

Monitoring and evaluation strategy

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TABLE OF ACRONYMS

CSEF	Civil Society Education Fund
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CTO	Chief Technical Officer
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DCP	Developing Country Partner
EMIS	Education Management Information System
ESP	Education Sector Plan
ESPDG	Education Sector Plan Development Grant
ESPIG	Education Sector Plan Implementation Grant
FY	Fiscal Year
GA	Grant Agent
GCE	Global Campaign for Education
GPC	Grants Performance Committee
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
GRA	Global Regional Activities
JSR	Joint Sector Review
KGPE	Knowledge and Good Practice Exchange
M&E	Monitoring & Evaluation
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PDG	Program Development Grant
R&P	Results and Performance
RBM	Results-based Management
SIC	Strategy and Impact Committee
TBD	To be determined
TEP	Transitional Education Plan
ToC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of Reference
UIS	UNESCO Institute for Statistics
UN	United Nations
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

MONITORING AND EVALUATION STRATEGY

1. INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW OF THE M&E STRATEGY

1.1 The GPE Strategic Plan 2016-2020 (GPE 2020)¹ puts forth the vision, mission and strategic objectives of the Global Partnership for Education, as well as its operational model as driven by a **Theory of Change** (ToC). The strategic plan is accompanied by a results framework, which lays out the 37 indicators that will be used to monitor outputs and outcomes along the results chain described in the ToC.

1.2 The goal of the GPE monitoring and evaluation (M&E) strategy is to understand the extent to which the partnership is achieving, and ultimately will have achieved, the objectives of GPE 2020, as well as to learn from this and make decisions based on data. It responds to the recommendations of the GPE Independent Interim Evaluation, which called upon the partnership² to “**develop a strategic management framework that is based on the new strategic plan and that includes a results framework, monitoring plan, formal feedback mechanisms and an evaluation plan.**”

1.3 Within the framework of this strategy, monitoring and evaluation has **three main purposes**: to strengthen **accountability for GPE’s work**; to stimulate **learning and improved performance** across the partnership; and to facilitate **organizational decision-making** by the Board, Secretariat and national stakeholders. Monitoring and evaluation are central pillars in GPE’s approach to results-based management (RBM) and will provide useful information about the level of risk in our operations.³

1.4 The monitoring and evaluation strategy is organized into four main streams of work: results monitoring, grant monitoring, evaluation, and dissemination and learning. Each plays a pivotal role in GPE’s ability to monitor and assess progress at the country level, and of the partnership as a whole.

¹ As set out in BOD/2015/12/DOC 08 and approved by the GPE Board of Directors in June 2016.

² Recommendation 2, *Independent Interim Evaluation of the Global Partnership for Education*, Volume 1, p. xii.

³ RBM is a management strategy focusing on performance and achievement of outputs, outcomes and impacts. For further information on the use of monitoring and evaluation for RBM see J. Kusek and R. Rist, *Ten Steps to a Results-Based Monitoring and Evaluation System* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2003), and Global Affairs Canada: http://www.international.gc.ca/development-developpement/partners-partenaires/bt-oa/rbm_tools-gar_outils.aspx?lang=eng.

1.5 Each of the four M&E streams of work is interlinked. **Results monitoring** provides routine tracking and reporting of key information and tracks indicators that measure progress at each level of GPE’s ToC. The indicators used in the results framework also establish common quality standards for all aspects of GPE’s operational model – for example, they establish benchmarks for quality sector plans, effective joint sector reviews (JSRs), and national data and learning assessment systems.

1.6 A stronger framework for **grant monitoring**, allowing greater oversight of the activities supported by GPE grants, is outlined in this M&E strategy. The grant monitoring stream will provide the foundation for tracking our investments and value for money within them.

