GPE MANAGEMENT PROPOSED ACTIONS IN RESPONSE TO MILESTONES MISSED FOR 2016

For Decision

Please note: Board papers are deliberative in nature and, in accordance with the GPE Transparency Policy, are not public documents until the Board has considered them at the Board meeting. It is understood that constituencies will circulate Board documents among their members prior to the Board meeting for consultation purposes.

1. STRATEGIC PURPOSE

The purpose of this paper is to seek the Board's endorsement of: 1) the set of actions proposed by the Secretariat and recommended by the SIC to address areas where GPE 2020 is currently not on track as identified in the 2016 Results Report; and 2) the routine presentation of management actions alongside the presentation to the Board of future Results Reports, beginning in 2017. The analysis and proposed actions included in this paper respond to the following Board decision at the June 2017 meeting:

> *Recognizing the urgent need for further secondary analyses, requests the secretariat to develop a plan for responding to key areas where GPE 2020 is not on track and to develop a set of costed management actions to be reviewed by the Strategy and Impact Committee at the October meeting and by the Board in December 2017, with implementation status reviewed at each subsequent Board meeting. The management actions shall clearly state actions by the Secretariat and the broader Partnership in response to the Results Report. (BOD/2017/06-10—Results Report 2015-2016).*

Summary of SIC Committee Deliberations Meeting, October 25, 2017

- The Strategy and Impact Committee (SIC) noted that the completion of the Global Partnership's first results report is an accomplishment. For the coming year, they suggested that the report should present disaggregated country-level analysis, as relevant, and the proposed plan for improvement in a consolidated manner. Details on the plan should be incorporated into the comprehensive annual budget and work program presented to the Board.
- Regarding the specific FY18 actions for improvement proposed by the Secretariat, SIC emphasized that the improvements should be driven through GPE's core model at the country level, and should be prioritized based on data.
- SIC noted that the Partnership should be held to a higher level of accountability for alignment (Indicator 29).
- SIC also emphasized that any new work should be subject to systematic monitoring and evaluation, so that the relevance and results of that work be determined.
- SIC requested that the Secretariat suggest partnership-wide actions as a part of the proposed set of actions to address areas for improvement.
- With these changes, SIC noted that the actions proposed and currently being implemented are recommended as the most effective and efficient way to address areas for improvement and contribute to GPE's strategic goals.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2.1 The 2016 Results Report provided the first comprehensive view of GPE's achievements with respect to the three goals and five country-level and global objectives included in GPE 2020. The report highlighted areas for improvement where GPE did not meet proposed 2016 milestones. At the Board's request, the Secretariat produced a short narrative report that highlighted the findings included in the Results Report, and the associated lessons learned. As such, the report provided an opportunity to both understand where and how GPE should channel effort in order to improve outcomes, and how to institutionalize an efficient and comprehensive process for evidence-based learning and decision-making.

2.2 Acknowledging that the success of GPE is dependent upon the identification of specific actions to be undertaken both by the Secretariat and by all members of the partnership, future Results Reports will be accompanied by proposed management and partnership-wide actions for improvement. These will be integrated into the annual budget and work plan, thereby aligning the Results Reporting, planning, learning and decision-making cycle.

2.3 The 2016 Results Report identified three areas where the Global Partnership did not meet the milestones for specific indicators included within the GPE 2020 results framework, and an overarching area of concern regarding the availability of data on learning. The Secretariat has

designed integrated sets of actions that require coordination across the partnership as a whole, and aim to improve outcomes on the specific indicators identified. This includes:

- **Indicator 6**: pre-primary gross enrollment ratio. The Global Partnership will continue to support strengthened policy dialogue on the need for early childhood development through Education Sector Plan Development Grants (ESPDGs) and Education Sector Plan Implementation Grants (ESPIGs) in targeted countries and will strengthen national capacity for improved ECCE policies and programs through the proposed KIX theme "Early Childhood Care and Development".
- **Indicator 8**: gender parity index for out-of-school rate. The Secretariat will continue to implement activities laid out in its Gender Equality Strategy, which include targeted support for gender-responsive sector planning and strengthening national capacity to identify and include gender equality in ESPs and ESPIGs.
- **Indicator 29**: proportion of GPE grants aligned to national systems. Actions for improvement include developing partnership wide guidance on alignment, addressing especially problematic sub-areas of non-alignment with grant agents, and using the Global Partnership's quality assurance processes to ensure that non-alignment is addressed earlier in the grant approval process.
- **Indicator 1**: improvement in learning. GPE will continue to support improvements in learning through education sector planning grants and the teaching and learning components in its ESPIG grants. Additional actions for include the introduction of strengthened funding model requirements on data, which support the inclusion of financing for the development and use of learning assessments at the country level in ESPIGs where these are not already in place. In addition, KIX activities and the Assessment for Learning (A4L) initiative will support the use of diagnostic tools on learning assessment systems to inform strategies on how to strengthen these systems and fund regional bodies to strengthen national capacity to develop effective learning assessment systems.

2.4 Table 1, below, summarizes Partnership constituents' responsibilities in taking the actions forward.

Table 1: Action Area and Partnership Constituents' Responsibilities

Area Action	DCP/LEGs	Grant Agents	Secretariat	Others
Indicator 6: Pre-primary gross enrollment	Prioritize topic in ESPs and ESPIGs, as relevant; Participate in, and use, proposed ECCE KIX services	Prioritize topic in ESPIGs, as relevant	Quality assurance; Use Results Framework data to analyze and inform decisions on ESPs/ESPIGs; launch proposed KIX	Donors/DCPs share knowledge through proposed KIX; Civil Society and Teacher Organizations advocate and monitor progress
Indicator 8: gender parity index	Prioritize topic in ESPs and ESPIGs, as relevant; Participate in and use Gender Strategy services	Prioritize topic in ESPIGs, as relevant	Quality assurance; Use Results Framework data to analyze and inform decisions on ESPs/ESPIGs; Implement Gender Strategy	Donors/DCPs share knowledge through KIX; UNESCO UIS and UNICEF provide data on out of school children; Civil Society and Teacher Organizations advocate and monitor progress
Indicator 29: Alignment		Share institutions' legal and procedural constraints with the Secretariat; Explore opportunities	Update technical guidelines; Assess opportunities in upcoming ESPIGs; Promote good practices in alignment; Understand grant agents procedural and	Donors share good practices

Area Action	DCP/LEGs	Grant Agents	Secretariat	Others
		for alignment, as appropriate under updated Secretariat guidance	legal constraints; Conduct a technical review of alignment with the GPC	
Indicator 1: Data on learning	Articulate and implement data strategy in ESPIGs; Participate in proposed A4L-supported activities	Articulate data strategy in ESPIGs	Quality assure ESPIGs for data strategy; Launch A4L program	UNESCO engages DCPs in regional learning assessments; Civil Society and Teacher Organizations advocate and monitor progress

2.5 All actions for improvement implemented in FY18 are subsumed under the current overall budget envelop for FY18 and will therefore not incur additional costs in FY18.

2.6 Learning from GPE's first results reporting process in 2016-2017 and noting opportunities for greater alignment of the Results Report with budget and work planning, the 2017 Results Report will be processed according to a new proposed schedule. The 2017 Results Report, to be presented to the Board in June 2018, will identify additional or modified actions, which will be included in the July 2018-June 2019 budget and work program document.

3. RECOMMENDED DECISION / REQUESTED INPUT

The SIC requests that the Board of Directors endorse the following decision.

BOD/2017/12 XX— <u>GPE Management Proposed Actions in Response to Milestones Missed For 2016:</u> The Board of Directors:

1. Endorses management actions for FY18 in response to the areas for improvement identified in the 2016 Results Report, as well as those that are recommended for the broader partnership

2. Endorses the proposed approach to the presentation of management actions on a routine basis, beginning with the 2017 Results Report. Proposed management actions to address the areas

identified for improvement will be presented alongside the Results Report presentation to the Board, and will be included in the Secretariat's annual workplan and budget

4. BACKGROUND

Management Actions for FY18

4.1 The Secretariat presented the 2016 Results Report to the Board of Directors in June 2017. It revealed that the Global Partnership had achieved 16 of the 19 2016 milestones but needed to improve with respect to three indicators with missed milestones and as well as with respect to the availability of data on learning. As required by the Board, the Secretariat presented a plan of action to the SIC in October 2017 to address each of the areas for improvement, as summarized below.

