SYRIA MAXIMUM COUNTRY ALLOCATION

Please note: Board papers are deliberative in nature and, in accordance with the GPE Transparency Policy, are not public documents until the Board has considered them at the Board meeting. It is understood that constituencies will circulate Board documents among their members prior to the Board meeting for consultation purposes.

Recommended by: Grants and Performance Committee (GPC)

Committee Consideration:

- The GPC reviewed three options for GPE's engagement in Syria during a call late September and provided helpful comments on framing the options and further information/clarifications needed for the Board. GPC members expressed a strong divergence of views on the options in representing their various constituencies. The Committee concluded that the Board should consider all three options, taking into account the implications, sensitivities and precedent setting by any decision.
- However, cognizant that previous Board papers on the Syria MCA without a recommendation had resulted in non-decisions from the Board with the GPC discussing the same issue anew, the Chair stated a preference that in the final Board paper the GPC provide some steer to the Board on the choice of options based on comments made throughout the process of finalizing the Board paper. Option 1 as discussed during the call, to follow GPE's usual process, was opposed by some constituencies represented who found any (perceived) direct contact with the Syrian government unacceptable. Option 3, cancelling the MCA for Syria, was opposed by other constituencies represented who cited, based on the Secretariat's analysis, that there is no legal restriction to GPE engagement in Syria. With no comments declaring opposition to Option 2 in principle and several indications of support, the Chair concluded that at this point this may be a signal that the Board may be able to build consensus for Option 2, which proposes working through the Syrian Education Dialogue Forum in this exceptional case.

Board Policy Reference: BOD/2018/12-06, BOD/2019/06-12

1. OBJECTIVE

1.1. The Board is to consider whether and how GPE should implement the US$25 million maximum country allocation for Syria. Three options, discussed below, are proposed by the Grants and Performance Committee based on their deliberations and consultations with constituencies.

2. RECOMMENDED DECISION

BOD/2019/12-XX–Syria Maximum Country Allocation: The Board of Directors:

1. Agrees to Option (1, 2 or 3) as set out in BOD/2019/12 DOC 11 for GPE engagement/non-engagement in Syria.
2. [If the Board chooses Option 2] On an exceptional basis, waives the DCP membership precondition for grant funding for education needs in Syria on the condition that funding be deployed under applicable UN resolutions and mechanisms and in accordance with *GPE Operating Principles in Complex Emergencies*. The Board invites accredited grant agents authorized to operate on Syrian territory under the applicable UN resolutions to submit an expression of interest by January 15, 2020 to serve as grant agent including potential scope of work.
3. [If the Board chooses Option 3] Requests the Finance and Risk Committee to develop a proposal for reallocating the US$25 million maximum country allocation.

2. BACKGROUND AND OPTIONS

2.1. In February 2018, the Finance and Risk Committee (FRC) approved an MCA of US$25 million to meet education needs in Syria based on its delegated authority and Board-approved eligibility criteria and allocation formula. The Syrian Education Dialogue Forum (EDF), which convenes development and humanitarian actors supporting education in Syria, submitted a proposal for use of the funds (see Annex E for needs and coordination mechanisms in Syria.) Subsequent GPC, Coordinating Committee (CC) and Board discussions are summarized in Annex C.

2.2. In June 2019, the Board requested the GPC to develop a paper for the December 2019 Board meeting describing the special considerations, challenges, risks and possible framework for engagement in Syria considering GPE's mandate, operating framework in emergencies, and legal parameters. The Secretariat, at the GPC's request in July, consulted with World Bank legal counsel and the relevant UN authorities on potential support from GPE to education in Syria (see Annex B.) The CC, in its September 10 call, requested that the paper also address the pros, cons, and risks of providing funding for education in Syria, which are detailed in Annex A. Potential GPE-ECW complementarity is detailed in Annex F and GPE's mandate in Complex Emergencies in Annex E.

2.3 The GPC presents the following options to the Board:

Option 1: In line with GPE's standard operating model, invite the Syrian government through the Ministry of Education to join GPE by committing to the Compact, mobilizing a local education

group and developing and adopting an endorsed education sector plan. The grant application process would follow standard procedure. The Secretariat recommends that the GPC approve the grant agent and project scope early in the process.

