CIVIL SOCIETY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

For Decision

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this paper is to present the Secretariat's recommended approach to improve Civil Society engagement, based on consultation with GPE stakeholders, which will require systematic consideration by all GPE partners at country and global level.

2. PROPOSED DECISION

The Secretariat requests that the Board of Directors approves the following decision:

BOD/2013/11-XX – Civil Society: The Board of Directors:

a. approves the recommended strategy for GPE and its partners to better implement the principle of Civil Society engagement as outlined in Annex 1 of BOD/2013/11 DOC 05;

b. approves the second commitment of funds by the Trustee to UNESCO as Supervising Entity in the amount of US$ 7.25 million to support the Civil Society Education Fund for the period of 2014/2015, US$ 508,078 as an agency fee, and US$ 324,227 as a supervision allocation.

c. requests the GPE Secretariat to develop a Civil Society Support Proposal 2015-2018, in consultation with the Global Campaign for Education, Education International and other stakeholders, for consideration by the Board of Directors at its next face-to-face meeting in June 2014.

3. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

3.1 The Global Partnership for Education has enshrined the principle of Civil Society engagement in education sector planning, monitoring and oversight in its Charter and policies. However, Civil Society still faces challenges in their inclusion in local education sector planning and monitoring, as well as challenges to the effective representation of Civil Society at the global level. In order to effectively address the gaps to effective Civil Society participation in GPE processes, this paper outlines three areas for which the Board's approval is requested.

3.2 First, this Board paper will **summarize the key areas in which GPE Secretariat and partners should work** to improve and/or better implement GPE policies and procedures related to Civil Society, provide capacity building support for strengthened Civil Society engagement, and interventions by GPE and its partners to support more effective and inclusive engagement of Civil Society actors across GPE's processes, operations and monitoring efforts at both national and international levels. Further details on this strategic approach to implanting GPE's principle of Civil Society inclusion can be found in Annex 1.

3.3 This paper further **recommends that the second tranche of funding for the 2014 phase of the Civil Society Education Fund ("CSEF") be approved for disbursement**, given the satisfactory contractual and programmatic agreements that have been established in 2013 between the Global Partnership for Education, the Supervising Entity UNESCO, and the Global Campaign for Education. Further information on the status of implementation of the Civil Society Education Fund can be found in Annex 2.

3.4 This paper also **outlines the need for predictable and longer-term support for Civil Society to improve the capacity and mechanisms needed to enable Civil Society actors' engagement in education sector processes**. It discusses the rationale for GPE to resource such efforts in the next replenishment period from 2015 to 2018, both in terms of allowing the Global Partnership to achieve its mission and to support strong national accountability mechanisms linked to national education strategies and the Post 2015 Sustainable Development Agenda. This paper recommends that the Global Partnership work with its civil society stakeholders to develop a proposal for such support for consideration at the next face-to-face meeting of the Board of Directors.

4. BACKGROUND

4.1 **The Global Partnership for Education Principle of Civil Society Inclusion**: Civil Society is expected to play a role at country level which helps to promote democratic oversight of education, enhance accountability of governments for the provision of public education and improve the effectiveness of education in meeting the needs of all learners. The Global Partnership for Education recognizes this role and has clearly articulated the role of Civil Society in its charter, country level processes, strategic plan, and other policies and standards. In this context, Civil Society Organizations include non-state actors which have a presence in public life, expressing the interests and values of their memberships or others on the basis of ethical, cultural, political, scientific, religious, philanthropic or other considerations. These may include community groups, NGOs, labor unions, indigenous peoples' organizations, charitable organizations, research centers, faith-based organizations, social movements, professional associations and foundations. The GPE's articulation of the role of civil society is in keeping with the Dakar Framework for Action, which sets out the international responsibility to "ensure the

engagement and participation of civil society in the formulation, implementation and monitoring of strategies for educational development."[1]

4.2 The Global Partnership for Education **Strategic Plan** also states:

"The Global Partnership will support greater Civil Society, teaching profession and private sector and private foundation involvement in LEGs and in policy dialogue at the country level. The meaningful inclusion of Civil Society (including international NGOs, local NGOs and associations, teacher unions as well as community based organizations and local stakeholder groups such as parents and students) will require greater and more timely participation of these partners in the development of national education plans, program implementation grant applications and joint sector reviews. By ensuring that GPE processes are inclusive of Civil Society, the Global partnership can help promote national education strategies which are responsive to the needs of communities and empower local actors to demand and monitor the implementation of quality education services."[2]

4.3 **The Charter of the Global Partnership for Education,** as revised by the Governance Working Group, reconfirms the role of Civil Society in the Global Partnership in Section 3.3.3 which outlines the role of Civil Society Organizations:

In addition to the roles and responsibilities [of the Development Partners Group], non-governmental organizations (including international and local CSOs, representatives of the teaching profession, the private sector and private foundations) participate in the Development Partner Group to:

a) Support progress towards the Education for All Goals through advocacy and dialogue on appropriate education policy and implementation with adequate financing, quality, learning outcomes, as well as oversight and accountability mechanisms;

b) ensure that broad and representative voices are brought into the discussions regarding the development, implementation and monitoring of the education sector plan; and

c) engage in policy dialogue with a view to strengthen domestic policy and accountability gaps.

