Republic of Liberia

Ministry of Education

Partnership Compact

2023/24-2026/27

Endorsed 12th September 2023

Table of Contents

Acronyms and abbreviations 2
Acknowledgements 3
Executive Summary 4
Priority reform 4
Enabling factors 4
Coordination and governance 4
Alignment 4
Minister's foreword 6
1. Introduction 7
1.1 Existing policy frameworks 7
1.2 Enabling factors analysis 7
1.3 Counterparts and consultations 7
2. Priority reform 8
2.1 Description 8
2.2 Rationale 8
2.3 How the reform advances system transformation 10
2.4 Alignment with ESP and GPE Priority Areas 13
3. Enabling factors 13
3.1 Volume, equity and efficiency of domestic public expenditure on education 14
3.2 Data and evidence 14
3.3 Sector coordination 15
3.3.1 Inclusive sector dialogue and coordinated action 15
3.3.2 Coordinated financing and funding 16
3.4 Gender-responsive sector planning, policy and monitoring 16
4. Delivering system transformation 17
4.1 Alignment of partner resources 17
4.2 Alignment of GPE financing 18
4.2.1 Multiplier co-financing 18
4.2.2 Incentive-based financing 18
4.2.3 System Capacity Grant 20
4.3 Roles and responsibilities of country partners 20
4.3.1 Ministry of Education 20

4.3.2 Annual operational plan 20
4.3.3 Governance 21
4.3.4 Grant agent 21
4.3.5 Technical assistance and capacity development 21
4.3.6 Public-private partnerships 22
5. Monitoring and evaluation 22
5.1 Theory of change 22
5.2 Intermediate and long-term indicators 24
5.3 Evaluations and reviews 27
6. Statement of endorsement by government and country partners 28
Annex 29

Acronyms and abbreviations

ALP	Accelerated Learning Program
ASC	Annual School Census
CEO	County Education Officer
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
DEO	District Education Officer
ECE	Early Childhood Education
EFA	Enabling Factors Analysis
EMIS	Education Management Information System
ESA	Education Sector Analysis
ESDC	Education Sector Development Committee
ESP	Education Sector Plan
ESSA	Education System Strengthening Activity
G2B	Getting To Best
GER	Gross Enrollment Rate
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
LBE	Lower Basic Education
LEAP	Liberia Education Advancement Program
LEG	Local Education Group
IDELA	International Development and Early Learning Assessment
ITAP	Independent Technical Advisory Panel
JESR	Joint Education Sector Review
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MoE	Ministry of Education
SCG	System Capacity Grant
SQA	School Quality Assessment
STG	System Transformation Grant
TESTS	Transforming the Education System for Teachers and Students in Liberia
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

Acknowledgements

The Ministry of Education wishes to thank the Partnership Compact Task Team for their dialogue and expertise.

Hon. Alton V. Kesselly	Ministry of Education	Policy Lead
Hon. Dominic N. Kweme	Ministry of Education	Deputy Policy Lead
Joe K. Gbasakollie	Ministry of Education	Technical Lead
Numene B. Reeves & Sarah M. Johnson	Ministry of Finance and Development Planning	Member
Sarah M. Johnson	Ministry of Finance and Development Planning	Member
Hon. Peter S. Bemah	Ministry of Youth and Sports	Member
Vivian Kanneh	Ministry of Gender and Social Protection	Member
Mardea Nyumah	USAID	Member
Binta Massaquoi	World Bank	Member
Anderson Miamen	COTAE/CENTAL	Member
Dr. Agnes Reeves Taylor	University of Liberia	Member
Andrew A. Tellewoyan	LISGIS	Member
Mohammed Kamara	Liberia National Student Union	Member
Madam Daintowon Pay-Bayee	National Commission on Disabilities	Member
Abdallah Housseini	Ministry of Education	Member
Gadara Myers	Ministry of Education	Member
Willtress Dolo	Ministry of Education	Member

Executive Summary

The Government of the Republic of Liberia and its partners make an explicit commitment to align resources to improve foundational literacy and numeracy skills. The Partnership Compact describes the priority reform and how it will lead to transformational change in Liberia's education system.

The selection of the priority reform and its associated policy outcomes was made by the Ministry of Education in consultation with its development partners and is based on the latest Education Sector Analysis (2022) and Education Sector Plan 2022/23-2026/27.

Priority reform

The agreed priority reform is **Grade 3 students achieve foundational literacy and numeracy skills**. This ambitious goal will be met by achieving the following policy outcomes:

1. Children, especially girls, children from poor or rural families and children living with disabilities, enroll at the correct age ready for school.
2. Overaged[1] and out-of-school children are supported with accelerated and alternative learning programs.
3. Students are educated in a healthy, inclusive, and adequately resourced learning environment.
4. Teachers, especially women teachers, have the qualifications, skills, and curriculum to teach and assess foundational skills.
5. Improved volume, efficiency, and equity of domestic public education expenditure.
6. Improved quality and timeliness of data and evidence.

The Partnership Compact provides an overview of the policy actions and available resources required to overcome bottlenecks to achieving the priority reform, particularly for the most disadvantaged children in Liberia.

Enabling factors

To address barriers to successful reform such as inequitable funding for schools and capacity gaps, the government and partners also commit to strengthening two high priority enabling factors: i) the volume, equity, and efficiency of domestic public education expenditure; and ii) data and evidence. Specifically, this will involve increasing the equity and share of the education budget allocated to early grade grants and improving the frequency, quality, and sustainability of the Annual School Census and primary learning assessment.

Coordination and governance

The Partnership Compact will be coordinated through the existing Local Education Group and Joint Education Sector Review mechanism. Civil society will be consulted and engaged through the Education Sector Development Committee. Foundational learning activities will be budgeted in the Ministry's annual operational plan and reported in the annual report.

Alignment

The Government and its development partners commit to mobilizing and aligning financing to the Partnership Compact priorities. These include philanthropic financing, and major projects for

[1] Two or more years older than the correct age for their grade.

foundational learning, pre-service teacher education, and system strengthening from donors such as USAID and the World Bank. Financing from the Global Partnership for Education will be targeted at the priority reform and high priority enabling factors.

Minister's foreword

The Republic of Liberia is proud to be a member of the Global Partnership for Education (GPE). Together, we have improved access to early grade education, provided grants and teaching and learning materials to schools, trained teachers and principals, established systems to measure school quality and primary learning outcomes, improved equity and efficiency in our teaching workforce in underserved counties, and built new classrooms to serve our most disadvantaged communities.

The 2023 Partnership Compact has been jointly developed by the Ministry of Education (MoE) and our development partners in Local Education Group in a spirit of collaboration and accountability. The document focuses on the earliest grades of our education system because it is those children who will transform the future of Liberia. We have a shared duty to strive for stronger foundational learning and inclusivity. As I wrote in the preface to the Education Sector Plan (ESP) 2022/23-2026/27:

"The critical task of this ESP, therefore, is to bring more children, especially those from poorer, underserved areas, into the education system at the right ages, ensure they progress through and complete school on time in a healthy, safe, protective environment, and leave with the foundational and 21st-century skills they need to contribute to and benefit from national development."

I am deeply moved by the commitment of our development partners to the priority reform agreed upon in the Partnership Compact. I also acknowledge the members of the Partnership Compact Task Team from the government and stakeholders for their dedication and wisdom in developing the document under the leadership of Deputy Minister Alton V. Kesselly, Assistant Miniter Dominic N. Kweme, and Technical Lead Joe K. Gbasakollie. I appreciate the technical support provided by the World Bank as the grant agent for the GPE System Capacity Grant that funded the dialogue on the Compact.

The Ministry is ready to lead the implementation of the priority reform activities selected from the ESP in partnership with our education stakeholders. I call upon all educators, partners, leaders, and communities to unite to improve foundational literacy and numeracy as a transformational investment in our children. I endorse the Partnership Compact on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Liberia.

Professor D. Ansu Sonii, Sr.