Option 2: The Board invites accredited grant agents authorized to operate on Syrian territory under the applicable UN resolutions to submit an expression of interest to serve as grant agent including potential scope of work. Based on the expressions of interest, the Secretariat would make a recommendation on which grant agent to select and scope of work. When preparing this proposal, the Secretariat will consult with EDF. To increase efficiency, the Board delegates its authority to approve the proposed grant agent as well as scope of work to the GPC. Based on the selection, the grant agent will be requested to prepare a proposal, in consultation with EDF. Like any local education group (LEG), the EDF[1] would be an advisory entity only. Any resulting grant proposal would require the approval of the Board before funds would be allocated, and the selected grant agent would need to guarantee that its proposal meets legal requirements to operate within Syria based on UN resolutions in addition to GPE requirements for grant agents. This option requires an exemption from country membership and funding model requirements. Syria would not become a member of GPE and the Secretariat would not have contact with the Syrian government.

Option 3: Cancel the MCA for Syria and ask the FRC to propose how to reallocate the MCA.

Annexes (posted on the Board meeting registration site)

Annex A: Details of the Options

Annex B: Legal Considerations

Annex C: Background on Syria MCA

Annex D: GPE's Mandate in Complex Emergencies

Annex E: Education Needs, Support and Coordination in Syria

Annex F: Potential GPE-ECW Complementarity in Syria

Annex G: Indicative timeline in the event of engagement

[1] The EDF is the most comprehensive education coordination mechanism for Syria and as such, the closest to a Local Education Group (LEG). The Whole of Syria (WoS) is the UN response framework in the country, and as such WoS education partners are part of the EDF, alongside donors and regional UN representatives.

SYRIA MAXIMUM COUNTRY ALLOCATION

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Annex A: Details of the Options

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Annex C: Background on Syria MCA

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Annex E: Education Needs, Support and Coordination in Syria

Annex F: Potential GPE-ECW Complementarity in Syria

Annex G: Indicative timeline for funding application

ANNEX A – DETAILS OF OPTIONS

Option 1

Under Option 1, the Secretariat would inform the government of Syria through the Minister of Education of the existence of the MCA and invite the country to join the Partnership with the submission of an endorsed education sector plan (ESP) or transitional education plan (TEP). GPE membership would require the government to commit to the GPE Compact and establish a local education group (LEG), and Syria would join a developing country partner constituency group and be eligible to participate in GPE's governance structures.

This option would be based on the premise that the Syrian government is recognized by the United Nations (UN) and is a member of the World Bank (WB). It would open the way for the submission of grant requests (education sector plan development grant and program implementation grant) through the standard procedure. In the event this option is selected by the Board, the Secretariat recommends that the GPC approve the grant agent and project scope early in the process to ascertain compliance with legal requirements under the applicable United Nations Security Council Resolutions (UNSCRs). This option does not necessarily mean that the government of Syria would implement activities, as direct implementation by grant agents in agreement with government partners is possible in GPE's operating model.

The **advantage of option 1** would be that GPE would not deviate from its standard approach to GPE membership and financial support. GPE's direct financial support as well as the broader focus on sector development could promote systems-building and access to education for a significant number of marginalized children and youth in Syria. GPE's engagement could promote convergence between priorities identified in the TEP, Syria Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) and the Education Cannot Wait (ECW) Multi-Year Resilience Plan (MYRP) for a coherent approach to sector development, harmonized funding within a broader sector perspective, and consideration for sustainability and longer-term impact of interventions (see Annex E on education needs, support and coordination in Syria).

Disadvantages and risks of Option 1 would include reputational and political risks, as well as potential for doing harm, resulting from direct engagement with the Syrian government. There could also be implications for GPE funding from donors with embargos on support to the Syrian government. The selected grant agent or agents would need to have the capacity and resources to navigate significant financial, security and political risks.