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[1] The Dakar Framework for Action states that: *Learners, teachers, parents, communities, non-governmental organizations and other bodies representing civil society must be granted new and expanded political and social scope, at all levels of society, in order to engage governments in dialogue, decision-making and innovation around the goals of basic education. Civil Society has much experience and a crucial role to play in identifying barriers to EFA goals, and developing policies and strategies to remove them. Such participation, especially at the local level through partnerships between schools and communities, should not only be limited to endorsing decisions of, or financing by, the state. Rather, at all levels of decision-making, governments must put in place regular mechanisms for dialogue that will enable citizens and civil society organizations to contribute to the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of basic education. This is essential in order to foster the development of accountable, comprehensive and flexible educational management frameworks. In order to facilitate this process, capacity will often have to be developed in the civil society organizations.*

[2] GPE Strategic Plan 2012-2014, p 34.

[3] The Charter of the Global Partnership for Education, p 7-8.

4.4 The GPE's strategy to improve Civil Society engagement (including the teaching profession) is not only fundamental to the partnership model and its principle of mutual accountability, but it is also in keeping with accepted approaches to development which recognize that sustainable and pro-poor outcomes are better achieved if Civil Society is strongly engaged and invested in development processes. Furthermore, Civil Society actors are key stakeholders in efforts to improve governance and transparency in order to effectively hold governments accountable for achieving education progress, especially for the most marginalized.

4.5 **Progress implementing the principle:** The participation of the Global Campaign for Education since the inception of the Global Partnership for Education a decade ago and the inclusion of the teaching profession, represented by Education International, in the new governance framework of the partnership has facilitated a growing awareness within the partnership of the role of Civil Society in the education sector. To this end, the GPE has developed and promoted normative standards for the inclusion of Civil Society in the global governance of the partnership, as well as in education policy dialogue, implementation, and monitoring in its developing country partners.[4] It has also provided funding and support to the Civil Society Education Fund from 2009 to 2011 and from 2013 to 2014 in order to help Civil Society actors to improve their capacity to participate in GPE processes.

4.6 GPE support provided to Civil Society Organizations shows impressive results in terms of their participation in education policy processes: the number of countries reporting Civil Society representation in their LEGs has increased from 16 to 41 countries from 2010 to 2013. The independent evaluation of the CSEF found that "*the CSEF has contributed to civil society networks becoming key political agents in educational debates and has actively worked for the realization of the right to 'education for all', effecting significant national policy change in many world locations. However, the contribution of civil society to the EFA action framework should not be seen only in terms of aid effectiveness. Well-articulated and competent civil society networks can contribute to advance the EFA goals, as well as to the democratization of education politics at different levels. In relation to the latter, the CSEF has opened spaces for civil society organizations and individual citizens to have a say in education and to hold their governments to account.*"[5] This evaluation and progress reports provided to the Global Partnership for Education for the period of 2009 to 2012 demonstrate that civil society inclusion in sector policy processes enhances accountability and improves the responsiveness of the education sector to civil society.[6]

4.7 **Constraints to implementing the principle**: However, there are several constraints which continue to impede the goal of ensuring the effective and consistent inclusion of non-state

[4] See for example, the Country Level Process Guide http://www.globalpartnership.org/media/GPE_Country_Level_Process_Guide_Aug_2012.pdf and Education Sector Plan Preparation and Appraisal http://www.globalpartnership.org/media/docs/library/121106-Guidelines-for-Education-Sector-Plan-Preparation-and-Appraisal-EN.pdf

[5] REGIONAL AND NATIONAL CIVIL SOCIETY EDUCATION FUNDS EVALUATION REPORT, p 7. http://campaignforeducation.org/docs/csef/CSEFev_FINAL_REPORTv4_complete.pdf

[6] To access these progress reports please see http://www.globalpartnership.org/finance-and-funding/global-partnership-for-education-fund/civil-society-education-fund/

actors in global and country level education sector processes. Based on extensive feedback from Civil Society members and teachers organizations, the following challenges to inclusion persist: The first overarching constraint is the lack of systematic qualitative and quantitative information on Civil Society participation, which GPE, the Global Campaign for Education and others are developing and which will evolve as it is implemented. Secondly, in practice Civil Society representatives are not yet consistently participating in GPE's global and regional events and activities (global workshops, communities of practice, etc.), global education policy dialogue, advocacy campaigns or other GPE-facilitated events. The third challenge is to ensure the systematic inclusion of Civil Society representatives, especially teacher representatives, in Local Education Group dialogue, and in the development of education sector plans, GPE grant financing design, and annual sector monitoring efforts.

4.8 Although many countries have strong Civil Society monitoring of education policy, financing, and service delivery, the Global Campaign for Education and Education International report that their members are still excluded from official monitoring efforts in several GPE countries.[7] This is particularly true for teachers' organizations, which still do not participate in country level policy processes at all in many countries. Even where strong Civil Society engagement in monitoring activities is in place, governments and members of the Local Education Group can better leverage the oversight role of Civil Society to affect policy change and more effectively track service delivery at decentralized levels. The Secretariat recommends a more consistently joined-up and multi-stakeholder approach to monitoring so that the expertise, experience and knowledge of Civil Society are brought to bear on national education frameworks and strategies.

4.9 It should be noted that constraints which are related to Civil Society's capacity to effectively play its role have been a primary focus for the GPE since 2009 and are reflected in the funds approved for the Civil Society Education Fund program. While the Civil Society Education Fund has and continues to provide training and support for national Civil Society actors, it is widely regarded as insufficient to achieve inclusive dialogue and education sector monitoring without the cooperation of other GPE partners to enable Civil Society stakeholders to play a role in these processes.

