DECEMBER 4-5, 2025

MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

BRUSSELS, BELGIUM

MEETING REPORT

INTRODUCTION

This report presents a high-level summary of decisions and key discussion points. The agenda and documents for the Board meeting can be found on the GPE website. The Board decisions can be found in Annex 1 and the list of participants in Annex 2.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2025

1. Opening of the Meeting

1.1 The Board Chair called the meeting to order at 09:00am.

1.2 The Board Chair invited David Boutcher, interim Chair of the Foundation for GPE, to present an update regarding the Foundation's progress. Mr. Boutcher reported substantial advancements in registering the Foundation as an independent organization committed to the mission and objectives of GPE. The Foundation has established its offices in Geneva, convened multiple meetings—both virtually and in-person—and reached consensus on key principles of communication and transparency. He further highlighted ongoing outreach efforts with prospective donors and partners, notably at the UN General Assembly in New York, where there was considerable support for the Foundation's mission. The Foundation looks forward to participating in the GPE replenishment campaign and is tentatively planning a formal launch to coincide with its initial major transactions. David Boutcher ended by thanking everyone for their continued collaboration and expressing anticipation for sharing updates on specific actions and partnerships moving ahead.

1.3 The Board Chair introduced youth observers Norhan Gharabli and Karen-Andrea Bedoume Nkoume, who thanked the Board and stressed the importance of improving access to quality education for all children.

1.4 Laura Frigenti, GPE CEO, noted that Dan Toole, interim ECW Director, is attending the meeting.

1.5 Following the opening statements, the Chair presented the meeting agenda.

2. CEO Report

2.1 Laura Frigenti, GPE CEO, presented an overview of GPE's performance in the last six months as laid out in DOC 02.

Discussion

2.2 The Board extended their appreciation for the CEO's report and recognized the progress and accomplishments achieved by the GPE Secretariat, particularly considering recent challenges.

2.3 **UNGA:** Members pointed out that the launch of the replenishment campaign at UNGA was a major achievement. Appreciation was expressed to staff and the Foundation for GPE team for their work in strengthening resource mobilization and forming new partnerships.

2.4 **Financial Prospects:** Members recognized the high disbursement rates, increased absorption capacity and the mobilization of co-financing as signs of systemic improvement and efficiency. Members encouraged GPE to maintain low transaction costs and pursue operational efficiencies to maximize the impact of funding. The strengthening of country-led reforms and national ownership in education sector planning was viewed as essential for sustainable progress, with broad support for grant-based financing models over concessional lending. The CEO emphasized that the aim is to improve Secretariat efficiency without cutting resources for partner countries and reiterated the need to advocate for expanding available funding.

2.5 **Midterm Reviews**: Support was expressed for GPE's results-based financing, incentivizing increased domestic education funding and learning from partner countries' midterm reviews. Requests were made for updates on the advancement of midterm reviews, specifically focusing on progress with various education reforms. The CEO acknowledged these suggestions and indicated an intent to monitor developments from the midterm reviews, committing to providing updates to the Board as information becomes available.

2.6 **Foundation for GPE:** Members acknowledged the successful establishment and ongoing operations of the Foundation for GPE, conveyed confidence in its leadership and encouraged continued efforts toward resource mobilization. Several members welcomed efforts to target philanthropy, the private sector and high net worth individuals, and highlighted the importance of innovative partnerships and the multiplier to unlock additional funding. The CEO noted strong interest in the Foundation for GPE and suggested joint outreach to engage private foundations and other groups.

2.7 **Cross-sectoral Collaboration**: Participants emphasized the importance of working

across different sectors, including digital transformation, climate resilience, health and nutrition. They strongly supported ongoing investment in EdTech and technical assistance, particularly for areas dealing with climate emergencies and transition challenges.

2.8 **Gender Equality:** Gender equality remained a central topic, with members praising GPE's gender hardwiring approach and investment in girls' education, particularly through the girls' education accelerator. Members stressed the importance of safeguarding the rights of women, girls and people with disabilities and marginalized groups. Calls were also made for GPE to differentiate its approach in conflict and crisis contexts to ensure quality education for all children. The CEO emphasized the importance of girls' inclusion and recognized the significance of supporting people with disabilities.

2.9 **Misuse of Funds Cases:** Members raised concerns about the small number of misuse cases reported, considering the scale of the GPE operations, with emphasis placed on building a culture of trust in reporting such issues.

