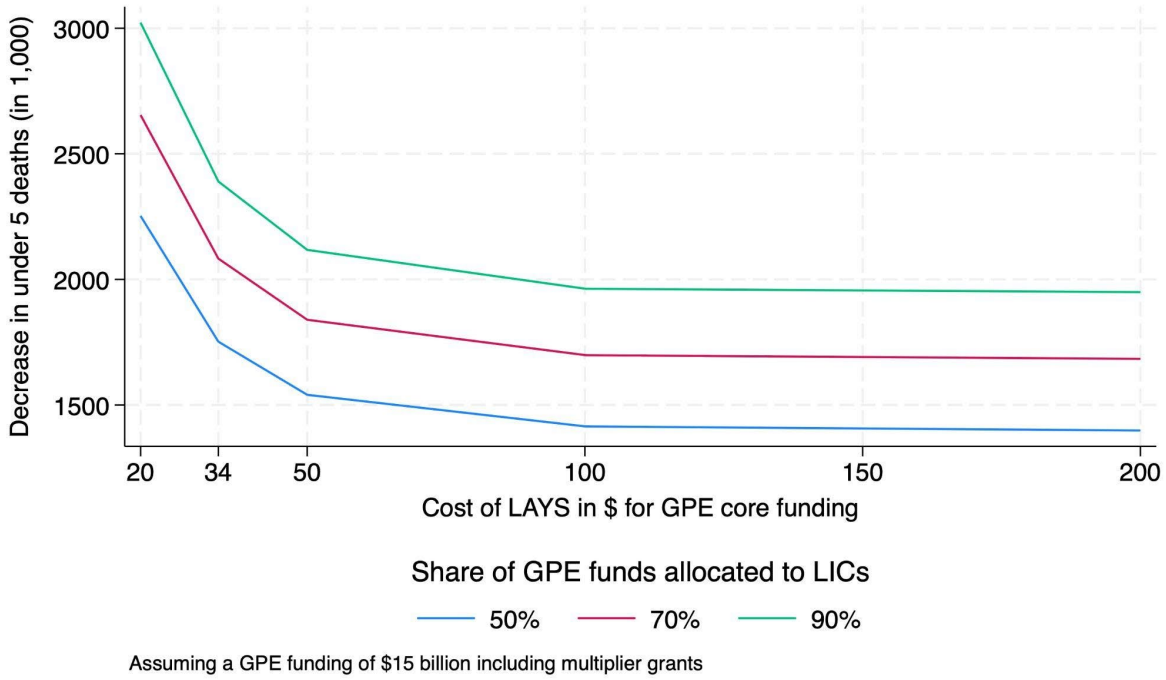
Note: DR = discount rate; GDP = gross domestic product; LICs = low-income countries; LAYS = learning-adjusted years of schooling.



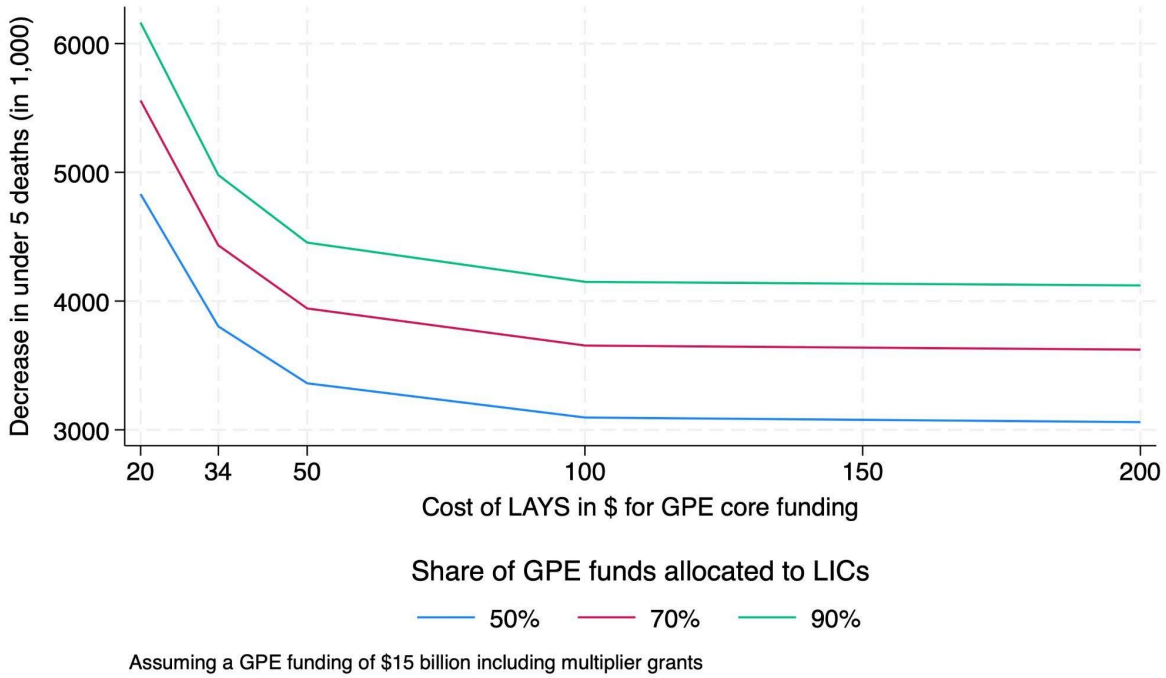
Note: LICs = low-income countries; LAYS = learning-adjusted years of schooling.



