UNICEF ZIMBABWE

Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, Zimbabwe

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Prepared for:	Secretariat, Global Partnership for Education
UNICEF Grant Reference:	SC/2013/0323
Period covered:	1st October 2013 to 31st December 2016
Report Type:	Final Report
Date submitted:	March 2017

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Cover Photo: *UNICEF Zimbabwe/2013*
Caption: *Schoolchildren at Binga Primary school smile while reading books at the school*

Summary of Contribution	
Country Assisted	Zimbabwe
Programme Name	The Global Partnership for Education (GPE)
Donor	GPE
Grant agreement number	SC/2013/0323
Total Agreement Amount	USD 25,252,000.00
Programmable Amount	USD 23,600,138.60
Funds Utilized to Date	USD 23,600,138.60
Balance on funds received*	Nil[1]
Duration of Grant	3 Years
Report Type	Final Report
Reporting Period	1st October 2013 – 31st December 2016
Programme Objective	To boost learning outcomes in basic education through continuous professional development of teachers, improved teacher supervision and management as well as strengthened evidence based policy and strategic planning.
Geographic Focus Area	National
Focus Population	Teachers and students in Basic Education in Zimbabwe.
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*Fund utilization amounts in the report are only interim figures. The final Certified Financial Statement will be made available after closure of year-end accounts by the UNICEF Comptroller.	

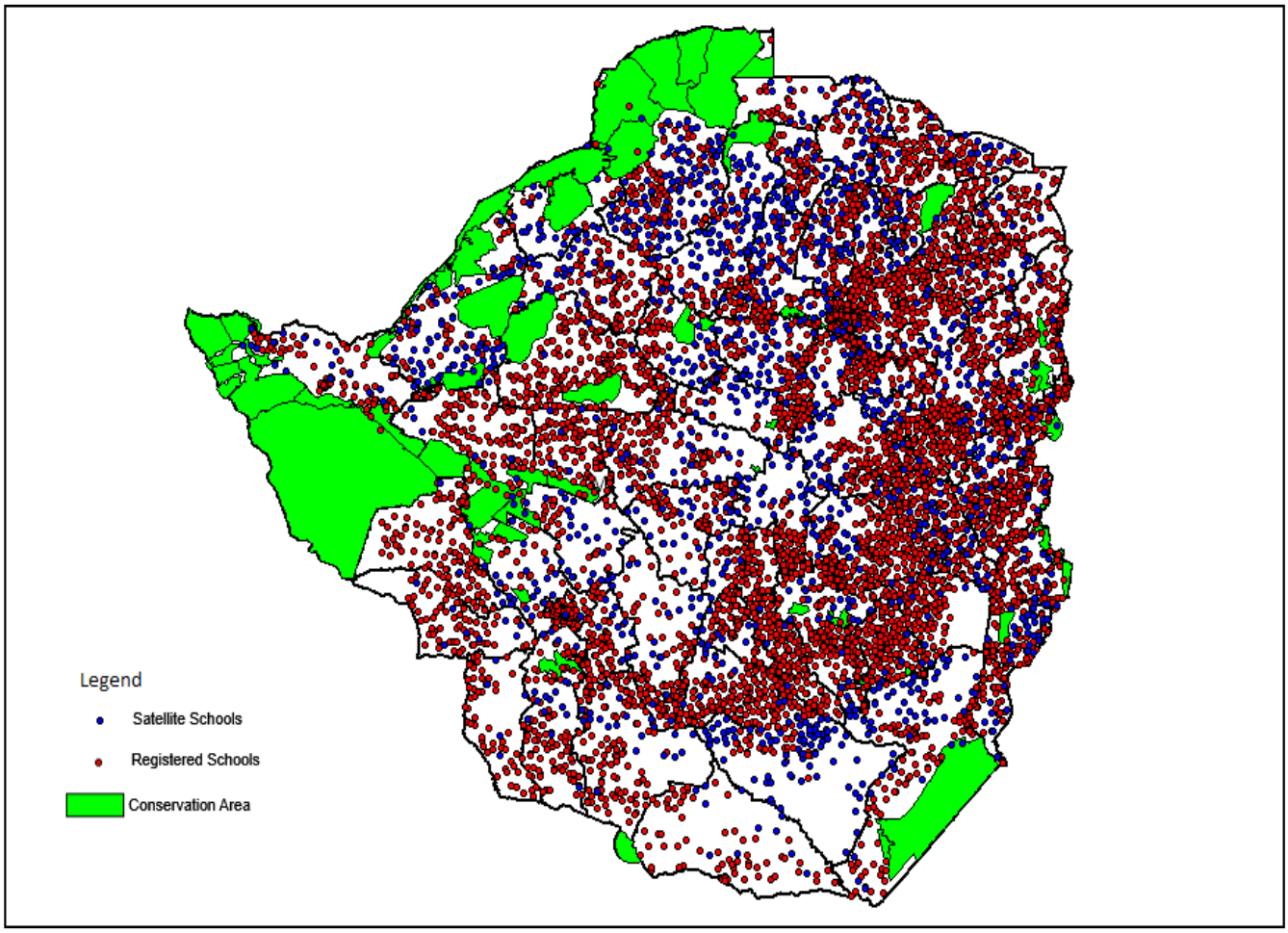
[1] Due to UNICEF system discrepancies, the donor statement (Annex 7) reflects a balance. UNICEF CO is working with UNICEF HQ to rectify this anomaly.

Maps of Zimbabwe

Figure 1: Map showing the districts of Zimbabwe



Figure 2: Map showing primary and secondary schools distribution in Zimbabwe



(Source: EMIS 2015)

List of Acronyms

BSPZ	Better Schools Programme of Zimbabwe
CDU	Curriculum Development Unit
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
CRT	Cluster Resource Teacher
DEO	District Education Officer
ECD A & B	Early Childhood Development (1st and 2nd year)
ECG	Education Coordination Group
ECOZI	Education Coalition of Zimbabwe
EDF	Education Development Fund
EFA	Education For All
EMIS	Education Management Information System
EMTP	Education Medium Term Plan
EMTP- OP	Education Medium Term Plan- Operational Plan
ERI	Early Reading Initiative
ESSP	Education Sector Strategic Plan (2016-2020)
FACE	Funding Authorization and Certificate of Expenditures
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
HACT	Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers
IST	Implementation Support Team
LAG	Learning Achievement Gap
LAT	Learner Achievement Tracking
LSP	Logistical Support Providers
M & E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MoFED	Ministry of Finance and Economic Development
MoHTESTD	Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, Science Technology Development
MoPSE	Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education
MTR	Mid-Term Review
NGO	Non-Government Organization
PED	Provincial Education Director
PLAP	Performance Lag Address Program
SDC	School Development Committee
SMT	Senior Management Team
TDIS	Teacher Development Information System
TPS	Teacher Professional Standards
WRAT	Wide-Range Achievement Test
ZELA	Zimbabwe Early Learning Assessment
ZIM ASSET	Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio-Economic Transformation
ZimSEC	Zimbabwe Schools Examination Council

Executive Summary

This is the final report to the Global Partnership for Education (GPE I) grant to Zimbabwe. It is aimed at providing the GPE Secretariat with information on how the programme implementation grant to the Government of Zimbabwe (GoZ) was utilized. A programmable amount of US$ 23.6 million was available to support the programme in Zimbabwe. This report covers the three years of programme implementation. The grant was allocated to Zimbabwe in October 2013 and implemented over the period 1st January 2014 to 31st December 2016.

Highlights

- 44,342 teachers trained in ERI
- 52,730 teachers trained in PLAP
- 103,764 teachers along with all primary and secondary heads and deputy heads in 8651 schools, all TIC's in 5933 primary and two HODs each from 2718 secondary schools trained in use of Teacher Professional Standards (TPS)
- All primary and secondary heads and deputy heads in 8651 schools, all TIC's in 5933 primary and two HODs each from 2718 secondary schools trained in use of Teacher Professional Standards (TPS)
- TDIS system available in all districts and teacher data on 127,000 captured
- ESSP (2016-2020) developed, approved, printed and disseminated.

The grant enabled the country to achieve, and in some cases exceed the set targets in its pursuit for improved learning outcomes for children throughout Zimbabwe, in primary and secondary schools. All children benefitted, either directly (through Early Reading Initiative and Performance Lag Address Programme) or through greater efficiencies in the system (Teacher Development Information System, Teacher Professional Standards and the Education Sector Strategic Plan). The achievement of key results as specified in the GPE Implementation Plan is attributable to the impetus of the districts, especially of the District Education Officers now called District Schools Inspectors, and the Early Reading Initiative (ERI) and Performance Lag Address Programme (PLAP) resource tutors in ensuring the roll out of the programme at cluster level and following up on training by visiting the trainees in schools to support them further. School heads were also very supportive in the roll out of the various trainings that involved their teachers.

In the sub-component areas of the first component: early reading (ERI) and performance lag (PLAP), results achieved have comfortably exceeded the targets. The ERI subcomponent saw the development of three ERI modules, one for ECD A and B and other two for grades 1 – 2. These modules were printed and distributed to all schools with a target of one copy for every infant teacher (ECD level to grade 2). The Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MoPSE) embarked on an in-service teacher training for all teachers at the infant level; using the developed modules. The programme trained 44,324 infant teachers in early reading methodologies that focused on enhancing the early reading, writing and mathematical skills

amongst young learners. Throughout the course of the ERI programme the emphasis was on material development using local resources for teaching and learning processes. Monitoring of the implementation of ERI activities revealed that infant teachers in all schools including P1, P2, P3 and satellite schools are now exposed to and applying the ERI approach in their classes. The GPE programme financed Performance Lag Addressing Programme (PLAP), a core intervention by MoPSE, where it supported the development of PLAP materials and training of teachers on the same. By the end of the grant, 52,730 teachers had been trained in the use of Performance Lag Address Programme (PLAP) manuals and accompanying materials. This intervention happened at school and cluster level with supervision and support from District Remedial Tutors. The training was complemented by the development, printing and distribution of the PLAP manual to all teachers at junior level (Grade 3-7). A conscious decision was made by the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education to substitute the externally produced Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT) with a locally conceptualized curriculum based test. This was developed, piloted and finalized during the GPE grant period and will be available to all schools for use by teachers from 2017 onwards.

All printed manuals and modules for PLAP, ERI and documents for TPS are now available in schools for use by teachers and supervisors in their day to day work. Syllabuses for classroom use, which are critical to ERI and PLAP were reproduced at district level. There are ten provinces with 72 districts in Zimbabwe. Cluster Resource Teachers (CRTs) for PLAP and ERI were also identified and supported to scaffold these initiatives at cluster level and to conduct school visits to support their peers. 1,218 clusters were identified and supported during the GPE grant period. The GPE baseline conducted in 2014 had showed these clusters to be largely dysfunctional as a result of shortage of funds and resources.

As part of capacity building for the sub-national levels, the programme procured and distributed to each of the 72 districts, equipment in the form of risograph machines, 3 desktop computers, one projector, a binding machine and a Xerox 4 in 1 (print/scan/fax/copy) machine. Each one of the 1,218 clusters also received one Xerox 4 in 1 machine. Each of the 72 districts received an operational grant of US$1,200 every six months to help with maintenance of the machines and the purchase of computer consumables. Use of that money also included buying fuel for supervision of GPE related programmes including cluster level resources and stationery for district offices and clusters. The fuel bought was used to monitor GPE activities in the districts including the monitoring of cluster trainings as well as the collection and distribution of materials to schools.

The gains made through these two subcomponents should be sustained well beyond the life of the grant through local level support by CRTs, school heads and district education inspectors who were trained under these programmes. School level staff development will play a critical role in the training of any new teachers who enter the system. The availability of ERI modules and the PLAP manual should help to guide current and future teachers in the implementation of these teaching approaches. Dialogue has already started between the Ministries of Primary and Secondary Education and that of Higher and Tertiary Education for the integration of ERI and PLAP into pre-service training in teachers' colleges and universities which offer teacher education to primary teachers. This will ensure continuity and sustainability of these programmes.