Option 2

The Board invites accredited grant agents authorized to operate on Syrian territory under the applicable UN resolutions to submit an expression of interest to serve as grant agent including potential scope of work. Based on the expressions of interest, the Secretariat would make a recommendation on which grant agent to select and scope of work. When preparing this proposal, the Secretariat will consult with EDF. To increase efficiency, the Board delegates its authority to approve the proposed grant agent as well as scope of work to the GPC. Based on the selection, the grant agent will be requested to prepare a proposal, in consultation with EDF. Like any local education group (LEG), the EDF[1] would be an advisory entity only. Any resulting grant proposal would require the approval of the Board before funds would be allocated, and the selected grant agent would need to guarantee that its proposal meets legal requirements to operate within Syria based on UN resolutions in addition to GPE requirements for grant agents.

Option 2 would require an exemption from country membership and funding model requirements, though key foundations such as complementarity of financing within a coherent framework, inclusive dialogue, and quality standards would apply. It would not involve Syria becoming a member of GPE under current circumstances, and it would not involve dialogue between the GPE Secretariat and the Syrian government. The Secretariat advises that the proposal's scope and the grant agent selection be approved by the GPC at an early stage to ascertain compliance with legal requirements under the applicable UNSCRs (see Annex 3 in BOD/2018/12 DOC 05). Since the selected grant agent would need to be compliant with the UNSCRs and operate within this framework, the 'do no harm' principle and other neutrality and impartiality principles would apply.

The **advantage of this approach** would be that GPE would be able to deploy available resources to fill existing funding gaps in support of education needs inside Syria without engaging with the government of Syria. Consequently, a significant number of vulnerable children and youth in regions affected by conflict could be supported through strengthened education service delivery at the sub-national level. GPE's principles of inclusive partnership, alignment and harmonization could contribute to strengthen planning and implementation with a focus on complementarity, optimal use of available resources and attention to bridging from short- and medium-term plans and interventions to build capacity and resilience at community and school level as the basis for longer-term, sustainable education service delivery.

[1] The EDF is the most comprehensive education coordination mechanism for Syria and as such, the closest to a Local Education Group (LEG). The Whole of Syria (WoS) is the UN response framework in the country, and as such WoS education partners are part of the EDF, alongside donors and regional UN representatives.

Disadvantages and risks of Option 2 would include the exceptional status of Syria in GPE, since the country would not be in a position to be a member. The partnership would need to weigh the principle of country membership against commitment to support education opportunities for vulnerable children. There could be reputational risks related to GPE's engagement in Syria if seen as support to the government. Moreover, as with Option 1, there could be implications for GPE funding from donors that have particular restrictions around the use of their funds in the context of the Syrian crisis. The selected grant agent or agents would need to have the capacity and resources to navigate significant financial, security and political risks, including the risk that funding be used in support of the Syrian government or fall into the hands of armed groups or terrorists.

Option 3

Under Option 3, the Board would cancel the MCA for Syria and inform the EDF that under present circumstances, GPE will not be able to provide support to education in Syria. The Board would then request the Finance and Risk Committee to propose how to reallocate the US$25 million MCA.

The **advantage of Option 3** is that the risks and disadvantages of Options 1 and 2 would be avoided (see above).

The **disadvantage** would be that available support from GPE to fill funding gaps for needed education provision within Syrian borders would not be deployed. It could also raise questions around GPE's commitment to meeting education needs in fragile contexts. There is a risk that GPE would be perceived as influenced by political agendas, allowing these to prevail over commitment to support education for the most vulnerable populations of the world. The cancelation of an MCA due to political circumstances in the country would be a first and could set a precedent.

ANNEX B – LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

Legal Considerations

GPE's mandate to operate in conflict contexts is rooted in its mandate to support and mobilize global efforts in the achievement of equitable and quality education and learning for all, and further established through the Board decisions in 2012 (*Guidelines for Accelerated Funding in Emergency and Early Recovery Situations*), 2013 (*Operational Framework for Effective Support in Fragile and Conflict-Affected States*) and 2018 (*Operating Principles in Complex Emergencies*). The Board's considerable risk appetite for supporting education in fragile and conflict-affected states was affirmed in June 2019. See Annex D for detail.