5. PROPOSED DECISIONS TO ADVANCE CIVIL SOCIETY ENGAGEMENT IN AND BEYOND 2014

5.1 While the GPE has made considerable progress in mainstreaming the inclusion of Civil Society, there remain several areas which require additional effort to ensure that this goal is adopted throughout GPE's processes. The GPE Secretariat proposes that the Board of Directors approves the recommended strategy to improve the GPE Secretariat and GPE partners' engagement of Civil Society; approves the second tranche of US$ 7.25 million in funding for the Civil Society Education Fund; and requests the Secretariat to work with partners on a proposal for longer-term support to Civil Society.

[7] Education For All Assessment 2013, Education International; and the REGIONAL AND NATIONAL CIVIL SOCIETY EDUCATION FUNDS EVALUATION REPORT, p 7.

5.2 **GPE's strategic approach to enable better Civil Society engagement**: The GPE Secretariat has identified key areas which should be the focus of the GPE's efforts to improve engagement of Civil Society actors and which are outlined in Annex 1. By ensuring that there is systematic consideration of these areas for improvement, in which the GPE Secretariat and its partners can better facilitate effective engagement of Civil Society, members of the GPE can begin to identify their responsibilities and take measures to implement the principle of civil society inclusion across GPE's work. The recommendations in the Strategic Approach to Civil Society Engagement are not meant as comprehensive requirements, but as a starting point for consideration and adoption by all parties in the Global Partnership. The areas where there is an opportunity to more concretely and systematically improve Civil Society engagement include:

a. Improving the GPE Secretariat, including its systems and staff capacity, to meaningfully engage and support Civil Society actors

b. Building the capacity of GPE country level partners and resourcing more effective inclusion of Civil Society actors in country-level processes. This strategic approach includes additional support to Local Education Group members and continued support for Civil Society actors to engage in country level policy dialogue (including through stronger links with the Civil Society Education Fund and Global and Regional Activities supporting this agenda).

c. Building the capacity and improving the level of participation of Civil Society representatives at the global level. This strategic approach includes support for the Civil Society representative on the Board of Directors, Financial Advisory Committee and other sub-committees, as well as global level activities.

5.3 **Approval of Funds for Civil Society Education Fund program in 2014/2015**: The Secretariat recommends that the Board of Directors approve US$ 7.25 million to support the Civil Society Education Fund in 2014 and the first four months of 2015. UNESCO and the Secretariat believe that during the reporting period, despite some challenges and delays, considerable work was achieved by GCE and its partners and solid foundations were built for a successful implementation of project activities under the next phase by national coalitions and at regional and global level.

5.4 The report attached in Annex 2 covers the first five months (April to August 2013) of the project. During the period covered by this report, GCE and its partners worked, in consultation with UNESCO, to ensure that the right foundations are in place to guarantee effective delivery of the program objectives, taking into account the lessons learned from the evaluation of the last CSEF program period and addressing the issues raised by the GPE Board last December, notably the need for a detailed implementation plan with clear milestones, an improved governance approach and structure and an effective monitoring and evaluation framework.

5.5 Although the first transfer of funds occurred later than expected which created serious challenges for GCE, substantial work took place to improve the program and its structures and

intensive support was given to national coalition planning processes in a very collaborative process engaging not only GCE and the regional implementing partners, but also a number of other INGOs/international organizations engaged through the new CSEF International Partners' Group. This has demonstrated how CSEF can successfully serve as a means not only to support national civil society activity, but also to coordinate international support for that activity.

5.6 Upon approval of the second tranche of funding by the GPE Board of Directors, which will be considered at its November 2013 meeting, the UNESCO-GCE Agreement will have to be amended to include the additional amount of US$ 7.25 million. At the same time, taking into account the delay in signing agreements and transferring the first payment, which have in turn delayed project activities, the implementation plan and disbursement schedule should be revised, and the project extended, at no extra cost, from 31 December 2014 to April 2015, in order to maintain a total duration of 24 months, as initially planned.

5.7 **Development of a Board proposal outlining the Global Partnership's support for Civil Society during the next replenishment period**: Given the scale of the challenge in ensuring that a diverse and representative Civil Society is empowered to play its role effectively in GPE processes, governance and financing, the GPE Secretariat recommends that the Board of Directors give consideration to its role in resourcing efforts to strengthen Civil Society engagement during the next replenishment period. The Independent Evaluation of the Civil Society Education Fund from 2009 to 2011 found that: *"Time constraints, uncertainty with the future of the program and delays in funding delivery marked the trajectory of the project and, to some extent, the level of achievement of its goals."*[8] It is therefore imperative that the GPE work to ensure that the time constraints, uncertainty and lack of predictability do not undermine future efforts to achieve goals related to the empowerment of Civil Society actors within the education sector.

5.8 Therefore, the Secretariat recommends that the Board of Directors requests the Secretariat to engage interested stakeholders, experts and Civil Society organizations, including the Global Campaign for Education and Education International (as the GPE Board members which manage the representation of Civil Society at the global level), to develop a proposal outlining the technical and financial support which GPE should provide to enable stronger civil society engagement and participation. This proposal should be considered at the face-to-face meeting of the Board of Directors in June 2014, and cover the period of the next replenishment from 2015 to 2018. This proposal should outline the role, activities and resources required for sustained programmatic support for Civil Society engagement in education sector dialogue and monitoring, including sustaining the Civil Society Education Fund, and scaling up current work to improve the technical and organizational capacity of teachers' organizations to participate in Local Education Groups, for the period of 2015 to 2018.