Teacher Professional Standards (TPS), its accompanying handbook, training manual and supervision instruments were developed, printed and distributed nationally. These documents were used in the training of teachers, schools heads and other supervisors at various levels. A total of 103,764 teachers were trained in TPS. The cascade model was successfully applied in the roll out of the TPS, starting first with School Heads, Deputy Heads, Heads of Departments (Secondary) and Teachers in Charge of Infant Departments (Primary). After their training, the training was then cascaded to school level through staff development sessions where teachers were taken through the specifications of TPS and the supervision instruments. Teacher professional development needs should now be identified through the input of teacher data into the district Teacher Development Information System (TDIS), to be transferred for further analysis by HQ. The relationship between TPS and TDIS will be further strengthened through this ongoing process as self-identified teacher professional development needs are entered into the TDIS system in each district in order for the Ministry to take a more responsive approach to teachers' staff development. This approach was driven by the realization that having highly motivated and professionally competent teachers has a direct impact on achieving desired learning outcomes. With all supervisors having been trained on TPS across the country, monitoring visits showed the positive approach that supervisors are now taking in their role of mentoring and supporting teachers. Teacher self-appraisal data is being held by the teachers, for their own use in reflection and planning for their professional development needs.

The Teacher Development Information System (TDIS) is operational in most districts with follow up required in districts where human resources officers are still uncertain on how to use the data and on how to develop and print reports on teachers in the district. TDIS generated data on teachers, combined with EMIS data has strengthened Ministry's capacity for responsive and data driven planning and research. A total of 127,000 teachers have so far been captured into the system. A module allowing the capturing of data for administrators, who number about 10,000 is under development. Integration of TDIS and EMIS has been effected and is to be operationalized in the next quarter. All 72 districts and ten provinces now have internet connectivity, which facilitates not just TDIS work but enables better communication between the national and subnational levels. Interconnectivity between districts, provinces and Head Office is still underway and it is expected that once this is completed, real time transmission and updating of data will be possible at the various levels.

GPE implementation focal teams at the Ministry Head Office, with support from the Implementation Support Team (IST) and UNICEF, ensured provincial and district level understanding of the GPE interventions and the actions necessary for the activities to have an impact on learners. As part of capacity building and support for sub-national levels, the focal groups developed and shared guidelines for activities which would see each sub-component meeting its target. Six weekly implementation updates presented to the Education Co-ordination Group (ECG/LEG) as the 'endorsement' committee for the GPE, also served as an information dissemination forum and from time to time as the decision making forum on the re-budgeting of funds. Technical working groups comprising various stakeholders played a crucial role at the inception stages of work on TPS, ERI and PLAP.

Monitoring was done jointly and at strategic points during implementation, by MoPSE focal group members, the IST and UNICEF staff. While funding was made available to ECOZI for small scale monitoring, the requirement for them to be always accompanied by UNICEF or MOPSE, meant that the number of visits they could make was restricted. DFID as Coordinating Agency (CA) also accompanied UNICEF and MoPSE on a few monitoring visits for GPE and the Education Development Fund (EDF), but again the number and scope of these visits remained limited and based upon availability of both partners at mutual times, to take advantage of the requirement for MoPSE to be part of these monitoring visits.

DFID as the coordinating agency participated in the programme at various stages and Dr. Steve Harvey as DFID's Education Advisor and liaison person for GPE Zimbabwe made useful inputs and comments on the programme during and after monitoring visits and in response to the GPE quarterly updates, in addition to facilitating communication between the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education and the GPE Secretariat. Visits to Zimbabwe by the GPE Country Lead for Zimbabwe, Lucinda Elena Ramos Alcantara of the GPE Secretariat were timely and useful as she gave valuable feedback not just on the overall progress of implementation but also during key strategic moments in the development of the ESSP and the application process for the new GPE grant (2017-2019). The Implementation Support Team (IST) made a lot of positive contributions in liaising with the various departments and levels of the Ministry, including provinces and districts to speed up requests for funding, acquittals and processing of action plans for new disbursements.

The Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education now has a new Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP 2016-2020) and this was developed through funding from the GPE Grant. The new ESSP served as the reference document for the development of the National and District Operational Plans (N/DOPs). Plans are underway for the Provincial Operational Plans (POPs) to be developed in 2017. The ESSP was also part of the package that was submitted to GPE as application for the next grant, which has since been approved. Since the beginning of the grant, the Ministry has been conducting a yearly Education Sector Performance Review and these have helped Ministry to reflect on performance and outcomes achieved and to further strategize on how to improve.

We wish to thank the GPE for contributing to the achievements outlined in this report. We look forward to working together to sustain these achievements and attain greater results for children in the coming years in Zimbabwe.

1.0 Background Information

The Global Partnership for Education grant of USD 25.2 million with a programmable amount of USD 23.6 million available to Zimbabwe was allocated in October 2013 for implementation for the period January 2014 to December 2016. The grant has been implemented over three years and it supported the implementation of key identified activities in the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education's, 'Education Medium Term-Operational Plan' (EMTP-OP 2013-2015). The main aim of the grant was to support the improvement of the quality of teaching and learning in Zimbabwe by supporting teacher education in the three pivotal areas of:

- Professional development for better teaching and learning
- Supervision and management of teacher performance and development
- Strengthened strategic planning leading to the Zimbabwe Education Sector Strategic Plan (2016-2020).

These three components are further divided into subcomponents[2] which address issues of early learning through a comprehensive well-resourced reading programme (ERI), catch-up education for those children who continue to lag in age and grade appropriate performance (PLAP), the development and adoption of a Teacher Development Information System (TDIS), the approval and adoption of Teacher Professional Standards (TPS) and the completion of an Education Sector Plan (MoPSE ESSP 2016-2020). The main features of the design and activities which continue to be financed by the grant are contained in the approved GPE programme design and aligned with the EMPT-OP, which was part of the application documentation submitted to GPE.

Through all programming decisions made in 2015 close attention was paid to issues of equity. The GPE mid-term review found that the method of allocating and disbursing funds to districts was inequitable because all districts were being allocated a blanket amount regardless of the numbers of teachers to be trained in each district. This led to the 2nd and subsequent disbursements (up to 8th) being made based on the number of teachers in the district expected to undertake each training programme (ERI, PLAP, and TPS) with teacher numbers per district taken from EMIS 2014 data. Hence, guidelines for the use of funds were drawn up to reflect the change in budgeting and allocations. The new method of fund disbursements was appreciated by the districts and allowed all teachers to access training at the same unit cost of about US$ 15 a head.

Although the education sector has not been totally spared of the pressures in the broader economy, it has exhibited remarkable resilience. Emphasis has also been on generating sufficient evidence not only to guide planning and system management activities but also to inform policy dialogue and advocacy around critical issues affecting the sector. With 2016 EMIS and TDIS data now available, decisions around GPE interventions and implementation are being informed by up to date education data. Data generated through the strengthened EMIS, Teacher Development Information System (TDIS), 2014 MICS, GPE and TPS baseline surveys and the GPE mid-term review, contributed to the education sector performance review (ESPR) in late July 2015 and in November 2016 and the Education Sector Analysis (ESA) in June 2015 which have fed into the 2016-2020 Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP) and the accompanying operational plans.

[2] The three components and five subcomponents of activities supported through the GPE grant are:
1. Professional development for better teaching and learning
    a. Early reading initiative
    b. Performance lag addressing program
2. Supervision and management of teacher performance and development
    a. Teacher Professional Standards
    b. Teacher Development Information System (TDIS)
3. Strengthened strategic planning leading to MoPSE ESSP 2016-2020.

A major bottleneck to sustaining the quality education measures undertaken by the GPE interventions, remains the serious underfunding of the education sector against the backdrop of a weakening economy and the prevalence of poverty. The percentage of the national budget allocated to primary and secondary education in 2016 remained relatively high (in the region of 23%), but nearly 98% of it supports employment costs, resulting in households bearing an increasingly heavier financial burden (about 96%) of non-salary costs. Meanwhile, UNICEF has continued to advocate for more resources for the sector, from both government and other players, by supporting the development of a credible, more equity-focused ESSP 2016-2020 and by facilitating a deeper engagement with the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MoFED) and other potential funding partners to ensure more sustainable, longer term commitments to fund the sector. The School Improvement Grants (SIG) under the EDF that are provided to selected most vulnerable rural schools contribute to alleviating arising challenges from limited non salary cost investment by enabling these schools to address their most pressing needs in line with approved school development plans.

According to the most recent Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS, 2014), Zimbabwe's education indicators painted a mixed picture of the sector's performance with the country's literacy rate remaining high (92% for males and 86.1% for females age 15-24), and net intake in primary school being at 73 percent in 2014. EMIS data shows that GER for the 3-5 age group was still low at only 29 per cent in 2015. However, primary GERs are very high (slightly over 106%) while NERs hover around 89 per cent, with gender parity.

Completion rate for primary education, according to 2014 EMIS data was 77.25% with GPI 1.01. While primary school completion rates for 2015 remained high (79.7%), those for lower secondary are much lower (65.7%), reflecting the large proportion of learners who drop out before they complete the basic education cycle[3].

Figure 3 below illustrates the distribution of untrained teachers, expressed as a percentage of the teachers in each district as in the 2015 EMIS. On the whole, EMIS 2015 shows us that the majority of Zimbabwe's schools are staffed by trained teachers (78.9%). However, a deeper analysis reveals that there are wide inequities in the allocation of trained teachers across the different districts, especially at the ECD level. Furthermore, there exist large numbers of unregistered (satellite) schools that still lack basic facilities to qualify them for official registration. Schools that lack basic facilities and trained staff offer education of inferior quality. As a response, GPE interventions have ensured adequate professional development and monitoring support to satellite schools. However, the allocation of trained teachers is an issue that requires long-term policy interventions. A change in deployment and re-deployment policies and practices is being addressed in the next sector planning phase for the ESSP 2016-2020.

[3] In Zimbabwe, basic education spans 2 years of ECD, 7 years of primary school, and 4 years of lower secondary education (i.e. up to 'O' level).

