JANUARY 31, 2023

MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

MEETING REPORT

INTRODUCTION

This report presents a high-level summary of the decision and key discussion points. The agenda and documents for the Board meeting can be found on the GPE website. The list of participants is presented in Annex 1.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 31, 2023

1. Opening of the Meeting

1.1 The Board Chair called the meeting to order at 7:00am Washington, DC time, welcomed Board members and Alternate Board members and presented the agenda for the meeting.

1.2 Laura Frigenti, GPE Chief Executive Officer (CEO), took the floor and expressed her appreciation for the work carried out within and across constituencies since the last meeting of the Board. She noted that the meeting in Paris provided a clear opportunity to identify the bottlenecks that are limiting GPE's ability to respond to challenges in the education sector, compounded by a very challenging aid environment. It had become clear that this was not the best time for the Board to be presented with a binary choice. She further noted two key considerations to keep front of mind namely (i) the need to engage in a strategic discussion on the global education sector and the role of GPE in this architecture, and the best institutional set-up for GPE to deliver on its mandate, (ii) and adjustments to the GPE-World Bank Hosting Arrangements and the need to find flexibility within the agreement.

2. World Bank-GPE Hosting Arrangements: Presentation from Country Partners (BOD/2023/01 DOC 02)

2.1 David Moinina Sengeh, Minister of Basic and Senior Secondary Education of Sierra Leone and Board member for Africa 3 presented the Ministerial Communique from Country Partners that was informed by the Paris meeting and the responses of 47 partner countries to a survey. Minister Sengeh stressed that all partner countries had a responsibility in delivering on education globally and underlined the need for greater autonomy for the GPE Board.

2.2 Board members expressed their appreciation for the Ministerial Communique. They emphasized the need to focus on GPE's role in the current global education architecture, the delivery for partner countries and country ownership.

2.3 While acknowledging the global crisis in education and the difficulties in the international development architecture, several Board members stated that GPE had to continue to deliver results without delays.

2.4 Board members agreed that increased autonomy and operational flexibility were needed, and were interested in exploring options to further discuss.

3. World Bank-GPE Hosting Arrangements: Considerations for the future of GPE (BOD/2023/01 DOC 02)

3.1 The Secretariat delivered a presentation on key considerations for the future of GPE. The presentation outlined that GPE is a strong organization but that solutions to achieve better efficiencies and effectiveness especially at country level were needed. The presentation also touched upon the bottlenecks at country and global level.

Discussion

3.2 The Board member for MLA3 declared a conflict of interest.

3.3 Several Board members stated that GPE should be elevated strategically in the long-term. Some Board members argued that GPE stood at the forefront of the global education architecture, and that the Board had to work to make GPE more visible and impactful. A Board member suggested a more extensive discussion on the country-level bottlenecks in the coming months.

3.4 Although CSOs, Private Sector, and Private Foundations constituency category acknowledged the work done and welcomed Option 1, they provided two sets of amendments: 1) they put forward the need to have a separate legal entity, as included in the Secretariat presentation and Board document, an option that has

yet to be explored with the World Bank; and 2) they noted the importance to reach a decision at the June Board meeting focused on three main concerns from their category: a) autonomy of the Board; b) the ability of GPE to be flexible, including a solution to the currency hedging; and c) progress towards GPE having operating capability on the ground that is less reliable on international and multilateral entities. The decision language with the proposed amendments was displayed on the screen.

3.5 The Secretariat clarified that the amendment on the timeframe was not feasible due to the need for sufficient time to have a constructive and successful negotiation with the World Bank. This was supported by several Board members. There was general agreement, however, that a report back in June 2023 on the progress made was needed.

3.6 Several Board members noted that there was broad Board consensus on the original language of Option 1, which was seen to hit the right note and was balanced, while also giving the CEO enough flexibility for negotiations with the World Bank and providing the Board with a more systematic view for the partnership. A Board member noted that the decision language would be made public, and that it would be advisable for the negotiation with the World Bank to maintain more general language.

3.7 In view of the consensus around the original language of Option 1, the representatives from the CSOs, Private Sector and Private Foundations constituency category withdrew their proposed amendments but requested that these be minuted in the Board meeting report.

3.8 The Secretariat noted that the points raised by Board members made it very clear that this conversation is not about fixing GPE but rather on how to better respond to the needs of partner countries.

3.9 Considering the urgency and speed of finding solutions to the needs raised by partner countries in the Ministerial Communique, the Secretariat informed that it has already scheduled a meeting with the World Bank Senior Management to convey the result of the Board's decision and initiate the discussion on the hosting agreement.

3.10 The Secretariat highlighted that, building on the Board discussion, there is a need to focus on the main goals, namely the autonomy of the Board, the flexibility of GPE, and the ability to respond effectively, and there was an initial open mind approach from the World Bank to this discussion. It was also noted that GPE expects that the SDG 4 High-Level Steering Committee will facilitate the longer-term conversation on the global education architecture forward. The Secretariat emphasized the need to

keep the Board briefed and informed in a timely manner.