Consultations with the World Bank legal counsel and UN Whole of Syria (WoS) focal point confirm that there are no legal obstacles to deploying the GPE MCA in Syria:

- The Syrian Arab Republic is a member of the World Bank Group and the government of Syria (GoS) is recognized and represented on the World Bank's Board of Governors and its Executive Directors. There is no embargo on financial assistance to Syria. However, Syria cannot receive funding from the International Development Association (IDA) due to arrears and the World Bank's inability to effectively appraise and supervise projects in the country. In the World Bank's legal counsel's opinion, GPE may provide support in Syria under the applicable United Nations Security Council Resolutions (UNSCRs).

- The GoS is recognized by the United Nations (UN) and represented in the UN General Assembly and other UN bodies. Under the applicable UNSCRs, the UN delivers humanitarian response support in Syria under a coordinated WoS approach, which covers operations within Syria and cross-border operations from Jordan, Turkey and Iraq. UNSCR 2165 permits cross-border supply of materials by UN agencies and implementing partners to people in Syria without the need for interaction with the GoS, apart from notifying the GoS of the movement of supplies, and in accordance with humanitarian principles.

- While there is a legal pathway to the deployment of GPE funds in Syria, there may be embargos on donor funding that could have implications for contributions to the GPE Fund. Currently, since contributions to the GPE trust fund are co-mingled, donors cannot attach conditions that would separate their funds to assure they would not be used to support a given context. In line with the *GPE Contributions and Safeguards Policy*, however, if a donor has restrictions to deploying funds to a specific country, the donor can notionally earmark its funding to all other countries, minus the country in question.

ANNEX C – BACKGROUND ON SYRIA MCA

In February 2018, the Finance and Risk Committee, in its delegated authority from the Board and based on the Board-approved eligibility criteria and allocation formula, approved an MCA of US$25 million to meet education needs in the Syrian Arab Republic. In June 2018, the GPC reviewed a concept note on operationalizing the MCA developed by the Syrian Education Dialogue Forum (EDF), which convenes development and humanitarian actors supporting education in Syria. Due to the complex circumstances, the GPC decided to refer the issue to the Board along with a proposal for GPE operating principles in complex emergencies.

The Board adopted the *GPE Operating Principles in Complex Emergencies* in December 2018. However, given divergent views on the MCA for Syria, the Board requested the GPC and Secretariat to present to the June 2019 Board meeting a paper on whether or how the Syria MCA should be operationalized. The request lacked clear guidance on what would be required beyond the information already contained in the annex to the operating principles, and the GPC through its Chair requested the Coordinating Committee (CC) to provide greater clarity.

The CC discussed the GPC Chair's request in March 2019, as well as concerns submitted by a group of donor partners regarding GPE support to the Syrian Arab Republic. The CC concluded that broader consultation among constituencies was required.

In June 2019, the Board requested the GPC to develop a paper for the December 2019 Board meeting describing the special considerations, challenges, risks and possible framework for engagement, considering GPE's mandate, operating model in emergencies, and legal parameters.

The GPC reviewed a proposed outline for the paper in July 2019, requesting the Secretariat to consult with World Bank and the UN legal counsel regarding any legal constraints to support from GPE to education activities in Syria, and to include such considerations in the paper. The scope of the paper was further discussed in the CC meeting held on September 10, 2019. The CC requested that the paper also address the pros, cons, and risks of operationalizing the MCA in Syria.

ANNEX D – GPE'S MANDATE IN COMPLEX EMERGENCIES

As per the GPE Charter and Compact, GPE is mandated to support and mobilize global efforts in the achievement of equitable and quality education and learning for all through inclusive partnership, effective education systems and increased financing.

In line with an increased focus on fragile and conflict-affected states, the Board adopted the *Guidelines for Accelerated Funding in Emergency and Early Recovery Situations* in November 2012, followed by an *Operational Framework for Effective Support in Fragile and Conflict-Affected States* in June 2013 to enable the partnership to shift grant funds to emergency needs when these arise. The objective of both mechanisms was to provide effective and efficient education response in emergency situations, while also leveraging links between education humanitarian and development efforts and additional financing for education in emergencies. The decisions emphasized the importance of limiting and alleviating impact on education services in emergency situations and ensuring continuity in children and youth's education despite crisis.