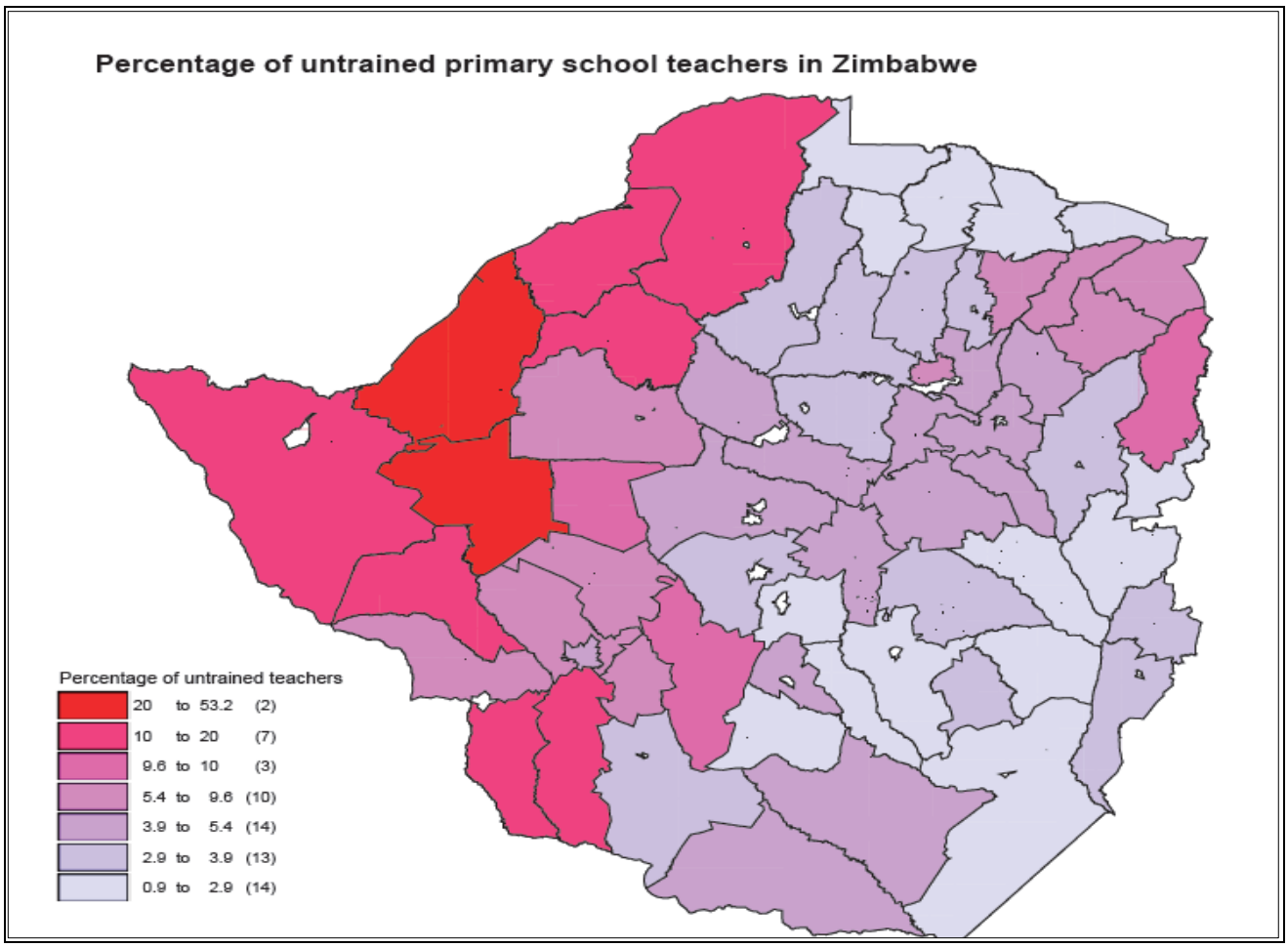


Figure 3: Percentages of untrained teachers by district (EMIS, 2015)

In November 2014, the GPE baseline highlighted the achievements and challenges in the education sector as directly relevant to the GPE programme. This baseline identified areas of strength and challenges in GPE implementation and the areas in which additional and specific support is needed. All districts and provinces participated in the baseline with 420 schools and 4,200 teachers covered. In 2015, the TPS baseline gave us valuable information on the status of professional development support for teachers. Programming decisions on the GPE have also been taken in response to the findings of these two research studies, to help address some of the specific issues which were found during the course of the two baselines. Findings from the baselines have also informed MoPSE's own response in drafting teacher professional standards guidelines, the supervision/mentoring instruments and in fostering the link within the GPE programme between TPS and TDIS so that data on teacher professional development needs gathered from self-appraisals and mentoring reports is input into the district TDIS database and used by national office HQ to develop teacher professional development programs which are responsive to teacher needs and training gaps.

Despite the economic challenges and fragile nature of the country's political context, much progress has been made with support from the donors. UNICEF has played a strong role as the fund manager of EDF and the Managing Entity for GPE, giving it a unique position that has enabled it to significantly influence Zimbabwe's national education agenda and achieve positive

results for children. In executing this role, UNICEF has successfully advocated for the strengthening of MoPSE leadership in the design, management and monitoring of all interventions, a call MoPSE has positively responded to by increasingly taking on greater ownership and accountability for activities implemented through UNICEF's technical support.

2.0 Objectives of the GPE and MoPSE Partnership in Zimbabwe

The overall objective of the GPE was: *To boost learning outcomes in basic education through continuous professional development of teachers, improved teacher supervision and management as well as strengthened evidence based policy and strategic planning.*[4]

The Sub-objectives were:

- To improve the quality of teaching reading and writing of all children from ECD A (Early Childhood Development Year 1) to grade 2.
- To reduce the learning achievement gaps of students in grades 3-7 by supporting implementation of Performance Lag Address Programme (PLAP) activities at school and cluster level.
- To optimize teacher performance using Teacher Professional Standards (TPS).
- To improve teacher performance management by providing a database on teacher skills, qualifications and training needs that will permit more efficient and effective teacher recruitment, deployment, training and professional development (TDIS).
- To improve education strategic planning in Zimbabwe through support to the development of the next five year education sector strategic plan MoPSE ESSP (2016-2020).

3.0 Description of Progress and Achievements

3.1 Component 1
Professional development for better teaching and learning

Subcomponent 1:	To improve the quality of teaching of pre-reading, reading and writing of all children from ECD to Grade 2
Subcomponent 2:	To reduce the learning achievement gaps of students in grades 3 -7 by supporting implementation of PLAP activities at school and cluster level

3.1.1 Early Reading Initiative (ERI)

Over the last three years GPE Zimbabwe witnessed accelerated implementation of early reading interventions (subcomponent 1 of the GPE programme). While most of the activities focused on capacity development and in-service training of both key Ministry Officials as well as teachers, attention was also placed on materials development, a critical intervention for the success of Early Reading. Strengthening of support mechanisms at district and cluster levels was also a priority. Each district office identified a dedicated inspector to spearhead implementation of ERI

[4] Measured through Annual ZELA (Zimbabwe Early Learning Assessment) in grade 3 which is an outcome indicator. Grade 7 result is one of 2 overall result indicators. The other is on number of teachers achieving teacher professional standards.

together with the ECD trainer. The identification and training of cluster resource teachers made sure of closer peer to peer support.

The GPE programme focused primarily on 'teacher optimization', an area that was identified in the Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio-Economic Transformation (ZIM ASSET 2013-2018) as one requiring special attention. The strategy was to develop and implement a materials driven, school and cluster based approach to train teachers in the Early Reading Initiative. Pre-grant evidence from the situational analysis revealed that despite considerable efforts directed towards improving learning outcomes, learners were failing to acquire basic reading and writing skills. It thus pointed towards the need for a sustained and intensive professional development of teachers to develop and upgrade their skills in teaching reading. This applied to all teachers, both qualified as well as unqualified. The unqualified teachers are paid for by communities and many have undergone paraprofessional training. The practice of hiring paraprofessionals ECD teachers is being discontinued by the Ministry, however current shortfalls in teacher numbers required at this level means that many communities continue to engage paraprofessionals when qualified teachers are not available.

The Early Reading Initiative (ERI) is a sub-component that is closely aligned to the work being undertaken in the ECD paraprofessional training and in the criteria identified for the evaluation of the ECD programme. Year 1 activities entailed the development of three ERI modules, one for ECD and the others for grades 1-2 and their trials, using copies printed on their risograph machines in 72 districts. MoPSE then moved to sensitize teachers on the modules and received their feedback before national publication. Under the same initiative, Deputy Provincial Directors (PEDs-Primary) and District ECD Trainers received support to understand their roles in the GPE interventions and thus draft costed action plans. Acquittal reports showed that the district ECD trainers worked closely with the education inspectors in all the 72 districts. They also successfully used the information gained during the orientation on ERI to further train cluster ERI resource persons (head teachers, TIC's and selected infant teachers in each district). This was followed by cascading training from cluster to schools. Since the GPE baseline reflected many clusters were inactive due to financial constraints, the programme took the initiative through the identified district resource persons and responded to capacity and resource gaps to re-activate the clusters. This was done through equipment support and insistence on building the capacity of cluster chairpersons and CRTs, coupled with financial support for their travel, communication and subsistence while on business.

Feedback from schools showed that the ERI continued to support the enhancement of pre-primary and primary school teachers' pedagogical skills in early reading. Equipment in the form of one projector, one binding machine and one risograph machine and two desktop computers were distributed to each of the 72 districts to support in-service training work. Each cluster received a Xerox 4 in 1 (printer/fax/scanner/copier) machine, with two toners for a start. The monitoring visits and best practices shared proved that district ECD trainers and trained cluster resource tutors worked with the trained teachers in implementation of ERI in infant grades.

The third and final year of Global Partnership for Education programme (GPE 1: 2016), saw implementation of planned activities taking place with the same vigor. A mop up in-service training of teachers who had either recently joined service or who had missed out on earlier

training for some reason continued at cluster and school level. By the end of the grant period, 44,324 teachers were successfully trained in ERI, and were improving early reading, writing and mathematical skills amongst infant learners. In the 5th tranche disbursed in 2016, all the 72 districts received an amount of money to procure reading and teaching and learning materials for schools. Procurement was done directly by districts and completed within an impressive six to ten weeks, a much faster turn- around time than that of the Ministry Head Office, which when procuring centrally seems to face a number of bottlenecks and challenges. The GPE focal groups at the Head Office worked with improved co-ordination to monitor activities at the sub-national levels and achieve planned results.

The setting up of focal groups was instrumental in speeding up programme implementation. The focal groups had dual leadership between UNICEF and MoPSE. Monthly GPE meetings were held between UNICEF and MoPSE focal persons to address issues of co-ordination and to follow up on implementation progress. The Implementation Support Team provided the necessary link between Head Office of MoPSE and the sub-national implementation levels of MoPSE. In addition to engagements with ECG, the high level participation of the Minister of Education in GPE meetings in Kigali and Brussels and the Permanent Secretary and Mr. Peter Muzawazi in Djibouti also facilitated in sharing progress, experiences and challenges with other countries as well a smooth roll out of the GPE programme back home in Zimbabwe.

3.1.2 Performance Lag Address Programme (PLAP)

A pre-grant survey showed that learning achievement gaps were identified as a major hurdle in the consistent poor performance by learners in the final year examination of primary school, grade 7. To address these gaps, GPE financed “Performance Lag Addressing Programme”, a core intervention by MoPSE, where it supported the development of materials and training of teachers in the PLAP programme. Trainings were undertaken in school staff development sessions and in clusters with supervision and support from District Remedial Teachers. The training was complemented by the development, printing and distribution of the PLAP manual to all teachers at junior level (grade 3-7). As with ERI, the first year was dedicated to setting up systems, processes and procedures to enable successful implementation. The PLAP focal group developed the PLAP manual and a range of model PLAP lessons for reference by teachers. Like the ERI subcomponent, district education inspectors, remedial tutors and PLAP cluster resource teachers were also trained in the use of the manual and drew up costed district action plans for implementation of PLAP. Sensitization of teachers and school heads on the PLAP approach was done in year 1 while discussions around the use of the WRAT test continued and the teachers continued to be innovative in developing their own tests to establish the learning gap in learners.

The second year of implementation saw more intensive training of junior primary teachers in the catch up programme. The PLAP manual was finalized in year 2 with printed copies distributed to provinces, districts, clusters and schools. The Ministry started developing a local curriculum based test for replacement of the WRAT. This was piloted and finalized and will be distributed in 2017 for use by all schools. In the final year (2016) of GPE 1, in-service training of teachers continued in clusters and schools for PLAP to mop up those teachers who joined service after the initial trainings were completed. At the end of 2016, 52,730 teachers were successfully trained in PLAP methodologies. Complementary reading materials were also procured and

distributed. For equity purposes districts were asked to assess which schools needed most support with materials, therefore targeting the rural schools and satellite schools which have been struggling to purchase resources. This was done collaboratively in each district with input from cluster leads. Thus the complementary reading materials procured were distributed first to the P3 and satellite schools (poorest and most remote) as a priority, and later to the remaining schools.

Guidelines for the provinces, districts and clusters were also developed so that each level could develop their own action strategies for PLAP. By the end of the grant, the 52,730 teachers who had been trained in the use of Performance Lag Address Programme (PLAP) knew how to use the manuals and accompanying materials. Cluster resource teachers for PLAP were also identified and supported to conduct school visits to support their peers. In year 2 a conscious decision was made by the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (and approved by the ECG) to substitute the externally produced Wide Range Achievement Test with a locally conceptualized curriculum based test. This was developed, piloted and finalized and will be available to all schools for use by teachers from 2017 onwards.