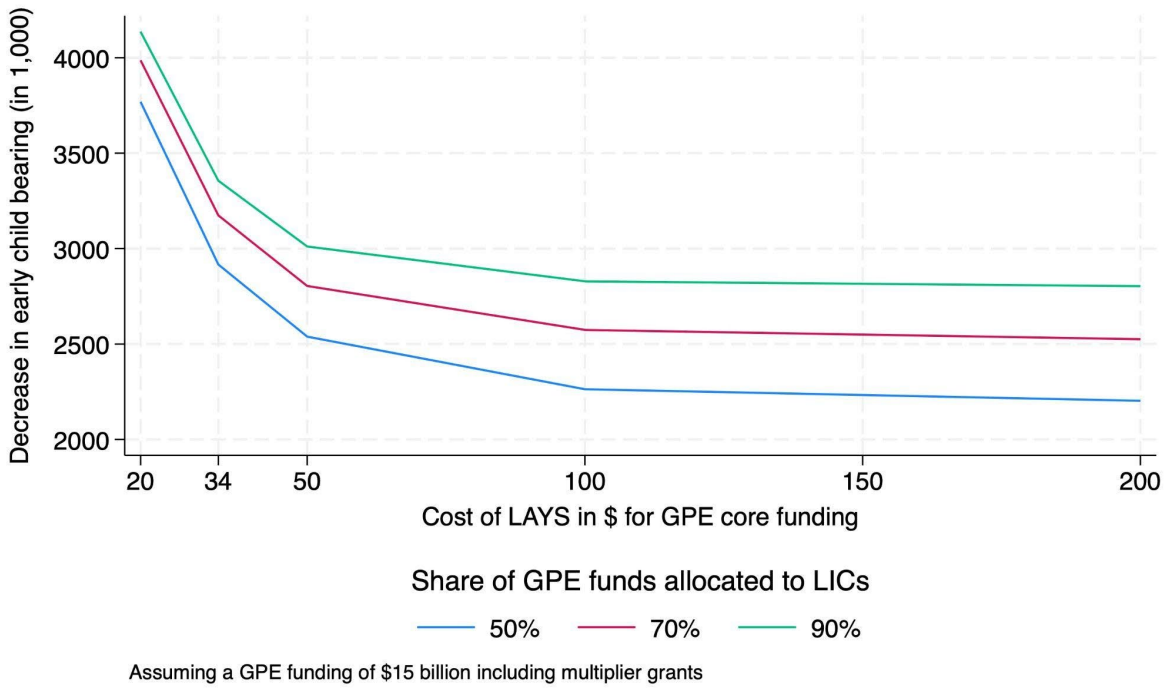
Note: LICs = low-income countries; LAYS = learning-adjusted years of schooling.



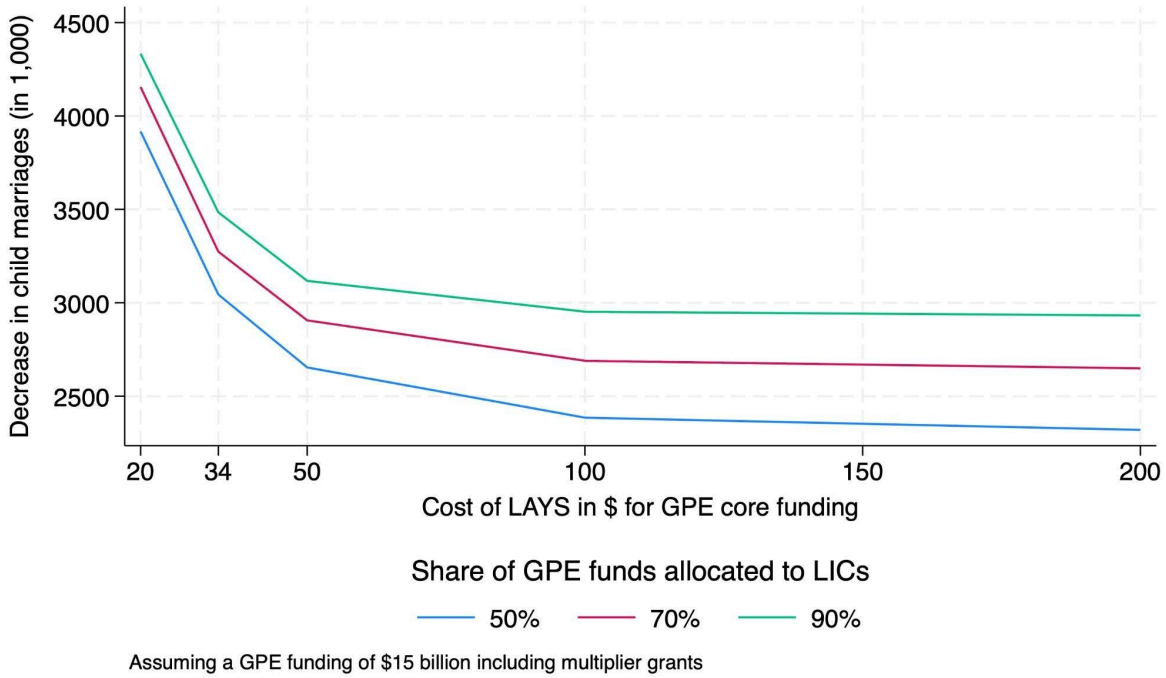
Note: LICs = low-income countries; LAYS = learning-adjusted years of schooling.