Minister of Education

1. Introduction

The Government of the Republic of Liberia and its partners make an explicit commitment to improve foundational literacy and numeracy skills. The Partnership Compact describes the reform and how, if successful, it will lead to transformational change in Liberia's education system.

The Partnership Compact rationale explores the access, quality, and equity bottlenecks and theory of change to achieving improved early grade learning. The document also prioritizes steps to unlock system improvements in domestic education expenditure and data and evidence. Next, the Partnership Compact describes how domestic and partner resources will be aligned with the priority reform and the high priority enabling factors. Finally, the document describes monitoring and evaluation (M&E) approaches to tracking progress towards the outcomes at the national and decentralized levels.

Liberia is eligible for a GPE System Capacity Grant (SCG), System Transformation Grant (STG), and Multiplier grant so the Partnership Compact also lays out the proposed priorities, top-up triggers and means of verification for these grants.

1.1 Existing policy frameworks

The selection of the priority reform and its associated policy outcomes was made by the MoE in consultation with its development partners and is based on the latest Education Sector Analysis (ESA), ESP, and Joint Education Sector Review (JESR). As the ESA and ESP were written in 2022, the Enabling Factors Analysis (EFA) and Partnership Compact have a robust evidential foundation.

1.2 Enabling factors analysis

The EFA and Domestic Financing Matrix identified two high priority factors which -if not addressed – would make the proposed reform highly challenging to achieve. These were: i) the volume, equity and efficiency of domestic financing; and ii) the quality and timeliness of data and evidence from the Annual School Census and primary learning assessment.

1.3 Counterparts and consultations

To develop the Partnership Compact, the government convened a multidisciplinary Task Team in November 2022, consisting of experts from different ministries and development partners[2]. The Task Team selected the priority reform, outcomes and high priority enabling factors during a workshop in February 2023, which were then refined and endorsed by the Local Education Group (LEG). In May 2023, the Government received detailed feedback on the initial EFA screening and contextual report from the GPE's Independent Technical Advisory Panel (ITAP), and the ITAP recommendations were incorporated into the draft Partnership Compact. After consultations and feedback on the draft Partnership Compact, the document was revised, approved by the Government, and endorsed by the LEG in September 2023.

[2] The Task team includes: Ministry of Education, Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, Ministry of Youth and Sports, Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, National Commission on Disability, Liberia National Student Union, Coalition for Transparency and Accountability in Education, Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Services, University of Liberia, World Bank, and USAID

2. Priority reform

2.1 Description

The priority reform is **Grade 3 students achieve foundational literacy and numeracy skills**. This ambitious goal will be met by achieving the following outcomes:

1. Children, especially girls, children from poor or rural families, and children living with disabilities, enroll at the correct age ready for school.[3]
2. Overaged[4] and out-of-school children are supported with accelerated and alternative learning programs.
3. Students are educated in a healthy, inclusive and adequately resourced learning environment.
4. Teachers, especially women teachers, have the qualifications, skills, and curriculum to teach and assess foundational skills.
5. Improved volume, efficiency and equity of domestic public education expenditure.
6. Improved quality and timeliness of data and evidence.

2.2 Rationale

The comprehensive Education Sector Analysis identifies multiple bottlenecks to achieving the priority reform:

- School fees prevent children from poorer households enrolling in school.
- Inadequate domestic budget for foundational learning, accelerated education programs and school improvement.
- Teachers lacking the skills and curriculum materials to teach and assess literacy and numeracy.
- Low quality learning environments in early childhood education (ECE) and basic education.
- Lack of regular data to measure improvements in the education system and target resources.
- No large-scale parenting programs to improve school readiness.

Underlying these barriers are persistent root causes including:

- Geographical inequities.
- Widespread poverty.
- Poor child health and high levels of stunting.
- High rates of sexual gender-based violence (SGBV).
- Constrained government budget and a historical underinvestment in basic education.
- Large numbers of underqualified teachers.

Because of the bottlenecks and root causes, children in Liberia have poor learning outcomes which has a profound impact on future learning and income. A recent United States Agency for International Development (USAID) evaluation of early grade literacy found that the average child at the beginning of Grade 3 had an oral reading fluency of 14.4 correct words per minute, far below the MoE end-of-Grade-2 benchmark of 35 correct words per minute.[5] Just 13.8 percent of students reached the benchmark. This

[3] Five years-old in ECE Kindergarten II and six years-old in Grade 1.
[4] Two or more years older than the correct age for their grade.
[5] Menendez, A., Hoadley, U. and Soloyeva, A. 2021. Read Liberia Impact Evaluation Endline Report. University of Chicago.

weakness in foundational literacy is compounded by low levels of school readiness in early childhood education (ECE). In 2018, only 13 percent of students in public ECE schools demonstrated adequate skills to progress to basic education.[6] The 2018 study found considerable variation between counties, with students in isolated counties having poorer school readiness.

The learning crisis is compounded by the high prevalence of overaged students in ECE and primary schools. In the 2021-22 academic year, 64 percent of ECE students and 70 percent of lower basic students were overaged for the grade in which they were enrolled.[7] Late enrollment and high rates of repetition have led to poor net enrollment rates. Furthermore, there were significant geographical disparities. The most recent Demographic Household Survey found that students from poor households or rural areas were more likely to be overaged.[8]

Due to enrolment barriers such as school fees and poor school readiness, an estimated nineteen percent of lower basic students are out of school. There is strong evidence of the impact of poverty: household wealth was a strong determinant of enrollment. Children from the poorest families are 21 percent less likely to access Grade 1 than those from the richest backgrounds, and fees prevent many families from enrolling their children in school. Poor girls are especially vulnerable: these students are the least likely to enter primary education and their chance of completing senior education is virtually zero (ESA, 2022).

Gender parity worsens with age and the gaps widen at the post-primary levels due to long-standing gender barriers including the need to work or support family, widespread SBGV, lack of safe spaces for girls and gender-segregated latrines, low numbers of female teachers, and early marriage and childbearing.[9] Girls and female teachers face extremely high levels of SGBV as a legacy of the civil war, societal norms and weak law enforcement. Between 2016 and 2020, 70 percent of SGBV cases were perpetrated against children, often by authority figures, leading the President to declare a national emergency in 2020. Sexual violence, transactional sex, and corporal punishment is common in schools. Overall, Liberia ranked 156 of 162 countries in the Gender Inequality Index (UNDP, 2020).

Just 35 percent of ECE teachers and 45 percent of lower basic teachers were qualified to the minimum standard. The workforce faces critically low numbers of female teachers at every level, with gender disparities which widen with each level (ESA, 2022), among the lowest in the world. There are few female principals, severely limiting women's decision-making power. The predominantly male school environment creates safety concerns for girls and their parents and deters women from joining the teaching workforce.

Teaching is dominated by rote-based strategies with low levels of student engagement, even in ECE classrooms where just 14 percent of classroom time was pupil-centered. There is an acute shortage of teaching and learning materials, including age-appropriate reading books and basic numeracy and literacy textbooks, despite the recent intervention of USAID and GPE-funded projects. Because of these

[6] Lipcan, A. et al. 2018. Early Learning Partnership Systems Research Liberia Diagnostic Report. Oxford Policy Management.
[7] Ministry of Education. 2023 (draft). Liberia Education Statistics Report 2021-22. Republic of Liberia.
[8] Liberia Demographic Household Survey 2019/20 calculated in: Ministry of Education. 2022. Education Sector Plan 2022/23-2026/27. Republic of Liberia.
[9] Liberia also has high rates of adolescent childbearing and marriage: 30 percent of women gave birth before the age of 18. Rates are highest for girls with no education or whose mothers had no or minimal education. Almost half of schools do not allow pregnant students to attend school (MoE, 2017).

multiple barriers, a child born in Liberia has just 2.2 learning-adjusted years of school.[10] It is critical for the future of Liberia that access to quality foundational learning is the highest priority for action.