In all the three years of the Global Partnership for Education programme (GPE 1), the Provinces shouldered the overall responsibilities for monitoring the implementation of the costed action plans and the district acquittals against these action plans. Head Office focal groups provided programmatic oversight and approved provincial and district action plans. Provincial and District Inspectors assigned to PLAP continued to give the much-needed technical guidance on these programs. The six monthly operational grants were useful in the upkeep of equipment and the purchase of resources to support all GPE activities. All 72 districts used equipment to reproduce manuals and print supplementary resources for PLAP as well as school syllabi for effective training sessions.

An annex comprising a special needs education addendum for both ERI and PLAP was developed in 2016 and is awaiting finalization, approval and printing This is meant to support the teachers who work with children with a range of learning difficulties and not just the mere visible disabilities, hence broadening the sphere of response to children's needs. The annex contains various tailor-made activities for learners with each type of special education needs to develop specific skills such as auditory/ visual/ verbal/non-verbal skills written in a user-friendly language so that non-specialist teachers can also easily use the annex.

The sharing of progress and challenges between MoPSE and UNICEF continued and resulted in intensive programmatic monitoring visits by HO, IST, and UNICEF including financial spot checks to determine whether the funds disbursed have been used for its intended purposes. These visits were critical due to the Direct Cash Transfer (DCT) payment system used by UNICEF to disburse funds to districts.

The equipment procured for districts and clusters, using the GPE grant were used for all education activities, as needed. The operational grant of US$ 1200 every six months helped with maintenance of the machines and the purchase of computer consumables. Use of that money also included buying fuel for supervision, and stationary for districts and clusters. The fuel was

used to monitor GPE and wider education activities in the districts including attending reflection meetings run by the clusters and collection and distribution of materials.

Specific small grants were made available to districts to procure complementary teaching and learning materials for ERI and PLAP for distribution to schools within their areas. Such an approach ensured that districts were responsive to the needs of their schools. This local level procurement was complemented by national level procurement of some materials for further distribution to schools. This worked for those reading materials whose publishers were generally found in big cities and this enabled the programme to benefit from economies of scale. However local level procurement proved to be more efficient, with a shorter turnaround time. A specific small grant targeting materials for children with special needs was also made available to each district so that materials could be procured and distributed by districts to clusters and schools, as necessary. Each district identified the centers with resource units, special schools and special classes and consulted them on their needs. The procurement was then done in response to those needs. This process allowed districts to have a participatory assessment of school needs in each of their clusters.

The objectives and targets set for ERI and PLAP under this programme were achieved. The gains made through these two programs should be sustained well beyond the life of the grant through local level support by CRTs, school heads and district education inspectors who were trained under these programs. School level staff development will play a critical role in the training of any new teachers who enter the system. The availability of modules and the manual should help to guide current and future teachers in the implementation of these teaching approaches. Dialogue has begun between the Ministries of Primary and Secondary Education and Higher and Tertiary Education for the integration of ERI and PLAP into pre-service teacher training at institutions for higher learning in Zimbabwe.

Deviations from the implementation/action plan during the reporting period and factors jeopardizing the implementation of activities

1. The transitional nature of the wider socio-political context of Zimbabwe made programme planning in education a complex task. Internal processes in the Ministry for approval of national level work in printing of TPS, ERI and PLAP modules slowed down progress. They also affected the planned procurement of complementary reading materials for ERI and PLAP
2. Ministry of Education proposed that instead of engaging Logistical Service Providers (LSP) as envisaged in the implementation plan, it could make use of its own staff and structures for service delivery. The Education Coordination Group approved this modification. The funds saved through this change were channeled to other critical programme areas like the procurement of printing equipment for clusters and more complementary readers to support ERI and PLAP work
3. The MoPSE felt that instead of purchasing the expensive and foreign designed WRAT tests, they had the personnel and ability to develop locally designed curriculum based tests. It was felt that the WRAT which is a standardized internationally available achievement test was not giving the country value for money in the Zimbabwean context. This decision was approved by the ECG and savings made were directed towards more teaching and learning resources for districts and clusters. From these savings the programme managed to set aside some funds for the procurement of specific teaching and learning materials for children with special

needs. Some savings from the WRAT test was used to increase the cost of PLAP training, to match the cost of ERI trainings and to ensure that all junior (grade 3-7) teachers were trained. In many schools, infant teachers were also trained in PLAP, and staff development sessions in schools are ensuring that this training remains on the agenda.

Mitigation measures implemented

1. Monthly co-ordination meetings between MoPSE and UNICEF GPE focal persons to review progress and plan the next steps together were successful in clearing bottlenecks and areas of slow budget movement. These regular interactions enabled joint identification of workable strategies to accomplish planned activities.
2. Fund disbursement procedures were streamlined with accountability for use at district and provincial level. The Ministry Head Office provided oversight. This strengthened capacity at the subnational level and enabled greater responsiveness to the local context.
3. Money redirected from WRAT allocation to district level equipment procurement has been particularly useful because of the delays with getting the final print run of the manuals and modules for both ERI and PLAP and in the printing of draft syllabi as the new curriculum rolls out in 2017.

3.2 Component 2

Supervision and management of teacher performance and development

Subcomponent 1: Improved teacher performance management through supervision and monitoring using the Teacher Professional Standards

Subcomponent 2: Teacher Training and Development Information System (TDIS)

3.2.1 Teacher Professional Standards

Teacher professional status is given the highest priority in Zimbabwe and it also complements the first component of the programme with a focus on strengthening the existing arrangement for teacher supervision and management. In 2014, the Teacher Professional Standards, its accompanying handbook, training manual and the supervision instruments were developed, reviewed and revised by a national team with relevant stakeholders (teacher's unions, academics, civil society, MOPSE and Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, UNICEF, UNESCO). The documents formed the basis of all supervision and mentoring of teachers for the next three years in a fair and transparent manner. A baseline survey was conducted with the participation of 420 schools and 4,200 teachers. It provided evidence based information to the Ministry on the need of training of teachers at district level. Consequently, it was decided that the use of TPS resources in districts would be preceded by training of supervisors at the subnational levels.

In 2015 training of teachers was conducted in all districts for supervisors and cluster chairs on the use of the TPS document and handbook. These workshops were a critical intervention by the Ministry to raise awareness and create an appreciation of the operational standards and ethics for teachers while re-kindling the concept of personal responsibility and accountability. As per the initial plan, the trained supervisors and cluster chairs cascaded their learnings on the interactive TPS process to schools who further disseminated it through staff development sessions to their staff. In 2015, training of all primary school supervisors and strategic secondary school supervisors (including Heads, Deputies and 2 HODS) was successfully concluded in all

1218 clusters. The mop-up orientation of remaining teachers and secondary school HODs were later held at school level. Because of this effective training, the TPS along with its supervision instruments have become a point of reference for all supervision and mentoring in the education system in Zimbabwe. The notion of introspection, honesty, objectivity and truthfulness was emphasized in the training so that teachers were able to come up with reliable and authentic professional development plans. The teachers also appreciated the significance of such a training as a prelude to targeted continuous teacher development. It helped them self-assess their skills and focus on professional development areas of need whereas their mentors are also able to identify the much needed support they need for their professional development, at school sessions or through Ministry provided short term sub-national trainings.

In the final year of the GPE 1 grant, the Teacher Professional Standards (TPS), its handbook and training manuals were distributed to all infant, junior and secondary schools in the 72 districts of the country. The TPS handbook is a significant document that unpacks and provides a clear explanation of the purpose and nature of TPS. It also rationalizes the revision, refinement and development of the TPS supervision instruments of 2016, and are referred to at the various levels of the Ministry's school system. These instruments are not only for teachers, but also for Heads of Departments (including Teachers-in - Charge), the School Heads, Education Inspectors and the DSIs (District School Inspectors – previously called District Education Officers). The Teacher Self-Assessment and Professional Development Planning tools were finalized in 2016 along with trainings in the ten provinces, followed by cascading to districts and clusters by the end of the last quarter. By the end of 2016, 103,764 teachers including School Heads, Teachers in-Charge and Heads of Departments were trained in the use of TPS.

Training was then cascaded to school level through staff development sessions where teachers were familiarized with the materials and methods to be used in the implementation and use of the TPS. A further round of training was conducted where all supervisors identified above were trained on self-assessment and how to identify needs and develop Personal/ Professional Development Plans (PDPs). Teacher professional development needs will be identified through an analysis of teacher data, input into TDIS, which stems from the teacher PDPs. This approach was driven by the realization that having highly motivated and professionally competent teachers has a direct impact on achieving the desired learning outcomes.

3.2.2 Teacher Development Information Systems (TDIS)

The development of the Teacher Development Information System (TDIS) for capturing teacher data, monitoring teacher performance, providing informed guidance on teacher training needs, and improving management of teacher professional development (TPD) activities started in 2014. By 2015, a clean TDIS data base was in place. Training was provided to the district staff to upload information and Head Office HR officers in using TDIS to download content from district and provincial data sites and generate reports.

In 2016, the input of data on administrative staff into the TDIS system and thoughts on the inputting of teacher professional development plans into TDIS were initiated. Tools for the collection of data on administrative staff were developed and modules created in the TDIS platform. GPE funds had helped to procure desktop computers and printers to facilitate data capture and storage at district and provincial levels in year 1. The updating of TDIS records

continues on a regular basis in the districts. While virtually all districts have updated records on their PC's, there continues to be an issue with timely submission of data as expected (monthly) to HO for processing. This has resulted in an outdated national TDIS data base being held at central level. In the last quarter of 2016, MoPSE's ICT/EMIS Section, with UNICEF support embarked on a mission to merge EMIS and TDIS, with the latter being a subset of the former as envisaged at the programme design stage. This ensures that the TDIS falls under the management of the ICT/EMIS Section that possesses superior skills and extensive experience in data management. The capture of EMIS and TDIS data was also synchronized which has enabled uniform data capture by a data cleaning team who worked under the supervision of the ICT/EMIS Section.

For the integration of the Teacher Development Information System (TDIS) with EMIS, work began in year 3 (2016) of the GPE, on the establishment of an information data base that would provide up-to-date information on teachers by trainings, location, age, experience, qualification, performance etc. The planned target for this was to merge it with the EMIS for the annual education census in August 2016. This has been delayed and the Ministry continues to work with different strategies to integrate Teacher Personal Development Plans into the TDIS system.

A total of 127,000 teachers have been captured in the TDIS system. In the next stage, the development of a module will allow capturing of data for administrators, who number about 10,000. TPS and TDIS should see a close integration as teacher self-appraisal and needs analysis are included in the TDIS system in each district. Data from TDIS and EMIS should strengthen MoPSE's capacity to undertake data driven planning and research for the professional development of education personnel. Using GPE funds, the Ministry initiated a process to have internet connectivity in all 72 districts to enable TDIS work to be done online. Interconnectivity between districts, provinces and Head Office is still underway and it is expected that once this is completed, real time transmission and updating of data will be possible at subnational levels by the time GPE funds are finally acquitted. On the whole the TDIS is currently working well, with most Ministry of Education Human Resources (HR) officers having been trained on how to use the data to develop and print reports on teachers. These reports will provide a robust support base for Ministry as it plans for in-service training that address teachers' expressed professional development needs.

Any deviation from the implementation/action plan during the reporting period and any factors jeopardizing the implementation of activities

1. The use of TDIS in monitoring teacher performance, providing informed guidance on teachers' training needs, and improving management of teacher professional development (TPD) activities was rather slow in taking off. The TDIS is expected to properly inform planning and response to teacher development needs. But until all training related to TPS was completed and teachers were supported with self-appraisals and development of personal PD plans, the TDIS system was not able to be used to guide a long term national professional development response.
2. Lack of connectivity at some district and provincial offices persisted despite efforts to address this issue.
3. The quality of connectivity is sometimes poor, particularly in rural districts thereby affecting the smooth operation and use of the data system

4. Another significant challenge was the regular update of TDIS. Although EMIS and TDIS are now being merged, the system can still operate independently. Because of competing priorities in districts, teacher data updating becomes the last priority. It is unclear when the most recent data was captured and if up to date data is available on teachers.
5. Funds for training on TPS did not stretch to training all secondary school supervisors at cluster level – only two HOD's along with the School Head and Deputy Head could be trained. The remaining HOD's were trained by their supervisors and those who attended cluster training, to work with the TPS documents and supervision instruments in staff development sessions at school.
6. All districts did not honor the time of TDIS data submission. This late submission was a result of inadequate monitoring by Head Office who had to ensure compliance by districts, as well as logistical challenges that districts faced due to poor connectivity (some districts had no access to internet, and therefore had to physically deliver their data on flash disks).
7. Another severe challenge was the poor link between the Head Office and districts, the former often being unaware of the challenges at the ground level.

