STATUS OF GPE SECRETARIAT ACTIVITIES AND RESULTS

For Information

1. PURPOSE

This paper provides an update on Secretariat activities and results, as well as a reflection on the evolving relationship between the Secretariat and the Board of Directors. It is structured around a presentation of work plan deliverables and budget utilization to date. The paper also identifies areas of potential budget pressure.

2. RECOMMENDED DECISION

This paper is for information/input only and no decision is being sought at this time from the Board of Directors.

3. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Secretariat had utilized 25% of its annual budget by 22 October, just higher than the projected rate of about 23%. The Secretariat's work program included assistance to 24 countries preparing or implementing education sector plans, support to the UN Secretary General's Education First Initiative and co-sponsorship of UN General Assembly side events, as well as delivery of a reading workshop in Bangkok for 150 participants from 12 Asia countries and the first-ever meeting of all African constituencies in Accra, with 26 countries represented. The Secretariat also reviewed and approved Education Plan Development Grants to 10 countries and Program Development Grants to 6 countries. Budget pressures are expected in some categories of expenditure, notably travel, event services (including interpretation and translation) and office occupancy. Disbursements for Program Implementation Grants totalled US$320 million as of 31 October, 2012 (see Annex 2 for country-specific disbursements through 30 September, 2012).

4. BACKGROUND

4.1. *Summary of Budget Utilization:* As of 22 October 2012,[1] the actual utilization of Secretariat budget resources as approved by the Board of Directors totaled US$2.879 million. Table 1 below shows actual expenditure by major expenditure category. Tables 2 through 4 provide expenditure information on three key events delivered in the period: (i) support to the UN Secretary General's Education First Initiative and GPE side events at the UN General Assembly; (ii) the reading workshop held in Bangkok in September; and (iii) the meeting of the Financial Advisory Committee held in October 2012.

[1] This paper uses 22 October 2012 rather than 30 September 2012 as the end period for reporting in order to provide the most up-to-date information possible. Budget utilization data will be updated for presentation at the Board of Directors meeting in November 2012.

Table 1
Planned vs Actual Expenditure by Major Category of Expense (July 2012 - 22 October 2012)

		18 mo. plan July 2012 - Dec 2013	of which 12 mo. July 2012 - June 2013	Actual July 2012 - 22 Oct 2012	% Utilization of 18 mo budget	% Utilization of 12 mo budget
1	**Labor Costs (Salaries & Benefits)**	**13.058**	***8.221***	**1.816**	**14%**	**22%**
	Core Staff	**11.523**	***7.151***	**1.542**	**13%**	22%
	Term Staff			0.971		
	Extended-Term Consultants			0.571		
	Short-Term Consultants	**1.535**	***1.070***	**0.274**	**18%**	26%
	of which:					
	. Support to LEGs/Other in-country support			*0.032*		
	. Board incl Constituency Meetings/FAC/UNGA/SPWG/Res Mob			*0.070*		
	. M&E and Results Report			*0.038*		
	. Communications			*0.034*		
	. Support Strategic Priorities			*0.056*		
	. Other (Admin)			*0.045*		
2	**Travel**	**2.100**	***1.400***	**0.454**	**22%**	**32%**
	Core Staff			**0.338**		
	of which:					
	. Support to LEGs/Other in-country support			*0.146*		
	. Board incl Constituency Meetings/FAC/UNGA/SPWG/Res Mob			*0.076*		
	. Meetings/Conferences with Partners			*0.035*		
	. Sec Sponsored Workshops			*0.082*		
	. Professional Dev					
	. Other					
	Short-Term Consultant			**0.115**		
	of which:					
	. Support to LEGs/Other in-country support			0.000		
	. Board Meetings/Board Constituency Meetings/FAC/UNGA/SPWG/Support to Chair			0.071		
	. Meetings/Conferences with Partners			0.004		
	. Participation in Sec Sponsored Workshops			0.040		
3	**Board/FAC/Other Events (non-travel)**	**1.125**	***0.659***	**0.249**	**22%**	**38%**
	Event Costs (non-travel)		*0.280*	0.086		31%
	Contribution to other events			0.039		
	Translation/Interpretation		*0.379*	0.124		33%
4	**Other Expenditures**	**1.793**	***1.399***	**0.360**	**20%**	**26%**
	Office Occupancy		*0.556*	0.171		31%
	IT and Communications		*0.260*	0.085		33%
	Retreats, Representation, Hospitality			0.001		
	Supplies/Printing/Branding		*0.055*	0.027		50%
	Staff Training		*0.028*	0.000		1%
	Software Purchase		*0.500*	0.058		12%
	Other Expenditures			0.018		
	Total Expenditure	**18.076**	***11.679***	**2.879**	**16%**	**25%**
	of which:					
	GPE Fund	*16.590*	*10.273*	*2.623*	*16%*	*26%*
	USAID Fund	*1.486*	*1.406*	*0.256*	*17%*	*18%*