[8] REGIONAL AND NATIONAL CIVIL SOCIETY EDUCATION FUNDS – CSEF [GPE/EPDF grant n. TF094688] EVALUATION REPORT, p 7.

5.9 As the global community shifts its focus to a new sustainable development agenda for post-2015, it is critical that the mechanisms to audit progress and which give marginalized communities and citizen stakeholders a voice in national education policy frameworks are in place. The past decade of GPE's experience, through its support for the Civil Society Education Fund and for the teaching profession, provide a strong basis on which to build national accountability mechanisms and to leverage the role that Civil Society can play to ensure all learners' needs are met.

6. IMPLICATIONS FOR SECRETARIAT RESOURCES

In order to implement the GPE's principle of Civil Society engagement and participation, it is expected that the GPE Secretariat can do so within its current budget. On the basis of on-going discussions with GPE partners to better define their needs related to their responsibilities in this agenda, the GPE Secretariat will undertake a review of the additional resource requirements to effectively support its partners. Where additional resources will be needed to enable the GPE Secretariat to support its partners to play their roles effectively, for example, Coordinating Agencies, Civil Society Board members or others implicated in this strategy, these will be included in the proposal put to the Board at its first face-to-face meeting in June 2014.

7. NEXT STEPS

7.1 Strategic Approach to Civil Society Engagement

1. The GPE Secretariat will share the proposed areas for improved Civil Society engagement with Local Education Groups and begin discussion on where there are gaps in implementation. The GPE Secretariat will also engage the Civil Society Board representatives to develop a proposal for improving their capacity to effectively represent their constituencies.

2. The GPE Secretariat will work with the Global Campaign for Education and Education International to establish a monitoring framework to track the engagement and participation of Civil Society in GPE processes.

3. The GPE Secretariat will review the feedback from the above exercises to determine what additional activities, policies, practices and/or support are needed to enable all partners to effectively engage Civil Society. This set of activities will be factored into the Secretariat's work plan and future Secretariat budgets.

7.2 Approval of funding for the Civil Society Education Fund

1. Upon approval, the Trustee will work with UNESCO to ensure timely transferal of funds to support the second year of activities under the Civil Society Education Fund.

2. UNESCO and the Global Campaign for Education will draft an update on the Civil Society Education Fund for the second Board of Directors face-to-face meeting in 2014.

7.3 Request for a Proposal for GPE Support for Civil Society Engagement from 2015 to 2018

1. The GPE Secretariat will engage the Global Campaign for Education and Education International to outline the areas for consideration. On the basis of this outline, the GPE Secretariat will invite input from Board members and their constituencies, as well as from specialists in any relevant areas (for example, social accountability tools).

ANNEX 1 – RECOMMENDED STRATEGY FOR GPE AND ITS PARTNERS TO BETTER IMPLEMENT THE PRINCIPLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY ENGAGEMENT

The Global Partnership for Education operates at multiple levels through which Civil Society may add value to education policy dialogue, planning, implementation, monitoring and advocacy, both national and internationally. Firstly, the GPE Secretariat can provide tools and support to GPE partners to engage in ways which are inclusive of Civil Society actors, including technical support, consensus building, guidelines, monitoring and transparency functions. Secondly, the GPE can provide support and capacity building for Local Education Group members, including ministries of education, to engage Civil Society throughout the education sector plan development, implementation and monitoring processes, as well as in the Global Partnership for Education Fund and other education financing frameworks. Thirdly, the GPE can enhance its support for global representation of Civil Society on the Board of Directors, Financial Advisory Committee and other global level advisory and decision-making bodies. The following areas are where the GPE Secretariat has identified the opportunity to better implement its principle of Civil Society inclusion.

1. Improve GPE Secretariat systems and staff capacity to engage Civil Society actors

In order to enable more effective engagement of Civil Society and teachers' representatives, the Secretariat will review its systems and implement regular checks to ensure that Civil Society needs and interests are met within the Secretariat function. Important elements of this strategic direction include efforts to improve the transparency of information regarding national policy development, financing and monitoring; establishing regular contact with relevant Civil Society actors during country missions; supporting the implementation of GPE's education sector planning guidelines and helping to clarify the role and responsibility of partners within this agenda; providing platforms for information sharing and training on issues relevant to Civil Society including country process timelines, policy documents, GPE Fund contributions, Local Education Groups; and ensuring systematic inclusion in GPE-related events, communities of practice or other relevant groups to support the implementation of GPE's strategic plan. These efforts can be supported through stronger engagement with the Civil Society Education Fund structure; the GPE Secretariat aims to maximize the input from Civil Society stakeholders in defining the needs and potential interventions.