4.2 The plan of action is based on two principles: 1) it envisages the Secretariat using disaggregated, indicator data to inform prioritization of GPE support for countries to address the specific area for improvement, leveraging GPE investments in sector planning and plan implementation and its new Knowledge and Innovation Exchange activities; and 2) it anticipates complementary actions and close cooperation from Developing Country Partners (DCPs), Local Education Groups (LEGs), and other constituents for successful implementation in each area. DCPs and LEGs will need to engage actively to address the issues of concern in education sector plans (ESP) and education sector plan implementation grants (ESPIG); grant agents will similarly need to engage on ESPIGs. In addition, each area will require active knowledge-sharing from donors and other constituents of the Global Partnership.

4.3 Concurrently, the Secretariat will introduce a specific monitoring framework for the capacity-building and knowledge-exchange activities to support the core GPE country-level model, if they are not already covered under the current monitoring and evaluation framework.

4.4 Indicator 6. Pre-primary enrolment

GPE's 2016 milestone and achievement for pre-primary gross enrollment ratio was as follows:

i. Overall: planned 29%; achieved 28.1%
ii. Fragile and conflict afflicted countries [FCAC]: planned 23.3%; achieved 22.1%
iii. Female: planned 28.3%; achieved 27.5%

The Secretariat will take the following interrelated actions to address these findings, in collaboration with DCPs and LEGs:

i. Assess the degree to which education sector plans (ESPs) and education sector plan implementation grants (ESPIGs) address early childhood care and education (ECCE) to inform prioritization of its efforts to support stronger attention in countries in which this indicator is low (by December 2017); continue to support effective investment in ECCE through ESPs and ESPIGs

ii. Provide reinforcing support for effective national planning and implementation of ECCE reforms through the proposed Knowledge and Information Exchange (KIX) program (a reinforcing mechanism for the country model), which aims improve countries' and other stakeholders' knowledge, and facilitate good practice exchange on what works to ensure equitable access to early childhood care and education within education systems.

These actions will also contribute to improvements in the Early Childhood Development Index (indicator 2, under goal 1).

4.5 Indicator 8. Gender parity index for out-of-school rate

GPE's 2016 milestone and achievement for gender parity index was as follows:

i. Primary education:
   a. Overall: planned 1.26; achieved 1.28
   b. FCAC: planned 1.33; achieved 1.37

ii. Lower Secondary education:
   a. Overall: planned 1.10; achieved 1.11
   b. FCAC: planned 1.17; achieved 1.19

GPE has developed a Gender Equality Strategy (June 2016) with a costed action plan, to improve how the partnership addresses and mainstreams gender parity across the partnership and GPE's grant portfolio, focusing on sub-sets of countries where improvement is most urgent. Implementation of this strategy should contribute to improved outcomes on this indicator. The Secretariat, in collaboration with DCPs and UNICEF, plan to undertake the following steps:

i. Prepare country analysis for 4 DCPs drawing on the findings of the UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS) and UNICEF data-based profiles of out-of-school children (as well as the knowledge products noted above), for use in their upcoming ESPs and in ESPIGs. By June 2018.

ii. Provide regional training and capacity development on Gender Responsive Sector Planning for government and Local Education Group (LEG) partners, in collaboration with UNGEI. One workshop was held in March 2017 for East Africa (with participation from Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, and Zanzibar). Upcoming workshops are scheduled for Oct 2017 in South Asia (with participation from Bangladesh, Bhutan,

Maldives, Nepal, and Pakistan [Baluchistan, Sindh, Punjab]) and in early 2018 in West Africa (country participation to be determined).

iii. Support UNICEF's testing of Education Sector Analysis Methodological Guidance on Inclusive Education in Ghana, and finalize and publish the guidance as a chapter and promote its application in GPE partner countries (with UNICEF), by June 2018.

iv. Develop, disseminate and promote use of knowledge products (toolkits, guidelines, operational manuals) from Global and Regional Activities (GRA) grants (15, with 5 still active) to inform evidence-based ESP development on equity and inclusion based themes (which will include out-of-school children), by June 2018 – ongoing. FY17 annual summary reports on the activities has been provided to the Grants and Performance Committee.