Table 2
Support to UNSG's Education First Initiative & UNGA Events
New York September 2012
US$

	Staff	Short-term Cons/Others	Other Expenditures	Total
Travel	**33,197**	**17,477**		**50,674**
Airfare/Train	4,615	9,298		13,913
Hotels	19,372	5,387		24,758
Food/Taxi/other travel	9,210	2,793		12,003
Short-Term Cons Fees		**10,544**		**10,544**
Contributions to side event & to Global Compact reception			**40,350**	**40,350**
Miscellaneous (printing, translation, courier service)			**7,908**	**7,908**
Grand Total	**33,197**	**28,021**	**48,258**	**109,476**

Table 3
Reading Workshop – Bangkok September 2012
US$

	Staff/Presenters	Workshop Participants	Other Expenditures	Total
Airfare	26,197	30,523		**56,720**
Hotels/Per diem	10,167	20,762		**30,929**
Venue/Meeting Package			43,637	**43,637**
Conference Organization			13,000	**13,000**
Interpretation/Translation			11,000	**11,000**
Printing, Shipping, USB Purchase			3,185	**3,185**
Total	**36,364**	**51,285**	**70,822**	**158,471**

Table 4 FAC Meeting - Washington DC - Oct. 2012 US$	
Airfare	18,718
Airport transfers	950
Hotel VIPs	3,569
Per Diem VIPs	1,005
Catering	5,259
Interpretation	6,702
Grand Total	36,203

4.1.1. Actual utilization is at or ahead of projections in a number of major expenditure categories. Core staff expenditure (salaries and benefits of Term Staff and Extended Term Consultants) is at 22% of the annualized estimate, about as projected. Short-term consultant utilization is at 26% of the annualized estimate, slightly above projections but down by 44% compared to the same period one year ago. Travel expenditure is at 32% and has significantly exceeded projections. The major driver of the higher-than-expected travel expenditure rate is a more proactive Secretariat role in supporting Strategic Plan objectives. This has included: (i) 25 countries visited by Country Leads, reflecting a very active portfolio; (ii) a workshop for 150 participants held in Bangkok in September to improve reading outcomes in the Asian developing country partners; (iii) participation of Secretariat staff in key international meetings, including on fragile states and girls' education; and (iv) travel associated with Board activities including meetings of the Strategic Plan Working Group, the FAC meeting, resource mobilization activities and travel in support of the Chair.

4.1.2. Translation costs also are outpacing projections and will need to be re-evaluated over the next few months. The office occupancy expenditure is at 31% on an annualized basis for four months; future cost pressures include charges for expansion space to be acquired in November/December 2012. Information Technology and Communications expenditure is 33% of the annualized budget reflecting the additional support required to serve the growing complement of Secretariat staff and consultants.

4.2. *Status of recruitment against plans:* The Secretariat is in the process of executing the staffing plan as presented in BOD/2012/09 DOC 01. Since the June 2012 Board meeting, a total of six Term Staff/Extended Term Consultants/Secondees have

joined the Secretariat and four Term Staff/Extended Term Consultants/Secondees have left the Secretariat.

4.3. Intensive efforts are underway to complete recruitment of priority positions, and the Secretariat has launched a number of vacancy announcements simultaneously in order to streamline application review and interview processes.