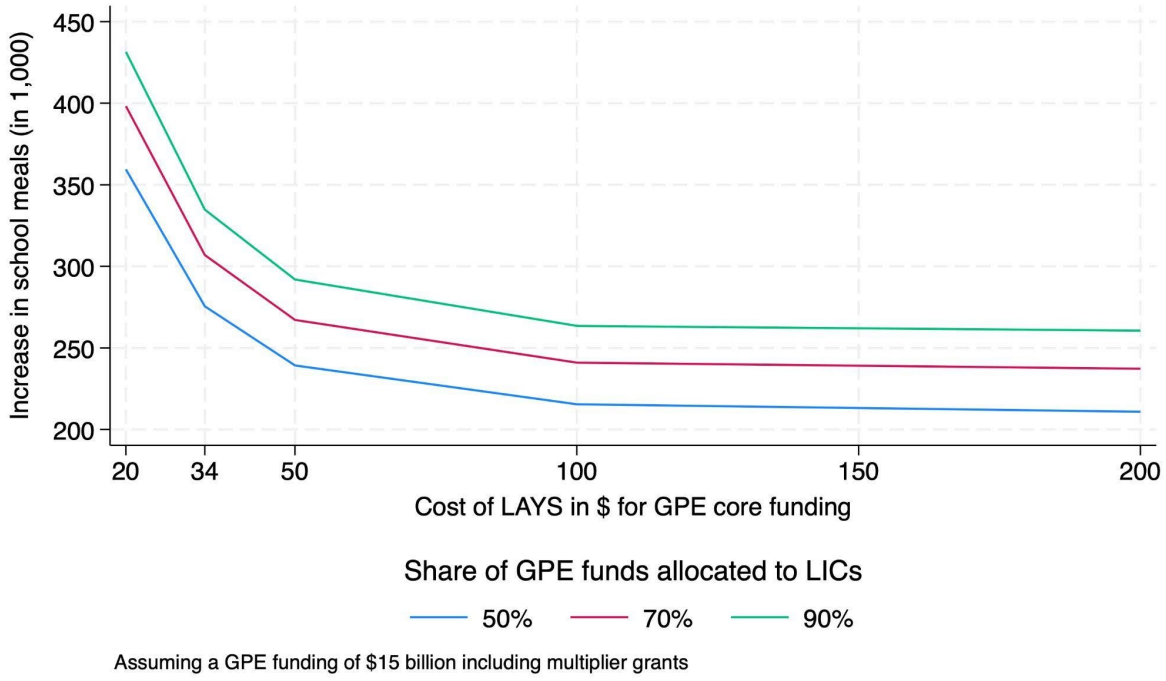
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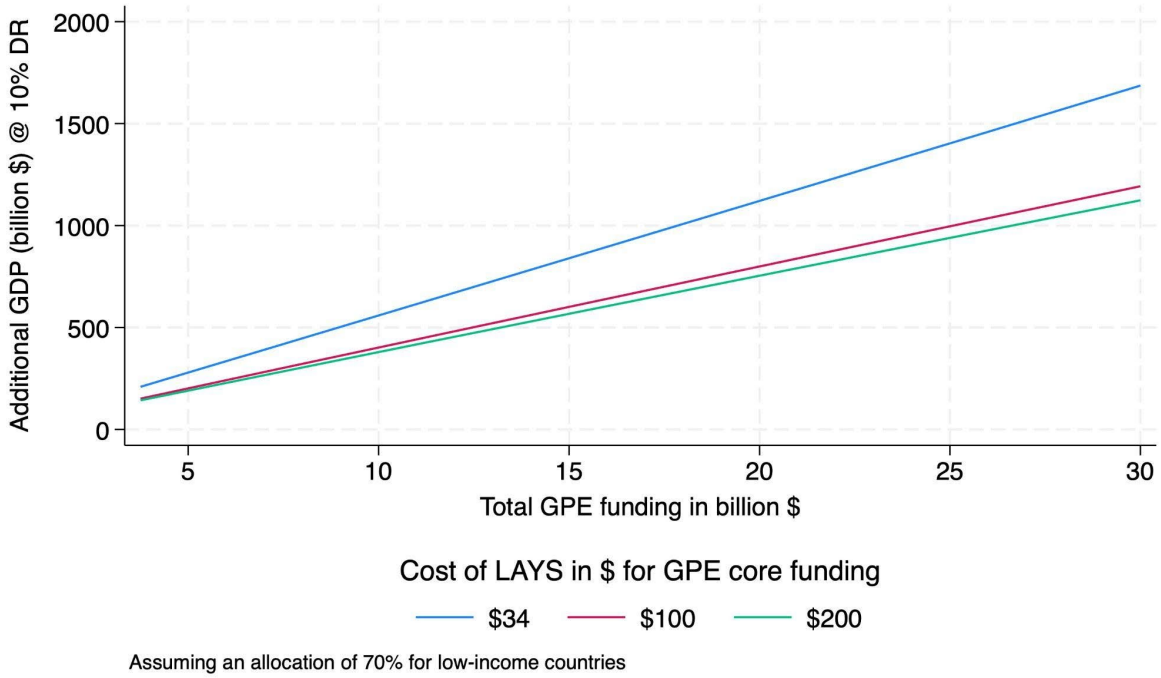
Note: LICs = low-income countries; LAYS = learning-adjusted years of schooling.