2.10 **Grant Agent Diversification:** Members stressed the importance of ongoing grant agent diversification. The CEO confirmed that this remains a key priority.

2.11 **Results:** The importance of integrating holistic learning outcomes and real-time monitoring to demonstrate results for children and strengthen the investment case was highlighted.

2.12 The CEO thanked the members for their input and noted that some topics would be addressed in dedicated sessions during the Board meeting.

3. Thematic Session: A Renewed Agenda for Sustainable Financing of Education

3.1 Raphaelle Martinez, Lead Economist on Sustainable Finance, presented an overview on sustainable financing for education based on lessons emerging from GPE 2025 and how GPE is evolving in the current context to continue to be relevant and impactful in supporting partner countries as laid out in SG 01. Luis Benveniste, MLA 3 Board member, moderated the thematic session. The ministers from The Gambia, the Maldives and Somalia shared their country-level experiences on the topic. Stefania Giannini, MLA 1 Board member, provided closing remarks.

Discussion

3.2 **Domestic Resource Mobilization**: Members emphasized the importance of increasing domestic funding for education and they noted efforts to boost budgetary allocations and tax reforms to unlock new revenue sources. Members stressed the need for robust domestic resource mobilization as the anchor of

sustainable financing.

3.3 **Private Sector and Philanthropy Engagement:** Members underscored the need to mobilize private and philanthropic funding towards the education sector. The Minister of Nigeria stated that his government is planning a public-private sector summit to tap into private support for education, while other partners echoed the need to engage foundations and private sector more proactively.

3.4 **Systemic and Contextual Approaches:** Members advocated systemic thinking and better alignment of financing strategies at the country level, warning against fragmentation and parallel systems. They encouraged GPE to coordinate closely with other multilateral agencies and to ensure that sector plans remain the entry point for macro-fiscal discussions.

3.5 **Debt Relief and Fiscal Space:** Members pointed out that high-debt service ratios limit the fiscal space available for education, especially in lower-income countries. Advocating for debt relief and progressive taxation was seen as critical to expanding resources for education.

3.6 **Innovative Financing:** While recognizing the value of innovative financing, members cautioned against treating it as a silver bullet and stressed the need for practical models and critical analysis. Members highlighted the need to learn from ongoing initiatives and focus on equity and inclusion, especially for marginalized groups.

3.7 **Cross-sectoral Collaboration:** Some members advocated for holistic approaches, such as integrating health, nutrition and social protection with education.

3.8 **Data Systems and Accountability:** Members highlighted robust data systems as vital for accountability and for ensuring that spending leads to better policies and outcomes.

3.9 **Coordination and Alignment:** There was a consensus on the need for joint support among partners to avoid duplication and fragmentation. The importance of aligning global and country-level strategies was underscored, with GPE seen as uniquely positioned to translate high-level guidance into concrete, scalable support.

3.10 Members agreed on the urgency of sustainable financing for education, the centrality of domestic financing, and the need for efficient, equitable and inclusive approaches. They called for actionable strategies, improved coordination, capacity building and a shift to long-term, integrated investments. The discussion concluded with optimism about GPE's role in driving these changes and a commitment to continued collaboration among stakeholders.

4. GPE 2030 Strategy

4.1 Jo Bourne, Chief Technical Officer (CTO), provided a presentation on the GPE 2030 Strategic Plan as laid out in DOC 03.

Discussion

4.2 Members commended the comprehensive and evidence-based process, emphasizing the value of broad consultation, inclusivity and country ownership in developing the strategy. The Secretariat expressed gratitude for the extensive engagement and input received throughout the 18-month process, acknowledging the valuable contributions of both Board members and their teams.

4.3 **Core Strategic Themes:** Members highlighted the integration of gender, disability inclusion, and resilience as core enablers of systemic reform, and stressed the importance of positioning education as a central solution to global challenges. Members stressed that education is a human right as well as an important investment and recognized the strategy emphasis on the principle of "leave no one behind" that aligns with the Agenda 2030.

4.4 **Emergencies and Crisis Contexts:** Members requested more clarity on GPE's catalytic role in emergency and protracted crisis contexts, including complementarity with Education Cannot Wait (ECW). It was proposed to add a box clarifying mandates and coordination between GPE and ECW. The Secretariat agreed to include a box in the document highlighting their high-level complementarity.