5. POTENTIAL FOR REVISIONS TO THE CURRENT BUDGET ALLOCATION

5.1. The current work plan and budget are being implemented in the context of the existing authorization, which is BOD/2012/09 DOC 01. The Secretariat continues to carry out its program with the objective of supporting the implementation of the Strategic Plan. However, we expect that incremental demands on the Secretariat will arise from the upcoming Board discussions, for which additional resources are likely to be required. We anticipate preparing a revised budget request after the Implementation Plan has been finalized and/or when the new CEO is in place.

6. WORK PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

6.1. An overview of work plan implementation and deliverables for each Secretariat team is posted on the Board website. Over the last four months, the Country Support Team has carried out 24 developing country partner visits. It has approved Education Plan Development Grants to 10 countries and Program Development Grants to 6 countries (see Annex 1) while supporting endorsement of sector plans in four countries and conducting 10 quality assurance reviews or initial consultations. It finalized the Country Level Process Guide, the Terms of Reference for Coordinating Agencies, Supervising Entities, and Managing Entities, and developed the Plan Preparation and Appraisal Guidelines in collaboration with IIEP. It also prepared a proposal on Accelerating GPE Fund support in emergency and early recovery situations.

6.2. The Resource Mobilization Team, which is part of the front office in the Secretariat, carried out visits to the Middle East, Europe, Japan and Korea. It supported the public launch of the GPE Strategic Plan which took place during UNGA week in New York in September, in conjunction with support for the launch of the UN Secretary General's Education First initiative. The team also facilitated the development of an implementation plan for the Strategic Plan. The Board Services Team, also part of the

front office, worked with the German BACKUP Education initiative to organize a meeting of all three African constituencies in Accra, with 26 individual country delegations participating.

6.3. The Global Good Practices Team held a reading workshop for 150 participants from 12 Asian countries in Bangkok in September 2012. It organized a workshop on textbooks and reading materials that will be developed into e-learning modules available to all partners. It launched a community of practice on early grade numeracy and tested assessment and tracking systems for measuring the numeracy indicator in the Strategic Plan. In collaboration with UNICEF and the World Bank, the team supported the development of a workshop for 11 African countries on introducing Early Child Development in a manner that is pro-poor and yet has cognitive content. It worked with a range of partners on identifying and providing services to out-of-school children, including children with disability, and to conduct a study on low-cost provision of eyeglasses to school children in Cambodia. It finalized the results report and a report on aid effectiveness in the education sector.

6.4. The Communications and External Relations Team led the social media effort around the Education First Initiative, working closely with United Nations agencies, donors and CSOs. It organized press and social media activities for a UNGA side event on education in conflict and in humanitarian emergencies. It delivered an online Annual Report entitled *All Children Learning*, and launched a global photo and video contest that now has over 300 entries from over 50 countries worldwide and 94 co-sponsor organizations including multilateral organizations, private sector, donors, teachers, as well as local and international civil society organizations. It has also created document sharing sites for the Board and FAC and produced monthly email newsletters in English and French.

6.5. The Finance, Portfolio and Administration Team prepared the FAC report of the June 2012 meeting, including an Annual Portfolio Review, for transmittal to the Board. It organized the FAC meeting of October 2012 and drafted papers for Board consideration on: Annual Review of Program Implementation Grant Indicative Allocations; an approach on Standards for Supervising and Managing Entities; and a GPE Fund Financial Forecast including funding scenarios. It shared a model agreement for discussion with six potential Supervising and Managing Entities. It prepared the

Secretariat budget request for Board approval (31 July 2012) and launched a staff planning exercise and recruitment processes.

7. REFLECTIONS ON SECRETARIAT WORK PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

7.1. Four months into implementation of the Secretariat's 2012 work plan, a number of issues and opportunities have emerged that require the thoughtful attention of the Board of Directors. Some of these are of long standing and others are more recent in nature. This section provides a quick synopsis of these issues and opportunities, and some observations regarding how they can be addressed.

7.2. *Getting the balance right*. The Strategic Plan of the Global Partnership may be best understood as an attempt to reconcile two fundamental tensions in the Partnership—its longstanding commitment to country-led planning and ownership and its more recent focus on evidence-based results. The ability of the Secretariat to secure consistent attention to GPE's strategic objectives while respecting country ownership will determine its success for many years to come. Getting this balance right is crucial to the Partnership's future relevance and the issue deserves close scrutiny from the Board of Directors.