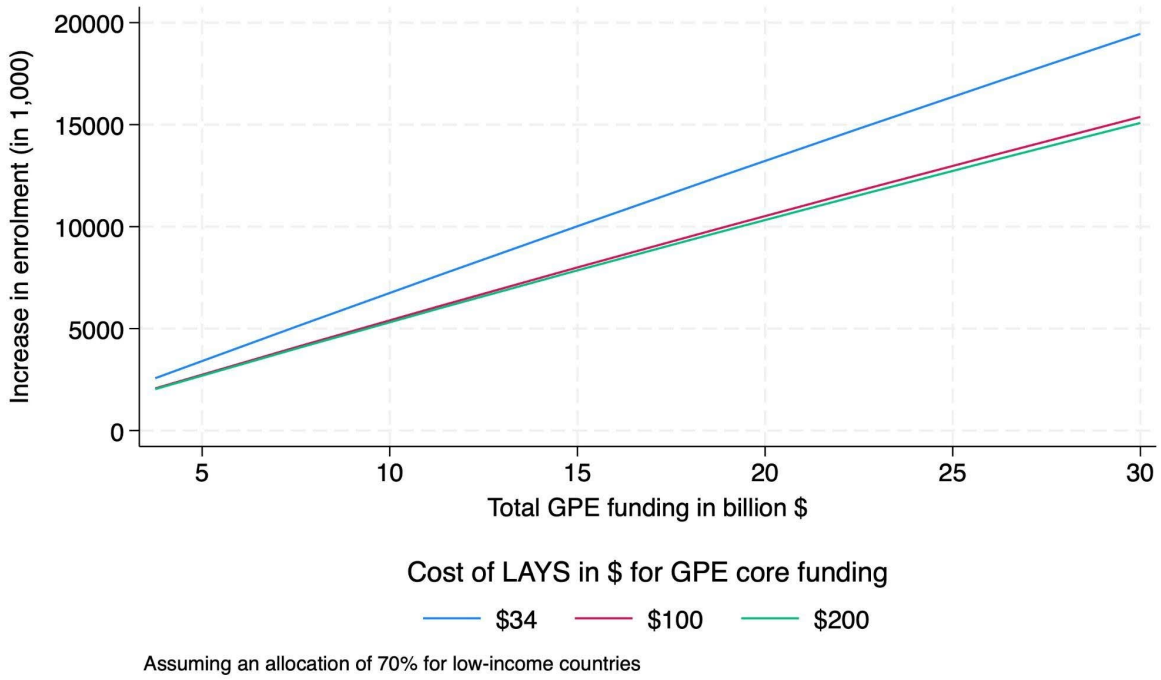
Note: LICs = low-income countries; LAYS = learning-adjusted years of schooling.

11.2 Sensitivity to varying levels of spending

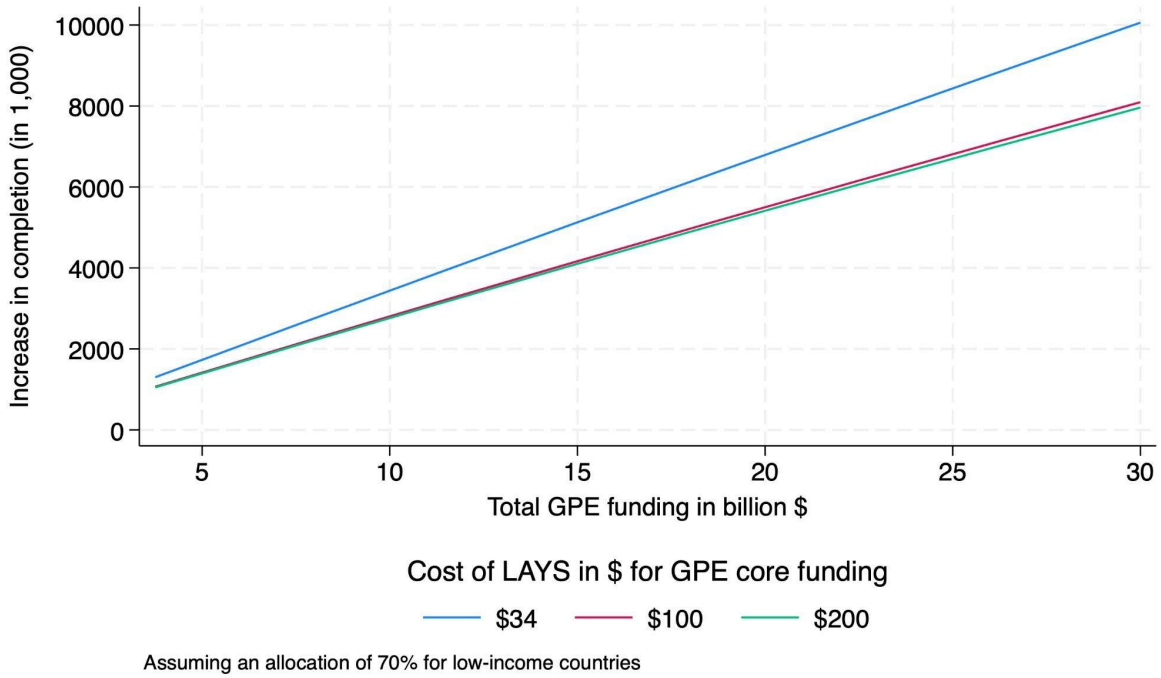
Projections for various levels of spending



