System Capacity Grant Annual Progress Report Template

Status: Accepted

Country	Grant ID	Grant Agent	Grant Effectiveness/Start Date
Jordan	GPE0016546	SCG	01/01/2025

Grant Amount	Timeframe Examined in this Report		Date of Report Submission
550,000 (USD)	From Date	To Date	04/06/2026
	12/31/2024	12/30/2025	

Area(s) and activity group(s) covered by grant

Window 1: Strengthen gender-responsive planning and policy development for system-wide impact

- System diagnostics, compact development and education sector analyses
- Gender-responsive sector planning, including operational planning and budgeting
- Supporting policies and plans to identify and address multiple forms of exclusion (planning for children with disabilities, system resilience and inclusion of displaced children)
- Strengthening evidence-based diagnosis of critical implementation bottlenecks and identifying potentially scalable, transformative solutions

Implementation Progress

Overall Project Progress this Reporting Period

Overall progress this reporting period [1]	Previous Rating
Highly Satisfactory (HS)	NA

Detailed Description including factors that lead to an upgrade/downgrade in the rating

(i) Major accomplishments this reporting period

During the reporting period, the grant successfully achieved its primary technical milestones, including the Education Sector Analysis (ESA), the draft of the Education Strategic Plan (ESP) 2026–2030, the Enabling Factors Analysis (EFA), and the Partnership Compact.

The Ministry of Education, with technical support from UNESCO, successfully disseminated the ESA and finished the major workshops leading to the development of the ESP 2026–2030. The ESP was launched after the reporting period of this report.

Furthermore, the initial Partnership Compact was successfully completed and submitted according to the original work plan to the Ministry of Education for submission. The request to re-submit the compact based on the new GPE guidelines was shared after the reporting period of this report..

(ii) Implementation challenges, delays, and mitigations

While the grant achieved its primary milestones, implementation faced specific institutional and capacity-related challenges:

• Navigating Competing National Priorities: The MoE successfully advanced the planning process while simultaneously managing a demanding national reform agenda. In instances where overlapping national events required senior personnel to delegate attendance, the MoE and UNESCO worked proactively to ensure that strategic alignment was maintained, and consensus-building continued effectively.

• Structural Reform and Strategic Ambiguity: The education sector is currently undergoing a major structural reform, notably the pending government approval to merge the MoE and the Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE) into a single Ministry of Education and Human Resources. This pending merger created initial ambiguity regarding the specific domains the MoE should focus on during the ESP planning process. Consequently, strategic adjustments to the domains had to be made following the second planning workshop, which in turn impacted the parallel discussions regarding the Partnership Compact and the selection of priority areas.
• Mainstreaming vs. Siloing Gender: The MoE made a strategic decision to mainstream gender across all aspects of the new ESP, rather than isolating it in a separate annex as was done in the previous ESP. However, translating this policy decision into practice proved challenging. Following the first two planning workshops, development partners and gender specialists raised concerns with MoE Gender specialists that gender considerations were inadvertently being diluted rather than systematically integrated into the core educational domains.
(iii) Mitigation Strategies and Responses: To navigate these hurdles, UNESCO adopted an agile, hands-on approach by creating synergies with complementary programs and mobilizing its broader technical assets:
• Leveraging SSP Synergies for Daily Coordination: To mitigate the capacity constraints and decision-making bottlenecks without duplicating efforts, UNESCO synergized the SCG activities with the ongoing System Strengthening program (funded by the MPTF). By utilizing an embedded partnership and coordination expert stationed directly at the MoE, UNESCO ensured consistent, daily follow-up. This continuous presence allowed the team to track unmade decisions from workshops, organize internal MoE catch-ups to unblock stalled processes, and maintain momentum.
• Cross-Ministry Engagement: To address the ambiguity of the MoE/MoHE merger, UNESCO proactively visited the Ministry of Higher Education. This outreach clarified the GPE grant process and framed the EFA as a common ground for empowering the unified ministry and its staff, ensuring joint ownership rather than viewing it as an isolated MoE exercise.
• Mobilizing "One UNESCO" Technical Expertise: To support the MoE in aligning the ESP domains with the impending ministerial merger, the MoE drew upon colleagues from IIEP-UNESCO. IIEP provided targeted technical support and clarification to MoE staff, guiding them through the decision-making process for domain selection. Crucially, IIEP experts demonstrated how "Digital Transformation" the MoE's chosen priority area—could be effectively embedded and highlighted as a cross-cutting priority throughout the ESP, realigning the planning process and bridging the gap between the ESP and the Partnership Compact.
• Targeted Capacity Building for ESP Drafters: To fully operationalize the MoE's ambitious decision to mainstream gender across all domains, the Ministry and UNESCO jointly leveraged the capacity-building framework of its System Strengthening Program (SSP). In close coordination with Canada and following consultations with the MoE, UNESCO facilitated a targeted gender-responsive planning workshop. Crucially, attendance was deliberately restricted to the specific MoE staff and partners actively drafting the ESP. This ensured that the technical support had an immediate, measurable impact, translating directly into concrete, gender-responsive indicators and strategies within the final plan.