4.5 **Data, Measurement and Accountability:** There was support for the approaches being proposed to improve measurement and reporting of learning outcomes, through strengthening national data systems, and incentivizing the availability of learning outcome data. Members called for ambitious reporting on indicators, especially regarding inclusivity and the influence of youth and civil society actors. Calls were made for clear monitoring, public reporting, and disaggregated data aligned with global reports. The Secretariat acknowledged methodological consistency with UIS and ambition in approach, with assurance the board that more operational aspects of rolling out the revised approach to results reporting were underway.

4.6 **Operational Guidance and Implementation:** Members stressed the need for clear operational guidance, robust capacity-building and phased reporting expectations to support countries, especially in fragile contexts. Development of an accountability framework for country-level engagement was encouraged. The Secretariat noted ongoing work on operationalizing the strategy, especially regarding learning outcomes data and collaboration on domestic financing. The Secretariat affirmed readiness to further mainstream based on Board guidance in the implementation process.

4.7 **Focus on Skills and Learning Outcomes:** Members requested more references to skills for work development, noting the urgency in regions like Sub-Saharan Africa.

The skills development journey, starting with foundational learning, was emphasized, alongside the critical role of teachers.

4.8 **Inclusion of Youth and Civil Society:** There was a request for more youth and civil society participation in decision-making, moving beyond monitoring to more active roles in policy and implementation.

4.9 **School Nutrition and Well-being:** Members acknowledged the inclusion of school nutrition and requested that learner well-being be mentioned, as this is also critical to equity and retention, especially in vulnerable contexts.

4.10 **Technology and Digital Skills:** Members stressed the need to address the digital divide not only through connectivity but by developing digital skills. It was noted that there are risks as well as opportunities posed by technology.

4.11 **Teachers**: It was noted that there should be more consistency in describing the role of teachers in terms of implementation and the role of teachers' organizations in policy dialogue. It was noted that efforts for diverse representation were relevant for both teachers and teacher organizations.

4.12 **Governance and Process:** Members requested timely sharing of the final strategy for Board endorsement to ensure clear ownership and accountability. Members proposed sending it to EXCO for final review to prevent delays in the January strategy launch.

4.13 The Secretariat thanked the Board for their suggestions, and for highlighting areas for further emphasis, and confirmed that these could be addressed in the final version of the document. It was also agreed to include a map showing where GPE works.

4.14 The Secretariat recommended integrating members' feedback, refining the draft document and forwarding it to the Executive Committee (EXCO) for finalization on behalf of the Board, as postponing until the next Board meeting in June would not be practical. This proposal was agreed to by the Board.

4.15 The Board Chair declared consensus on the decision in Annex 1.

5. Financial Forecast and Corporate Risk

5.1 Youssouf Tahir Ahmat, Chair of the Finance and Risk Committee (FRC), opened the session and provided an overview of the Committee's deliberations. He was followed by Padraig Power, Chief Financial Officer (CFO), who presented the Financial Forecast (DOC 04) and the Corporate Risk Report (DOC 05).

Discussion

5.2 **Financial Position:** Members expressed appreciation for the efforts made and welcomed the improvement in GPE's financial position and the continued containment of operating expenses within the seven percent ceiling. The challenges of financial management in this current context were recognized while highlighting

the need to maintain a prudent financial approach. Members noted the risks of uncertainty and the importance of keeping members informed about various replenishment scenarios and their implications.

5.3 **Donors' Pledges:** Members shared concerns about donors not fully pledging or disbursing on time and emphasized ongoing efforts to raise awareness regarding what gets deprioritized when pledges are delayed. The Secretariat highlighted the importance of donor pledges, mentioning Germany's contribution to long-term financial predictability. However, uncertainty remains regarding other donors, and projections will be refined as more pledges are confirmed. The Secretariat noted that the June 2025 Board decision on eligibility and allocation for GPE2030 considered various funding scenarios of between US$3 to 5 billion. Should funding fall substantially below US$3 billion, the Finance and Risk Committee and the Board would need to review and consider If adjustments were required.

5.4 **Carryover:** Members suggested that the Secretariat should pursue ongoing efforts to lower carryover costs.

6. Executive Session on Misuse of Funds and the Protection against Sexual Abuse, Exploitation and Harassment (PSEAH) and GPE 2030 Operating Expenses Parameters

6.1 The Board held an executive session on Misuse of Funds and the Protection against Sexual Abuse, Exploitation and Harassment (PSEAH) lessons learned and cases, and on GPE 2030 Operating Expenses Parameters.