1.7 **Evaluation**, the third stream of activities, builds on findings from the results framework and grant monitoring streams. It will be used to provide objective findings and recommendations about GPE grants and support to developing countries; it will probe the strengths and weaknesses of its operational model, and provide detailed information about the effectiveness of its thematic and programmatic activities. A summative evaluation at the end of the strategic plan period will further probe the extent to which different outputs monitored along the ToC lead to proposed outcomes and results, answering questions about “why” GPE has or has not successfully contributed to the development results outlined in GPE 2020.

1.8 **Dissemination and learning** refers to the publication, communication and dissemination of strategies so that all results reporting and evaluations are shared widely – both across the partnership and with the public – to ensure accountability and learning for improvement.

1.9 Table 1 below summarizes the purpose of each stream of work within the M&E strategy: results monitoring, grant monitoring, evaluation, and dissemination and learning.

Table 1: Purpose of Four Components of the M&E Strategy

Component	Description	Purpose
Results monitoring	37 indicators with accompanying targets and milestones.	Periodic monitoring of GPE 2020 outputs, outcomes and impact.
Grant monitoring	Monitoring procedures for all GPE grants individually and as a portfolio.	Inform implementation. Detailed information about GPE grants and their performance feeds into annual reporting on Strategic Objective 3 in the results report.

Evaluation	A portfolio of country-level, thematic and programmatic evaluations, culminating in a summative evaluation.	Periodic assessment and analysis of grants and GPE's country-level operational model, leading to a comprehensive evaluation of GPE's development effectiveness.
Dissemination and learning	Production of reports, other evaluation products and dissemination activities for sharing data and information generated through M&E activities.	Ensures that there are opportunities to learn from and use evidence gathered through monitoring and evaluation.

Guiding Principles

1.10 Five key guiding principles will guide GPE's monitoring and evaluation activities. In addition, GPE will be guided by international norms and standards and align its work to international indicators whenever applicable and possible:⁴

- a) **Partnership:** GPE will engage with its partners in data collection and evaluation activities.
- b) **Mutual Accountability:** Monitoring and evaluation will be used as a tool for mutual accountability across the partnership, as described in the GPE charter.
- c) **Transparency:** GPE will ensure that data and evaluation findings are made widely and publicly available, to promote ownership, participation, mutual accountability and partnership.
- d) **Quality Standards:** GPE monitoring and evaluation activities will follow relevant international standards for quality, including the OECD/DAC Principles for Evaluation of Development Assistance and the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms and Standards (2005).

⁴ International standards include OECD/DAC Principles for Evaluation of Development Assistance (1991); OECD/DAC Evaluation Quality Standards (2006); OECD/DAC Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results-Based Management (2002); OECD/DAC Guidance on Joint Evaluations (2006); OECD Principles of Corporate Governance (1999, revised 2004); UNEG Norms for Evaluation in the UN System (April 2005); UNEG Standards for Evaluation in the UN System (April 2005); and the standards laid out in the IEG World Bank/DAC Network on development evaluation (2007): *Sourcebook for evaluating global and regional partnership programs* (Washington DC: The World Bank).

- e) **Alignment:** GPE is committed to using SDG 4 indicators as these become available. Wherever possible, its data draws on existing national and international data. Institutional MOUs with key data providers will be established (for example, with UIS and UNICEF).

Limitations and Risks

1.11 GPE’s monitoring and evaluation strategy faces four main limitations and risks: (1) gaps in country-level data and other agencies’ capacity to produce relevant data for the results framework, which might inhibit reporting on selected indicators; (2) the potential impacts of organizational change or limited resources on the delivery of the M&E strategy; (3) the failure of key partners, including grant agents and developing country partners, to engage with and use the evidence provided through the M&E strategy to improve practice and make informed decisions; and (4) the risk that the monitoring and evaluation of new activities or initiatives (for example, the Education Cannot Wait Initiative) is not adequately addressed. These risks will be offset through a range of measures that include support to country-level data capacity from GPE grants for sector planning and implementation; ensuring wide dissemination and creating opportunities for reflection and learning from the evidence produced under the M&E strategy; and updating the M&E strategy when new activities or initiatives are added to the GPE platform.