Grant Implementation Progress, by Grant Window

Grant Window	Level of Progress this Reporting Period [2]	Previous Rating
Window 1: Strengthen gender-responsive planning and policy development for system-wide impact	Highly Satisfactory (HS)	NA

Detailed Description:
During the reporting period, the grant successfully finalized all primary technical milestones. The Ministry of Education, with UNESCO's support, disseminated the Education Sector Analysis (ESA) and moved along with developing the Education Strategic Plan (ESP) 2026–2030. All technical components for Activity Groups 1, 2, and 3 were met through participatory processes. The Partnership Compact and Enabling Factors Analysis (EFA) were technically completed and submitted

Lessons, innovative/promising practices

During this reporting period, the grant implementation realized several key insights and approaches that strengthened the quality and national ownership of the education sector documents. To guide future

sector planning and demonstrate institutional learning, these are categorized below:

1. Lessons Learned

• The Necessity of Structured, Proactive Partner Participation: critical lesson learned is that active partner and donor participation requires deliberate orchestration rather than relying solely on existing forums. UNESCO achieved this through consistent one-on-one follow-ups with key partners and regular presentations on progress across major forums (PPCC, EDPG, and ESWG). This structured approach was particularly vital during the selection of the priority area for the Partnership Compact. Channeling the diverse interests and future plans of various partners, donors, and MoE staff into a single strategic focus required dedicated capacity. To navigate this, a UNESCO consultant facilitated intensive one-on-one consultations, which were followed by consensus-building workshops with the Education Sector Working Group and formal presentations to His Excellency the Minister of Education. This deliberate, iterative cycle of feedback, planning, and action successfully aligned competing priorities and ensured broad ownership of the final Compact priority.

• Bridging Technical and Inter-Departmental Gaps: Another key lesson is the importance of specialized technical facilitation to bridge gaps between different ministry departments during the ESP drafting process. To support this, UNESCO mobilized IIEP finance experts to specifically backstop the MoE's finance team. This targeted support empowered the finance personnel to critically examine plan items and indicators. More importantly, it facilitated essential, structured cross-departmental discussions between the finance teams and the relevant MoE technical sections, ensuring that the strategic priorities set by technical staff were deeply grounded in shared financial realities and consensus.

• Operationalizing Gender Mainstreaming Requires Targeted Capacity Building: Shifting from a standalone "Gender Annex" to genuinely mainstreaming gender across all strategic domains requires more than a high-level policy decision. When early reviews indicated that gender integration was stalling, the partnership learned that broad sensitization was insufficient. Mainstreaming is only effective when the specific technical personnel actively drafting the ESP are equipped with the precise tools to weave inclusion into the DNA of the sector plan, moving gender-responsive planning from an abstract goal to concrete, cross-cutting indicators.

• Strategic Adaptability (Quality Over Speed): The proactive decision to pause and revise the initial Partnership Compact to align with the newly released 2026 GPE guidelines—despite having an initial draft ready—demonstrated that flexibility is essential in system reform. Prioritizing long-term compliance and strategic quality over rigid procedural timelines ensures the final Compact is a sustainable, future-proof tool for sector coordination.