6.2 The Board Chair declared consensus on the decision in Annex 1.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2025

7. Replenishment update

7.1 Karen Schroh, Director of External Relations, and Breanna Ridsdel, Head of Advocacy and Communications, provided a brief update on the replenishment campaign. The Nigerian Minister of Education, Maruf Tunji Alausa, reaffirmed the country's commitment as co-host, mentioning plans for a private sector roundtable in January and expressing confidence in meeting campaign goals. Susanna Schlein, representative of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, reaffirmed Italy's dedication to education as a driver of prosperity and stability.

Discussion

7.2 Several members thanked the co-hosts, shared optimism for the campaign's plan, and confirmed their active support. The Secretariat emphasized the urgent priority of

achieving replenishment goals to maintain GPE's impact over the next five years. It further stressed the importance of advocacy in partner countries, particularly the need for domestic financing commitments, and the role of donors in sustaining or increasing their contributions.

7.3 France informed about its current budget process and plans to utilize its upcoming G7 presidency to elevate education on the international agenda by organizing a high-level event on financing for education and supporting the replenishment.

8. Discussion: Multilateral Aid Architecture for Education in Emergencies and Protracted Crises

8.1 Christine Hogan, Board Vice Chair and EXCO Chair, provided introductory remarks regarding the EXCO meeting convened the evening prior regarding the Education Cannot Wait (ECW) Hosting review and the Multilateral Education Architecture (Education in Emergencies and Protracted Crises): Phase One Study conducted by Genesis which identifies four pathways for collaboration or merger between GPE and ECW. The Vice Chair stated that Committee members appreciated the opportunity to discuss these issues and the value of the briefing to better understand the short- and long-term implications for GPE governance.

8.2 EXCO members flagged timing as a critical concern, emphasizing that discussions on aid architecture should not detract from GPE's immediate priority—the replenishment campaign. The Vice Chair stressed the importance of GPE maintaining constructive engagement within efforts to strengthen multilateral aid effectiveness for education in emergencies, highlighting the need for coherence, alignment and complementarity between humanitarian and development actors.

8.3 The Vice Chair noted that EXCO stands ready to engage further as needed, given the potential governance implications, and asked the Secretariat to keep the Committee informed of ongoing developments, with a commitment to involve the Board as needed.

8.4 The Vice Chair concluded by assuring Board members that EXCO remains attentive and will continue its role in monitoring and constructively participating in relevant activities and discussions on the subject.

8.5 Judith Herbertson, Donor 3 Alternate Board member, outlined the background to the study, which was commissioned by a group of bilateral donors, including the United Kingdom, Norway, Denmark and Germany.

8.6 Amrita Paul, delegated Donor 3 Board member, updated the Board on the December 2nd workshop held at the Canadian Embassy in Brussels, highlighting the discussion of the options outlined in the study. 30 participants attended the meeting, including

representatives from partner countries, donors, GPE, ECW, implementing agencies and CSOs. It was noted that two more dialogues on the topic are planned to take place in January and February 2026.

Discussion

8.7 **Need for Collaboration and Systemic Reform:** Members stressed that the current fragmentation of the global education architecture system is unsustainable. There was broad agreement on the importance of improving coordination, efficiency and accountability to ensure that support reaches learners. They called for a more coherent, adaptive and simplified multilateral system, with education reforms aligned with broader UN reforms.

8.8 **Inclusivity and Stakeholder Engagement:** Members highlighted the need to include a diverse range of stakeholders, especially partner country governments and civil society organizations in the ongoing discussions. There was consensus that diverse perspectives should inform any significant reforms, and that partner countries should be co-architects, not just beneficiaries, of future solutions.

8.9 **Possible Merger and Structural Change:** Views diverged regarding the possibility of merging GPE and ECW. Some members were open to considering this option but emphasized the necessity of further analysis and stakeholder input before making any decision on structural changes. Others cautioned against a merger at this critical time, citing risks such as disruption of emergency response, increased transaction costs and the potential for delayed or diluted support for children in need.

8.10 **Distinction Between Humanitarian and Development Aid:** Several members noted that the distinction between humanitarian and development assistance is increasingly blurred due to the protracted nature of many crises. They advocated for seamless support across the spectrum, with clearer roles for each fund. Some members underlined that ECW should focus on rapid emergency response and GPE on medium-term system strengthening.