Mitigation measures implemented

A refresher training was conducted in 2016 to ensure capacity building in using TDIS to draft reports and inform training needs for teacher development interventions in provinces and districts. To make the TDIS fully functional, all training related to TPS were successfully completed and teachers learnt how to prepare self-appraisals and development of individual development plans for better professional proficiency. Plans to integrate TPS data into TDIS and EMIS are in the offing to enable a stronger relationship between professional development responses of the Ministry and teacher needs. UNICEF is supporting the MoPSE in strategizing improvement of e-connectivity of district and provincial offices so that the TDIS can provide real time data on teachers. There is need for the Ministry to re-engineer the personnel structure at district level so that they can have people to update the collected data.

3.3 Component 3

Improve education strategic planning through support to the development of the next five-year Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP) 2016-2020

Objective: To improve education strategic planning in Zimbabwe through support to the development of the next five-year Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP: 2016-2020)

Subcomponent: Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP: 2016-2020)

3.3.1 Education Sector Strategic Planning

A core activity initiated with GPE support in 2014 was the development of the 2016-2020 Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP). In the first year, a review of the experiences with the preparation of the current EMTP and EMTP-OP, with MoPSE teams collecting documents to inform the next ESSP was done. This was followed by a sector performance review in October 2014. The availability of substantially more data of good quality informed the review and enabled MoPSE to have an objective presentation of the status of the sector, a scrutiny of the progress, success, as well as the constraints and challenges the sector still faced. The participation of a

broad variety of partners active in the education sector (other sector Ministries, NGOs, CSOs, donors, universities, teacher training colleges, and parastatals such as ZimSEC) was overwhelming, and set the tone for a consultative ESSP development process in 2014.

In 2015, a core activity for the education sector was the Education Sector Analysis (ESA) and the initiation of the development process of the 2016 -2020 Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP). For the latter, it was imperative to conduct an Education Sector Performance Review (ESPR). It was attended by Lucinda Ramos of the GPE Secretariat who witnessed the presentation of the preliminary findings of the ESA. The ESPR brought together a broad range of players in the education sector under the leadership of MoPSE to review progress made between October 2014 and July 2015 in the achievement of the sector priorities that were set in the EMTP 2011 to 2015.

In the highly participatory ESPR some of the issues discussed were: the need to ensure full implementation of policy provision e.g. on non-exclusion of learners because of failure to pay school fees, provision of non-formal education services by all schools, provision of school infrastructure, under-provision of opportunities for children with special needs; and chronic underfunding of the sector. Controversial issues such as corporal punishment in schools also found a place in the discussions.

The completion of the 2014-15 Education Sector Analysis meant findings could be addressed in the ESPR and subsequently supported the first draft of the ESSP (2016-2020) that was ready by December 31st, 2015. National consultations on the sector priorities for 2016 to 2020 were conducted in all schools across the country in August 2015. Parents, communities and schools participated in the consultations, and the results were compiled for reference during the preparation of the ESSP itself. Initial results from the consultations show a general convergence over the following priorities: (a) improved quality of learning environments (infrastructure, equipment, competent and motivated teachers); (b) greater focus on children with special learning needs; and, (c) increased funding for the sector by government.

The drafting of the ESSP formally commenced on 5th October 2015 under the guidance of an international consultant. MoPSE provided an inclusive opportunity by involving other sector ministries, quasi-government bodies, funding partners, development partners, civil society organizations (including teacher organizations) and learners themselves for determining future priorities for the sector. In early February 2016, a meeting was held for feedback and a draft was submitted to stakeholders, including other sector Ministries, NGO's, ECOZI, UN Agencies, donors and World Bank. Following this process, a revised draft with a tentative costing was presented at the ECG meeting on the 25th February 2016. The draft was further revised in response to the comments in both these forums. An independent review was commissioned on behalf of the ECG (LEG) by DFID, the coordination agency (CA) in mid-March 2016.

The 2016-2020 ESSP was internally endorsed by MoPSE and subsequently by the Education Coordination Group (ECG) at its July 2016 meeting. The ESSP then served as the reference document for the development of the National Operational Plan and the District Operational Plans (DOPs) from August to September 2016. During the preparation of their DOPs, districts

ensured full alignment with the goals, priorities, targets and milestones in the ESSP. By so doing, the DOPs contributed to the outputs and outcomes in the ESSP results framework.

While in 2015 and 2016, Zimbabwe was preparing for its GPE grant application for the period 2017 to 2020, a basic requirements in the application package was a credible ESSP that met international standards in accordance with a specific set of criteria, which Zimbabwe's ESSP did. The ESSP was therefore part of the package that was submitted to GPE on 1st September 2016, and the GPE Board approved Zimbabwe's application, resulting in MoPSE securing, in the first week of December 2016, further funding (the fixed tranche) to the value of $20.58 million for the period 2017 to 2019.

The year 2016 saw MoPSE hold its third consecutive annual Education Sector Performance Review. Compared to the ESPRs for 2014 and 2015, the ESPR for 2016 was a big improvement on previous ones for several reasons, among them the following: (a) unlike in previous years, the 2016 ESPR involved inputs from districts, with districts sector review results feeding into the national ESPR; (b) the quality of presentations, in terms of structure, evidence (using 2016 EMIS data) and focus, was much higher; (c) the reports presented maintained a sharp equity focus; and (d) a much broader range of stakeholders took part in the ESPR, generating a diversity of views that enriched discussions. The Education Coordination Group (ECG) unanimously confirmed the high standard of the 2016 ESPR at its meeting of 18 November 2016.

For the three years of the GPE grant the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education was conducting a yearly ESPR, with the first one being in October 2014 attended by Douglas Lehman of the GPE Secretariat. The 2015 education sector review was preceded by an education sector analysis (ESA) which brought forth pertinent information backed by relevant data on the performance of the education sector in 2014 and 2015. Lucinda Ramos of the GPE Secretariat visited Zimbabwe during the education sector reviews in 2015 and 2016, and provided inputs on the way forward for the development of the ESSP and the strategic objectives that GPE was working on in tandem with the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals.

The ESSP document itself is an important guide for all levels of the education sector. The ESSP has now been printed and distributed to all districts and provincial offices. The ESSP was also key in the development of the programme document and application package for the fixed tranche of the next GPE grant for the period 2017 to 2019. One of the GPE's basic requirements in the application package is a credible ESSP that meets international standards in accordance with a specific set of criteria, of which Zimbabwe's ESSP did. The ESSP was therefore part of the package that was submitted to GPE on 1 September 2016, and the GPE Board approved Zimbabwe's application, resulting in MoPSE securing, in the first week of December 2016, further funding (the fixed tranche) to the value of $20.58 million for the period 2017 to 2019.

Deviation from the implementation/action plan during the reporting period and factors jeopardizing the implementation of activities

1. The ESSP was only finalized in mid-2016, which was already the first year of its implementation. Meanwhile, progress against the 2016 plans had to be assessed before the GPE grant expiry. The short time between the completion of the plan and the review of progress against the goals and targets put a lot of pressure on MoPSE staff. This was

particularly the case for districts which managed to complete their DOPs only in September, the month in which review processes were supposed to begin. In fact, due to very tight schedules, provinces did not have the chance to prepare their Provincial Operational Plans (POPs). This meant that the link between the district and national plans were not made explicit.

2. Provinces were unable to develop their own Provincial Operational Plans (POPs) in 2016 due to limited time.
3. Many competing demands and heavy financial commitment to teacher salaries, meant that Government was unable to give adequate and timely attention to the roll out of the ESSP priorities resulting in delayed implementation of activities.

Mitigation measures implemented

1. In the three years of the GPE Programme, from 2014-2016, UNICEF supported MoPSE in the recruitment of consultants for critical tasks of the ESSP (2016-2020) development.
2. The Provincial Operational Plans, are a priority in 2017. Along with the drafting of the POPs, the Provinces will also review progress in time to get inputs into the ESPR for 2017. Since the quality of reports generated by each of the 72 districts varied widely, it will also be important in the future to provide additional technical support to targeted districts to ensure quality reporting, and this will further enhance the quality of the national ESPR.

4.0 Risk Assessment and Risk Management

Risk Category	Risk Rating	Risk Description	Mitigation measures taken
Economic and Financial Risk	Medium	• Though spending was maintained across all subcomponents, process in Ministry for procurement of ERI and PLAP complementary readers continue to hold up procurement. • Cash crisis slowed down the implementation of programme activities • Possibility of misuse of funds by government (district or cluster level, provincial and national levels) or other implementing partners, resulting in financial	• Central level procurement processes in terms of efficiency and speed was weak. A decision was therefore made to focus more on district level procurement. Proposed disbursements were streamlined at subnational level with accountability for use at district and provincial levels. Director of Finance with IST support oversaw financial disbursements and acquittals. • Each district developed their own coping mechanism to ease the pressure of unavailability of hard cash. The use of platforms like mobile money, plastic money and transferring money directly into

Risk Category	Risk Rating	Risk Description	Mitigation measures taken
		loss. This also compromises principles of VfM.	the account of the workshop participants and liaising with local businesses to work around the challenge related to liquidity crunch, supported response to this challenge. • HACT guidelines were followed through UNICEF systems to ensure financial risk management and focusing on strengthening national capacity for management and accountability. Partners were also encouraged to do an online course on HACT. Assurance activities like spot checks, monitoring and capacity building on financial systems and requirements continued through district level work between UNICEF and MoPSE.
Capacity support	Medium	• Ministry structure is not optimal for division and advancement of GPE activities • Inadequate staffing in MoPSE (vacant or acting capacity) of those expected to take leadership role in training and monitoring	• The programme included review/audit of partner structures as part of verification • The programme reviewed technical assistance requirements and recruited consultancies for specific tasks and for a limited period of time. • UNICEF advocated redistribution of tasks, e.g. to decentralized levels • Support was always provided with UNICEF technical assistance
Staff movement	Medium	• Resource people at national, provincial and district levels are not up to speed with the GPE IP, therefore the costed action plans for each year delayed. Staffing	• Staff at national, provincial and district, cluster and school levels were generally up to speed with GPE in PLAP, ERI, and TPS. Work was also done with clusters to improve their grasp of the programme.

Risk Category	Risk Rating	Risk Description	Mitigation measures taken
		unstable in MoPSE and in leadership positions at provincial levels • New Ministry structure in 2016 may affect service delivery as changes take effect • Programming compromised at MoPSE, creating a bigger burden on the Grant Agent for implementation	• Until implementation of the new structure, existing Principal Directors (PEDs) and Directors were responsible for GPE subcomponents and this worked • Engagement at senior management level between UNICEF, MoPSE and ECG on new structures and delegation of responsibilities helped
Monitoring and Management	Medium	Proposed monitoring and implementation procedures are not followed/put in place	• The programme required regular submission of reports (generally quarterly) • UNICEF conducted verification visits based on submitted monitoring and acquittal reports • MoPSE and UNICEF conducted joint monitoring visits that included all partners • UNICEF clarified responsibilities of different players • GPE programs were monitored along with other education programs being monitored by MoPSE or UNICEF
Overall risks	Medium	• Due to many competing demands and heavy financial commitment to teacher salaries, Government was not able to give adequate attention to some GPE subcomponents (such as TPS and ESSP) resulting in delayed implementation • Sustainability of GPE programs	• Decentralization of most of the GPE trainings to clusters and schools mitigated the overall risk to the programme. School level implementation and monitoring in year 3 continued to mitigate overall risks. • Government ownership of the GPE programme and strong support from leadership (the Minister and Permanent Secretary) considerably reduced the risk of incomplete or shoddy programme delivery

Risk Category	Risk Rating	Risk Description	Mitigation measures taken
			• Frequent and targeted monitoring visits also helped to clear bottlenecks and to move GPE forward in a productive way. • Beyond 2016, pre-service training to be included in GPE interventions, particularly for ERI, PLAP and TPS.