2. Capacity building and resourcing more inclusive country level processes

The strengthening of inclusive participation of CSOs in country level processes should be prioritized in the following areas: (a) the development of national education plans and plan updates; (b) the development of GPE financing applications; (c) implementation of various social accountability activities within national education strategies and GPE programs; and (d) joint monitoring of national education plans and GPE program financing. Across each of these processes, the GPE will mainstream Civil Society participation, work to promote meaningful and

effective engagement of Civil Society, and invest in activities to strengthen the capacity of national Civil Society actors to conduct evidence-based oversight and advocacy.

a. Support Local Education Group members efforts to create an enabling environment for civil society involvement, including supporting the government, Coordinating Agency ("CA") and Supervising Entity/Managing Entity ("SE/ME") to engage Civil Society and teachers' representatives. Key elements of this strategic direction include: providing clear guidance in GPE policy to ministries, CAs and SE/MEs on the principle and benefits of engaging meaningful participation of Civil Society representatives in the development of education sector plans, including implementing a framework to track and monitor the inclusion of Civil Society actors and their level of participation; targeting additional support and training to ministries, CAs, SE/MEs on what good participation looks like and how to ensure an enabling environment for Civil Society participation; supporting Local Education groups to monitor the quality and quantity of Civil Society participation in Local Education Group meetings and throughout the cycle of GPE grant development and monitoring; facilitating efforts to ensure that education policy documents are accessible to Civil Society groups, including at the local level and in local languages where appropriate; systematic inclusion of Civil Society groups in joint sector reviews and stronger attention to social accountability methods in sector monitoring; as well as ongoing support from Secretariat for Civil Society.

b. Ensure strong programmatic support for the Civil Society Education Fund ("CSEF"), including support for and engagement with the national, regional, and global capacity-building and learning elements of the program. Current GPE funding to the Civil Society Education Fund (managed by the Global Campaign for Education) is used to strengthen and resource national Civil Society coalitions in around 50 countries to engage in national policy processes, broaden citizen engagement, carry out monitoring and analysis, and share learning across Civil Society. Strengthening the linkages between coalitions' work and national policy and monitoring processes is a priority of the current phase of CSEF, and ongoing support to this will be needed from the GPE Secretariat and other GPE partners at country level. While national coalitions are currently supported by GCE, regional networks and INGOs within the context of the CSEF, there is an opportunity to design and implement more systematic, multi-partner support for national stakeholders to engage in the policy dialogue. Similarly, Education International and UNESCO are working to improve the capacity of teachers' unions to engage in social dialogue through a Global and Regional Activities grant. By drawing on current experiences of these efforts, the GPE may strengthen this work by providing better linkages across the partnership to resources, technical expertise, networks and other inputs to these aims. This may include training, cooperation and accompaniment for national coalitions and teachers unions on the GPE process, education sector monitoring, public financial management, or other relevant sector issues. Deepening GPE partners' understanding of the needs and challenges faced by marginalized groups and by Civil Society representatives in general can in turn inform the support to Local Education Groups and adaptations to the GPE Secretariat's systems.

3. Build capacity and improve the participation of Civil Society representatives at the global level

As a complement to strengthening national Civil Society participation, there is a need to ensure that sufficient support is given to enable the Civil Society representatives to effectively play their role in the global governance of the partnership. Currently, the main arenas for Civil Society engagement in global level policy dialogue include the Board of Directors, Financial Advisory Committee, Communities of Practice, and Board Working Groups, though others are formed as necessary.

a. Board of Directors: Similar challenges are faced by Civil Society representatives on the Board of Directors as with other diverse and less resourced Board constituencies, such as the developing country partner constituencies with large membership. Particularly for the Southern Civil Society Representatives, which are tasked with representing Civil Society in GPE's 60 country partners, it is important to address the factors that will enable them to fully inform their constituencies and to meaningfully represent their positions. Lessons can therefore be learned on the appropriate methods to strengthen their participation in Board meetings, including the establishment of regular pre-Board meetings, webinars on GPE processes and topics, and other support to enable the Civil Society Board representatives to prepare collectively derived positions and enable meaningful discussion and debate. The current Civil Society Education Fund program can also help to resource the efforts of members of the Global Campaign for Education to organize internally to effectively bring in feedback from all Civil Society stakeholder coalitions.

b. Financial Advisory Committee or new Board sub-committees: Civil Society is currently represented on the Financial Advisory Committee, but given that they are responsible for representing the interests and views of Civil Society in countries applying for GPE financing, it is important that steps are taken to facilitate the effective fulfillment of that role. Some of the measures that may be implemented include a track-list of which national coalitions have been involved in the GPE program development process and how, support for country-level discussion of application processes with national Civil Society stakeholders, increased communications efforts to inform national Civil Society of the opportunity to feedback to their FAC representative, and systematic consideration of the inclusion of social accountability mechanisms in the design phase for GPE grants. The Civil Society Education Fund program can also support better feedback from coalitions on grant applications for the FAC by providing support for the dissemination, analysis, and reporting back of its members on GPE grant documents.

c. **Other global committees, communities of practice, or events:** The GPE Secretariat, Board members and partner stakeholders are engaged in a variety of forums to drive policy discussions on GPE's areas of strategic focus or to increase visibility of particular issues. However, Civil Society is primarily represented in these arenas by INGOs with less engagement from regional or national organizations and coalitions.

Some methods have been used to support better inclusion, for example providing costs for the inclusion of Civil Society groups in Sector Monitoring Initiative Regional Workshops (where Local Education Groups and ministries select the participants whose travel costs were covered by the Secretariat.). Further consideration of Civil Society needs to be made to not only ensure inclusion but also to make sure that Civil Society voices are diverse and representative.