8.11 **Risks:** Some members warned that debates over fragmentation and possible structural changes must not interfere with the ongoing replenishment cycles for GPE and ECW, as delays could jeopardize funding for millions of out-of-school children. There was also concern that major changes could increase costs and disrupt ongoing programs. Some members questioned the methodology of the study, noting the lack of evidence.

9. Committee Recommendation: Education Out Loud (EOL):

9.1 Judith Herbertson, Donor 3 Alternate Board member, and Chair of the Performance, Impact, and Learning Committee (PILC), opened the session and provided short remarks. Tanvir Muntasim, Senior Education Specialist, provided a presentation on

the Design Framework of the Education Out Loud (DOC 07).

Discussion

9.2 **Endorsement of Adapted Design Framework:** Members welcomed and endorsed the adapted design framework, highlighting appreciation for its focus on teachers, youth organizations and marginalized groups.

9.3 **Grant Agent Selection Criteria:** Members welcomed the grant agent selection criteria and highlighted transparency, robust due diligence and meaningful involvement of recipient organizations in co-financing decisions. Concerns were raised regarding the timeline, specifically questioning how grant agents can develop proposals without knowing the funding envelope. The Secretariat explained that the process involves two steps, starting with an assessment of applicants' capacity, including grant management and geographic presence. Upon confirmation of the funding envelope in June 2026, the selected grant agent will be invited by the Board to submit a detailed operational proposal.

9.4 **Coordination and Alignment:** Several comments underscored the need for improved coordination between EOL with KIX, technical assistance initiatives, and partnership compacts, to avoid fragmentation and maximize impact. The Secretariat is strengthening connections with regional actors and local education groups to ensure a harmonized and coordinated approach and avoid fragmentation. Moreover, the Secretariat noted ongoing collaboration with ECW and other humanitarian sector partners to strengthen country-level civil society capacity and align guidance for national education coalitions. The Secretariat reported on collaborations with external initiatives, such as German Generation Digital and the World Bank Civic Initiative, to provide complementary support for civil society.

9.5 **Emphasis on Collaboration and Accountability:** Members stressed the importance of collaboration among civil society organizations in driving education processes and policy reforms. National education coalitions are seen as central to strengthening accountability, representation and the advocacy agenda, especially for marginalized communities. The Secretariat stated that National Education Coalitions are encouraged to work with school management committees and Parent Teachers Associations to ensure parent voices inform policy spaces.

9.6 **Teachers' Unions:** Members called for explicit mention of teachers' unions as key stakeholders. The Secretariat stated that the approach involves collaboration with national partners to include teachers in the discussions. The Secretariat aims to enhance their participation and capacity through both national and global channels.

9.7 **Co-financing:** There was consensus among members for increased domestic resource mobilization and strategic co-financing, with CSOs playing a crucial role in advocating for better national education financing. Members requested more

information regarding the involvement of international education funders. The Secretariat noted that outreach to international education funders proved challenging during the first phase. For the upcoming phase, greater emphasis is planned, including exploring additional resource mobilization options through the Foundation for GPE.

9.8 **Capacity Development and Civic Space:** Members highlighted the need for EOL to deepen its capacity-building offerings for CSOs, leverage existing training and address shrinking civic space. Members encouraged enhanced youth engagement and more focus on gender and inclusion. The Secretariat welcomed the recent mapping that the Global Education Monitoring team developed on youth participation and plans to collaborate with relevant organizations to support structured youth engagement. The Secretariat stated that the updated theory of change emphasizes gender and inclusion, with additional capacity-building support for grantees specializing in these areas.

9.9 **Communication and Advocacy Tools:** A member requested compelling case studies and impact examples, such as policy change, evidence generation and coalition engagement, to support advocacy and replenishment efforts. The media involvement in vulnerable contexts was also mentioned. The Secretariat noted that the documentation of lessons learned and successful approaches is ongoing, with existing partnerships to highlight achievements and support advocacy and replenishment efforts. The Secretariat also stated that media involvement is encouraged to promote learning outcomes and showcase successful strategies, especially in challenging contexts.

9.10 **Operational Recommendations:** Board members welcomed the simplified operational components, endorsed the shift from three to two components and the allocation of 90 percent of resources to national efforts. Members called for early strategies on data collection, a results-oriented approach and recommended mandating Country Engagement Leads to improve outreach of the EOL activities towards partner countries' governments to increase the visibility of GPE's work.