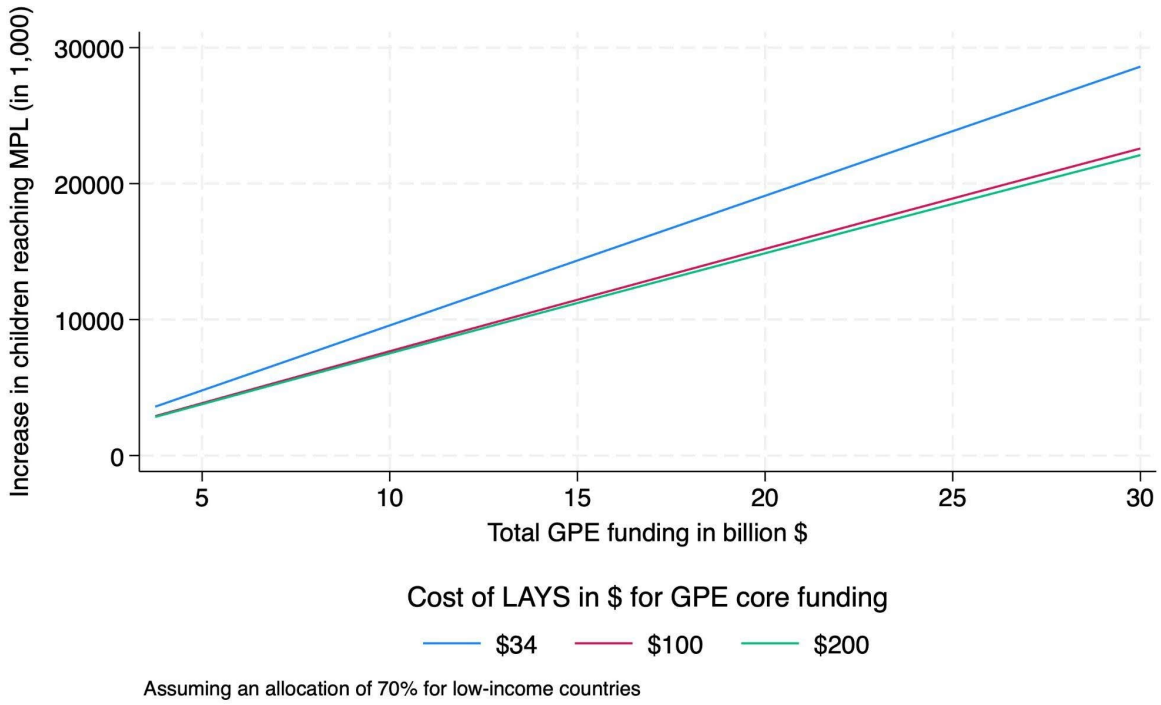
Note: DR = discount rate; GDP = gross domestic product; LAYS = learning-adjusted years of schooling.



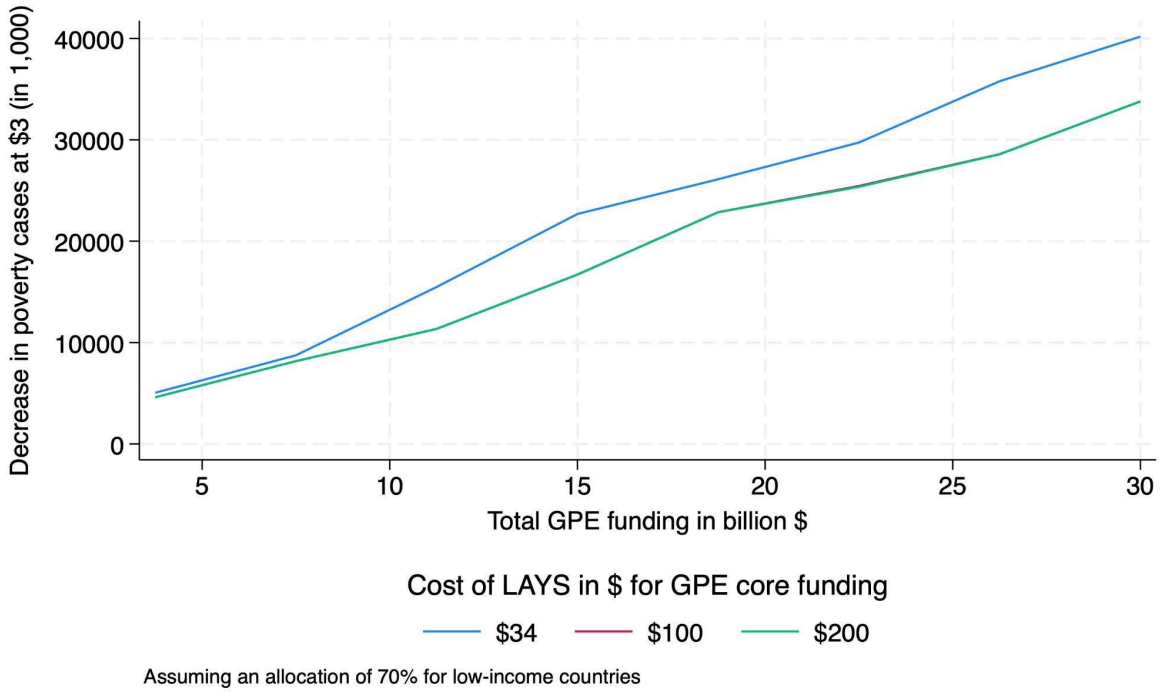
Note: LAYS = learning-adjusted years of schooling.