After a consultative review of GPE's mechanisms for support in crisis, in December 2018 the Board adopted the *Operating Principles in Complex Emergencies* to provide further and updated guidance. The Board noted that acting on these principles will require a risk-based approach for each specific context.

In June 2019, the Board approved a set of risk appetite statements formulated to enable the partnership to support equitable education and learning opportunities for the most marginalized children and youth while managing associated risks. This included a risk appetite statement for supporting education in fragile and conflict affected states: *"GPE recognizes the need to take risk given its mission to mobilize global and national efforts to contribute to the achievement of equitable, quality education and learning for all. GPE is particularly committed to focus its resources on the most marginalized children and youth, including those affected by fragility and conflict. GPE believes that considerable risk taking is justified to achieve its goals in fragile and conflict-affected states where opportunities for building systems are available. It is willing to accept potential negative impacts arising from working in these environments."*

ANNEX E: EDUCATION NEEDS, SUPPORT AND COORDINATION IN SYRIA

The conflict in Syria has just entered its ninth year and has impacted the lives and education of over 6 million children (5-17 years old) inside Syria. Over 2 million children are reported out of school. Many of them have not been able to attend school for the last five years. The conflict has destroyed decades of education investments in a country which once had high levels of education access and learning. One in three schools have been damaged and many are being used as Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) shelters. As per the 2019 Syrian Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO), 1.3 million children in Syria are at the risk of dropping out of school.

A learning outcome assessment undertaken in March 2017 in Idlib showed that 59 percent of 6th graders, 52 percent of 7th graders and 35 percent of 8th graders could not read a simple, 7-10 sentence story; the equivalent of 2nd grade reading skills. Similar trends are reported for early grades. The Early Grade Reading Assessment and Early Grade Mathematics Assessment conducted in Idlib, Rural Damascus, and Aleppo in 2017 found that less than 10 percent of 3rd grade students can read and perform basic mathematical tasks at grade level.

Since the start of the crisis, approximately 140,000 education personnel (50 percent of the education personnel), including teachers, have left the education system. Since the defeat of ISIL, it is estimated that over 1.4 million IDPs/returnees have returned to their respective villages and towns, where schools are damaged or lack necessary facilities such as water and sanitation. Schools in IDP/returnee receiving communities have limited capacity to include newly arriving students, causing overcrowding, double and even triple shifts. Reports indicate that in Rural Damascus, Quneitra and Dar'a areas, classroom sizes in public schools have reached 150 students per teacher in 2018.

Education Coordination Mechanisms in Syria

There are several mechanisms coordinating education support to Syria. Some are focused on the humanitarian sector while others support both development and stabilization interventions. The following coordination mechanisms are currently operational:

Whole of Syria (WoS)

In 2014, the UN brought together operations led by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) under a single response framework known as "Whole of Syria" (WoS). This followed the UN launch of the Syria Response Plan (SRP) under United Nations Security Council Resolutions (UNSCRs) 2165, 2191, 2258, 2332, 2393. The purpose of the WoS approach was

to develop a principled, predictable and coherent response to prioritized humanitarian needs through in-country and cross border operations. As education cluster leads, UNICEF and Save the Children collaborate in leading the coordination of the WoS education response.

Syrian NGO membership in WoS is vetted to ensure humanitarian, non-political and non-military functions. Currently, WoS is implementing the Education Cannot Wait (ECW) funded education activities in Syria.

Syria Development Partners Group (DPG)

The Syria Development Partner Group was established in 2016 by the Department for International Development (DFID) to strengthen donor coordination in the education sector across humanitarian, development and stabilization education projects. Currently, 10 bilateral donors to the education response are members. DFID and the European Union (EU) currently co-chair the group.

The focus of DPG support has largely been on provision of education services in non-government controlled areas, either through dedicated education programs or through multi-sectoral programs which include education. Some DPG supported programs have explicit stabilization objectives, while others closely mirror the activities undertaken by WoS partners through non-humanitarian funding sources.