9.11 The Board Chair declared consensus on the decision language in Annex 1.

10. Committee Recommendation: Knowledge and Innovation Exchange (KIX)

10.1 Judith Herbertson, Donor 3 Alternate Board member and Chair of the Performance, Impact, and Learning Committee (PILC), opened the session and provided short remarks. Ian Macpherson, Senior Education Specialist, provided a presentation on the Adapted Design Framework of the GPE Knowledge and Innovation Exchange (KIX 2.0 – DOC 08).

Discussion

10.2 **Endorsement of the Framework and Gender Equality, Equity and Inclusion:** Members welcomed and endorsed the adapted design framework and emphasized the focus on gender equality, equity and inclusion, urging that these remain central in KIX operations and research.

10.3 **Regional Hubs and Civil Society:** Broad support emerged for increased funding and responsibility for regional hubs, with calls for streamlined mechanisms to avoid unnecessary complexity. Members emphasized the need for meaningful civil society engagement and cautioned against reductions in research funding. The Secretariat clarified that regional learning partners and national delegations drive KIX's work at the country level, with strong civil society organization (CSO) participation. It was assured that the initiative will maintain a country-driven, collaborative approach, and that CSO engagement is critical to success.

10.4 **Integration and Coordination:** Members welcomed the stronger integration of KIX with GPE 2030, emphasizing the need for coherence with other mechanisms such as System Capacity Grants, technical assistance initiatives, EOL and others. They cautioned against duplication and stressed the importance of strategic alignment. The Secretariat confirmed stronger coordination between KIX and technical assistance initiatives, System Capacity Grants, EOL and other GPE mechanisms, both at Secretariat and country levels. The new KIX governance and management structures are designed to enhance strategic alignment and avoid duplication.

10.5 **Visibility and Country Engagement:** Members noted the limited awareness and visibility of KIX activities at the country level. They requested clearer illustrations of impact and better communication to ensure partner countries understand and benefit from the initiative. The Secretariat acknowledged the need for better communication about KIX activities and impact. The Secretariat also agreed to provide clearer, accessible illustrations of country-level results and committed to increasing visibility through various channels, including national delegations, local education groups and focal points.

10.6 **Evidence and Impact:** There was a call for more focus on evidence uptake, outcome measurement and measurable key performance indicators to ensure accountability and track progress. The Secretariat emphasized that the next phase of KIX will prioritize evidence use and the development of concrete performance indicators. There is a commitment to outcome-focused reporting and measurement, drawing on the GPE Data Hub expertise.

10.7 **Private Sector Engagement:** A member identified opportunities for greater involvement in evidence sharing, digital learning and EdTech, requesting more

avenues for engagement. The Secretariat welcomed the private sector engagement, highlighting recent joint initiatives such as the GPE Data Academy, developed in partnership with Cisco, and the Africa 19 Hub. Significant potential for further collaboration in digital learning and innovation was noted.

10.8 The Board Chair declared consensus on the decision language in Annex 1.

11. Regional Managers Panel

11.1 Charles North, Deputy Chief Executive Officer (DCEO), introduced the regional managers, Aya Kibesaki, Marco Mantovanelli and Belay Addise, and moderated the panel. This session outlined the recent reorganization of the Secretariat. The regional managers stated that the reorganization aimed to improve engagement with partner countries, enhance operational efficiency, reduce costs and better align with the GPE 2030 goals. It was noted that the new structure has resulted in more effective decision-making, faster grant processing and accelerated project implementation, with GPE now disbursing $1 billion annually. They noted that Country Engagement Leads (CELs) and Country Program Officers (CPOs) work closely with partner countries supporting policy dialogue, sector reviews and resource mobilization in support of reform priorities and the CPOs providing end to end support to grant processes. Moreover, it was noted that regional coordination with partners has improved. Specialized roles in gender and finance have helped mainstream these priorities and manage risks across the regions.

11.2 The panel also emphasized the critical importance of sustainable financing. Domestic resource mobilization, equitable spending, innovative mechanisms and partnerships with agencies and the private sector are being leveraged to support education reforms and address emergency needs. Collaborative efforts at regional level and in partner countries are mobilizing additional resources and driving sector reforms, demonstrating how GPE's regional approach and partnerships are advancing its mission to strengthen education systems and outcomes globally.