4. Defining Roles and Responsibilities

The GPE Secretariat and its partners will also need to work together to better define roles and responsibilities in regard to this mandate and to improve the capacity of GPE partners to play those roles effectively. These roles will become better defined through country level and global dialogue based on the specific context, however some initial principles which will guide the GPE's efforts to improve Civil Society participation may include the following:

a. On the part of the Global Partnership for Education Secretariat and governments, donor and international agencies, each actor must be aware of his/her role in supporting an inclusive and participatory process of decision-making around national policies, programs, and financing. These roles should be informed by the principles of diversity (ensuring that no one is excluded on the basis of ethno-linguistic, socio-economic or other differences), transparency (ensuring that all relevant information is easily accessible and made available in a timely manner), and participation (ensuring that collective processes continually identify ongoing opportunities for collaboration, consultation, and meaningful input.

b. **On the part of Civil Society, it is important that Civil Society representatives** have a mandate to speak on behalf of their Civil Society constituencies, inform and solicit feedback from those constituencies in a transparent and timely way, draw on the expertise of a diverse range of members including the most marginalized, and interact constructively with other actors to understand and influence policies and practices. It is also important that Civil Society actors practice good governance whether they are INGOs, local NGOs, unions or coalitions, and work together to manage often diverse and competing priorities within their inherently plural constituency. Civil Society groups should also ensure that their implementation efforts in the education sector are aligned and coordinated with the national plan.

ANNEX 2 – UPDATE ON THE CIVIL SOCIETY EDUCATION FUND

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this paper is to present an update to the Board of Directors on the status of the Civil Society Education Fund. It includes an overview of the status of the contract, role of the Supervising Entity, UNESCO, and the activities completed to date by National Coalitions.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 On 18 December 2012, the Board of Directors of the Global Partnership for Education ("GPE") approved "an allocation of up to US$ 14.5 million from the Global Partnership for Education Fund to fund the proposal submitted by the Global Campaign for Education" (the "CSEF Proposal"), with "UNESCO serving as Managing Entity" (BOD/2012/12-1).

2.2 The Trustee was requested to commit US$ 7.25 million of this amount upon the signing of an agreement with UNESCO; and a further US$ 7.25 million of this amount upon further instructions from the Board of Directors, which will be considered at the second face-to-face meeting of the Board of Directors in 2013.

2.3 The Board of Directors also requested the Secretariat to provide a report on progress of implementation of the CSEF Proposal, based on input from the Managing Entity, at the second face-to-face meeting of the Board of Directors in 2013; and requested the Secretariat to continue to work with the Global Campaign for Education and UNESCO to further address issues raised in the expedited review of the CSEF Proposal and to agree to milestones to be reached which may result in revisions to the CSEF Proposal.

2.4 As Supervising Entity, UNESCO has provided written input to the Secretariat in order to update the Board of Directors on the status of the CSEF Proposal, including the status of the contractual arrangements, revisions to the CSEF Proposal and related milestones, and activities undertaken to date. This update will support consideration and approval by the Board of further expenditure of US$ 7.25 million to continue funding the CSEF in 2014 which will be considered during the Board meeting.

2.5 UNESCO has worked closely throughout the preparation and planning period with GCE in order to improve the program, the governance structures and the results framework and indicators.

2.6 UNESCO furthermore conducted a financial risk and control assessment in order to assess the adequacy of the financial and administrative framework foreseen under the CSEF Program for 2013-14. The assessment is now completed and found for the most part that control mechanisms and structures are appropriate. In a few areas, recommendations for improvement have been formulated and these will be taken up by UNESCO with GCE in the coming months.

2.7 UNESCO and the Secretariat believe that during the reporting period, despite some challenges and delays, considerable work was achieved by GCE and its partners and solid foundations were built for a successful implementation of project activities under the next phase by national coalitions and at the regional and global level.

3. SIGNATURE OF AGREEMENTS

3.1 In April 2013, the World Bank as Trustee of GPE and UNESCO signed a Financial Procedures Agreement (respectively on 17 and 24 April 2013). At its 19 April Meeting, the FAC approved UNESCO's Costed Plan for Supervision (US$ 648,454) and Agency Fees (US$ 1,016,157) for the total project duration, and authorized disbursements related to the first tranche of the CSEF. UNESCO's role was later changed to that of Supervising Entity (confirmed by a letter dated 6 May 2013 from the Chair of the Financial Advisory Committee ("FAC") to UNESCO). UNESCO's understanding of this role, as developed in dialogue with GCE and the GPE Secretariat, was defined in a document submitted with a costed plan for supervision to the GPE Secretariat on 9 April 2013.

3.2 UNESCO signed an Implementation Partner's Agreement ("IPA") with GCE on 17 July 2013, covering the first tranche of funding released by the GPE, a total amount of US$ 7.25 million for the period 17 April to 31 December 2013. The preparation of the agreement took longer than anticipated because the role of "Supervising Entity" implies a new modality of tripartite cooperation for UNESCO which needed to be adequately framed by the organization's existing administrative and financial rules and regulations.

3.3 Similarly, GPE's GRA Manual and its Terms of Reference for Supervising Entities were mainly designed for national projects with governments and a number of questions, notably relating to reporting duties, needed to be clarified between UNESCO and GPE before the GCE agreement could be signed.

3.4 The IPA foresees that funds will be paid in three installments, two of which have so far been transferred by UNESCO to GCE upon approval of the requested deliverables, as follows:

- a first payment of US$ 2,400,000 on 20 July 2013; and
- a second payment of US$ 1,737,122 on 27 September 2013.