Among risk factors identified in the ESPIG Application, factors[5] jeopardizing the overall implementation of the GPE programme, including any newly identified risk(s).

1. Due to many competing demands and heavy financial commitment to teacher salaries, Government was not always able to give adequate attention to some GPE subcomponents (such as ERI, PLAP, TPS and ESSP) resulting in some implementation and intervention activities being delayed.
2. The fact that teachers' salaries were constantly delayed, particularly in the 3rd year of implementation made it difficult to keep motivation levels high, in view of the fact that initiatives like ERI and PLAP needed self-drive for them to be successful. Teachers were expressing concerns with the salary and bonus situation at each training session.
3. Sustainability of GPE programs without GPE funding. Concerns have been expressed that while systems have been put in place for the continuation of ERI and PLAP, without adequate funding from the fiscus, supervision and application of these initiatives will simply fizzle out.
4. Though spending was maintained across all subcomponents, processes in Ministry for procurement of ERI and PLAP complementary readers slowed down the use of GPE funds for this purpose. It took MoPSE two years to go through the procurement processes for these readers and in the end there was pressure in the final year, with more than US$ 10m to be spent with a considerable amount tied to procurement. Measures were taken to make this process easier, faster and more efficient.
5. For TDIS the districts often failed to share updated data with the HR at the Ministry Head office. This was largely due to the absence of interconnectivity between HO and subnational offices. The Ministry has rightly identified connectivity issues among those needing urgent attention and priority.

Mitigation measures for the risk factors

The current Education Sector Strategic Plan (2016-2020) will take forward the next steps from the activities covered under the last EMTP plan (2011-2015), consolidating progress in ways which see activities sustained through school based staff development sessions and supported by trained cluster resource tutors. Now that clusters have been re-activated and empowered to take forward trainings and material development, it is critical that the Ministry continue to support and monitor them, for sustainability and for impact on school development sessions.

[5] Including any changes in political context and/or institutional arrangements.

5.0 Outcome indicators in the GPE Programme Results Framework

The framework is an accompanying annex to the report: Annex 6.

6.0 Programme Disbursement

Note: "Disbursement" refers to funds transferred by the Grant Agent (or by other financing resources) to the government or other implementing partners, or funds directly expensed by the Grant Agent (or by other financing resources).

	Current reporting period		Cumulative		Next reporting period	
	Planned Disbursement (US$)	Actual Disbursement (US$)	Planned disbursement (US$)	Actual Disbursement (US$)	Reporting period	Future planned disbursement (US$)
GPE (ESPIG)	US$23.6[6] million	US$23.6 million	US$23.6 million	US$23.6 million	US$23.6 million	N/A
Financing resource 1 *(insert)* **(NA)**						
Total	US$23.6 million	US$23.6 million	US$23.6 million	US$23.6 million	US$23.6 million	N/A

The certified financial statements will be made available by UNICEF New York HQ. By component, the Zimbabwe Country Office GPE Programme made the following disbursements against available programmable funds (US$ 23.6 million):

Component	Total GPE budget	Total Funds received to date	Cumulative spending as at 31 December 2016	Balance on funds received to date	% Expenditure on total budget
Component 1					
1.1 Early Reading Initiative	7,958,581.00	7,916,113.00	8,288,682.94	(372,569.94)	104.71%
1.2 Performance Lag Address program	8,455,744.00	8,455,744.00	9,123,159.30	(667,415.30)	107.89%
Component 2					
2.1 Teacher Professional Standards	1,346,125.00	1,346,125.00	1,689,580.36	(343,455.36)	125.51%
2.2 Teacher Development Information System	2,112,600.00	2,112,600.00	1,389,046.76	723,553.24	65.75%

[6] The total agreement amount was USD 25,252,000.00. The programmable amount received by Zimbabwe was US$23.6 million.

Component 3					
3. Education Sector Plan 2016-2020	703,400.00	703,400.00	721,305.02	(17,905.02)	102.55%
Management and M & E costs	1,994,866.00	1,860,704.90	1,202,337.21	658,367.69	64.62%
Office Overheads	1,028,822.00	1,205,451.10	1,186,316.87	19,134.23	98.41%
TOTAL	**23,600,138.00**	**23,600,138.00**	**23,600,428.46**	**(290.46)**	100.00%

Variances in expenditures were due to:

Management and M & E costs (under expenditure- 64.62%): UNICEF and MoPSE encouraged combination of monitoring visits with other purposes like workshops and programme technical support meetings thereby saving funds. Fewer monitoring visits were made as the Ministry and UNICEF made use of other means of getting to know the status of implementation, like receiving electronic and hard copy reports. Provinces and district offices were also involved in monitoring of programmes thereby reducing the amount of central level monitoring needed.

ERI and PLAP (overspending- 104.71% and 107.89% respectively)- There were savings from TDIS due to lower costs of interventions than anticipated and change of programme activities (65.75% TDIS expenditure). Some of the TDIS activities were also funded from the EMIS budget under EDF. Some trainings which had been planned could not take place as the Ministry shifted priorities. These savings were then directed towards ERI and PLAP where demand for funds was high, particularly for procuring complementary reading materials for schools and syllabus interpretation training workshops. The movement of these funds from TDIS to ERI and PLAP led to the expenditures of these last two overshooting the 100% mark.

Teacher Professional Standards (overexpenditure-125.51%)- There were more trainings than planned, particularly at district and cluster level in order to launch the developed Teacher Professional Development self-assessment and supervision instruments. With the concurrence of MoPSE, funds were obtained from savings from TDIS.

Education Sector Strategic Plan 2016-2020- (over expenditure- 102.55%)- this was incurred during the development of District Operational Plans and consultancies to support this process as well as the sector performance review processes. Additional funds were taken from the M&E costs and TDIS.

The following technical, policy and knowledge products were financed by the programme

- Baseline reports for TPS, ERI and PLAP
- TPS documents; TPS Training Manual ;TPS Handbook
- Early Reading Modules for ECD and grades 1 and 2
- PLAP Manual
- Education Sector Analysis
- Education Sector Strategic Plan (2016-2020)

These documents are available from the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education in Zimbabwe and UNICEF.

7.0 Constraints, Challenges and Lessons learned

After building cluster capacity at the subnational levels on organizing workshops and managing their affairs we realise that they are able to do a lot more if they are provided with information and knowledge. Districts and cluster level personnel showed a great deal of commitment and eagerness to achieve results for children in their respective areas. At the end of GPE 1 the districts and clusters became very efficient in delivery of trainings and timely follow up with very few acquittals going beyond 6 months. In addition, our current system of reporting from the districts, using a HACT reporting schedule has helped in efficient collection and reporting of data from the districts. The programme has also seen districts participating actively in their own procurement and the key lesson there is that given adequate support and guidance, districts can efficiently plan, organize and execute their own activities and procure with shorter turnaround time, in a responsive way to the local needs.

The mid-term review in June 2015 was instrumental in identifying issues with the function and performance of the GPE and the recommendations which were made in the review, were immediately implemented. The most significant of these were: the method of fund disbursement to districts was changed from equal district disbursements to disbursement according to the number of teachers in each district. For the GPE programs: ERI, PLAP and TPS this worked out at around US$15 per teacher.

A conscious decision was made to involve parents and communities more in the GPE initiatives and this was found to be particularly useful in the development of locally produced learning materials, where parents were involved in locating local raw materials (cans, boxes, old fabrics, coloured pebbles etc.) to support teachers to develop play and reading resources for children at minimal cost.

Beyond 2016, there is a risk that those components like ERI, PLAP and TPS which are no longer receiving significant funding under the second grant may slow down or completely stall if Government does not put in financial resources. Discussions around incorporating ERI, PLAP and TPS, into pre-service training will ensure that new teachers are aware of new education interventions and ESSP priorities before they enter the teaching service. This will ensure sustainability of the GPE interventions.

The concept of cluster resource teachers proved key and useful in providing peer to peer support which was crucial especially given that district level inspectors could not reach out to every corner of their districts to monitor and support teachers on ERI and PLAP.

UNICEF continues to engage closely with key players at Head Office level, and with provinces and districts. Schools are also routinely visited to observe the implementation of the GPE programme in the schools and to discuss progress, challenges and concerns with the teachers and the school leadership.

It is important to develop flexible implementation plans so that interventions can be adjusted or refined in response to the changes in the national development context. For example, the WRAT tests, which were planned for, initially had to give way to curriculum based tests as per the demands of the new curriculum framework adopted in 2015. The change from having logistical service providers to leaving Ministry personnel to organize the trainings was also responsive to the local context. This enabled re-allocation and investment of resources into areas where greater value for money could be derived.

What worked well

While the GPE focal teams in the first year took time establishing the necessary systems and processes to implement the several subcomponents of the GPE and ensure subnational understanding of the GPE interventions and activities to be undertaken, implementation became smooth and picked up speed once it took off. This was helped by the fact that the focal groups developed realistic and time-bound costed action plans to keep their work in focus and track progress. The technical working groups included higher and tertiary institutions, practicing teachers and managers, student representatives, civil society organizations, technical specialists from national and international CSO's and NGO's. This broad and participatory membership bridged the gap between planning and implementation. Thus, a strong foundation was set for national acceptance and correct positioning of the GPE implementation. This was evidenced by the high rate of disbursements to the different levels in each of the three years of GPE. In fact, by 31st December 2016 there was zero balance with all tranches disbursed and utilized as per the activity plans.

An important sustainable achievement of GPE 1 was strengthening the subnational levels and supporting them financially and materially. The GPE programme continued to strengthen cluster level capacity for a sustainable impact on children in schools. Every six weeks an update on implementation was presented to the Education Coordination Group (ECG) which also acted as the 'endorsement committee' for the GPE. These meetings helped in making sound decisions in the re-allocation of budget. For example, the ECG was required to approve the re-allocation of funds from the non-sustainable WRAT tests as provided in the GPE implementation plan to strengthen PLAP test which are linked to each syllabus and which have a bigger allocation of resources to clusters and schools. In addition, 1,218 clusters received equipment which was procured and distributed with the reallocation of funds from WRAT tests.

Forging partnerships has been the GPE program's strength and throughout the three years of GPE implementation, the subnational levels (the 10 provinces; 72 districts and 1218 clusters) were capacitated which resulted in much better programme delivery. The Ministry Head Office (HO), the GPE Implementation Support Team, as well as UNICEF programme officers continued to give provinces and districts the needed technical guidance on their operational action plans and on how best to use resources that were allocated to them. Intensive joint field monitoring by the ECG as well as financial spot checks by UNICEF were conducted at provinces, districts, clusters and schools. These visits were critical due to the Direct Cash Transfer (DCT) payment modality used by UNICEF to disburse funds to districts and given that the districts in turn fund clusters with a greater part of the funds they receive. The visits revealed that the needs of schools and teachers were met and that there was an overall positive attitude to the equitable distribution

of resources (year 2 and 3) compared to the one size fits all approach (year 1). Provinces had overall responsibility for monitoring the implementation of the costed plans and for district acquittals against these action plans.

DFID as the coordinating agency made immense contribution to both implementation and monitoring of the programme and participated in planning and strategic discussions at various stages. Stephen Harvey, as DFID Education Advisor and liaison person for GPE Zimbabwe, served as a critical communication link between the GPE Secretariat and the Ministry for the expiring grant and also during the application process for the new grant. Several support visits by the Country Lead, Lucinda Elena Ramos served to steer the country's programme forward in the right direction and also provided useful guidance in the application process for the new grant. The visits were quite strategic as they took place around the education sector review or at critical moments during the application process.

