CIVIL SOCIETY EDUCATION FUND 2016-2018 PROPOSAL: REPORT FROM THE COUNTRY GRANTS AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

For Decision

1. STRATEGIC PURPOSE

1.1 The purpose of this paper is to request the Board of Directors to delegate authority to the Country Grants and Performance Committee to review and approve a revised proposal of the Global Campaign for Education's (GCE) for the Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF) 2016-2018 no later than its October 27-29, 2015 meeting. The recommendation will allow GCE to respond to specific requests from the CGPC for improvements to the proposal and resubmit the proposal for consideration as soon as possible with the goal to minimize the risk of a break in funding of the CSEF and subsequent disruption of the program.

2. REQUESTED DECISION

2.1 Following discussion of GCE's CSEF 2016-2018 proposal at its April 14-16 meeting, the CGPC recommends the following decision to the Board:

BOD/2015/05-XX—Civil Society Education Fund 2016–2018: The Board of Directors:

1. acknowledges its request to Global Campaign for Education ("GCE") to develop a new Civil Society Education Fund proposal with a maximum indicative allocation of US$30 million for the 2016-2018 period (BOD/2014/12-13);

2. notes the conclusions of the Country Grants and Performance Committee ("CGPC") regarding the GCE proposal discussed during its April 14-16, 2015 meeting as set out in Annex 1 of BOD/2015/05 DOC 14 and requests the Global Campaign for Education to submit a revised proposal accordingly;

3. recognizing the need for timely decision-making to avoid the risk of a disruption in the program, delegates authority to the CGPC to review and approve the revised proposal preferably prior to but no later than its October 27-29, 2015 meeting;

4. notes the findings of the Quality Assurance Review requested by the Board (BOD/2014/12-13) set out in Annex 2 of CGPC/2015/04-DOC 09, particularly the assessment from an independent firm that GCE has the capacity to act as Managing Entity of the CSEF 2016-2018.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 At the December 15-16, 2014 Board meeting, the Board approved the following decision with respect to the Civil Society Education Fund:

BOD/2014/12-13—<u>Civil Society Education Fund</u>: The Board of Directors:

1. requests Global Campaign for Education to develop a new Civil Society Education Fund proposal with a maximum indicative allocation of US$30 million for the 2016-2018 period;

2. requests that the proposal be subject to a Quality Assurance Review (QAR) encompassing a detailed grant-level assessment to be arranged by the GPE Secretariat which shall outline any proposed conditions to funding in addition to those recommended by the GERF, and propose supervision arrangements based on the findings of the QAR process. The proposal and findings of the Secretariat's QAR shall be submitted for review by the Country Grants and Performance Committee for their recommendation to the Board of Directors at its next face-to-face meeting in May 2015; and

3. authorizes an extension of the existing Civil Society Education Fund program to December 31, 2015 with UNESCO as Supervising Entity, and delegates authority to the Country Grants and Performance Committee to review and approve a request for a costed extension of up to US$5 million plus applicable agency fees and a supervision allocation.

3.2 In accordance with the Board decision, GCE submitted a proposal for a costed extension of the current CSEF to December 31, 2015, which the CGPC approved on February 24, 2015 (BOD/2015/05 DOC 13).

3.3 The Committee next reviewed GCE's proposal for the CSEF 2016-2018 along with the results of the Quality Assurance Review during its April 14-16, 2015 meeting in Washington, D.C.

3.4 The QAR report included the results of the detailed grant-level assessment requested by the Board and performed by an independent firm, Cardno, of the capacity of GCE to perform the role of Managing Entity for the CSEF 2016-2018. The firm had also conducted an institutional capacity assessment of GCE last year as part of the process for GCE to become eligible to serve as a GPE Managing Entity. The Committee acknowledged that Cardno based on its grant-level assessment,

considered GCE as having the capacity to serve as Managing Entity and had no objection. The Committee noted the Secretariat's proposal for increased monitoring and support of the CSEF taking into consideration the uniqueness of the program and the fact that this is the first time an International Non-Governmental Organization (INGO) will receive funds directly from GPE under the eligibility expansion plan, and requested the Secretariat to include further information on the costs for this at its next meeting.

3.5 The GCE proposal for the CSEF 2016-2018 incorporated feedback received from the Board, CGPC and SPC over the past twelve months. While the Committee appreciated the proposal, there were requests for further information and opportunities for improvement the Committee felt GCE should take to strengthen the proposal prior to approval.