2. Promising Practices

• Integrated Financial and Strategic Planning: A highly effective practice was integrating comprehensive financial diagnostics directly into the early planning and ESA phases, rather than treating costing as an afterthought. By utilizing IIEP expertise early on to develop the Multi-Year Operational Plan (MYOP), the MoE was empowered to map out the detailed, step-by-step actions required to achieve its strategic goals while ensuring strict financial realism. Crucially, the costed MYOP serves as a powerful advocacy tool, allowing the MoE to clearly articulate its specific financial needs to the central government and development partners. Furthermore, this rigorous operational planning embedded structural flexibility; it allows the ESP to easily adapt to future updates and emerging priorities, ensuring that any subsequent plans remain coherent with the overall strategic umbrella of the ESP and the broader national Economic Modernisation Vision (EMV).

• Institutionalizing Capacity over External Delivery: Rather than treating the Education Sector Analysis (ESA) and ESP as standalone products to be delivered by external consultants, the grant utilized a "National Team" approach supported by technical workshops on simulation modeling and analytical drafting. This practice successfully institutionalized technical skills directly within the MoE, ensuring the government led the development process and reinforcing a culture of evidence-based policy development.

3. Innovations

• Data-Driven Subnational Engagement via Targeted Surveys: A major innovation in the planning process was how the MoE captured subnational realities without the immense logistical constraints and costs of nationwide physical workshops. A comprehensive survey was rolled out across all 42 education directorates. Benefiting from IIEP-UNESCO's specialized technical backstopping, the Ministry formulated targeted questions to capture localized needs. To drive this exercise forward, a dedicated UNESCO Monitoring and Data Specialist oversaw the survey's distribution and tracked field responses. Crucially, the extracted grassroots data was translated directly into the planning materials and presented during strategic sessions. This innovative methodology allowed for deep subnational ownership, ensuring that the evidence base used to steer long-term priorities was generated and validated by the Ministry's own field offices.

Impact stories

This reporting period, the process of developing the Education Strategic Plan (ESP) 2026–2030 served as a critical vehicle for institutional transformation. Amidst a major national reform to merge Higher Education and General Education under a single Ministry, the grant successfully orchestrated the unification of staff from two distinct ministries into one cohesive planning body.

Under the active leadership of MoE management, the process moved beyond siloed operations. Financial teams worked side-by-side with technical units to ensure the plan was fiscally viable, while the M&E team led the rigorous refinement of targets across both sectors. Simultaneously, gender and inclusion specialists were embedded in every technical discussion, ensuring that equity was mainstreamed from the start rather than added as an afterthought.
The true success of this project was the Ministry's ability to lead this complex coordination of diverse internal units, subnational directorates, national stakeholders, and international partners. By taking the driver's seat in this integration, MoE staff have not just produced a plan—they have built a unified, sustainable system capacity to manage the future of Jordan's entire education landscape

Tangible Outputs, Knowledge Products, Results Framework and other Supporting Documentation

#	File Name	Document Type	Description
1	ESA 2024 EN Final (Web).pdf	Knowledge Product	Education Sector Analysis
2	Media and Visibility- GPE.pdf	Knowledge Product	Media and Visibility

The documents listed were submitted with the progress report. If you'd like access to them, please contact the grant operations officer for your country.