4.6 Indicator 29: Proportion of GPE grants aligned to national systems

Alignment with nationally owned education sector plans and country systems addresses an important aspect of GPE's strategic objective for mobilizing more and better financing for education. GPE's 2016 milestone and achievement for alignment were as follows:

- Overall: planned 37%; achieved 31%
- FCAC: planned 29%; achieved 26%

The Secretariat has conducted an analysis of alignment by country and identified the sub-areas of alignment that are problematic. A grant is considered to be fully aligned if it achieves 7 out of 10 sub-areas of alignment. Findings show that all grants are, aligned with the countries' education sector plans – this is to be expected given that GPE grant approvals are linked to ESPs.

However, grants are often not aligned on other dimensions, leading to the finding that fewer than 1/3 of grants are fully aligned, as defined by the current methodology. Sub-areas pertaining to financial management are typically not aligned, potentially due to weak country systems in these areas. The next steps are to:

i. Clarify and gradually institutionalize GPE's conceptual approach to aid alignment by: updating and streamlining technical guidelines to better reflect alignment policy and developing an updated GPE policy on alignment for post-2020 Strategic Plan

ii. Strengthen country support operations to foster change by improving country engagement and focusing on country-level opportunities for alignment in upcoming ESPIGs

iii. Capitalize on and promote good practices and knowledge regarding alignment (including disaggregated information from the RF indicators), in GPE countries and across the Partnership

iv. Engage with Grant Agents at their headquarters to better understand their procedural and legal constraints and leverage opportunities for more aligned (and pooled) grants

To support strengthened alignment of GPE grants, the Secretariat will also update GPE's upstream quality assurance processes to focus more clearly on this issue. As requested by the Board (BOD/2017/06-14), the Secretariat is also working with the Grants and Performance Committee (GPC) to identify additional actions to enhance the alignment of GPE grants based on disaggregated information and a thorough technical review of the alignment indicator at the forthcoming Spring GPC meeting. Progress on these actions will be reported by the GPC to the Board with further actions reflected in the GPE's FY2019 workplan and budget.

4.7 Indicator 1: Data on Learning

No 2016 milestone was established for Indicator 1, but findings from the Results Report demonstrated that only a third of GPE countries had quality data on learning. Improvement in learning outcomes is the highest goal for GPE and therefore it is essential that countries are supported to invest in stronger national learning assessment systems.

To address this area of weakness, GPE is taking a two-pronged approach: through strengthening of GPE's funding model requirements; and through its KIX activities and A4L initiative, launched in 2017. Both are discussed below.

i. Strengthening learning assessment through the funding model. For countries to access GPE financing (ESPIG), they must have a "system or mechanism to monitor learning outcomes in place; or a time-bound plan to develop mechanisms to monitor learning outcomes." The Board has mandated that, starting in 2018, this data requirement will be strengthened so that any country without an adequate learning assessment systems will be required to use ESPIG funding for this purpose.

ii. To further reinforce this component in new ESPIGs, the Secretariat will take the following actions, which will also require coordination with DCPs and LEGs:

iii. Continue monitoring ESPIG components related to strengthening learning assessments. Thirty-six of 54 grants in 2016 included components to strengthen learning assessment systems; and the 2017 Results Report will provide updated information.

iv. Continue using the updated Quality Assurance Review processes to assess countries' readiness to apply for financing based on their existing system for monitoring learning outcomes or requiring a time-bound plan to develop one. This approach is helping GPE ensure that all DCP proposals include a high-quality learning assessment strategy.

v. In addition, a refined quality assurance learning assessment tool is being finalized for indicator 15 (a learning assessment system within the basic education cycle that meets quality standards) and will be piloted by June 2018.