What did not work well

The envisaged use of Logistical Service Providers (LSPs) did not materialize. This would have seen non-governmental organizations receiving a portion of the GPE funds within their operating areas and in turn providing Ministry with the logistics and administrative support to roll out the trainings under ERI, PLAP and TPS. The idea of the LSPs was shelved for two reasons- one, the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education has sufficiently established structures at every level, with the capacity to successfully organize and execute, given enough guidance, any kind of training. The second reason was that in a polarized society like Zimbabwe, whose context and history does not speak well of the relationships between Government and non-governmental organizations, giving funds to the latter to manage on behalf of the former would have only served to further strain relations between these two.

The biggest challenge faced was the difficult economic situation the country faces which affected a large proportion of the population. Poor economic performance continues to contribute to declining revenue for government, resulting in limited inflows of resources to the sector. As a result, the sector's funding requirements, other than the non-salary component, have largely remained unmet. While the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MoFED) consistently prioritized education in the budget allocations the major bottleneck that remains is that most of the expenditure for the sector (topping 98%) is spent on staff salaries, leaving only 2 percent for non-salary expenditure. Inequalities based on socio-economic status (SES) remain wide in Zimbabwe, and this inevitably translates into wide inequities in the provision of education services of good quality among different socio-economic groups. This is largely because the burden of supporting children's education is increasingly borne by households and communities that have widely differing economic capacities.

Implementation of programs continued to suffer from the limited and overstretched capacity of MoPSE staff. Some departments of the MoPSE remain severely understaffed. This becomes a major bottleneck. This points to the need for any future programming to attend to assessment of the institutional capacity of the MoPSE and support for capacity development as a core strategy.

For a number of reasons, procurement of goods and services continued to present challenges for MoPSE. Consistent with UNICEF's overall goal to strengthen MoPSE's structures and

systems, efforts were made to ensure that, to the extent possible, government structures and systems were used to procurement goods and services. However, serious delays were experienced as processes were generally too slow to meet programme targets and requirements in a timely manner. An example is the procurement of complementary early reading materials that took no less than 18 months to be accomplished. In some cases as appropriate, UNICEF undertook procurement on behalf of MoPSE, with MoPSE's concurrence. However, on at least two occasions in 2015, GPE equipment procured was not collected by MoPSE (as consignee) on time, resulting in the goods accruing substantial storage or demurrage charges. In one case, UNICEF had to move the procured Xerox printers to its (UNICEF's) own warehouse as there were concerns over the safety and security provided at MoPSE's warehouse. UNICEF now acknowledges the need to look at procurement processes more holistically to include timely collection, storage and distribution. It is therefore working closely with MoPSE to ensure adherence to a clear set of established procurement procedures and to strengthen safety and security at government warehouses and storage depots.

One of the most successful interventions supported by UNICEF is the strengthening of data generation and management systems. More specifically, MoPSE now enjoys an EMIS and TDIS system that generates a comprehensive set of good quality data. What remains, however, is to create the capacity and the appetite for fuller utilization of the available information to guide policy development, planning and decision making processes.

It is widely acknowledged by the GPE focal groups that the support of the Implementation Support Team as identified in the GPE Implementation Plan was necessary and key to move activities forward in a timely way and to monitor fund requests and acquittals.

8.0 Key Partnerships and Inter Agency Collaboration

The use of the GPE grant stimulated new partnerships and enhanced existing collaboration between UN agencies, civil society and the Government departments. UNESCO and non-governmental organizations as well as teachers unions participated in the technical working groups for Teacher Professional Standards. The Education Coalition of Zimbabwe (ECOZI) played a key role in the fine-tuning of implementation modalities as well as in monitoring the various components. UNICEF used its good standing with Government to advocate for the engagement of MoPSE and ECOZI which ultimately resulted in the later gaining admission to the Education Coordination Group, first as an observer, and later as a full member. ECOZI supported the Ministry to facilitate workshops on the ESSP, the new curriculum framework and syllabus development and joined Ministry and partners in joint monitoring activities in the education sector. This has been a significant achievement of the GPE programme.

Policy decisions on the activities supported by GPE and the financial resources necessary to support these were made by MoPSE in consultation with UNICEF and informed by discussions with the Education Coordination Group (ECG). ECG is chaired by the Minister of Primary and Secondary Education, Hon. Lazarus Dokora and brings together MoPSE senior management, UNICEF as the Grant Agent, DFID as the GPE Coordinating Agency (CA), UNESCO,

development partners, ECOZI and two representatives of the Civil Society Organizations (CSOs).

As the Managing Entity (now Grant Agent), UNICEF added value to the GPE teams through its technical staff that worked with MoPSE focal points in supporting each of the five GPE-supported programme subcomponents. The partnership has been pretty solid and of mutual benefit to both MoPSE and UNICEF as wider education sector activities are often interwoven with GPE initiatives. This ensured a sector wide benefit from the GPE funds, which allowed for some leverage, for example, the ability of monitoring budgets to include Ministry visits to districts and clusters for all education initiatives. There was also greater effort in the Ministry to coordinate field and monitoring visits so that several programs could be observed and monitored on the same trip – a practice that is continuing.

The UNICEF team supported the Ministry in ensuring timely financial requests and acquittals as well as in programme monitoring, with all funds being managed through UNICEF financial processes. DFID as the Coordinating Agency for GPE, facilitated communication, interaction and engagement by all the parties (ECG members, MoPSE, UNICEF, UN representatives, ECOZI and CSO representatives) while maintaining contact with the GPE Secretariat. The Ministry coordinated meetings with other ministries and government agencies as necessary.

9.0 Management, Monitoring and Evaluation

The structure for implementation was that each of the five subcomponent areas had a focal group headed by a Director or Deputy Director. The teams were stable from the 2nd year and this improved coordination, accountability and decision making on programs. The main five subcomponent areas were headed by the following focal points in the Ministry.

Component 1

1.1 ERI – Mrs. Musoko
1.2 PLAP – Mr. Makandigona

Component 2

2.1 TPS – Mr. Mutuwira
2.2 TDIS – Mr. Mubau

Component 3

3.1 ESSP – Mr. Peter Muzawazi (Mr. Enock Chinyowa in year 3)

Overall management: Mr. Peter Muzawazi, Director Planning
Overall responsibility: Dr. Utete-Masango, Permanent Secretary

The overall responsibility rested with the Permanent Secretary (PS), who played an active role in review of documents, monitoring progress and ensuring critical decisions were made in a timely way. This support was instrumental in increasing the expenditure rate and rate of progress. Pre-ECG meetings between the Managing Entity (UNICEF) and the Permanent Secretary and her team decided on the issues to be taken to the ECG, so that when major decisions were being made (such as the use of WRAT funds to empower teachers to develop curriculum based tests,

to support cluster based syllabus interpretation training, to purchase cluster equipment or to fund longer trainings for PLAP), the issue would be presented by the MoPSE GPE coordinator with support from UNICEF and full knowledge of the PS.

Monitoring of the GPE financed activities included spot checks of selected district offices based on issues and observations from district reports and acquittals. Monitoring visits included joint monitoring visits with MoPSE, the ECG members, the Coordinating Agency (CA) and the Managing Entity (ME). Trip reports and workshop/training reports were invaluable in deciding next steps.

10.0 Value for Money

The principle of value for money guided all the programme considerations at every level from national to cluster level. Attempts and efforts were directed at putting every dollar to best use and thus stretching it to achieve results at the lowest possible cost. Examples of how savings were made include: selecting public service centres for group trainings in place of going to expensive hotels and the purchase and distribution of cluster equipment to decentralise printing and copying of resources. Savings were used in provision of school level resources in ERI and PLAP, provision of funds to purchase raw materials to facilitate local production of ERI materials and the procurement of complementary reading materials for ERI and PLAP for children with special needs. The application of UN/GoZ harmonized rates for travel and allowances also ensured best use of the resources available. Furthermore, UNICEF and MoPSE secured negotiated workshop rates with low-cost venues, leading to even more savings. Adoption of this mix of strategies significantly contributed to the reduction of costs for implementation. This was possible following advocacy with senior MoPSE leadership that led to a more broadly shared commitment to institute cost-containment measures. It is expected that these efficiency and effectiveness measures will be institutionalized as part of MoPSE's regular practice in the management of all resources, including its own.

Supervision and monitoring of programme activities often required extensive travel to districts, provinces, schools and other programme sites, both by MoPSE and UNICEF staff. There was an effort to include the CA and ECOZI in strategic monitoring visits. Both these partners required specific authorization from the Permanent Secretary to visit districts and schools and this limited the number of joint monitoring visits which could be undertaken. Joint visits for all GPE activities were undertaken by Ministry teams and a monitoring budget was made available to the Ministry and ECOZI for this purpose. Subsequent trip reports showed the value and cost effectiveness of this exercise, enabling teams to visit more districts than otherwise would have been possible.

In addition, the monitoring of all UNICEF programs, including the GPE are carried out by UNICEF staff routinely, whatever the main purpose of the field visit. This means that when a monitoring team sets out, they monitor all UNICEF supported education programs regardless of source of funding. Hence the budget for monitoring is shared out and used more effectively within UNICEF.

Resources placed in district offices and cluster schools (or nearby school with power) are being used for all GPE activities, for the production of teaching and learning materials and to support

material production and cluster level training resources for ERI and PLAP. Districts are also using the equipment to produce much needed circulars, sample exam papers, best practice examples and planning and record keeping documents for teachers which has expanded the use of the equipment beyond use in GPE activities. Some districts are using the equipment to support schools in producing exam papers during the year.

During the course of the programme the ECG endorsed the MoPSE and UNICEF request to re-channel the grant portion allocated for the hire of the Logistical Support Providers (LSPs) to training of teachers and support of cluster and school level GPE activities. The Ministry was confident of doing the LSP work themselves through their own highly effective network system. This allowed the channelling of the year 1 and 2 allocation of US$ 840,000 which would have gone to the LSP, into programming to benefit teachers and children at school level. In year 3, ECG again approved the re-channelling of funds for better quality connectivity as well as to support information dissemination and syllabus interpretation on the new curriculum to districts.

The replacement of the WRAT tests with the Ministry initiated curriculum based test represented a huge saving and value for money with savings being channelled into programming and equipment needs. Use of curriculum based tests, instructions for which are also included in Chapter 6 of the PLAP Manual, (which has been distributed to each teacher in junior schools around the country), means that teachers can develop their own curriculum based test to determine the levels at which their learners are functioning. A national level sample test with instructions and guidance has also been developed and trialled by this subcomponent team for teacher use starting 2017. These initiatives have enabled the roll out of the PLAP programme, local ownership and parental and learner understanding of the diagnostic assessment practice that teachers are using for PLAP.

While the Global Partnership Implementation Grant and Plan make financial provision for three full time members of staff for the GPE: a manager, an education specialist and a programme assistant, given the demands of the programme and the issues with capacity and time among Ministry staff, UNICEF's own parallel team from the education specialists at UNICEF continued to closely support the focal groups for each subcomponent. This team worked outside the budgeted staffing allowance of the GPE, and are full time UNICEF staff.

11.0 Expression of Gratitude

The Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MoPSE) and UNICEF Zimbabwe wish to express their sincere appreciation to the GPE Secretariat for making funding available to support the education sector in Zimbabwe. Special appreciation goes to the Education Coordination Group (ECG) for appropriate acknowledgement and support of the GPE1 Implementation Plan and to Lucinda Ramos, Country Lead responsible for GPE Zimbabwe for her support and encouragement during the course of the implementation of the first grant and during the preparations of the application for the second grant.

We look forward to a continued fruitful and collaborative partnership in implementing the GPE II grant towards improving the quality of education for children in Zimbabwe.