7.3. *Strengthening the Board/Secretariat working relationship*. The successful implementation of the new Strategic Plan will require a stronger working relationship between the Board and the Secretariat, and an increase in structured opportunities for mutual consultation around substantive issues. It will also be important that Board agendas provide greater focus on operations and results linked to the Strategic Plan objectives. It may also be that the tools which the Board has at its disposal for decision-making and dialogue between face-to-face meetings are inadequate and need rethinking. For instance, the no-objection option for decisions between Board meetings has not proven to be a particularly flexible tool, and has contributed to delays and uncertainty. Additional audio-conferences and briefings, and a more flexible approach to intermediate or delegated decision-making should be considered.

7.4. *Ensuring a greater voice for developing country partners in decision-making processes*. The constituency arrangements within the Board have already led to a greater engagement of developing country partners. The recent meeting of the three African constituencies highlights an opportunity for the Global Partnership to provide global

leadership in ensuring a greater voice for developing country partners in decision-making processes. To date, however, the constituency arrangements have not achieved their full potential in this regard, and there is uneven participation by developing country partners in the policy dialogue which occurs between Board sessions at audio-conferences and in working groups. The Accra meetings have spurred a number of informal suggestions for how best to address this. It is important that operational proposals to strengthen this role emerge from the constituency dialogue with concrete proposals brought to the Board for discussion and decision.

7.5. *Moving the GRA forward.* The Secretariat and the Board have worked over the past year to launch the Global and Regional Activities program (GRA). Every effort must now be made to ensure that the GRA brings together all partners, including developing country governments, around a bold, evidence-based agenda that ensures value for money and development impact. The GRA must be a program with broad ownership across the Partnership. A commitment to transparency and reflective learning can ensure that this program lives up to its potential to inform all financing in the education sector around Strategic Plan objectives in the years to come.

7.6. *Leading on substantive new areas of focus.* The Secretariat and the Board must find new ways to work together to support the objectives of the new Strategic Plan. For instance, the Secretariat has supported the reading agenda for the past several years, most recently with a series of operations-focused reading workshops, but all partners now need to come together to give this work new momentum. The Secretariat's work program in the immediate future will focus heavily on fresh thinking in Fragile States. Again, this means that all partners must work more effectively to ensure that children in these countries are able to benefit fully from increased and improved instruction. There is a need for programs that target countries such as Nigeria and DRC, with remaining high numbers of out-of-school children, programs such as Early Child Development that provide additional support for the most marginalized children and programs in support of children with disabilities or engaged in child labor. Programs to ensure adequate nutrition and health for school children have long been recognized as development 'best buys'. An important metric against which to measure the success of the Secretariat's work program is the extent to which it supports new areas of focus, and drives a dialogue around urgency and innovation.

7.7. *Enabling a successful CEO.* Finally, reinvigorating the Secretariat-Board working relationship must be an urgent priority for the Board and Secretariat management under the new CEO arrangements. The future role of the head/CEO merits thoughtful, transparent and inclusive Board dialogue. Success in this position will be enabled through empowerment – to manage ideas and provide leadership and a strong voice at the Board, around technical reforms and the associated political economy of change in the education sector.

7.8. The coming year will be a crucial one both for the Secretariat and the Partnership as the new Strategic Plan is implemented and as a record number of countries are expected to present requests for financial support from the Partnership. A continuing conversation between the Board and the Secretariat on the issues above, conducted in a transparent problem-solving mode, can help to ensure a successful year and to set the stage for the growing relevance of the Partnership through 2015 and beyond.

Annex 1:

Education Plan Development Grant & Program Development Grant Approvals for the period 1 July 2012 – 22 October 2012