Financial Reporting & Grant Management

Financial Reporting on GPE Grant

Cumulative Financial Absorption Rate

Approved Budget to Date	Cumulative Expenditure	Cumulative Financial Absorption Rate	Level of Financial Absorption
550,000	510,052.68	92.74	On Track

Budget Variance Analysis for the Current Reporting Period

Total Approved Budget for the Current Reporting Period
550,000

Total Expenditure for the Current Reporting Period
510,052.68

Management Performance

Level of management performance
Highly Satisfactory (HS)

Detailed Description
Throughout the reporting period, grant management was characterized by strong coordination between UNESCO and the Ministry of Education. Key management highlights include:

• Effective Coordination: Regular technical meetings and workshops ensured that both the ESA and ESP processes remained on track and aligned with national priorities.
• Capacity Integration: UNESCO prioritized the active involvement and leadership of the MoE's Team in all phases of analytical work; therefore, UNESCO mobilized its' resources to strengthen the MoE's capacity and institutional ownership while keeping them in the driver's seat.
• Adaptive Timeline Management for Quality: The timeline for launching the ESP was proactively adapted to ensure a higher-quality final product. This adjustment allowed the team to address critical information gaps, conduct deeper consultations, and ensure the ESP was fully synchronized with other emerging sector strategies developed by partners. This flexibility ensured the plan is both comprehensive and harmonized with the broader education landscape.
• Strategic Alignment and Partnership Responsiveness: The decision to update the Partnership Compact reflects the project's high degree of flexibility and its commitment to meeting GPE's evolving requirements. While the initial draft was completed on schedule, management demonstrated strong responsiveness by reopening the document to incorporate the latest 2026 guidelines following the PPCC mission. This proactive pivot ensures a smoother transition into the next phase of sector financing and guarantees that the Compact serves as a high-quality, relevant tool for all partners.
• Inclusive Oversight: Management successfully integrated a wide range of stakeholders into the process, including subnational representatives through targeted surveys and specialized experts for the gender and disability inclusion workshops.

There have been no significant management shortcomings or bottlenecks that hindered the achievement of the primary grant objectives.

Revisions to the grant

This period, have there been any revisions to the grant other than those submitted to the Secretariat for their approval?
No

How likely is that the grant agent will submit a request for revision to the Secretariat in the next 12 months for their approval?
Unlikely

Annexes

Annex 1: List of Acronyms

Acronym	Description
CWD / PWD	Children with Disabilities / Persons with Disabilities
EDPG	Education Development Partners Group
EFA	Enabling Factors Analysis
EMV	Economic Modernization Vision
ESA	Education Sector Analysis
ESP	Education Strategic Plan
ESWG	Education Sector Working Group
GEAP	Gender Education Action Plan

GPE	Global Partnership for Education
IIEP	International Institute for Educational Planning
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MoE	Ministry of Education
MPTF	Multiple Partners Trust Fund
MYOP	Multi-Year Operational Plan
PPCC	Policy, Planning and Coordination Committee
PSC	Programme Support Costs
SCG	System Capacity Grant
SSP	System Strengthening Program

[1] Highly Unsatisfactory- The grant has major shortcomings or delays that limit or jeopardize the achievement of one or more outputs and a resolution is unlikely. Unsatisfactory - The grant has significant shortcomings or delays that limit or jeopardize the achievement of one or more outputs and a resolution is uncertain. Moderately Unsatisfactory - The grant has moderate shortcomings or delays that limit or jeopardize the achievement of one or more outputs but a resolution is likely. Moderately Satisfactory - The grant is expected to achieve most of its major outputs efficiently with moderate shortcomings or delays. Satisfactory – The grant is expected to achieve almost all of its major outputs efficiently with only minor shortcomings or delays. Highly Satisfactory - The grant is expected to achieve or exceed all of the major outputs efficiently without significant shortcomings or delays.

[2] Highly Unsatisfactory – The window has major shortcomings or delays that limit or jeopardize the achievement of one or more outputs and a resolution is unlikely. Unsatisfactory – The window has significant shortcomings or delays that limit or jeopardize the achievement of one or more outputs and a resolution is uncertain. Moderately Unsatisfactory – The window has moderate shortcomings or delays that limit or jeopardize the achievement of one or more outputs but a resolution is likely. Moderately Satisfactory – The window is expected to achieve most of its major outputs efficiently with moderate shortcomings. Satisfactory – The window is expected to achieve almost all of its major outputs efficiently with only minor shortcomings or delays. Highly Satisfactory – The window is expected to achieve or exceed all of the major outputs efficiently without significant shortcomings or delays.

[3] tooltip