Education Dialogue Forum (EDF)

In 2017, the GPE Secretariat facilitated the development of the WoS proposal for the ECW initial investment grant to Syria. The development of the ECW WoS proposal led to the establishment of an inclusive forum with the purpose of coordinating all efforts to strengthen education inside Syria. EDF is a strategic and collaborative platform of development and humanitarian partners established to ensure a coordinated approach to education inside Syria and to jointly address strategic policy and technical education issues.

The EDF meets bi-annually and is attended by the WoS (UNICEF, Save the Children), DPG members (UK, USA, EU, Norway, Germany, Italy, Japan) and regional UN agency representatives (UNICEF, UNESCO, UNESCWA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNRWA, and WFP). The GPE Secretariat and ECW Secretariat participate as Observers. Currently, DFID and the EU co-chair EDF. Table 1 provides an overview of the roles and responsibilities of coordination mechanisms and stakeholders.

Whole of Syria	**WoS education co-coordinators (UNICEF and Save the Children)**
	• Co-lead the Syria EDF with the DPG to ensure a unified and cooperative approach and resolve strategic and technical education issues. • Coordinate the ECW investment in close collaboration with the DPG Hubs, as well as Syria EDF members. • Oversee the progress and development of the ECW investment inside Syria. Ensure standardized procedures and processes across the Hubs to promote program cohesion, efficiency, effectiveness, transparency and engagement of all partners.
	WoS Hub education co-coordinators (Damascus and Gaziantep)
	• Coordinate ECW sub-grant process with WoS education partners. • Ensure that the implementation of subgrant projects adheres to project design and that project activities are on track and progress reports are submitted on time. • On a quarterly basis, monitor projects progress against agreed result indicators and review submitted progress reports. • Share findings at the Hub level meetings to ensure transparency and engagement of all WoS education partners.
	WoS Hub level education partners (Syrian NGOs, INGOs, UN agencies)
	• Select a representative to participate at the Syria EDF and provide strategic and technical advice to ECW program implementation. • Compete for ECW funding according to eligibility criteria. • Implement projects adhering to project design. • If needed, conduct a comprehensive localized needs analysis to inform project implementation.
Development Partners Group (DPG)	• Co-lead the Syria EDF with the WoS to ensure a unified and cooperative approach and resolve strategic and technical education issues. • Agree on reporting guidelines with the WoS to ensure that ECW-funded interventions are monitored according to the agreed work plan. • Provide advice and technical support in project development and implementation.
UN agencies at regional level	• Participate in and contribute to the Syria EDF meetings. • Contribute to resolving strategic and technical issues related to the ECW Syria program • Provide advice and technical support in program development and implementation.
Local education authorities	• Participate in education dialogue forums at Hub and community levels to help resolve key strategic and technical education issues. • Provide data on enrolment, attendance and learning where possible. • Participate in capacity building initiatives organized by the WoS.
Community members	• Engage in BTL campaigns aimed at encouraging parents and communities to send their children to school • Facilitate, together with teachers and education personnel, the establishment of PTAs for education quality, school improvement and community support. • Provide necessary support for children's learning and education, in both formal and non-formal settings.

Education financing in Syria

The UN led 2019 Syria Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) has identified US$3.29 billion to support most essential humanitarian needs including education. Out of the appeal of US$3.29 billion, US$1.29 billion has been provided by the donor community, most of it to support food and health sectors. Key donors include the United States of America, Germany, the United Kingdom, and the European Union.

For the education sector, the HRP identified a total of US$251.1 million. As of the latest UN OCHA statistics (October, 2019), 48 percent of the education appeal has been fulfilled.

In 2017, ECW provided US$15 million as an initial First Response investment grant to education in Syria, with UNICEF as grant agent. An additional US$5 million was provided in 2018 to support on-going activities.

The EDF provides overall strategic guidance for the ECW investment. Currently, EDF is in the process of finalizing the Multi-year Resilience Plan (MYRP), with expected total seed funding of US$30 million from ECW for a program tentatively estimated at US$800 million.