2. MONITORING AND REPORTING ON RESULTS

2.1 In December 2015, the Board adopted a results framework comprising 37 indicators, of which 12 have been identified as “core indicators”. Several of the 37 indicators are aligned to an output along GPE’s Theory of Change, which moves from global-level to country-level outputs. The results they reflect contribute to the outcome and impact at the top of the ToC: effective and efficient educational systems, respectively improved and more equitable learning outcomes, and improved equity, gender equality and inclusion.

2.2 The results framework serves as a monitoring tool for the partnership over the duration of GPE 2020. Connecting these outputs, outcomes and impacts with indicators will help the Global Partnership for Education assess the extent to which the results along the logical chain are being achieved and whether its assumptions are valid.

2.3 The full results framework, with all targets and milestones, has been finalized and approved by the GPE Board in October 2016 (published at: <http://www.globalpartnership.org/content/gpe-results-framework-2016-2020>). Detailed methodological information on each indicator is presented in a separate document posted on the GPE website: <http://www.globalpartnership.org/content/results-framework-indicators-methodological-briefs>

2.4 Each indicator in the results framework:

- Includes values for baseline, targets and milestones (year-on-year targets).⁵
- Is disaggregated by gender and countries affected by fragility and conflict, where feasible and applicable.
- Is accompanied by a methodological note that captures details about its measurement methodology and sources of data and standard operating procedures pertaining to their data-collection chains. These measures ensure that all data is auditable and replicable.

2.5 The GPE results framework includes several innovative indicator methodologies. At the impact level, the Secretariat has designed a trend indicator for learning outcomes that is a significant methodological contribution. In the spirit of partnership, it has worked collaboratively with UNICEF, the World Bank and UIS to develop an equity index. At the country output level, indicator methodologies draw on criteria developed as GPE quality standards in the areas of sector planning and the quality of joint sector review processes.

2.6 Data collected under the results framework is stored in a designated database, which will be developed further and made publicly available. Furthermore, as described in Section 5, GPE's results will be presented to the Board in an annual results report, which will subsequently be published and disseminated to the public.

3. GRANT MONITORING

3.1 Enhanced grant monitoring is a central component of the GPE M&E strategy. At the heart of GPE's Theory of Change lies the financing GPE provides to support the development of strong educational systems. Grant monitoring aims to ensure that this and other strategic objectives are achieved through GPE's financing. It provides a detailed overview of all grants, the types of investments they entail and the performance of these investments.

3.2 GPE provides the majority of its financing through country-level grants: the **education sector plan development grant (ESPDG)**; the **education sector program implementation grant (ESPIG)**; and the **program development grant (PDG)**.

⁵Periodicity varies across the indicators. The baseline year is set at 2015 for most indicators, but due to data availability some indicators use the most recent year available. Some indicators are monitored on a two-yearly basis (e.g., 2016, 2018, and 2020) to reduce vulnerability to data availability. It is important to note that there exist time lags of up to two years on some indicators (UIS indicators, for example).

3.3 In addition to the above, GPE presently has two grants that are used to support cross-national activities designed to enhance country-level capacity and processes: the **Civil Society Education Fund** (CSEF) and the **Global and Regional Activities** (GRA) program.

3.4 Under the M&E strategy, each of these grants is monitored at both the individual grant level and the portfolio level:

- **Grant performance monitoring** provides periodic monitoring of grant performance against programmatic objectives, and includes fiduciary oversight of grant expenditures. Performance monitoring is conducted both by the Secretariat and by grant agents, who prepare routine reporting on grants under their management.
- **Portfolio-level monitoring** provides details about the content and performance of each category of grant, and is conducted primarily by the Secretariat.

3.5 Table 2 below describes how each of the five current types of GPE grants is designed to support country-level objectives and outputs in GPE’s Theory of Change as well as the overall number and total amount of active grants by category.