2.3 How the reform advances system transformation

The lack of foundational skills has a long-lasting impact on human capital development across the whole education system and society. Students who have foundational literacy and numeracy skills are more likely to succeed in higher grades, more likely to graduate and have higher incomes. The return-on-investment for tackling the barriers is high as the benefits will accrue across the whole system, and throughout the lives of these children.

The partners have identified priority policy actions from the latest Education Sector Plan which address the bottlenecks to improving access to quality learning for the most disadvantaged students.

Table 1 Policy action priorities

Barrier	Policy action priorities	ESP
Poor access to early grades, especially for poor families and children with disabilities.	Information for parents on at-age enrolment and school readiness.	1.1.2
	Expand home-based and community-based ECE programs.	1.1.2
	Replace ECE and primary school fees with grants and/or targeted scholarships with a new Equitable Funding Policy and Implementation Guidelines.[11]	1.1.2
	Sustain the public-private partnership Liberia Education Advancement Program which provides tuition-free ECE education.	3.2.1
	Strengthen access to quality inclusive and special education services.	1.1.1
High proportion of overaged and out-of-school children.	Expand Accelerated Learning Programs (ALP).[12]	1.1.3 1.2.2
	Incentivize and support schools to improve at-age enrolment, grade progression and ALP provision to "teach at the right level."	1.1.3 1.2.2
Poor learning environment.	Distribute school improvement grants.	1.2.1 1.2.4
	Implement school health and nutrition package (school feeding, deworming, vaccination, bed nets, screening).	2.4.1 2.4.2 2.4.3
	Construct and repair accessible classrooms and water and sanitation facilities.	1.2.1

[10] World Bank. 2022. Liberia Human Capital Country Brief. 2020 Human Capital Index. World Bank Group.
[11] ECE Kindergarten and Grade 1 are the most likely grades for targeting the removal of fees. During the development of the STG, the costs of the school grants will be modelled in more detail.

[12] Liberia has several experienced non-government providers of accelerated education (such as the We-Care Girl's Accelerated Learning Initiative and the Luminos Fund Second Chance Program) who can complement the Ministry's Accelerated Learning Program. Rising Academies – a public-private partnership provider - also has an accelerated program called "Faster Reading."

Barrier	Policy action priorities	ESP
	Increase the scope and frequency of School Quality Assessment support and monitoring visits.	3.4.1
	Strengthen special and inclusive education services.	2.4.1
SGBV and gender inequity	Training for principals, teachers and PTAs on preventing and addressing SGBV including the Safe School Protocol, positive discipline practices, Code of Conduct and Guidelines for the Prevention and Response to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in Grade Schools in Liberia.	2.4.2
	Provision of counselling and life skills clubs in upper basic schools.	2.4.2
	Design and execute referral and record keeping system for SGBV.	2.4.2
	Recruit more women into the teaching profession through incentive packages and improving pre-service teacher training.	2.3.3
Incomplete curriculum reform and lack of materials.	Refine national curriculum and benchmarks and increase contact time for foundational skills.	2.1.1
	Distribute structured lesson plans and materials for literacy and numeracy, including assessment tasks, textbooks, and student reading books.	2.1.2
Unqualified and underqualified teachers lack the skills to teach and assess foundational skills.	Improve the quality of ECE and primary pre-service teacher training.	2.3.1 2.3.2
	Increase the recruitment of female teachers.	2.3.3
	Improve the equitable deployment of qualified teachers by operationalizing the Teacher Workforce Strategy.	3.3.2
	Expand Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for foundational skills.	2.3.4
Inadequate and inequitable domestic budget for education.	Approve an equitable funding formula policy, including a Subsidy Policy for non-government schools.	3.1.4
	Develop and implement county and district education plans and budgets.	3.1.1
	Improve the tracking of education financing, especially tracking equity spending on girls, students living with disabilities, and disadvantaged students.	3.1.4
	Advocate for increased domestic education budget.	3.1.4
Lack of timely and accurate data on enrolment trends and learning outcomes.	Build capacity to implement and report the Annual School Census, school readiness assessment and national primary learning assessments.	2.1.3 3.1.3

Evidence

Evidence and learning from recent foundational learning projects, including the GPE-financed Getting to Best (G2B) and Liberia Learning Foundations projects, Liberia Education Advancement Program (LEAP), USAID-funded Read Liberia, Accelerating Quality Education and Liberia Teacher Training projects, and World Bank-supported Early Learning Partnership projects provide evidence-based pathways to strengthening ECE, primary and accelerated education. These include the introduction of community-based ECE, structured lesson plans, decodable readers, and comprehensive accelerated learning

packages. The focus on foundational literacy and numeracy is powered by the global evidence, particularly around effective reading instruction.[13]

For example, the Read Liberia early grade literacy project recently evaluated a package of literacy teaching and learning materials, in-service training for principals and teachers, coaching, community engagement, and student assessment that was effective in improving oral reading fluency and comprehension, increasing the number of fluent readers and more than doubling the proportion of students reaching national reading standards. The impact evaluation suggests that individual student ownership of the reading anthology, which they take home, and exposure to more and better-quality texts when it is used in class, accounts for better outcomes in the treatment group which will guide the revisions to the expansion of the literacy program.[14]

Globally, the importance of continued support to teachers to implement structured pedagogy and inclusive classroom practices is widely recognized.[15] In Liberia, projects such as G2B have been building the capacity of teacher training institutions to provide CPD and qualification upgrades with a strong focus on foundational teaching skills, and this work is being expanded in pre-service higher education teacher training institutions by the USAID-funded TESTS project. In each of the core foundational areas (literacy, numeracy, and accelerated learning), the Ministry is well-equipped with tried-and-tested CPD modules, structured teacher guides and student materials which can be efficiently scaled-up nationwide.

Many of the policy actions prioritized in the Partnership Compact are recommended as "great" or "good" buys by the Global Education Evidence Advisory Panel[16] including:

Table 2 Evidence-based policy actions

Great or good buys (highly cost-effective and supported by a strong body of evidence)	**Partnership Compact Policy Action**
Providing information on the benefits, costs, and quality of education.	Information for parents on at-age enrolment and school readiness.
Supporting teachers with structured pedagogy.	Distribute structured lesson plans and materials for literacy and numeracy, including assessment tasks, textbooks and reading books.
Targeting teaching instruction by learning level, not grade.	Expand Accelerated Learning Programs (ALP).
Providing parent-directed early childhood stimulation programs.	Expand home-based and community-based ECE programs.
Reducing travel times to schools.	Expand home-based and community-based ECE programs.
Giving merit-based scholarships to disadvantaged children.	Replace ECE and primary school fees with grants and/or targeted scholarships.

[13] Shanahan, T. 2022. How to Provide Effective Reading Instruction. Tools for Improving Reading Series. World Bank.
[14] Read Liberia Impact Evaluation (usaid.gov)
[15] Popova, A., Evans, D. Breeding, M. & Arancibia, V. 2018. Teacher Professional Development Around the World: The Gap Between Evidence and Practice. World Bank.
[16] Global Education Evidence Advisory Panel. 2023. Cost-effective Approaches to Improve Global Learning. Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office, World Bank, UNICEF and USAID.

Great or good buys (highly cost-effective and supported by a strong body of evidence)	Partnership Compact Policy Action
Administering school-based mass deworming.	Implement school health and nutrition package (school feeding, deworming, vaccination, bed nets, screening).