Discussion

11.3 Some members expressed their appreciation, noting their excitement about the upcoming midterm reviews and the need for continuous improvement in the review process. Members inquired on vulnerable contexts, highlighting the complexities of operating in such an environment, as Afghanistan, and the importance of safeguarding educational opportunities for girls and women. Further comments focused on the significance of collaborative regional and country-level engagement, as well as the importance of ongoing monitoring and adaptation in challenging contexts.

11.4 In their responses, regional managers highlighted the complexities of operating in challenging environments, emphasizing the importance of community-based education to reach the most vulnerable learners, especially girls, in contexts where it is not possible to engage with the government. In the case of Afghanistan, the majority of beneficiaries of GPE financed programs are girls, and grant agents are operating within a strict risk management framework in constant consultation with all partners active in the country to limit the risk of aid diversion. Regional managers emphasized the effectiveness of collective engagement with grant agents and the significance of localized risk management systems, which allow for continuous monitoring and adaptability in high-risk contexts. They pointed out that community involvement is crucial for overcoming barriers to education and that ongoing collaboration with the grant agencies ensure curriculum oversight and safeguards educational opportunities despite political uncertainties.

11.5 In their reflections on midterm review processes and sector reforms, managers called for inclusive and focused approaches that actively involve partner governments, local education groups and development partners. They advocated for simplified review processes tailored to the needs of smaller or fragile countries, stressing that inclusivity and clearly defined priorities are essential for meaningful policy dialogue and attracting diverse funding sources.

11.6 The panel concluded that fostering constructive engagement, maintaining flexibility and leveraging collective judgement are vital to driving progress and supporting equitable and quality education across diverse regions.

12. Thematic Session on Results

12.1 Judith Herbertson, Donor 3 Alternate Board member, and Chair of the Performance, Impact, and Learning Committee (PILC), moderated the session. Nidhi Khattri, Data & Evaluation Hub Manager, provided a presentation on the GPE 2030 data and evidence infrastructure, including the GPE 2030 results framework, monitoring data, the value for money indicators and the technology platform to underpin the data system (DOC 09 and SG 02).

Discussion:

12.2 **Platform:** Members asked about the availability of, and potential for sharing, the new platform with other partners to avoid duplication, and suggested facilitating knowledge exchange among partners to improve program delivery and measurement. The Secretariat stated that it is under development and expected to be ready by next fiscal year.

12.3 **Challenges in Measurement:** Members acknowledged the difficulties in collecting robust data in challenging environments, especially regarding learning outcomes and disability. It was suggested to leverage national data systems where possible and start with existing models for disability measurement. The Secretariat acknowledged difficulties in measuring outcomes, especially in complex contexts and stressed the need to work through these issues methodically, using available models and starting points for disability measurement. The Secretariat expressed intent to rely on national data systems where available, using grant-specific measurement only when national data is absent.

12.4 **Focus Areas for Evaluation:** Members proposed the possibility of several evaluations. Several of the suggestions were on specific topics, and GPE processes and instruments. The Secretariat welcomed these ideas for future evaluations.

13. Close of Meeting

13.1 The meeting was adjourned at 16:30.

Annex 1: Board Decisions

FINAL DECISIONS

Reference	Decision
BOD/2025/12-01	**GPE 2030 Strategic Plan:** The Board of Directors: 1. Requests the CEO to finalize the GPE 2030 Strategic Plan under the leadership of the Vice-Chair and Chair of the GPE Board of Directors, for publication early 2026.
BOD/2025/12-02	**GPE2030 Operating Expense Parameters:** The Board of Directors: 1. Affirms the necessity of a highly efficient and effective Secretariat to support the successful delivery of GPE2030, while maximizing resources for programmatic activities. 2. Confirms that the parameters for Operating Expenses (OPEX) shall remain set at seven percent (7%) of total disbursements from the GPE Fund, recognizing this as an appropriate methodology for determining OPEX levels at the current stage of GPE2030 implementation remaining aligned with other multilateral global funds. 3. Resolves that the Operating Expenses budget (inclusive of World Bank hosting charges) for July 2026 to June 2030 (FY27–FY30) shall not increase in real terms from FY26 levels, and shall be capped at 7% of the total disbursements from the GPE Fund. 4. Directs the CEO to take all necessary and orderly actions—should the 7% ceiling require a reduction in the Operating Expenses budget—to minimize risks to the delivery of GPE2030, while giving due consideration to the wellbeing of staff. 5. Requests the Secretariat and the Finance and Risk Committee (FRC) to review the OPEX framework in light of the GPE replenishment in 2026, if necessary, with a view to recommending updated operational parameters, that strengthen alignment with GPE2030 priorities. 6. Further requests the Secretariat and the FRC to explore and propose options to focus operational resources more directly on effective grant management and delivery in partner countries, ensuring that administrative efficiency supports greater impact on education outcomes.