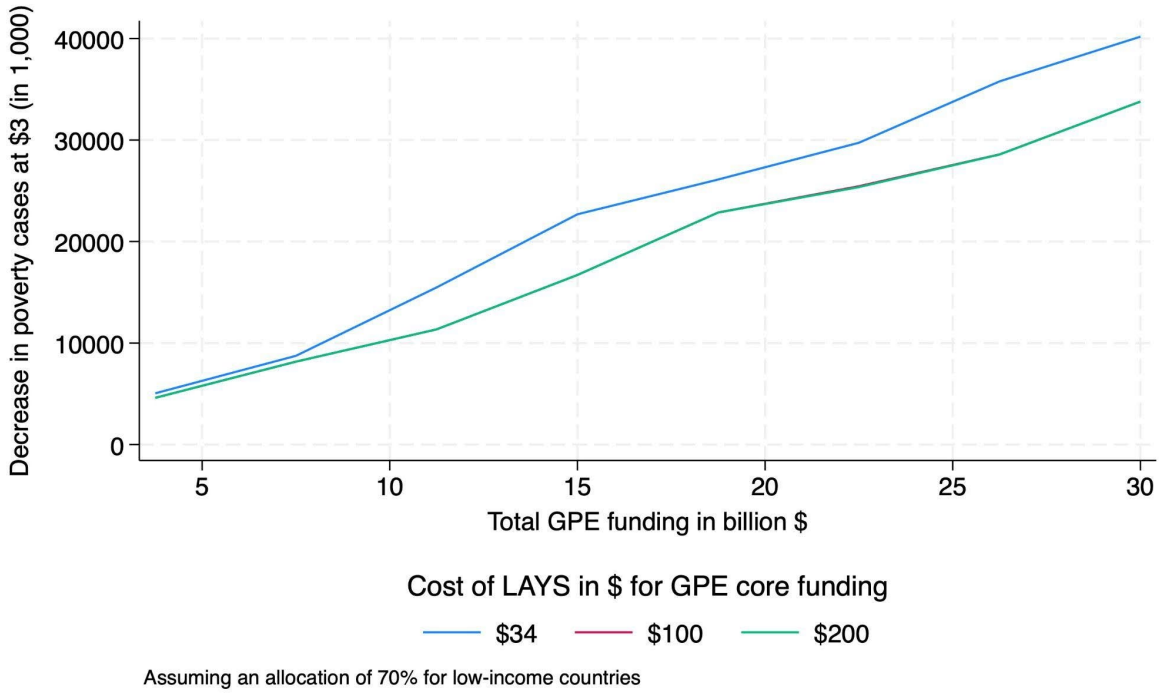
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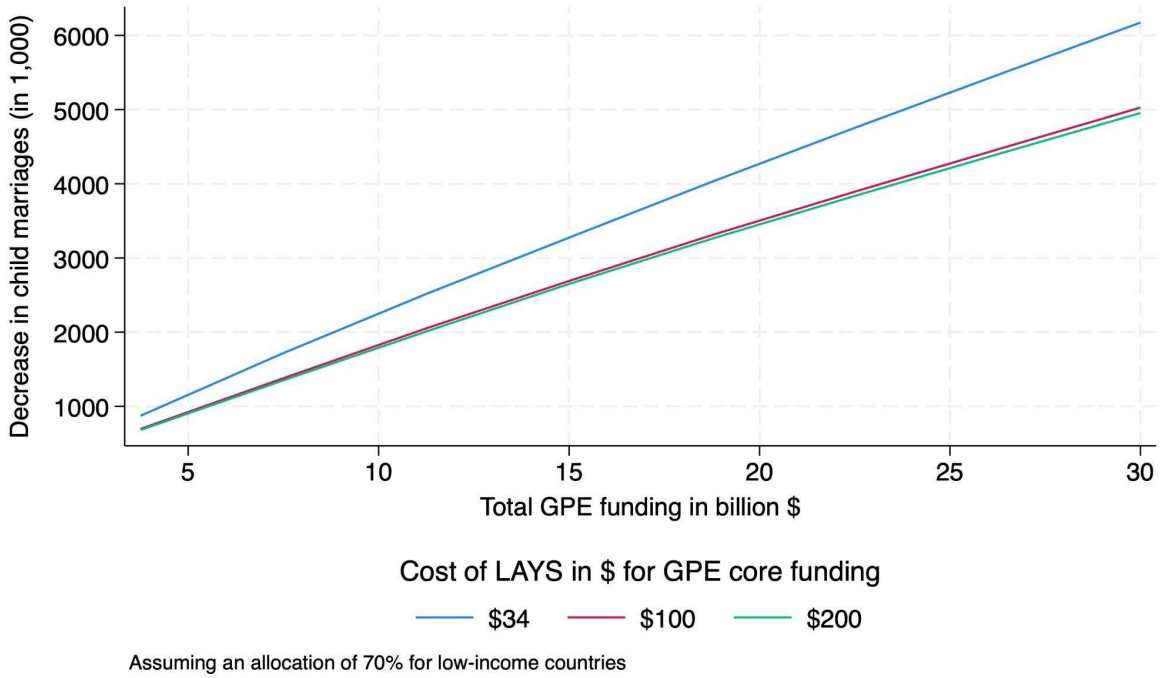
Note: LAYS = learning-adjusted years of schooling; MPL = minimum proficiency level.