2.4 Alignment with ESP and GPE Priority Areas

The priority reform contributes to the ESP Priority Programs and includes many ESP policy actions (see 2.4). The priority reform and outcomes align with the GPE Priority Areas:

Table 3 Alignment with GPE Priority Areas

Priority reform	GPE Priority Area
Grade 3 students achieve foundational literacy and numeracy skills.	Learning
1. Children, especially girls, and children from poor or rural families, enroll at the correct age ready for school.	Early childhood care and education Gender equality Equity and inclusion
2. Overaged and out-of-school children are supported with accelerated and alternative learning programs.	Access to education Gender equality
3. Students are educated in a healthy, inclusive and adequately resourced learning environment.	Early childhood care and education Equity and inclusion Gender equality
4. Teachers, especially women teachers, have the qualifications, skills, and curriculum to teach and assess foundational skills.	Quality teaching Gender equality
5. Improved volume, efficiency and equity of domestic education expenditure.	Equity and inclusion
6. Improved quality and timeliness of data and evidence.	Learning

3. Enabling factors

Two enabling factors were rated as "high priority" because achieving progress in the priority reform would be "*impossible or extremely unlikely unless significant reforms are undertaken in the enabling factor areas*."

Table 4 Ratings for enabling factors

Enabling factor	Level of priority
Volume, equity and efficiency of domestic public expenditure on education	High
Data and evidence	High
Sector coordination	
• Inclusive sector dialogue and coordinated action	Low
• Coordinated financing and funding	Medium
Gender-responsive sector planning, policy and monitoring	Medium

3.1 Volume, equity and efficiency of domestic public expenditure on education

In 2023, Liberia's domestic education investment (excluding debt service) was 14.5 percent of public expenditure, well below the ESP target of 18 percent by 2026/27.[17] In 2019, 73 percent of recurrent expenditure was on salaries, and most of the non-salary expenditure was on grants and transfers to post-secondary institutions.[18] As the ESA noted, this leaves little for foundational learning, school maintenance, operations, and construction, in-service teaching training, or procuring teaching and learning materials. Consequently, Liberia is highly reliant on external donors for development and capital expenditure, and most public schools need to charge school fees.

Public expenditure is also inequitably focused on post-secondary education, which absorbed 40 percent of the public recurrent education budget in 2019. The ESA found that 27 percent of the budget was allocated to primary education and 9 percent to the ECE subsector (a higher share than many regional peers). Expenditure per student was US$72 per primary student and just US$27 per ECE student compared to almost one thousand dollars per higher education student. Liberia's spending per primary pupil is significantly lower than the regional average.[19]

Achieving progress in the priority reform will be very unlikely unless the government invests more in foundational education, so the Partnership Compact considers increasing the volume, equity and efficiency of domestic public education expenditure as a **high priority** for policy actions, including:

- Advocating for increasing the share of the national budget allocated to education, including establishing a financing task force.
- Achieve efficiency gains by reducing the proportion of overaged students and reducing the repetition rate.
- Strengthening budgetary planning, execution, tracking, and reporting, including establishing stronger reporting from other ministries and development partners.
- Increasing the use of value-for-money approaches in the delivery of programs such as community-based ECE, increasing digitization of teaching and learning materials and textbooks, data collection, and integrating ALP approaches into all schools.
- Increasing direct funding to schools and disadvantaged families to reduce the burden on parents using an equitable funding formula.
- Implementing a Subsidy Policy to reduce transfers to fee-charging non-government schools.
- Accelerating decentralization through county and district planning, budgeting and capacity building.

3.2 Data and evidence

The lack of robust and timely enrolment, quality, and learning data will severely hamper the assessment of progress towards the priority reform. It also affects the Ministry's ability to plan and allocate scarce resources effectively and identify the most disadvantaged students, schools and districts which systematically undermines many policy actions in the Compact. As such, this enabling factor was rated as a **high priority**.

[17] Ministry of Education. 2023. Domestic Financing Matrix. Republic of Liberia.
[18] Ministry of Education. 2022. Liberia Education Sector Analysis. Republic of Liberia.
[19] Ministry of Education. 2022a.

Timely and accurate **Annual School Census** data collection and analysis has been a persistent issue for several years and will require continued support. Although the 2019/20 statistical report was the first in over four years, the Ministry published statistical bulletins for 2020/21 and 2021/22 in mid 2023. The ESP includes activities to strengthen the ASC and EMIS system to provide more useful data to policymakers, such as increased digitization, better backbone software, and human capacity improvements.

A successful pilot of a low-stakes **national primary learning assessment** for Grades 3 and 6 was conducted in 2021. The policy, framework and instrument bank were developed under the G2B project, and the Ministry is currently analysing data from the 2022/23 national primary assessment of Grade 3 and 6 students. The ESP prioritizes capacity building to implement annual learning assessments in sub-component 2.1.3.

The **School Quality Assessment** (SQA) was introduced by the MoE to provide feedback to schools on National School Quality Standards which are within the scope of the school management and community to maintain and improve. Introduced in 2019 as a pilot, the SQA has been used by District Education Officers (DEOs) in over 400 primary schools in the six most disadvantaged counties (20 percent of all primary schools) with the support of the GPE-supported G2B project. The ESP sub-component 3.4.1 lays out priority activities to expand SQA visits across the country, including supporting schools to use it for regular self-assessment.

The MoE will also require regular data on **school readiness**, where data is currently only available from one-off research activities. The Ministry has recently selected the International Development and Early Learning Assessment (IDELA) tool for the teacher-led school readiness survey, and this will require support to pilot and roll out across Liberia and integrate into teacher education.

The Partnership Compact lays out a series of actions to improve data and evidence, including:

- Develop and approve the *National Education Sector Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Policy.*
- Strengthen the capacity of M&E officers at all levels.
- Improve gender-responsive M&E tools, processes, and procedures which enable the MoE to identify the most disadvantaged students, schools and districts.
- Provide the EMIS with modern infrastructure and equipment.
- Adequately fund the data collection exercises.
- Conduct regular dialogues on learning and evidence to discuss assessment results, identify disadvantaged groups and locations, and discuss improvement strategies.
- Validate and implement a pre-primary school readiness assessment.

3.3 Sector coordination

3.3.1 Inclusive sector dialogue and coordinated action

Liberia has a long-established LEG which includes donors, philanthropic foundations and civil society including the National Commission on Disability, UNESCO, UNICEF, Save the Children, the National Teachers' Association of Liberia, and CENTAL/COTAE. In July 2023, the Ministry reconstituted the Education Sector Development Committee (ESDC) which has a wider civil society constituency and was highly active during the COVID-19 pandemic, and which includes smaller non-government stakeholders. The last JESR was in 2023 and included a wide range of organizations and sub-national education officers.

Actions to improve dialogue and coordination are likely to be relatively straightforward and low-cost, so this enabling factor is rated as a **low priority** in the Partnership Compact.

3.3.2 Coordinated financing and funding

In terms of external financing, the ESP has identified the need to systematically track and report activity and financial data from off-budget support, diversify investment in the sector, and advocate for increasing on-budget support to ensure the ESP funding gap remains manageable. USAID has offered to support the ministry in developing a matrix for donor mapping and resource mobilization across the sector and the ESP lays out a series of actions for improving aid coordination.

Modest improvements in the tracking of donor expenditure will support alignment and accountability for donor resources to the Partnership Compact priority reform (and other ESP priorities) so the enabling factor is rated as a **medium priority**.

3.4 Gender-responsive sector planning, policy and monitoring

The Ministry has a credible gender-response sector plan with a comprehensive results framework and a budget based on a realistic simulation model. The ITAP found that the planning instruments were "robust, comprehensive, and detailed." The latest ESA had a detailed analysis of gender and inclusion in education in Liberia, and gender is mainstreamed across the ESP Priority Programs. Liberia has a sound legislative and policy framework in most areas and the ESP identifies activities for policy gaps.

During the Partnership Compact development, the need to strengthen the annual planning and budget process was highlighted. The main gap was ensuring the annual operational plan reflected the Priority Program activities and provided sufficient budget allocation to achieve success (or identifying funding gaps for external aid). This is particularly important to coordinate reform and ensure equitable distribution of grants, textbooks, reading books, and trained teachers.
In terms of monitoring, future JESRs will require modest technical assistance to improve their alignment with ESP Priority Programs, ESP key performance indicators, and the Partnership Compact priority reform.