Table 2: GPE Grants by Strategic Objective and Purpose⁶

GPE Country-Level Outputs [“Strategic Objectives”]	Type and Purpose of Current Grant Windows	No. of Active Grants and Total Value
1: Strengthen sector planning and policy implementation	ESPDG for supporting the development of ESAs and ESPs.	29 Active ESPDGs US\$8,263,530
2: Support mutual accountability through effective and inclusive sector policy dialogue and monitoring	CSEF for supporting civil society participation in education sector policy and planning at national level. GRA (and future KGPE grants) to provide support for research, capacity building, knowledge development and	1 CSEF grant 12 GRA grants US\$25,906,363

⁶ The grant sizes are as follows: education sector development grants (ESPDG, US\$500,000), program development grants (PDG, max. US\$400,000), education sector program implementation grants (ESPIG, up to US\$ 100 m), and grants from the Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF, US\$29 m in 2016–2018).

	sharing of good practice at the country, regional and global levels.	
3: GPE financing efficiently and effectively supports the implementation of sector plans focused on improved equity, efficiency and learning	PDG for providing funding for the development of the program to be financed by GPE through ESPIG. ESPIG for the implementation of the ESP.	6 PDGs US\$1,344,962 59 Active ESPIGs US\$2,433,800,000

Note: Grants active or open in March 2016. Grant totals may be adjusted at closure.

Monitoring Country-Level Grants: ESPDG, ESPIG and PDG

3.6 Because they represent the largest share of GPE grants, the three country-level grants are monitored intensively in multiple ways, as illustrated in Table 3, below:

Table 3: Monitoring Approach to Country-Level Grants

Grant	Performance Monitoring	Portfolio Monitoring
ESPDG	Secretariat reviews factors such as timeliness of grants approval, grant allocations and disbursements, as well as the status of programmatic progress based on grant agent (GA) progress reports, disbursement tracking data and country lead mission reports.	Results are analyzed by comparing the type of support provided by the ESPDG, and by monitoring the quality of the education sector plan itself through the GPE results framework indicator 16 a-d: Results framework indicator 16: Proportion of endorsed (a) education sector plans (ESP) or (b) transitional education sector plans (TEP) meeting minimum standards.
ESPIG	Secretariat provides fiduciary and programmatic oversight using grant agent progress reports (based on	Grant coding by component and level of education supported. Annual portfolio review chapter in results report.

	<p>standard reporting templates and audit reports).⁷</p> <p>Secretariat undertakes monitoring missions – annually or as needed based on risk factors.</p> <p>Secretariat annually tracks whether overall ESPIG implementation is on track (or not) by looking at factors such as timeliness of grant approval, grant allocations and disbursements (including grants delayed), and the status of programmatic progress.⁸</p>	<p>Results framework indicators 20-24, 29 and 30:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EMIS/learning assessment systems (#20) • Textbooks purchased and distributed (#21) • Teachers trained (#22) • Classrooms built or rehabilitated (#23) • (#24): Variable part tracking • GPE grant modalities/instruments and alignment with national systems (#29, #30)
PDG	<p>Secretariat assesses and analyzes factors such as timeliness of grant approval, grant allocations and disbursements, and the status of programmatic progress based on grant agent (GA) progress reports, disbursement tracking data and country lead mission reports.</p>	<p><i>Portfolio-level results</i> are not collected for this type of grant, but can be analyzed by examining how its support contributed to the development of ESPIGs.</p>

Note: Bracketed numbers denote indicator number in GPE results framework.

3.7 Of particular note are three new approaches to grant monitoring introduced as part of the M&E strategy:

- a) **Grant Coding:** All ESPIG project documents will be coded by key components and level of education supported. This coding will enable GPE to describe its contribution to the

⁷ As of FY 2016, a standardized ESPIG annual implementation status reporting template is used to monitor grant performance. The template covers indicators from the GPE corporate results framework (i.e., indicators 20-24), in addition to providing basic information to monitor grants performance (e.g., disbursement, country-level risks, results).