EDUCATION PLAN DEVELOPMENT GRANT APPROVALS FROM 1 JULY 2012					
Country	**Managing Entity**	**Grant Amount**	**Agency Fee**	**Total**	**Approval Date**
Benin	World Bank	$56,200	$984	$57,184	9-Jul-12
Haiti	World Bank	$129,500	$2,266	$131,766	24-Jul-12
Somalia	UNICEF	$250,000	$17,500	$267,500	24-Jul-12
Central African Republic	World Bank	$126,600	$2,216	$128,816	30-Jul-12
Cameroon	World Bank	$200,000	$3,500	$203,500	30-Jul-12
Gambia	World Bank	$250,000	$4,375	$254,375	30-Jul-12
Pakistan	UNICEF	$250,000	$17,500	$267,500	30-Jul-12
Sierra Leone	World Bank	$250,000	$4,375	$254,375	30-Jul-12
Comoros	UNICEF	$150,000.00	$10,500	$160,500	6-Aug-12
Guinea	World Bank	$250,000.00	$4,375	$254,375	22-Oct-12
Total		**$1,912,300**	**$67,591**	**$1,979,891**	

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT GRANT APPROVALS FROM 1 JULY 2012					
Country	**Managing Entity**	**Grant Amount**	**Agency Fee**	**Total**	**Approval Date**
Mauritania	World Bank	$170,000	$2,975	$172,975	21-Aug-12
Mali	World Bank	$200,000	$3,500	$203,500	30-Aug-12
Sao Tome & Principe	World Bank	$200,000	$3,500	$203,500	30-Aug-12
Sierra Leone	World Bank	$207,567	$3,632	$211,199	27-Sep-12
Central African Republic	World Bank	$196,000	$3,430	$199,430	1-Oct-12
Haiti	World Bank	$120,200	$2,104	$122,304	1-Oct-12
Total		**$1,093,767**	**$19,141**	**$1,112,908**	

Annex 2: Disbursements for Program Implementation Grants (as of 30 Sep 2012)

			Allocations (US$m)								Cumulative Disbursements	
	Country	SE	2003-06	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012 (to Q3)	2003-12	Total	%
1	Afghanistan	UNICEF	-	-	-	-	-	55.7	-	55.7	9.0	16%
2	Benin	WB	-	76.1	-	-	-	-	-	76.1	69.8	92%
3	Burkina Faso	WB	-	-	102.0	-	-	-	-	102.0	102.0	100%
4	Cambodia	WB	-	57.4	-	-	-	-	-	57.4	55.6	97%
5	Cameroon	WB	47.3	-	-	-	-	-	-	47.3	47.1	100%
6	Central African Republic	WB	-	-	37.8	-	-	-	-	37.8	33.0	87%
7	Cote D'Ivoire	WB	-	-	-	-	-	41.4	-	41.4	-	0%
8	Djibouti Allocation 1	WB	8.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	8.0	8.0	100%
	Djibouti Allocation 2	WB	-	-	-	-	4.0	-	-	4.0	1.9	48%
9	Ethiopia Allocation 1	WB	-	70.0	-	-	-	-	-	70.0	68.1	97%
	Ethiopia Allocation 2	WB	-	-	-	-	98.0	-	-	98.0	88.5	90%
10	The Gambia Alloc 1	WB	13.4	-	-	-	-	-	-	13.4	13.4	100%
	The Gambia Alloc 2	WB	-	-	28.0	-	-	-	-	28.0	25.0	89%
11	Ghana Allocation 1	WB	19.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	19.0	19.0	100%
	Ghana Allocation 2	WB	14.2	-	-	-	-	-14.2	-	0.0	-	
	Ghana Allocation 3	WB							75.5	75.5	-	0%
12	Guinea	WB	-	117.8	-	-	-77.8	-	-	40.0	22.4	56%
		UNICEF	-	-	-	-	24.0	-	-	24.0	24.0	100%
13	Guinea-Bissau	WB	-	-	-	-	-	12.0	-	12.0	-	0%
14	Guyana Allocation 1	WB	12.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	12.0	12.0	100%
	Guyana Allocation 2	WB	-	-	20.5	-	-	-	-	20.5	20.7	101%
15	Haiti	WB	-	-	-	-	22.0	-	-	22.0	19.5	88%
16	Kenya	WB	121.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	121.0	121.0	100%
17	Kyrgyz Republic	WB	15.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	15.0	13.4	89%
18	Lao PDR	WB	-	-	-	-	30.0	-	-	30.0	13.1	44%
19	Lesotho Allocation 1	WB	11.9	-	-	-	-	-	-	11.9	11.6	97%
	Lesotho Allocation 2	WB	-	-	-	20.0	-	-	-	20.0	1.4	7%
20	Liberia	WB	-	-	-	-	40.0	-	-	40.0	7.3	18%
21	Madagascar Alloc 1	WB	60.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	60.0	60.0	100%
	Madagascar Alloc 2	UNICEF	-	-	-	15.0	-	-	-	15.0	15.0	100%
		UNICEF	-	-	-	-	22.0	-	-	22.0	22.0	100%
		UNICEF	-	-	-	-	27.0	-	-	27.0	27.0	100%