A4L initiative. The Secretariat launched the A4L initiative in mid-2017 with US$3 million funding from two foundations. It also hired a Senior Education Specialist in September 2017 to lead this area of work. The first phase of A4L encompasses three core sets of activities: a) diagnostics of learning assessment systems in three DCPs; b) support to regional assessment networks; and c) a landscape review on existing tools and initiatives for the measurement of 21st century skills. This set of activities requires engagement of DCPs and of UNESCO as knowledge partners. The plan for these activities includes:

i. Diagnostics of learning assessment systems in three DCPs, which will cover formative assessments, national examinations, and large-scale assessments and will inform the development of a strategy to strengthen the learning assessment systems. A diagnostic framework and tool will be developed under the aegis of the Global Alliance for Monitoring Learning (GAML). This tool will inform dialogue at the country level. An initial draft and finalization of criteria for the selection of the three pilot countries is planned in December 2017. Upcoming ESPIGs will also be harnessed to support such diagnostics in additional countries.

ii. Support to regional assessment networks, including: Network on Education Quality Monitoring in the Asia-Pacific (NEQMAP), managed by UNESCO Bangkok, and TALENT, managed by UNESCO Dakar. GPE has already been supporting the activities of NEQMAP through a GRA grant in 2014-2016. Both NEQMAP and TALENT are currently developing formal proposals for A4L support, which is planned to be formalized by November 2017. These networks will mobilize different stakeholders

(Ministries of Education, examination authorities, and research institutions and civil society) and facilitate collaborative research and build capacity. The workshops will target stakeholders in DCPs in their respective regions. Initial capacity development workshops will be organized in 2018 for both NEQMAP and TALENT.

iii. A landscape review on existing tools and initiatives for the measurement of 21st century skills is being planned, with an initial round of data collection in some countries of the Asia-Pacific under NEQMAP. A similar exercise will soon be initiated in Sub-Saharan Africa, by late 2018. The work in this area pertains to Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4.7.

In addition to the activities noted above and in collaboration with the A4L work, the Secretariat has a strong engagement with GAML, convened by UIS. This includes serving on the GAML Strategic Planning Committee and its various task forces. At present, GPE is developing a proposal for DCP consultation on GAML tools/standards.

Timing of the 2017 Results Report and Management Actions

4.8 Beginning with the 2017 Results Report, proposed management actions to address the areas identified for improvement will be presented alongside the Results Report findings to the SIC and Board in May and June of each year.

4.9 Furthermore, the GPE Secretariat has committed to strengthening its work planning and prioritization from FY2019 forward, specifically addressing areas for improvement using the 2017 Results Report, risk framework, country pipeline, and partner management approach as key inputs. Areas for improvement identified the 2017 Results Report will therefore be integrated into the annual workplan.

5. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

5.1 The recommendation is for the Board to:

1. Endorse management actions for FY18 in response to the areas for improvement identified in the 2016 Results Report

2. Endorse the approach to present management actions to address the areas identified for improvement alongside the Results Report presentation to the Board, beginning with the 2017 Results Report to be presented to the Board in June 2018

5.2 The actions proposed and currently being implemented are recommended as the most effective and efficient way to achieve GPE's strategic goals.

5.3 The proposed approach to an integrated presentation of proposed management actions to address the areas identified alongside the Results Report presentation to the Board, beginning with the 2017 Results Report, will align and improve the Results Reporting, planning, learning and decision-making cycle.

6. IMPLICATIONS FOR SECRETARIAT RESOURCES AND RISK ANALYSIS

6.1 The overarching risks pertain to the proper identification and prioritization of each of the areas within ESPs and ESPIGs, which will need to consider costs/benefits of addressing areas of concern within limited resources.

6.2 No resource implications are envisaged for FY18; all Secretariat costs are subsumed under the current budget envelope. Actions taken by DCPs at the country level will be subsumed under ESPDGs and ESPIG allocations. Other constituents will bear the costs of the complementary actions they take.

7. PLEASE CONTACT Dr. Nidhi Khattri at: nkhattri@globalpartnership.org for further information.