3.5 The first payment constituted an advance payment for the implementation phase (1 July-30 September) whereas the second payment, transferred upon submission of a detailed financial report, covered the expenses incurred during the preparation and planning phases (17 April-30 June 2013). A third installment of US$ 3,112,877 is foreseen for October 2013, to cover activities during the last quarter of 2013.

3.6 Upon approval of the second tranche of funding by the GPE Board of Directors, which will be considered at its November meeting, the UNESCO-GCE Agreement will have to be amended to include the additional amount of US$ 7.25 million. At the same time, taking into account the delay in signing agreements and transferring the first payment, which have in turn delayed project activities, the implementation plan and disbursement schedule should be

revised, and the project extended, at no extra cost, from 31 December 2014 to April 2015, in order to maintain a total duration of 24 months, as initially planned.

3.7 Considering the significant work undertaken by UNESCO in negotiating the grant agreements, the unique nature of supervising the Civil Society Education Fund, which is a new arrangement for UNESCO, and the extension of the implementation period to April 2015, the supervision allocation is expected to be fully utilized.

4. STATUS OF CSEF ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN BY GCE UP TO 31 AUGUST 2013

4.1 This report covers the first five months (April to August 2013) of the project. As it focuses on the planning and preparation phases, it differs in nature from future reports where progress will be reported against the four program objectives. During the period covered by this report, GCE and its partners worked, in consultation with UNESCO, to ensure that the right foundations are in place to guarantee effective delivery of the program objectives, taking into account the lessons learned from the evaluation of the last CSEF program period and addressing the issues raised by the GPE Board last December 2012, notably the need for a detailed implementation plan with clear milestones, an improved governance approach and structure and an effective monitoring and evaluation framework.

4.2 Although the first transfer of funds occurred later than expected which created serious challenges for GCE, substantial work took place to improve the program and its structures and intensive support was given to national coalition planning processes in a very collaborative process engaging not only GCE and the regional implementing partners, but also a number of other INGOs/ international organizations engaged through the new CSEF International Partners' Group. This has demonstrated how CSEF can successfully serve as a means not only to support national civil society activity, but also to coordinate international support for that activity.

5. KEY ACTIVITIES AND MILESTONES ACHIEVED

Improvement of program design and structures:

5.1 This part of the work aimed at a more effective delivery of the program and was informed by lessons learned from the first phase of CSEF, discussions between the implementing partners and with the Supervising Entity and the independent evaluation of phase I. It also responded to the GPE expedited review conducted in late 2012. It included the following activities:

- The ***governance structure*** of the CSEF has been revised through the introduction of the CSEF Global Oversight Committee. The new structure seeks to ensure strict division of roles in terms of implementation, management and accountability in order to avoid any potential conflicts of interest which could occur. Revised terms of reference for all CSEF structures, including for global and regional implementing partners, were also developed to facilitate more effective and efficient working relationships within the program.

• An approach for engagement and ***outreach with other civil society partners*** at both national and international levels was developed and included the creation of the CSEF International Partners Group, which held its first meeting in London on 8-9 July 2013 and agreed on working modalities as well as concrete measures such as a mapping of coalition priority areas and capacity needs/strengths, a mapping of INGO presence and mechanisms for sharing resources and tools.

• A stronger focus on the ***learning component*** was built into the program design, through the incorporation of self-assessments and analysis in the planning process, as well as assessment by regional implementing partners and Regional Funding Committees. On this basis, a global CSEF plan for capacity support and learning during the implementation phase was prepared in collaboration between GCE and regional and international partners.

• The ***Regional Funding Committees*** which review and approve national plans and budgets within each region were re-constituted and their guidelines revised. Committees now include individuals from a variety of NGOs, independent experts, and the CSEF regional and global secretariats and Financial Management Agencies. They have been providing high-quality and intensive support to improve the quality of programs prepared by the national coalitions.

• New ***proposal guidelines and templates*** for national coalitions were produced to provide clear guidance and support for the development of applications, as well as the new capacity self-assessments.

• The CSEF ***financial and grant management procedures*** were revised to include greater detail and more effective financial reporting in the new program design.

• Detailed ***implementation plans and budgets***, including budget templates for national level linking activities to objectives, were developed so as to enable more effective monitoring and evaluation of expenditure against program objectives.

Development of National Coalition's proposals and capacity:

5.2 In line with GPE principles of country ownership, the focus and approach of coalition proposals are determined at national level, according to each context. GCE's efforts during the reporting period aimed at ensuring that the proposals developed for CSEF support were well-designed, logical and compelling, broadly supported by civil society, responsive to the national context, and clearly linked to the overall program objectives of CSEF in view of a globally coherent program delivery. Activities included:

• Coordination of the process of developing national program and ***targeted specific support*** to national coalitions through Regional Secretariats and Regional Financial Management Agencies. In Africa, the Middle East and Eastern Europe, GCE coordinated additional technical support to coalitions with particular capacity needs from members of the International Partners Group.

• Coalitions in ***49 countries*** have so far submitted proposals for CSEF support, of which ***35*** have been ***fully approved***. 17 proposals were approved but need revision of certain aspects or components, and in 4 further countries coalitions are currently being supported to improve their organizational structures or governance in view of submitting revised proposals at a later stage.

• Due to the delayed availability of CSEF funding, no ***grant agreements*** were signed at the end of August 2013 but grant agreements in all regions should be finalized at the end of October 2013. Notwithstanding, most coalitions have managed to maintain a certain level of activity while developing their CSEF proposals and budgets, to keep momentum and maintain their positions as civil society representatives in their countries. Many coalitions partook in some form of engagement in policy dialogue or sector reviews and continued to engage with their members, sharing information, revising structures and providing opportunities for training and capacity strengthening.