ANNEX F – POTENTIAL GPE AND ECW COMPLEMENTARITY IN SYRIA

GPE's mechanisms for emergency response have built-in mechanisms to bridge from development to humanitarian support. In Option 1, the focus would be squarely on systems rebuilding through a standard GPE approach in collaboration with the government. Option 2, however, requires an analysis of GPE's mandate and added value, especially compared to ECW, which has a very clear mandate in such contexts.

It will take years, maybe decades, to rebuild what war has destroyed in Syria, and despite uncertainty of when the situation will stabilize it is important to determine what building blocks can be put in place for the later development and launch of strategies that will enable equitable access to longer-term education opportunities for vulnerable children in Syria.

While with ECW, partners are designing a medium-term plan through the MYRP, GPE's engagement could allow partners to bring greater attention to reestablishing the foundations for longer-term planning: data capacity at local level, for instance, which would be an important basis for sector analysis and strategic planning to rebuild the sector. Capacity building of community level stakeholders and the fragmented bureaucracy at local level is another cornerstone for rebuilding. These are areas that could be explored by EDF partners under Option 2. GPE's quality standards examine the sustainability of program activities and in Syria these could help drive partner reflections towards longer-term perspectives and sustainability of interventions.

There has been fragmentation in support to education in Syria, although the MYRP will help partners to have a more coordinated action. By definition, GPE's support must be complementary to that of the partners, and the dialogue around it inclusive, within a coherent plan. The MYRP would need complementary resources to be fully financed. GPE's available MCA, if deployed, could enable a significant increase in resources for its implementation. Up to 20 percent of the MCA could be deployed rapidly, using the Accelerated Funding mechanism.

In conclusion, there would not be a neat and clear separation of ECW and GPE's roles in education in the Syrian context. The partners would likely use both sources of funding to finance the same plan, and it is quite possible that both GPE and ECW would have the same grant agent. But ECW and GPE's respective approaches to needs analysis, planning and capacity building could provide a compelling example of how to provide short- and medium-term support while also paving the way for rebuilding after a severe, long-term crisis.

Finally, ECW and GPE joining forces at the global level to call attention to the education crisis in Syria could be a powerful opportunity for advocacy and resource mobilization to promote peace and stability in the region through the education of Syria's next generation.

ANNEX G – INDICATIVE TIMELINE FOR FUNDING APPLICATION

The following timeline is indicative only, and the actual process would depend on the scope and grant agent selection discussions, completion of the planning framework (most likely the Multi-Year Resilience Framework), grant agent processes and the conditions on the ground. There are two scenarios presented below; one without and one with accelerated funding.

Scenario 1: No accelerated funding

Step 1: Launch of process • Secretariat communication to EDF co-chairs on Board decision requesting them to inform EDF members and potential grant agents of the opportunity to submit an expression of interest to act as grant agent(s)	By end December 2019
Step 2: Submission to GPE Secretariat of expression of interest (EoI) along with scope of work from partners to act as grant agent(s)	January 15, 2020
Step 3: Scope and grant agent selection • Secretariat consultation with EDF and assessment of expression of interest and scope of work • Scope and grant agent cleared by GPC	January-February 2020 February 2020
Step 4: Proposal development and quality assurance process	March–September 2020
Step 5: Grant application submission	October 2020
Step 6: GPC review	January 2021

Scenario 2: Accelerated funding

Step 1: Launch of process • Secretariat communication to EDF co-chairs on Board decision requesting them to inform EDF members and potential grant agents of the opportunity to submit an expression of interest to act as grant agent	By end December 2019
Step 2: Submission to GPE Secretariat of expression of interest along with scope of work from partners to act as grant agent(s)	January 15, 2020
Step 3: Scope and grant agent selection • Secretariat assessment consultation with EDF and expression of interest and scope of work • Scope and grant agent cleared by GPC	January-February 2020 February 2020

Step 4: Preparation of accelerated funding proposal (up to 20 percent of the MCA)	March -May 2020
Step 5: Processing and approval of accelerated funding	June-July 2020
Step 6: ESPIG Proposal development and quality assurance process (remaining 80 percent of the MCA or 100 percent if accelerated funding expansion is approved by the Board)	June-September 2020
Step 7: Grant application submission	October 2020
Step 8: GPC review	January 2021
Step 9: Board approval	February 2021