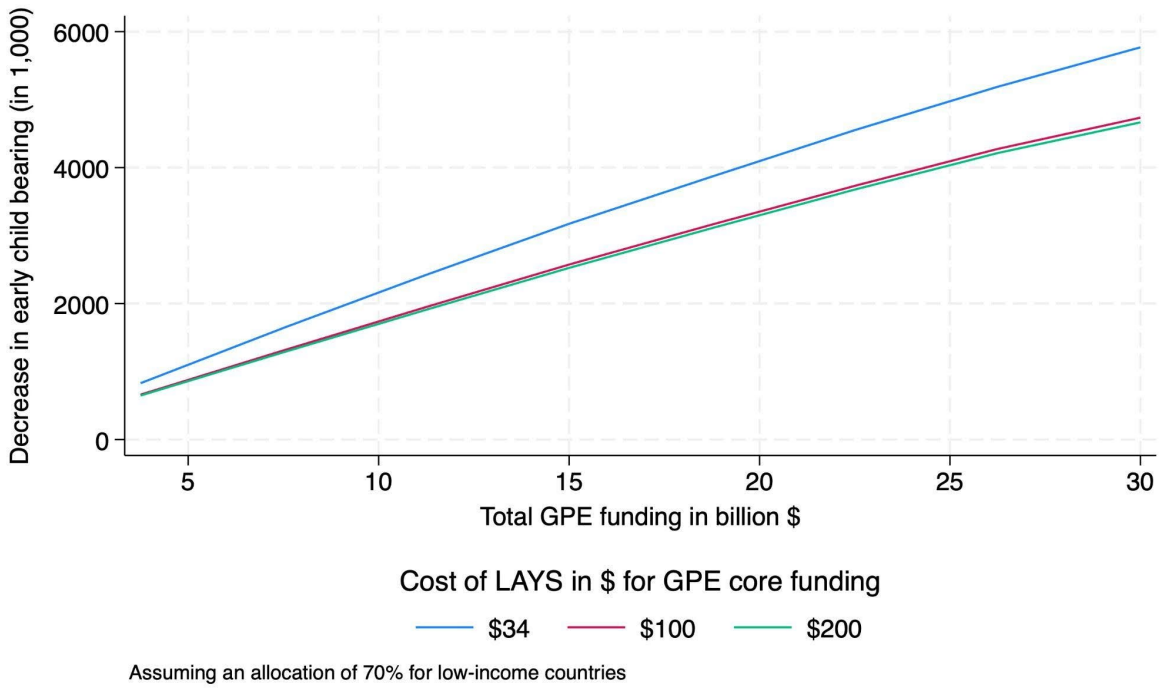
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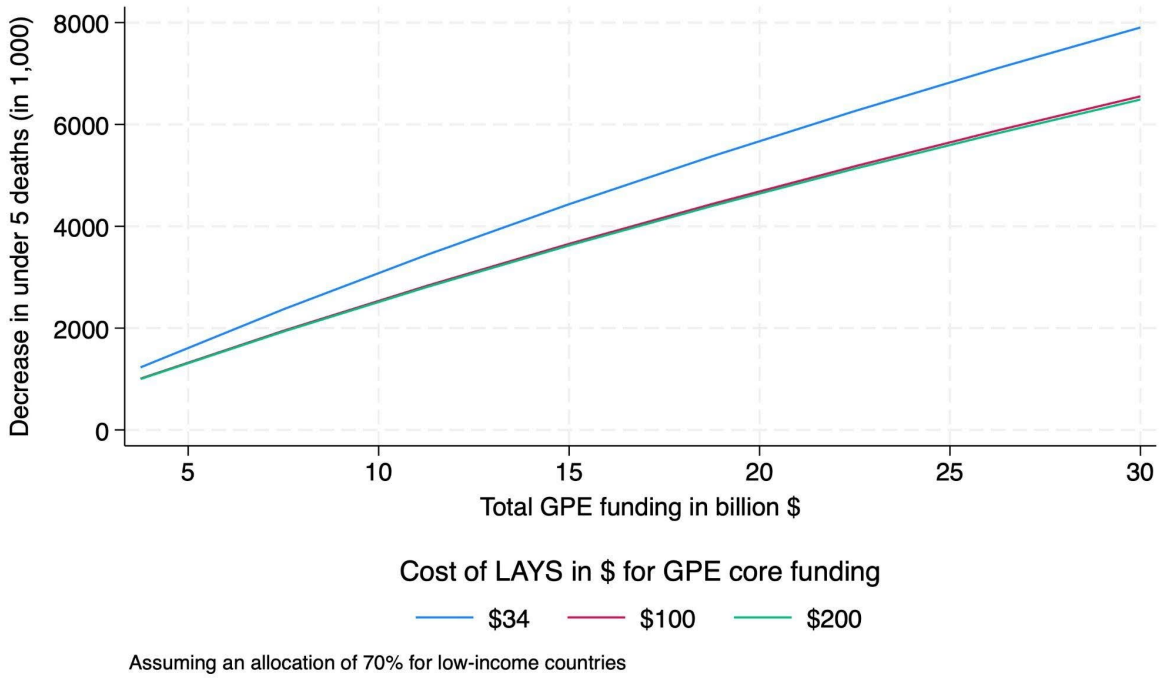
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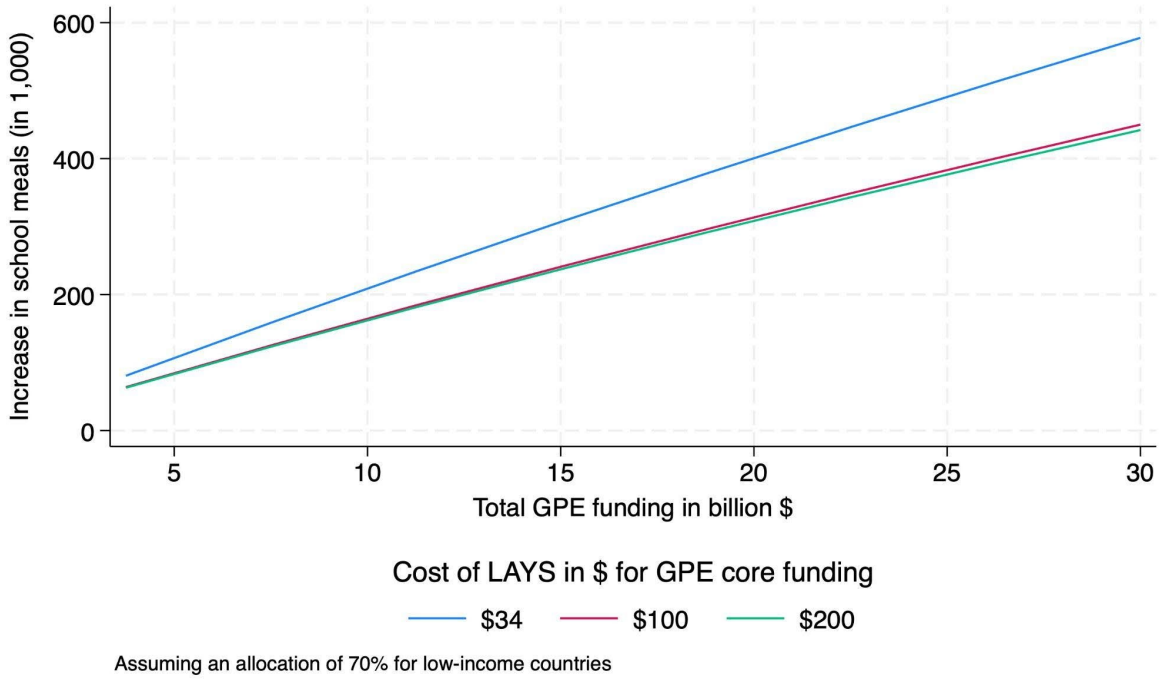
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Appendix: Sources of Data