The ESP includes specific activities to accelerate decentralization and improve routine monitoring of the education system, including:

- Capacity strengthening for county and district education personnel and systems to better plan, budget, and monitor local education activities.
- Development of county education plans which are aligned with the ESP targets and address the specific needs of their disadvantaged schools and students.
- Expansion of the School Quality Assessment inspection system to the remaining 10 counties to guide schools in improving access, equity and learning.
- Ensuring the SQA questionnaire is updated with evolving standards and policies, and made available to schools for self-assessment.
- Coaching and qualifications for school leaders, with a deliberate effort to increase the proportion of female principals.
- Establishing SGBV reporting and monitoring systems.

Overall, sector planning, policy and monitoring is rated as a **medium priority** for the Partnership Compact's priority reform.

4. Delivering system transformation

4.1 Alignment of partner resources

The MoE will continue to mobilize financing from the national budget and other partners during the Partnership Compact lifetime. The value and alignment of current or planned programs are identified in the table below.

Table 5 Resourcing the Partnership Compact

Funding source	US$m	**1** Children, especially girls, children from poor or rural families, and children living with disabilities, enroll at the correct age ready for school.	**2** Overaged and out-of-school children are supported with accelerated and alternative learning programs.	**3** Students are educated in a healthy, inclusive and adequately resourced learning environment.	**4** Teachers, especially women teachers, have the qualifications, skills, and curriculum to teach and assess foundational skills.	**5 & 6** Improved volume, efficiency and equity of domestic public education expenditure. Improved quality and timeliness of data and evidence.
Government of the Republic of Liberia[20]	293	ECE US$53m	ALP US$12m	Lower Basic US$100m	Teacher Education US$113m	System US$15m
MoE LEAP[21]	22.0					
USAID	94.2	SFP II 2019-2024 Incentivize Learning 2023-2028	TESTS 2021-2026 Youth Advance 2021-2026	SPF II 2019-2024 Incentivize Learning 2023-2028	TESTS[22] 2021-2026	ESSA 2023-2028
USAID planned	TBD	Foundational Skills (planned) Est. 2024-2029				
U.S. Department of Agriculture	25	LEARN II (4 counties) 2021-2026				
World Bank International Development Association	Up to 100.0					
GPE System Transformation Grant and Multiplier Grant	Up to 34.5					
GPE System Capacity Grant	2.0					

[20] ESP projected domestic resources available (ESP Tables 4.2 & 4.5) for ECE, LBE, ALP and 50% of teacher education and administration. The ESP simulation model uses a projected increase of education expenditure to 4.0% GDP and 20.6% of government expenditures (excluding debt service) in 2026/27.

[21] Financed by philanthropic foundations. Estimate from the ESP Table A3.8.

[22] TESTS includes a strong focus on pre-service teacher training and support for female teacher trainees.

4.2 Alignment of GPE financing

A maximum of US$34.5m from GPE is potentially available for the STG (US$ 19.5m) and Multiplier Grant (up to US$15m) and will be allocated to the unfunded priority reform activities. A further US$2.03m[23] from the SCG grant will be allocated to actions which address the two high priority enabling factors. The indicative allocations are aligned with planned investments by the government and other partners and will be further refined in the development of the respective program documents.

4.2.1 Multiplier co-financing

A maximum GPE Multiplier of US$15m is available if new external financing is made available to the education sector from other donors, development banks, philanthropic foundations, the private sector, or through loans. Full utilization of the Multiplier would increase the available financing to between US$66.5m to US$81.5m, depending on the external source of co-financing. While subject to fund availability, it is the World Bank's intention to reach an agreement with the Government of Liberia so part of the IDA allocation goes to the education sector for the explicit purpose of fully unlocking the GPE's Multiplier Fund.

Table 6 GPE Multiplier co-financing

External source	Leverage	New additional funding	Maximum Multiplier	Total
Development banks or bilateral partners	$3 to $1 Multiplier	US$45m	US$15m	US$60m
Foundations and private sector partners	$1 to $1 Multiplier	US15m	US$15m	US$30m
Debt forgiveness to boost education spending	$3 to $1 Multiplier	US$45m	US$15m	US$60m

4.2.2 Incentive-based financing

The government will allocate 30 percent (US$5.85m) of the STG grant as incentive-based financing (the "top up" allocation). The top-up will be released after the government achieves policy action triggers related to the volume, equity and efficiency of domestic financing and improvements in data systems. As the top-up cannot be renegotiated and does not allow for proportional disbursement, four triggers have been identified to spread the risk. The deadline for the triggers is **30th June 2026.**

Description of challenge

As described in 3.1, government domestic investment in education is below the targets in the ESP and Liberia's international commitments. There is also an inequitable distribution of domestic resources to foundational learning.

As described in 3.2, in recent years, the MoE has found it challenging to complete, analyse and report high quality and timely statistical data from the ASC and primary learning assessment to assess the progress of education reforms. Furthermore, the MoE has relied on external financing for these important annual activities.

[23] MoE has already committed US$170,000 of the SCG to the development of the Partnership Compact under SCG Tranche 1.

Table 7 GPE Top Up triggers

Bottleneck	Policy action	Trigger (indicator)	Baseline (2023)	Target (June 2026)	Disbursement (% STG and US$)	Verification
Inequitable distribution of public education budget to foundational learning and disadvantaged students. School fees prevent children from poor households enrolling in school.	Implement and report on an Equitable Funding Policy which directs public resources to the most disadvantaged students and schools.	1. Equitable Funding Policy and Implementation Guidelines reviewed by the LEG, approved by Minister of Education, and disseminated.	No	Yes	5% 975,000	LEG minutes
	Distribute grants to ECE and primary schools based on an equitable funding formula to replace early grade school fees.	2. Percentage of recurrent, non-salary public education budget allocated to grants for public ECE and primary schools.	0%	5%	15% 2,925,000	National Budget 2026
Lack of timely and accurate data on progress towards ESP targets which reduces the MoE's ability to target interventions effectively.	Strengthen the ability of the MoE and subnational officers to fund, plan, conduct, analyse, report and disseminate the Annual School Census statistical bulletin and annual national primary learning assessments for Grade 3 and 6.	3. Number of annual statistical reports reviewed by the LEG, approved by the Minister of Education and disseminated on time.	0	2	5% 975,000	LEG minutes
		4. Number of annual national primary learning assessment reports reviewed by the LEG, approved by the Minister of Education and disseminated.	1	1	5% 975,000	LEG minutes
Total					**5,800,000**	

The indicative verification methodology is outlined in the Annex.

4.2.3 System Capacity Grant

In coordination with government capacity investments and the USAID-funded Education System Strengthening Activity (ESSA), the Ministry of Education proposes to utilize the SCG to target capacity bottlenecks in high priority enabling factors which could derail the priority reform. These may include:

- Strengthening budgetary planning, execution, tracking, and reporting at the national and county levels, including establishing stronger reporting from other ministries and development partners.
- Professional development and technical assistance to education staff on equitable funding formula and school grant development, consultation, planning and implementation.
- Strengthening the EMIS unit and data collection system to improve the timeliness and accuracy of the annual school census system and enrich the statistical bulletins with additional analysis linked to the SDG and ESP targets.
- Providing matched funding for the annual school census and national learning assessment to support the transition to wholly government funded activities.
- Providing long-term technical assistance and professional development to strengthen the implementation, analysis, and utilization of the national learning assessment, including increasing linkages with regional assessment programs.
- Validate and implement a pre-primary school readiness assessment.

As the ESSA project begins implementation, the Ministry will update its capacity strengthening plan, and adjust the SCG activities to focus on priority reform capacity gaps which require further support.