BOD/2025/12-03	**<u>Education Out Loud (EOL) 2.0 - Design Framework:</u>** The Board of Directors: 1. Noting the proposed design adaptations, and their alignment with the Education Out Loud (EOL) evaluation, approves the design framework in Annex A of BOD/2025/12 DOC 07. 2. Acknowledges the proposed criteria and procedure for selecting grant agents for the upcoming phase of the initiative, as detailed in Annex C of BOD/2025/12 DOC 07.
BOD/2025/12-04	**<u>Knowledge and Innovation Exchange (KIX) – Adapted Design Framework:</u>** The Board of Directors: 1. Noting the proposed design adaptations, and their alignment with the Knowledge and Innovation Exchange (KIX) evaluation, approves the adapted design framework in Annex A of BOD/2025/12 DOC 08. 2. Acknowledges the proposed criteria and procedure for selecting grant agents for the upcoming phase of the initiative, as detailed in Annex E of BOD/2025/12 DOC 08.

Annex 2: List of Board Meeting Participants

	Name	Constituency	Role
	Board Members		
1	Farah Sheikh Abdulkadir	Africa 1	Board Member
2	Samaria Tovela	Africa 1	Alternate Board Member
3	Youssouf Tahir Ahmat	Africa 2	Board Member and FRC Chair
4	Mohamed Abdallah Mahyooub	Africa 2	Representing Alternate Board Member
5	Maruf Tunji Alausa	Africa 3	Board Member
6	Habibatou Drammeh	Africa 3	Alternate Board Member
7	Ismail Shafeeu	Asia and Pacific	Board Member
8	Wayne Mendiola Jr	Asia and Pacific	Alternate Board Member
9	Rahim Saidzoda	EEMECA	Board Member
10	Dan Perciun	EEMECA	Alternate Board Member
11	Mischka White-Griffith	Latin America and Caribbean	Representing Alternate Board Member
12	Jean-Sebastian Conty	Donor 1	Board Member
13	Valérie Carlier	Donor 1	Alternate Board Member
14	Paul St. John Frisoli	Donor 2	Board Member
15	Helena Reutersward	Donor 2	Alternate Board Member
16-17	Patricia Pena/Amrita Paul	Donor 3	Representing Board Member
18	Judith Herbertson	Donor 3	Alternate Board Member and PILC Chair
19	Merete Lundemo	Donor 4	Board Member
20	Ilham Al Ghadiri	Donor 4	Alternate Board Member
21	Martin Seychell	Donor 5	Board Member
22	Heike Kuhn	Donor 5	Alternate Board Member
23	Jane Chandler	Donor 6	Board Member
24	Takayuki Kawakami	Donor 6	Alternate Board Member
25	Yona Nestel	CSO 1	Board Member
26	Marian Hodgkin	CSO 1	Alternate Board Member
27	Solange Akpo-Gnandi	CSO 2	Board Member
28	Grant Kasowanjete	CSO 2	Representing Alternate Board Member
29	Haldis Holst	CSO 3	Board Member

30	Dennis Sinyolo	CSO 3	Alternate Board Member
31	Stefania Giannini	MLA 1	Board Member
32	Ilaria Dettori	MLA 1	Representing Alternate Board Member
33	Pia Britto	MLA 2	Board Member
34	Elizabeth Eyster	MLA 2	Representing Alternate Board Member
35	Luis Benveniste	MLA 3	Board Member
36	Jawara Gaye	MLA 3	Representing Alternate Board Member
37	Andrew Cunningham	Private Foundations	Board Member
38	Sabrina Hervey	Private Foundations	Representing Alternate Board Member
39	Tendai Mashingaidze	Private Sector	Board Member
40	Emily Friedman	Private Sector	Alternate Board Member
	Board and Committee Chairs		
41	Jakaya Kikwete	Board	Chair
42	Christine Hogan	Board	Vice-Chair