			Allocations (US$m)								Cumulative Disbursements	
	Country	SE	2003-06	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012 Q1 + Q2	2003-12	Total	%
22	Malawi	WB	-	-	-	-	90.0	-	-	90.0	38.2	42%
23	Mali	WB	-	8.7	-	-	-	-	-	8.7	6.6	75%
	Mali	WB	-	-	-	-	-	41.7	-	41.7	-	0%
24	Mauritania Allocation 1	WB	9.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	9.0	9.0	100%
	Mauritania Allocation 2	WB	-	14.0	-	-	-	-	-	14.0	14.0	100%
25	Moldova	WB	8.8	-	-	-	-	-	-	8.8	8.8	100%
	Moldova	WB	-	-	-	-	-	4.4	-	4.4	0.3	6%
26	Mongolia Allocation 1	WB	17.1	-	-	-	-	-	-	17.1	17.1	100%
	Mongolia Allocation 2	WB	12.3	-	-	-	-	-	-	12.3	12.3	100%
	Mongolia Allocation 3	WB	-	-	-	-	-	10.0	-	10.0	2.0	20%
27	Mozambique	WB	-	79.0	-	-	-	-	-	79.0	79.0	100%
	Mozambique allocation 2	WB	-	-	-	-	90.0	-	-	90.0	13.6	15%
28	Nepal	WB	-	-	-	120.0	-	-	-	120.0	68.0	57%
29	Nicaragua	WB	24.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	24.0	24.0	100%
	Nicaragua Allocation 2	WB							16.7	16.7	-	0%
30	Niger	WB	21.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	21.0	20.6	98%
31	Papua New Guinea	WB	-	-	-	-	19.2	-	-	19.2	1.1	6%
32	Rwanda Allocation 1	WB	70.0	-	-		-	-	-	70.0	70.0	100%
	Rwanda Allocation 2	WB	-	-	-	35.0	-	-	-	35.0	35.0	100%
	Rwanda Allocation 3	DFID	-	-	-	-	70.0	-	-	70.0	44.0	63%
33	Sao Tome & Principe	WB	-	3.6	-	-	-	-	-	3.6	3.6	100%
34	Senegal	WB	-	81.5	-	-	-	-	-	81.5	54.4	67%
35	Sierra Leone	WB	-	13.9	-	-	-	-	-	13.9	11.4	82%
36	Sudan	WB							50.7	50.7	-	0%
37	Tajikistan Allocation 1	WB	18.4	-	-	-	-	-	-	18.4	18.3	99%
	Tajikistan Allocation 2	WB	-	-	-	13.5	-	-	-	13.5	8.6	64%
38	Timor Leste Alloc 1	WB	8.2	-	-	-	-	-	-	8.2	8.2	100%
	Timor Leste Alloc 2	WB	-	-	4.9	-	-	-	-	4.9	4.9	99%
	Timor Leste	WB	-	-	-	-	-	2.8	-	2.8	-	0%
39	Togo	WB	-	-	-	-	45.0	-	-	45.0	14.0	31%
40	Vietnam	WB							84.6	84.6	-	0%
41	Yemen	WB	40.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	40.0	40.0	100%
42	Zambia	Netherlands	-	-	60.0	-	-	-	-	60.0	60.2	100%
	TOTAL		**550.6**	**522.0**	**253.2**	**203.5**	**503.4**	**153.8**	**227.5**	**2,414.0**	**1,617.5**	**67%**
	Catalytic Funds		***550.6***	***522.0***	***253.2***	***203.5***	***503.4***	***58.7***	***0***	***2,091.4***	***1,617.5***	***77%***
	GPE Funds		***0***	***0***	***0***	***0***	***0***	***95.1***	***227.5***	***322.6***	**-**	***0%***