4.3 Roles and responsibilities of country partners

4.3.1 Ministry of Education

The Minister of Education is responsible for the priority reform program through the Senior Management Team. The following units of the Ministry will lead each outcome:

Table 8 Implementation responsibilities

Outcome	Responsible	Implementation
1	Deputy Minister, Instruction	Assistant Minister, Early Childhood Education
2	Deputy Minister, Instruction	Assistant Minister, Basic & Secondary Education Director, Alternative Education
3	Deputy Minister, Instruction	Assistant Minister, Student Personnel Services
4	Deputy Minister, Instruction	Assistant Minister, Teacher Education
5	Deputy Minister, Administration	Assistant Minister, Fiscal Affairs
6	Deputy Minister, Planning, Research and Development	Assistant Minister, Planning, Research and Development

4.3.2 Annual operational plan

The Annual Operational Plan is developed by the MoE based on the ESP, Partnership Compact, and recommendations from the JESR. The Partnership Compact activities, budget, and targets will be included in the Annual Operational Plan and in the National Budget. A summary of the annual activities and targets will be included in the operational plan, quarterly reports, and annual reports.

At the local level, the County Education Officers (CEOs) will be responsible for planning, implementing, and monitoring Partnership Compact activities through their county annual operational plans. The DEOs will be responsible for monitoring Partnership Compact activities.

4.3.3 Governance

To avoid unnecessary duplication, the Partnership Compact will utilize existing governance mechanisms. The major development partners will coordinate their investments and Compact activities through the LEG, which meets monthly. All major partners commit to reporting off-budget education expenditures on a regular basis using the reporting template to be developed by the Ministry.

The government has also recently reconstituted the monthly ESDC meetings with a wider group of civil society stakeholders to coordinate activities, share learning, consult, and communicate about emerging issues. The ESDC will be used to identify organizations which are contributing to the priority reform at the local level and receive constructive feedback on priority policy reforms.

Once per year, the Ministry will lead a multi-stakeholder JESR, which will involve all the sub-national education officers, county school boards, development partners, and civil society. The review will examine the latest data, evidence, and learning from the education sector, and review progress against the ESP sub-components and targets, with a special focus on the Partnership Compact activities. As with previous reviews, the government will convene mini-reviews in each county, and establish technical working groups for ESP Priority Programs to prepare for the national review. The recommendations from the review inform the Annual Operational Plan and budget process, allowing the Ministry and its partners to adjust activities to the evolving context.

One new mechanism will be created for the highest priority enabling factor. The Minister will chair a high-level task force for education financing which will include major donors, the private sector, foundations, and the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning.

4.3.4 Grant agent

The government, with the support of USAID, the GPE Coordinating Agency, will facilitate a transparent process to select a grant agent with expertise in foundational learning for the GPE STG and Multiplier program. Dialogue to mobilize co-financing for the Multiplier is already underway.

As with previous GPE grants, there will be a small, responsive grant management committee to oversee grant implementation and review implementation plans. This will consist of the MoE, Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, and the selected grant agent.

4.3.5 Technical assistance and capacity development

Any technical assistance for the Partnership Compact activities will be embedded in the relevant MoE or sub-national department to ensure the transfer of skills and knowledge. The terms of reference for technical advisers will be shared with the LEG to ensure maximum coordination. The Compact envisages the continuation of the MoE's own Project Delivery Team to support divisions in their Partnership Compact activities.

The MoE will build upon – and annually update - the *Holistic Capacity Needs Assessment & Gap Analysis Report* (MoE, 2021) and *Revised Capacity Enhancement Plan* (MoE, 2022) to identify capacity strengthening activities for the priority reform which will include training, coaching, improved standard operating procedures, and stronger data, communication and record keeping systems. The new USAID-

funded Education System Strengthening Activity will provide a flexible mechanism to complement the capacity strengthening activities outlined for the SCG and STG program, particularly for the selected ESP *Priority Program 3 Governance and Management* activities outlined in the *Enabling Factors* section of the Compact.

4.3.6 Public-private partnerships

The government operates a large public-private partnership called the Liberia Education Advancement Program (LEAP). Four non-government organizations[24] provide manage and quality improvement services to 475 public schools across Liberia. Around 3,417 school staff and 115,749 students (47% female) benefit from the LEAP program which is funded by philanthropic foundations. The government retains ownership, monitors and provides staff to every LEAP school and the partners support better school administration, professional development, and quality assurance. The ESP notes there have been several innovations which could be scaled across the education system (for example, free ECE, structured lesson plans, catch-up programs, and school safeguarding approaches[25]). During the ESP, the Ministry aims to strengthen the public-private partnership regulatory framework and evolve the LEAP.

The Partnership Compact recognizes the involvement of non-government organizations and philanthropic foundations in achieving improved foundational learning. The LEAP funders are actively involved in the LEG and LEAP schools will be eligible for support under the various Compact programs. The Ministry intends to leverage learning from LEAP to accelerate learning and access during the STG design phase, and use LEAP schools as testbeds for innovation.

5. Monitoring and evaluation

5.1 Theory of change

The theory of change for the priority reform is outlined overleaf.

[24] Bridge Liberia (300 schools, 79,827 students), Rising Academies (95 schools, 19,940 students), Street Child Liberia (40 schools, 7,967 students) and UMOVEMENT-Liberia (40 schools, 8,015 students).
[25] All LEAP schools have safeguarding and whistleblower policies and identified safeguarding leads.

Priority reform	**Grade 3 students achieve foundational literacy and numeracy skills.**					
Outcomes	1. Children, especially girls, children from poor or rural families and children living with disabilities, enroll at the correct age ready for school.	2. Overaged and out-of-school children are supported with accelerated and alternative learning programs.	3. Students are educated in a healthy, inclusive and adequately resourced learning environment.	4. Teachers, especially women teachers, have the qualifications, skills, and curriculum to teach and assess foundational skills.	5. Improved volume, efficiency and equity of domestic public education expenditure.	6. Improved quality and timeliness of data and evidence.
Intermediate results	1.1 Improved parental knowledge about early grade education. 1.2 Increased proportion of students supported with grants and scholarships.	2.1 Increased number of students graduating from ALPs. 2.2 Increased number of out-of-school children enrolled in school.	3.1 Increased proportion of schools meeting minimum standards. 3.2 Increased proportion of students supported by school health package.	4.1 Improved PQTR in disadvantaged schools. 4.2 Increased proportion of teachers and head teachers receiving CPD. 4.3 Increased number of female teachers.	5.1 Increased domestic funding to school improvement grants.	6.1 Dissemination of annual statistical bulletins and learning data.
Focus areas	ECE and Lower Basic students		Learning environment	Curriculum	System strengthening	
	Parents	Teachers and head teachers			Decentralization	
Policy actions & interventions	**Parents** Information and resources for parents on the importance of at-age enrolment and home learning strategies. Expand home-based ECE parenting programs in urban areas. Expand community-based ECE in remote areas.	**Students** Replace ECE and lower basic school fees with grants. Targeted scholarships or conditional cash transfers for most vulnerable children (e.g. girls from poor households). Enrolment and Repetition Policy and enforcement. Remove informal education costs (e.g. examination fees). Strengthened inclusive and special education services.	**Overage program** Expand ALP and TARL programs. Provide ALP and TARL materials to teachers. CPD for ECE and primary schools for ALP and TARL. Incentivize schools to improve at-age enrollment and ALP provision.	**Health** Improved coordination with Ministry of Health. Targeted school feeding program. Implement school health package (deworming, vaccination, bed nets, vision and hearing screening). Counselling and SGBV reduction programs.	**Environment** Distribute school improvement grants. Accessible classroom and WASH construction. Increase School Quality Assessment support visits and access to self-assessment tool. Safe School Protocol.	**Curriculum** Define national curriculum benchmarks by grade. Increase contact time for foundational skills Distribute structured lesson plans, assessment tasks, textbooks and reading books. Sustain LEAP PPP program.	**Teachers** Improved quality of ECE and primary pre-service teacher training. Increased recruitment of female teachers. Equitable deployment of teachers. CPD on foundational learning. Bring more teachers onto formal payroll.	**Education financing** Policy with equitable funding formula. Subsidy Policy for non-government schools developed and implemented. Develop and implement county and district plans and budgets. Increased funding for early grades. Improved tracking of equity financing, aid and CDFs.	**Data and evidence** National primary learning assessment of reading and math. Develop and implement IDELA school readiness assessment. Capacity building for annual school census collection, analysis and publication (e.g. digital data collection; improved disability data).
Bottlenecks	Lack of effective parenting programs. No access to ECE in remote areas. Ineffective communication with parents.	Limited access to transfers for education for the poorest families. No school operation grants for ECE or primary students so schools rely on fees. School practices such as enrolment tests.	No policy enforcement. Unclear guidance and limited resources for schools to implement TARL and ALP.	Schools rely on fees to fund improvements and resources. Limited accountability for minimum standards at the school level. No MoE provision of TLMs. Disjointed coordination with Ministry of Health and other specialist services.	Complex curriculum without clear benchmarks or structured lesson plans. Insufficient contact hours. Limited systems for dealing with high rates of student and teacher absenteeism. Little CPD for teachers or head teachers. No system for deploying teachers to disadvantaged areas. Few female teachers.	Inequitable budget formulation. Unbalanced allocation to subsectors. No direct funding to schools. Limited local decision-making.	Lack of human and organizational capacity to implement national assessments and conduct sustainable and timely annual school censuses.
Root causes	**Late enrolment and out-of-school children** Lack of parental knowledge on school readiness and at-home learning strategies. Poor households unable to pay school fees and must prioritize necessities. Stunting and poor health. High rates of SGBV and adolescent marriage and childbearing. Underinvestment in early grade education so schools must charge fees.		**Poor learning environments** Lack of investment in early grade education. Overcrowding. High rates of violence. Inequitable distribution of resources.	**Ineffective teaching** Low quality pre-service teacher training. Limited resources for CPD. Many unqualified or underqualified or illiterate teachers.	**Underinvestment** Economic constraints. Political priorities. Centralized administration. Corruption.	**Capacity constraints** Reliance on aid and technical assistance for implementation. Many remote schools.