GPE partner countries

The projections are based on the list of 89 countries that were part of GPE in 2024. Therefore, the newest partner countries (Jordan and Bolivia) and countries that are eligible to be GPE partner countries but have not yet joined (Algeria, India, Morocco, the West Bank and Gaza) are not included.

Education indicators

Data on education indicators were retrieved from the UIS.Stat database (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2024), except years of schooling that come from Our World in Data work in projections years of schooling using the Barro and Lee dataset.
Minimum proficiency level and learning-adjusted years of schooling (LAYS) data have been retrieved from the World Bank website.

School meal data come from the 2022 World Food Programme survey.
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Roser, M., E. Ortiz-Ospina, and H. Ritchie. 2024. *Educational Attainment*. Our World in Data. Retrieved from https://ourworldindata.org/educational-attainment.

World Food Programme. 2022. *State of School Feeding Worldwide 2022*: *Global School Feeding Inventory*. Rome: United Nations World Food Programme. https://www.wfp.org/publications/state-school-feeding-worldwide-2022

World Bank. 2020. *Human Capital Index 2020*: *Learning-Adjusted Years of Schooling (LAYS)* (Washington, DC: World Bank), https://www.worldbank.org/en/publication/human-capital.

Economic variables

The IMF World Economic Outlook (WEO) database is the source of data for gross domestic product (GDP) in current prices and in PPP. Since projections of GDP stop in 2029, data for 2030 have been projected using specific country trends.

International Monetary Fund. 2024. *World Economic Outlook Database, April 2024*. Washington, DC. Retrieved from https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/WEO.

Income distribution

Income distribution and poverty estimates in this analysis are based on data from the World Bank's PovcalNet platform, which provides nationally representative household survey data on income or consumption across countries.

World Bank. 2024. *Policy and Inequality Platform*. Washington, DC: World Bank. Retrieved from https://pip.worldbank.org/home.

Education finance

Indicators of domestic education finance are primarily sourced from the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) database. Where UIS data are missing or incomplete, they are supplemented with information from GPE internal monitoring data. For Iraq, Montenegro and Nigeria, data are drawn from national education sector reports and budget documents. For Nigeria, UIS data only include central-level spending. Using data from country budget reports, it has been assumed that central-level spending in education makes up 26.9 percent of total spending and all education spending figure data have been inflated by this factor. We assume that spending in all partner countries gradually converges to 5 percent of GDP by 2030. This is an aspirational assumption, in line with the 4–6 percent of GDP guideline that the education sector has traditionally recommended.

Demographic indicators

Population and fertility and child mortality rates are taken from the UN World Population Prospects 2024, based on the medium variant projection.

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division. 2024. *World Population Prospects 2024*. New York: United Nations. Retrieved from https://population.un.org/wpp/.

Socioeconomic indicators

Early childbearing and child marriage data come from the UNICEF database.

UNICEF. 2024. *Child Marriage and Early Childbearing: Global Databases*. New York: United Nations Children's Fund. Retrieved from https://data.unicef.org.

Official development assistance

Data on donor funding come from the OECD Creditor Reporting System (CRS), which provides disaggregated information on official development assistance (ODA) by sector and recipient. These data are used to compute each country's share of global education ODA as well as the most recent education aid figures by

country. We assume that ODA will decline by 25 percent from 2023 levels over the next five years. This is in line with recent projections from the UNESCO *Global Education Monitoring Report*.

OECD. 2024. *Creditor Reporting System (CRS) Aid Activities database*. Paris: OECD. Retrieved from https://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=CRS1.

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