• A ***finance workshop*** organized by the Africa Financial Management Agency, Oxfam, for coalition accountants in the region, took place in Dakar from 19 to 23 August 2013. Its aim was to increase the participants' understanding of financial management issues, sharing of challenges and learning, and general training in financing management.

6. PLANNED ACTIVITIES FOR CSEF FOR THE REMAINDER OF 2013 AND 2014

Activities for September-December 2013:

6.1 In September and October 2013, Regional Funding Committees will work with the coalitions in order to finalize the grant agreements for all approved proposals and the implementation of the national program will fully start. Regional Secretariats and Funding Committees will continue to support coalitions in improving those national proposals which are to be resubmitted by mid-October 2013.

6.2 With the focus on program development and design nearing completion, attention at global and regional level is now turning to the delivery of a comprehensive plan for capacity building and learning. This is currently being produced based on consultations with coalitions, regions and the International Partners Group. This will emphasize national contexts, needs and interests, to develop support initiatives, events and tools, and take advantage of already existing opportunities and capacity.

6.3 Several learning events scheduled at regional level had to be postponed because of the late arrival of funds. They are now planned to take place on the following dates:

- Middle East/Eastern Europe: Amman, 18 - 27 October 2013
- Latin America: La Paz, 12 - 15 November 2013
- Asia & Pacific: (venue tbc) 3 - 5 December 2013
- Africa: Mombasa, 16 - 20 December 2013

6.4 Recruitment of additional dedicated staff in GCE and in UNESCO, the Supervising Entity, will be completed soon and will enable the partners to develop and put in place during the last quarter of 2013 a comprehensive monitoring and reporting framework as well as processes for the regular review of coalition and regional program reports and financial management.

Planned Activities for 2014:

6.5 The next phase of CSEF will focus on implementation of plans at national level, technical support and capacity-building, and promotion of cross-country learning and collaboration at regional and global levels. Although each proposal is driven by its national context, some themes can be clearly observed across each region. These will provide the foundation for regional and global capacity support, as well as help build into international and regional advocacy agendas:

- Africa: Inclusive education; quality education; teachers and learning; pre-primary education; non-formal education; education financing
- Middle East and Eastern Europe: Access to basic education with an emphasis on girls; quality education for all; equity and inclusion; education financing
- Latin America: The right to education and democracy; removal of user-fees; inclusive education, gender equity; financing of education; the post-2015 education framework
- Asia and the Pacific: The right to education; quality and teacher issues; inclusive education; financing of education and Public-Private Partnerships; literacy; early childhood education; and the post 2015 education framework
- EFA reviews and post-2015: Engagement with processes around achievement of EFA by 2015 and post-2015 frameworks was generally seen as a prominent focus area for coalitions across countries and regions. CSEF is strategically placed to ensure civil society contributions to EFA review and post-2015 discussions. Planned activities at national level include surveys, consultations, EFA reviews and position paper development, and regional and global secretariats will work to ensure these activities are linked and feed into regional and global consultations.

6.6 In terms of approaches, the plans identify proactive engagement in policy spaces around education sector policy, planning and monitoring, with a particular focus on engagement in LEGs, Technical Working Groups, etc.; on budget advocacy; and on engaging with sub-national as well as national decision-makers.

CIVIL SOCIETY EDUCATION FUND MILESTONES AND ACTIVITIES ACHIEVED

Improvement of program design and planning

- ✓ CSEF program design and detailed budget revised and completed
- ✓ Revised CSEF governance structure finalized, including Terms of Reference for all management and governance structures
- ✓ Guidelines for evaluation of coalition proposals and fund allocation completed
- ✓ CSEF Financial Management Guidelines completed
- ✓ Human resources plan in place
- ✓ CSEF GCE Global Secretariat staff recruited (partly achieved - re-recruitment of one key post underway)
- ✓ CSEF implementation plan completed

Grant agreements and program management

- ✓ Budget table with clear links to objectives finalized (to be completed for the national level shortly)
- ✓ GCE agreements with Regional Secretariats and Regional Fund Management Agencies signed
- ✓ Newly-established Global Oversight Committee constituted and operational
- ✓ CSEF International Partners Group launched (previously called International Advisory Group ("IAG"))
- ✓ Regional structures for Middle East and Eastern Europe region set up (partly achieved)
- ✓ Planning discussions with UNESCO and GPE

National coalition planning, evaluation of proposals & fund allocation

- ✓ Coalition proposal guidelines and template finalized and circulated
- ✓ Coalitions receive a call for CSEF proposals
- ✓ Regions, GCE and IAG provide capacity building support during the proposal development stage
- ✓ Coalitions submit proposals for regional evaluation
- ✓ Regional Fund Committee receives and evaluates coalition proposals, makes approval and fund allocation decisions
- ✓ Regions sign contracts with national coalitions
- ✓ First tranche of funding to national coalitions disbursed by Financial Management Agencies (partly)

Learning / capacity support plan

- ✓ Approach on capacity support, South-South learning and collaboration
- ✓ Approach on broadening engagement with civil society organizations

- ✓ Coalitions indicate capacity-building needs, through proposal process

On-going coalition activities

- ✓ Coalitions continued during the planning phase to implement activities in line with previous programs; some receiving "continuity and planning" grant to cover April-June 2013 period