5.2 Intermediate and long-term indicators

Unless noted, intermediate and long-term indicators and targets are extracted from the respective ESP sub-components or key performance indicators. Output indicators would be refined during the development of the STG program.

Table 9 Results framework

Goal/outcome	Indicator	ESP/SDG	Disaggregation	Baseline (2019/20)	Target (Dec 2027)	Data source
Grade 3 students achieve foundational literacy and numeracy skills	Percentage of students in Grade 3 achieving at least a minimum proficiency level in (1) English and (2) mathematics.	KPI 5a SDG 4.1	Sex Disability status County	English: 53% (M: 54% F: 52%) Mathematics: 44% (M: 46% F: 41%)	English: 60% (M: 60% F: 60%) Mathematics: 51% (M: 52% F: 49%)	National primary learning assessment
	County gap in the % of students in Grade 3 achieving at least a minimum proficiency level in (1) English and (2) mathematics.	KPI 30	County	English: 20 pp Mathematics: 11 pp	Decreased	National primary learning assessment
1. Children, especially girls, and children from poor or rural families, enroll at the correct age ready for school.	Gross Enrollment Rate	KPI 1.1 KPI 1.2	Sex Grade County	ECE: 128% LBE: 77%	ECE: 89% LBE: 76%	Annual School Census
	GER county gap (max value-min value) based on national population.	KPI 32.1 KPI 32.2	Sex County	ECE: 52 pp LBE: 75pp	ECE: Decreased LBE: Decreased	Annual School Census
	Gross Intake Rate in Lower Basic Education.	KPI 1.3	Sex County	102%	85%	Annual School Census
	Completion rate to Grade 6	KPI 17.1	Sex	59%	65%	Annual School Census
	Percentage of children in public ECE benefiting from capitation grant (fee-free education).	1.1.2.1	Grade Sex County	22%	60%	Annual School Census
	Percentage of students meeting school readiness milestones.	SDG 4.2.1	Sex Disability status County	TBD	Increased	International Development and Early Learning Assessment

Goal/outcome	Indicator	ESP/SDG	Disaggregation	Baseline (2019/20)	Target (Dec 2027)	Data source
2. Overaged and out-of-school children are supported with accelerated and alternative learning programs.	Percentage of over-age students.	KPI 2.1 KPI 2.2	Sex Disability status Grade County	ECE: 67% LBE: 32%	ECE: 20% LBE: 27%	Annual School Census
	Repetition rate in ECE.	KPI 3	Sex Grade County	8%	0%	Annual School Census
3. Students are educated in a healthy, inclusive and adequately resourced learning environment.	Percentage of schools meeting national school quality standards.	KPI 16	Level County	TBD	TBD	School Quality Assessment
	Percentage of teachers and school principals, DEOs and CEOs who have received training on preventing and addressing SGBV.	2.4.2.2	Role	Teachers: 4% Principals: 11% DEOs: 50% CEOs: 75%	100%	Activity report
	Percentage of students with special needs.	KPI 29.1 KPI 29.2	Sex Disability status Grade County	ECE: 0.9% LBE: 0.8%	ECE: 2.7% LBE: 2.4%	Annual School Census
4. Teachers, especially women teachers, have the qualifications, skills, and curriculum to teach and assess foundational skills.	Percentage of teachers who have received at least the minimum training for teaching at the relevant level.	KPI 11.1 KPI 11.2 SDG 4.c	Sex Level County	ECE: 35% LBE: 45%	ECE: 72% LBE: 66%	Annual School Census
	Percentage of female teachers.	KPI 26.1 KPI 26.2	Level County	ECE: 67% LBE: 20%	ECE: 67% LBE: 25%	Annual School Census
	Percentage of females in leadership positions.	KPI 27.1 KPI 27.2	Level County	ECE: 18% LBE: 10.5%	ECE: 25% LBE: 15%	Annual School Census

Goal/outcome	Indicator	ESP/SDG	Disaggregation	Baseline (2019/20)	Target (Dec 2027)	Data source
	Student-textbook ratio (public), LBE.	KPI 13.1	County	7:1	1:1	Annual School Census
5. Improved volume, efficiency, and equity of domestic education expenditure.	Percentage of national expenditure allocated to education and training.	KPI 22 SDG 1.a.2	-	14%	18%	National Budget
	Counties with annual ESP operational plans.	KPI 24	County	1 (2021)	16	Annual operational plans
4. Improved quality and timeliness of data and evidence.	Annual census reports available at the end of academic year.	KPI 18	-	0	4	LEG minutes

5.3 Evaluations and reviews

The following assessments, reviews and evaluations will be conducted to assess progress in the priority reform. The Ministry and its partners will share evidence during the LEG, ESDC and JESR.

Table 10 Evaluations and reviews

Type	Item	Frequency	Notes
Student assessment	National primary learning assessment of reading and math.	Annual	County representative sample, Grade 3 and 6
	School readiness assessment	Annual	County representative sample, IDELA
School monitoring	School Quality Assessment	Annual	Once per school by DEO.
Review	Joint Education Sector Review	Annual	Monitoring progress on ESP targets.
	Mid-term Review of Partnership Compact	2025/26	Review progress on Partnership Compact.
	Mid-term Review of ESP	2024/25	Review implementation status and realign priorities.
Evaluation	Evaluation of community-based ECE model	Once	ESP Activity 1.1.1.4
	Evaluation of home-based ECD services	Once	ESP Activity 1.1.1.5
	Study to assess possibility of removing/reducing ECE fees in public schools and to subsidize children to enroll in non-public schools in areas where there is no public ECE school.	Once	ESP Activity 1.1.2.1
	Study to understand the number and gender dynamics of out-of-school children and over-age learners, including girls and boys with disabilities.	Once	ESP Activity 1.2.3.1
	National research on the varying costs of school fees.	Once	ESP Activity 1.2.4.1
	Evaluation of the impact of providing students with uniforms and bags.	Once	ESP Activity 1.2.4.3

6. Statement of endorsement by government and country partners

The Liberia Partnership Compact has been jointly developed by the education sector development partners under the leadership of the Government of the Republic of Liberia. We agree to align our resources to improving foundational learning to transform the education sector.