Annex 1: Application for the second GPE Grant for Zimbabwe (2017-2020)

GPE SECOND Grant Update (GPE II): Following the successful conclusion of GPE 1, the Global Partnership for Education offered to continue supporting the country through targeted assistance that focuses on key gaps and priorities as reflected in the Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP 2016-2020). Zimbabwe received a tentative Maximum Country Allocation of US$29.4 million for the second grant covering January 2017 through to 2019. Of this amount, 70 percent (US$20.58m) is a fixed allocation and the remainder (US$8.9m) is a variable portion. An application for the fixed tranche was submitted to the GPE Board and approved in December 2016, based on criteria relating to education sector planning, financing and availability of data. For the remaining 30 percent variable portion the basis for accessing it is progress in a choice of actions/indicators. A separate application will be made this year (2017). The GPE II programme has two fundamental premises: to support MoPSE in achieving the priority goals in the ESSP 2016 – 2020 and to build on the successes of the previous GPE programme. Activities planned for GPE II also reflect the GPE strategic goals of equity, learning outcomes and effective and efficient use of resources.

The new GPE II grant focuses on five key components, namely:

1. Providing a strong policy, legal and regulatory framework
2. Implementing the new curriculum
3. Equity and access to learning
4. Institutional strengthening
5. Programme support, management and monitoring

After confirmation of the grant award, the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MoPSE) with support from the Grant Agent immediately set in motion the process of finalizing a detailed implementation plan, apportioning the budgets for year 1 by quarter, component, subcomponent and level (national and subnational). This process was followed by the realignment of existing focal groups and setting up of new ones to reflect the needs of the new programme. A one day joint MoPSE- UNICEF workshop was held to share the budgets details and implementation modalities. During the same workshop focal teams started developing their annual action plans for submission for approval by the Permanent Secretary. Further meetings were held with subnational levels - the provinces and districts to explain to them the thrust of the new programme and the implications for their level. This exercise was facilitated by a joint MoPSE-UNICEF team. A total of 72 district schools inspectors, 72 district accountants and 72 school Inspectors, 10 provincial education directors and 10 provincial accountants were reached by this exercise.

The workshop included a reflection on the key lessons and challenges of GPE 1; what to do with GPE 1 components and subcomponents that were no longer funded under the new grant; background to GPE II, the design of the new programme, budgets of the new programme and implications of this new programme for subnational levels. Important feedback was obtained on what worked well and the challenges encountered under GPE1. Clarifications were also sought on details about the new areas, particularly around the new curriculum. From the discussions held it was evident that the most desired approach that would yield results is to focus more resources on the levels closest to the child, which are the subnational levels of district, cluster

and school. It also emerged that there is need for enhanced communication lines between national and subnational levels on the issue of the new curriculum. It was clear that what practitioners want is capacity building in areas of the new curriculum. The provision of material resources was also topical in the discussions. The outreach meetings helped to clarify many areas and to set the tone for the successful roll out of the new GPE programme. It also helped to develop a common understanding of the thrust of the new programme, at the same time identifying and sharing ways to sustain the gains of GPE 1. The next steps are for the Ministry to submit requests for funding in line with the approved component and subcomponent action plans for GPE II. Release of funds and roll out of implementation will then follow.

Annex 2: GPE activities which made a difference to achieving results





Resources for ERI and PLAP awaiting distribution/2016/Manager Mhangami



A student makes a presentation at the 2015 Educacation Sector Review Workshop 2015/Manager Mhangami



2015 Education Sector Performance Review, Msasa, Harare/Manager Mhangami

	
Participants at an ERI cluster workshop in Mazowe district, July 2015/Bernadette Tachivona	Mr. J Sithole, MoPSE, Maxwell Rafomoyo, ECOZI, Manager Mhangami, UNICEF going on joint monitoring. Photo: UNICEF/ 2015/Noemi Robiati

	Peter de Vries, UNICEF handing over cluster equipment to Peter Muzawazi, MoPSE. Photo: UNICEF/ 2016/ Noemi Robiati

Annex 3: Human Interest Story

The Early Reading Initiative- a Teacher's Personal and Professional Journey

The GPE reflection meeting of 13, December, 2016 left audiences in awe after Simayedwa Ndlovu a Cluster Resource Teacher from Umzingwane District in the Carlisle Cluster made her presentation on implementation of the Early Reading Initiative (ERI) in her cluster. She spoke with passion and energy and gave us all an idea of what the Early Reading Initiative has done towards motivating and supporting infant teachers in Zimbabwe. The link https://youtu.be/ZJbzS-U86c8 shows a video clip of Simayedwa in action.

Umzingwane is one of the 72 districts in which the ERI programme was implemented. Simayedwa is one of 1,218 cluster resource teachers who drove the successful programme in their respective clusters. In those 30 minutes she shared her experiences that transformed infant children into readers. The meeting was attended by the Permanent Secretary for Education, DFID, VVOB, Principal Directors, Directors and District School Inspectors, ECOZI partners, other MoPSE Officers, UNICEF managers, and education specialists.

Speaking on her journey from an infant teacher to a cluster resource teacher, Simayedwa described how the early reading initiative which began very humbly, became a corner stone for teachers in imparting early reading skills to infant learners in her cluster, district, her province and even her country. Talking about the background of this initiative, she briefly looked back to 2013 when the Zimbabwe Early Learning Assessment Report revealed that many infant learners in Zimbabwe were reaching grade 3 without being able to read. To add to this, the analysis of grade 7 pass rates, backdated to 2009, also showed a declining trend. This reflected that there could be a co-relation between non-acquisition of reading skills at the infant level with poor academic achievement in the higher grades. In view of this, Zimbabwe initiated a national ERI programme in 2014 with GPE support.

When the initiative was announced as a national programme targeting infant teachers in Zimbabwe, ERI was received with a lot of apprehension she said. Teachers thought this was another task added to their already overburdened schedule. Schools, especially the rural ones, expressed their doubts on the capacity of their teachers since they were operating in a rural context with limited teaching-learning resources. Deriving judgements based on the situation of the country, they were also quick to conclude that the programme would flop. However, after witnessing three years of unfolding of ERI, and her promotion from an infant teacher to a Cluster Resource Tutor, Simayedwa had this to say, "ERI has helped our learners to acquire problem solving and sequencing skills, logical reasoning and to identify and discriminate between verbal and contextual clues which are crucial for later reading when they get to grade 1". For the grades one and two children, the methodology was of help to teachers because it helped them to facilitate the early reading skills that helped infant learners to discriminate between letters and numbers, identify similarities and sound letters thus accurately enabling them to read with fluency and understanding.

Echoing the views of her peers to the donor and the ministry representatives, she said, that a little file with some manila papers and stationary items could go a long way to assist teachers to

have an impact on infant reading and learning outcomes. Teachers have started to see their rural context as an enabling environment for them to become resourceful. From it, they are using locally available resources as teaching aids/materials that children can easily identify, discriminate between and differentiate amongst in building the skills needed in early reading. She thanked the GPE for supporting the strengthening of the clusters in the country because she realized that as a CRT she played the dual role of being a champion of ERI and a motivator for other teachers to promote and adopt the early reading strategies in their classrooms, as well.

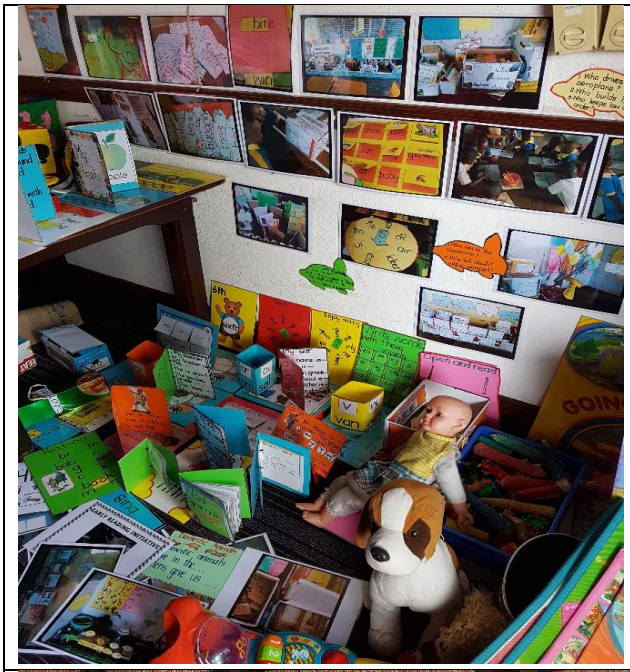
"The cluster has become a training venue and forum to share best practices. We have created a database to track the progress of reading skills of our learners. It shows a marked improvement in the reading skills of children captured at the time of enrolment and then after undergoing lessons that have integrated early reading strategies in our classrooms". This in her words, was definitely a high point in Umzingwane as it brought the district to the forefront, on the national map. Simayedwa proved to the participants at the workshop that there is so much talent in the infant teacher force in Zimbabwe. She spoke well about the role of communities in promoting ERI. She shared with the audience how communities support teachers with supply of local and household materials that they can fashion into resources. She praised the school heads for spearheading the change in attitudes towards promoting awareness of ERI and she acknowledged the communities for their unflinching support.

Talking about the challenges, this teacher from Carlisle Cluster pointed to the lack of provision for infrastructure for infants. In a rural district like Umzingwane, few children have classrooms fit for infant teachers to set up attractive reading environments. Some infant learners have no classrooms at all. Teacher pupil ratios are still very high. Many infant children are reaching school hungry that leaves them with very poor motivation to learn. The school feeding programme which asks that schools feed their infants one meal a day has done a lot to alleviate this. The severe drought in 2015 and 2016 became a threat to the implementation of the programme since many infant children walk long distances to school. However, despite these challenges, ERI methodology and the materials and resources accompanying it have become very popular with parents and teachers alike which has helped children to continue to acquire the skills in their school and their home environments. As she walked the audience through her inspiring journey she took the opportunity to encourage MoPSE to keep the cluster approach alive to achieve favourable learning outcomes for teachers as well as their learners.



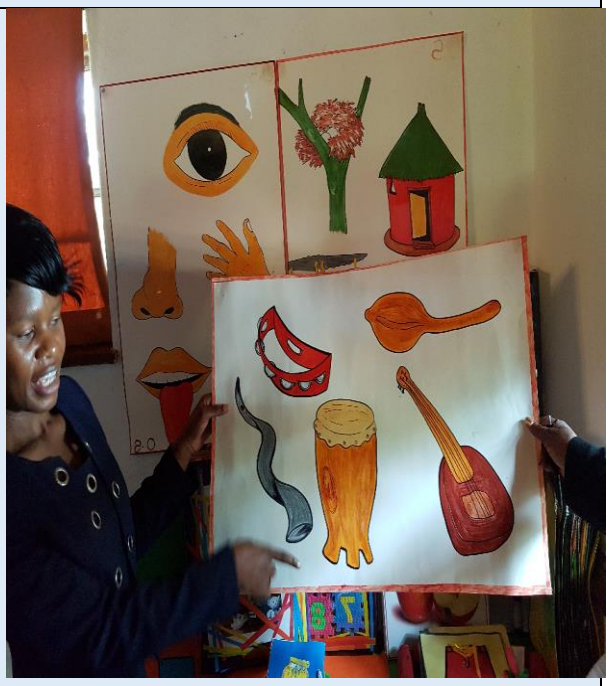
The Permanent Secretary Dr. Utete-Masango with Simayedwa Ndlovu, Early Reading Cluster Resource Teacher from Umzingwane district

Annex 4: GPE End of Programme Review 2016



The Permanent Secretary, MoPSE enjoying the ERI display at the GPE Review, December 2016 /Reshmi Majumdar





Annex 5: GPE II Outreach 2017

	
Umzingwane District, Midlands Province, February 2017/Noemi Robiati	GPE Outreach, Ministry and UNICEF facilitators, Midlands Province, February 2017/ Langton Mukandi

	DSI's, District accountant and district inspectors attend the GPE outreach meeting Midlands Province, February 2017/ Manager Mhangami

Annex 6: Outcome indicators in the GPE Programme Results Framework

Please find attached the Outcome indicators in the GPE Programme Results Framework

Annex 7: The Donor Statement by Activity (uncertified)

Please find attached a system generated Donor Statement by Activity (uncertified) for the contribution received from the GPE.

Annex 8: Donor Feedback Form

This report aims to transparently demonstrate how the funds from the GPE have been used. In order to strengthen future implementation and reporting, your feedback and input towards improving our reporting is kindly requested through completion of the attached form.