3.11 Action Point: The Secretariat to minute the proposed amendments to the decision language option 1 proposed by the CSOs, Private Sector and Private Foundations constituency category

3.12 Action Point: The Secretariat to report back in June on progress made in its engagement with the World Bank.

3.13 The Chair declared consensus on the following decision:

- **BOD/2023/01-01— GPE's Institutional Arrangements:** The Board of Directors:

1. Recognizes that GPE is a strong organization with the capability to fully support delivery of the current strategic plan.

2. In the context of examining how to best meet GPE's future needs beyond 2025, takes note of the findings of the independent consultant reports to examine the implications of establishing GPE as a separate legal entity.

3. Expresses its appreciation to the World Bank for hosting the GPE Secretariat.

4. Recognizes there are significant risks to ending the hosting arrangements at this time considering current economic conditions, the potential impact on staff, and delivery of GPE2025 which may outweigh the benefits of such a change in the short term. Further recognizes that for partner countries, the same economic environment compels the need for an urgent and innovative response.

5. Acknowledges there are advantages to the current institutional arrangements, but also the need for changes that will ensure the GPE Board has greater autonomy over its strategic vision, direction, funding, partnerships, and programs consistent with its status as a FIF hosted by the World Bank.

6. In this context, mandates the CEO, under the guidance of the EXCO and building on the progress to date to engage with the World Bank to further explore options that could achieve potential cost savings, fundraising instruments and greater operational flexibility.

7. Notes the call from partner countries in BOD/2023/01 DOC 02 Annex A for the Education Aid Architecture to strengthen its support for the role of partner countries to own and deliver education transformation, and that GPE has a unique role in helping convene partners and mobilize resources. Requests the SDG4 High-Level Steering Committee to consider this call in light of the global learning crisis, and the implications for GPE.

8. Requests the Secretariat to report back to the Board in June 2023 on progress and

identify potential future changes that may be required for the next strategic plan period for Board consideration by December 2023.

3.14 The Board member from the World Bank representing MLA3 took the floor and agreed with the principles raised by partner countries on delivery, country ownership, flexibility, voice, and autonomy. He further supported the suggestion of a comprehensive assessment of how GPE fits into the overarching global education architecture. In addition, he emphasized the need to have a common understanding of some of the requirements requested.

3.15 The meeting adjourned at 9.38 am.

Annex 1: List of Board Retreat and Meeting Participants

	Name	Constituency	Role
	Board Members		
1	Komla Dodzi Kokoroko	Africa 2	Board Member
2	David Moinina Sengeh	Africa 3	Board Member
3	David Andrew Adejo	Africa 3	Alternate Board Member
4	Ramkrishna Subedi	Asia and Pacific	Board Member
5	Aishath Ali	Asia and Pacific	Alternate Board Member
6	Saidzoda Rahim	EEMECA	Alternate Board Member
7	Didacus Jules	Latin America and Caribbean	Board Member
8	Frederic Depetris	Donor 1	Board Member
9	Martina Ramming	Donor 1	Alternate Board Member
10	Line Friberg Nielsen	Donor 2	Board Member
11	Per Magnusson	Donor 2	Alternate Board Member
12	Judith Herbertson	Donor 3	Board Member
13	Louise Holt	Donor 3	Alternate Board Member
14	Camilla Helgo Fossberg	Donor 4	Board Member
15	Rashid Al Shamsi	Donor 4	Alternate Board Member
16	Martin Seychell	Donor 5	Board Member
17	Heike Kuhn	Donor 5	Alternate Board Member
18	Aedan Whyatt	Donor 6	Alternate Board Member
19	Kira Boe	CSO 1	Board Member
20	Yona Nestel	CSO 1	Alternate Board Member
21	Solange Akpo-Gnandi	CSO 2	Board Member
22	Abeer Tamimi Darwazeh	CSO 2	Alternate Board Member
23	Haldis Holst	CSO 3	Board Member
24	Dennis Sinyolo	CSO 3	Alternate Board Member
25	Stefania Giannini	MLA 1	Board Member
26	Valerie Guanieri	MLA 1	Alternate Board Member
27	Robert Jenkins	MLA 2	Board Member
28	Rebecca Telford	MLA 2	Alternate Board Member
29	Luis Benveniste	MLA 3	Board Member

30	Syed Husain Quadri	MLA 3	Alternate Board Member
31	David Boutcher	Private Sector	Board Member
32	Emily Friedman	Private Sector	Alternate Board Member
	Board and Committee Chairs		
33	H.E. Jakaya Kikwete	Board	Chair
34	Susan Liautaud	Board	Vice-Chair
35	Marie Soulie	PILC	Chair
36	Nesmy Manigat	FRC	Chair