We shall work together around this priority reform, mobilize resources, and strengthen our shared efforts to contribute to this transformational goal.

Ministry of Education
Ministry of Finance and Development Planning

Coalition for Transparency and Accountability in Education
Educate Her Coalition
LGT Venture Philanthropy
Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-Informational Services
National Commission on Disabilities
Save the Children
UNICEF
United States Agency for International Development
World Bank

Annex

Table 11 Indicative verification rules for GPE incentive-based financing

Trigger 1 Equitable Funding Policy and Implementation Guidelines reviewed by the LEG, approved by the Minister of Education, and disseminated.
Definition of trigger

• The *Equitable Funding Policy* is an MoE policy signed by the Minister of Education which include rules for equitable funding policy actions for government education expenditure, including:
  ○ Needs-based per-head school grant formula which consider the relative disadvantage and educational needs of different school levels, locations, and types of students (for example, female students and students living with disabilities).
  ○ Rules for the equitable distribution of teaching and learning materials, infrastructure and other interventions based on needs.
  ○ Rules for the equitable deployment of newly qualified and serving teachers on the public service payroll which prioritise schools without adequate teachers (unless this is stated in another approved policy).
  ○ Rules for equitable distribution of subnational financing for administration and monitoring of education delivery (unless this is stated in another approved policy).
  ○ Rules for subsidies to non-government schools (unless this is stated in another approved policy).
  ○ Linkages with related policies and ESP strategies.
  ○ *Implementation Guidelines* which include clear guidance and examples to administrators and principals on the implementation of the policy.
• "Reviewed by the LEG" means at least two rounds of consultation on the policy and its guidelines with the LEG and ESDC.
• "Disseminated" means published on the MoE website and sent electronically to all CEOs, DEOs, LEG and ESDC members, and public-school principals.

Methodology for verification and disbursement

• At any time before **30th June 2026**, the MoE will:
  ○ Distribute the final *Equitable Funding Policy* and *Implementation Guidelines* to all LEG members.
  ○ Distribute a memorandum to all LEG members which includes:
  ▪ A summary of the consultation process with evidence of at least two rounds of consultation with the LEG and ESDC.
  ▪ List of CEOs, DEOs and principals who have received an electronic copy.
  ▪ Evidence the policy and guidelines are available for download on the MoE website.
• The LEG Coordinating Agency will note the receipt of these documents in the minutes of the meeting.
• A copy of the meeting minutes, policy and implementation will be provided to the GPE Secretariat.

Trigger 2 Percentage of recurrent, non-salary public education budget allocated to grants for public ECE and primary schools.
Definition of trigger
• "Grants" means financial transfers to school bank accounts. • "Public ECE and primary schools" means government or community schools which are entitled to have teachers paid on the public payroll and which are confirmed as registered public or community schools in the EMIS. • Grants, subsidies, or transfers to private or faith-based schools are not eligible with the exception of non-government special education schools as approved by the Director of the Special and Inclusive Education Division. • Government grants to public and community schools who are managed by non-government providers under a public-private partnership (such as the Liberia Education Advancement Program) are eligible.

- "Allocated" means appropriated in *301 Ministry of Education* and/or *303 Monrovia Consolidated School System* in the National Budget published by the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning.
- The economic classification for the grants will be *26 Grants.* The government has the discretion to use the appropriate budget line/s for the ECE and primary grants and may update the chart of accounts if required.
- "Recurrent, non-salary public expenditure education budget" is a total of:
    - 07-22 Use of Goods and Services
    - 07-25 Subsidy
    - 07-26 Grants
- "Percentage" is the total of eligible school grants as a proportion of the total recurrent, non-salary public expenditure education budget.
- The National Budget may be the approved budget or supplementary budget for 2024, 2025 or 2026.

Methodology for verification and disbursement

- At any time before **30th June 2026**, the MoE will:
    - Write to the LEG with evidence that the target has been met, providing the calculation and the relevant sections of the approved National Budget.
- The LEG Coordinating Agency will note the receipt of these documents in the minutes of the meeting.
- A copy of the meeting minutes, calculation and the approved National Budget will be provided to the GPE Secretariat.

Trigger 3 Number of annual statistical reports reviewed by the LEG, approved by the Minister of Education and disseminated on time.

- "Annual statistical reports" means the statistical bulletin report and data set for a particular academic year which includes:
    - Student enrolment statistics
    - Teacher and principal workforce statistics
    - School infrastructure statistics
    - Learning outcomes
    - Other quality measures such as school feeding, textbooks, reading books, and a summary of the School Quality Assessment data
- The report will include:
    - ECE, primary, secondary, alternative education, TVET, higher education
    - UNESCO Institute of Statistics and Sustainable Development Goal indicators
    - ESP Key Performance Indicators and progress towards targets
    - Disaggregation by grade/subsector, sex, disability, ownership, school provider and location as appropriate
    - Succinct narratives and appropriate charts for core indicators analysing issues, improvements and progress towards targets.
    - A user-friendly summary of the key findings and recommendations for education decision makers.
    - A section on limitations highlighting key challenges encountered (e.g. funding, return rate, sample size, data collection difficulties etc.) to contextualize the findings and help decision makers understand any shortcomings of the data and its results.
    - Recommendations for improving the annual school census.
    - Data tables in Excel for further analysis
- "Reviewed by the LEG" means at least two rounds of consultation on the draft reports with the LEG.
- "Disseminated" means published on the MoE website and sent electronically to all CEOs, DEOs, LEG and ESDC members.
- "On time" means submission of the final report and data for a particular academic year to the LEG by the beginning of next academic year (first day of Orientation). In 2023/24, this was 30th August.

Methodology for verification and disbursement

- At any time before **30th June 2026**, the MoE will:
  - Write to the LEG with evidence that the target has been met on time, submitting the final approved statistical report/s which meet the criteria outlined above, and providing evidence of at least two rounds of consultation with the LEG, list of CEOs, DEOs, LEG and ESDC members who have received a copy, and publication on the MoE website.
  - The eligible statistical reports are for the 2023/24, 2024/25 and 2025/26 academic years. Two on-time reports are required to trigger disbursement.
  - The MoE can submit as each report is completed.
- The LEG Coordinating Agency will note the receipt of the report/s in the minutes of the meeting.
- A copy of the meeting minute/s and report/s will be provided to the GPE Secretariat.

Trigger 4 Number of annual national primary learning assessment reports reviewed by the LEG, approved by the Minister of Education and disseminated.

- "Annual national primary learning assessment report" means a nationally representative, low-stakes, sample-based learning assessment for Grade 3 and 6 in English and mathematics, including:
  - Disaggregation by subject, topic, sex, disability, ownership of school and location.
  - Comparison and trends with previous assessments.
  - Progress towards ESP KPI targets.
  - Social, school and home factors influencing learning outcomes.
  - Strengths
  - Recommendations for improving learning outcomes, identifying weaker areas for further work.
  - A user-friendly summary of the findings and recommendations for teachers and principals.
- "Reviewed by the LEG" means at least two rounds of consultation on the draft report with the LEG.
- "Disseminated" means published on the MoE website and sent electronically to all CEOs, DEOs, LEG and ESDC members, public school principals, and other relevant stakeholders.

Methodology for verification and disbursement

- At any time before **30th June 2026**, the MoE will:
  - Write to the LEG with evidence that the target has been met on time, submitting the final approved report which meet the criteria outlined above, and providing evidence of at least two rounds of consultation with the LEG on the draft report.
  - One national learning assessment report is required. This is likely to be conducted and reported in 2025. The last national primary learning assessment was held in 2023.
- The LEG Coordinating Agency will note the receipt of the report in the minutes of the meeting.
- A copy of the meeting minute and report will be provided to the GPE Secretariat.