3.6 To minimize the risk of a break in funding and acknowledging that the Committee is best placed to consider the technical aspects of the proposal, the Committee determined to recommend to the Board that the CGPC be delegated authority to approve a revised proposal preferably before but no later than the October 27-29, 2015 meeting of the CGPC.

3.7 The summary of the deliberations of the CGPC is set out in Annex 1.

4. IMPLICATIONS FOR SECRETARIAT RESOURCES

If incremental costs for monitoring and support of the CSEF by the GPE Secretariat are required, then this will be disclosed as part of the documentation provided to the CGPC when they review the revised proposal, and any adjustments to the Secretariat's budget will be considered by the Board in December 2015.

5. PLEASE CONTACT: Sarah Beardmore (sbeardmore@globalpartnership.org) or Padraig Power (ppower@globalpartnership.org) for further information.

6. ANNEXES AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

6.1 This paper includes the following annexes:

Annex 1 – Observations, requests for report-back, and issues to be addressed from the CGPC on the CSEF proposal 2016-2018

6.2. Additional background information is available in CGPC/2015/04 DOC 09 on the Committee eTeam site, and the December 2014 Reports from the SPC and the GERF to the Board (BOD/2014/12 DOC 07 and BOD/2014/12 DOC 04 respectively) on the GPE website.

ANNEX 1 – CGPC observations, requests for report-back and issues to be addressed on the GCE Proposal for CSEF 2016-2018

Observations	The Committee appreciates GCE's proposal for the CSEF 2016-2018, noting in particular that it leverages expertise of national coalitions, utilizes an approach that is more tailored to national context, and provides support for civil society constituencies on the GPE Board. The Committee further notes the findings of the grant level assessment which states that GCE has the capacity to act as Managing Entity for the CSEF and has no objection to the organization serving as Managing Entity for the CSEF 2016-2018. However, while acknowledging the inherent challenges of managing a program of this nature with a significant and diverse number of beneficiaries and the risk of a possible break in funding of the program which would undermine progress made by the CSEF, the Committee feels the proposal would benefit from specific improvements before approval. Following GCE's satisfactory response to the issues noted below, the Committee will consider the revised proposal for approval no later than at its October 27-29, 2015 face-to-face meeting.
Issues to be addressed in revised proposal	The Committee requests GCE to revise the Results Framework to reflect the following: 1. Clearer alignment with the Operational Framework for Requirements and Incentives in the Funding Model of the Global Partnership for Education ("GPE Funding Model"), especially with regards to equity and learning, as well as with the goals and objectives of the GPE Strategic Plan 2016-2020 and progress on the development of the education Sustainable Development Goals. 2. Reduced number of core indicators that demonstrate the added value of the CSEF and with clear definition of the minimum criteria for the three main objectives of the program 3. Clear and detailed metrics, targets, and key indicators, as well as baselines where appropriate and feasible. Further, the Committee requests that grant guidelines for the Fund stipulate the need for proposals to outline their alignment with the GPE Strategic Plan 2016-2020 goals and objectives, how they link to the GPE Funding Model process, and for proposals to include clear and detailed baselines, metrics, and targets. The revised proposal should also include examples and/or a menu of options of concrete activities the program would expect to support at the national level. The proposal and results framework should demonstrate impact and in particular how the sum of the individual grants will generate greater collective. A Theory of Change to accompany the results framework would be helpful to show how the selected objectives and interventions will lead to outcomes and results. The Committee also requests that the CSEF program build into its 2016 activities the necessary processes to review, re-design and re-program, if necessary, based on further inputs from the CGPC and taking into account the independent evaluation of the CSEF and the final GPE Strategic Plan 2016 – 2020.

	In light of the current financial constraints of the Global Partnership, the Committee requests GCE to work with the Secretariat in identifying efficiency gains, focusing particularly on the global and regional level aspects of the program, and provide an updated budget outlining the savings which may result in a reduction in the grant amount requested. Demonstrate satisfactory progress on implementation of the recommendations arising from the detailed grant level assessment of GCE's capacity to act as Managing Entity including confirmation that there is an annual external audit of GCE by a reputable audit firm.
Report-back	The CGPC requests the Secretariat to work with the GCE to facilitate a semi-annual review of progress on implementing the CSEF at each face to face meeting of the CGPC.