⁸ Higher-risk grants receive additional monitoring, including from specialists in fiduciary issues. Enhanced monitoring and reporting mechanisms have been introduced through progress reports and audit report reviews. Past and current misuse of funds cases in a given country are part of the criteria for additional scrutiny as part of the operational risk framework. A newly developed operational risk framework is being introduced in 2016, along with enhanced monitoring reporting mechanisms for cases of misuse of funds.

education sector by education level as well as by the different types of activities at the sub-component level, so as to further analyze the combination of GPE grant activities in the three main strategic objective areas in GPE 2020: improved and more equitable learning outcomes; equity, gender equality and inclusion; and strengthened educational systems. Grants will be coded from FY 2015 onward, allowing a review of allocation trends.

- b) **End-of-Cycle Country Summary:** At the end of the ESPIG grant, the Secretariat will prepare an end-of-policy cycle summary. The summary will go beyond the ESPIG, as its objective is to document how GPE's support to a given country, through the sector planning and plan implementation cycle, has contributed to country-level outputs. The end-of-cycle summary will draw on the information in documentation such as grant agent progress reports and evaluations, Secretariat country mission reports, and data collected through GPE results indicators (for example, on trends in learning outcomes, equity, domestic financing and JSR processes). These short reviews will be used as key inputs into country-level evaluations and will also be used in the annual results report.
- c) **Comparative Data on the ESPIG:** An annual portfolio review will be included as a chapter in the annual results report. It will continue to present portfolio-level data on ESPIG grants, including information about timeliness, implementation, etc., as captured in indicators 20-24 in the results framework, but also track thematic and sub-sectoral components of the grants.

Monitoring Global and Cross-National-Level Grants

3.8 Global and regional activities (GRA) are monitored through reports from grant agents, as well as through monitoring missions by the Secretariat.

- **Performance Monitoring:** An operations manual sets out the policies and procedures for development, implementation and monitoring of GRA grants. Implementation progress is monitored by the Secretariat based on twice-yearly narrative and financial reports submitted by grant agents based on individual results agreements and a standardized reporting template. Direct monitoring by the Secretariat takes place through participation in country or regional events. Grant agents conduct continuous monitoring of their grants and sub-grants to implementing organizations.
- **Portfolio Monitoring:** The performance of the GRA portfolio is reported annually, in the annual results report. Reporting includes summaries of major activities, publications, and

knowledge and technical product. Some grants have planned and budgeted for an end-of-project evaluation. An independent evaluation of the GRA portfolio as a whole will be conducted in FY18.

3.9 Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF)

- **Performance Monitoring:** The CSEF Grant Agent, the Global Campaign for Education (GCE), provides GPE with semi-annual reports that measure progress against a mutually agreed-upon and approved results framework, implementation plan and budget. As part of its M&E strategy, GCE is also developing a “scorecard” of composite indicators to assess GPE country-level local education group processes and the content of GPE country grant proposals. The scorecard results will be regularly shared with GPE’s Secretariat, CSO representatives on GPE’s Board, and the Grants and Performance Committee (GPC). In addition, the Secretariat will conduct annual monitoring missions at the regional and, occasionally, the country levels to ensure adequate programmatic and fiduciary oversight of the program and to triangulate findings from GCE’s reporting.
- **Portfolio Monitoring:** The performance of the CSEF portfolio will be reported in the Annual Results Report utilizing the performance data prepared by the GCE and the Secretariat. The CSEF will be independently evaluated at the end of the grant period in 2018.

4. EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

4.1 GPE’s evaluation framework comprises a linked set of evaluation studies that explore *why*, *how* and *how well* GPE outputs and activities contribute to outcomes and impact — that is, how elements of GPE’s Theory of Change contribute to the achievement of education results within GPE partner developing countries in the areas of learning, equity and systems.

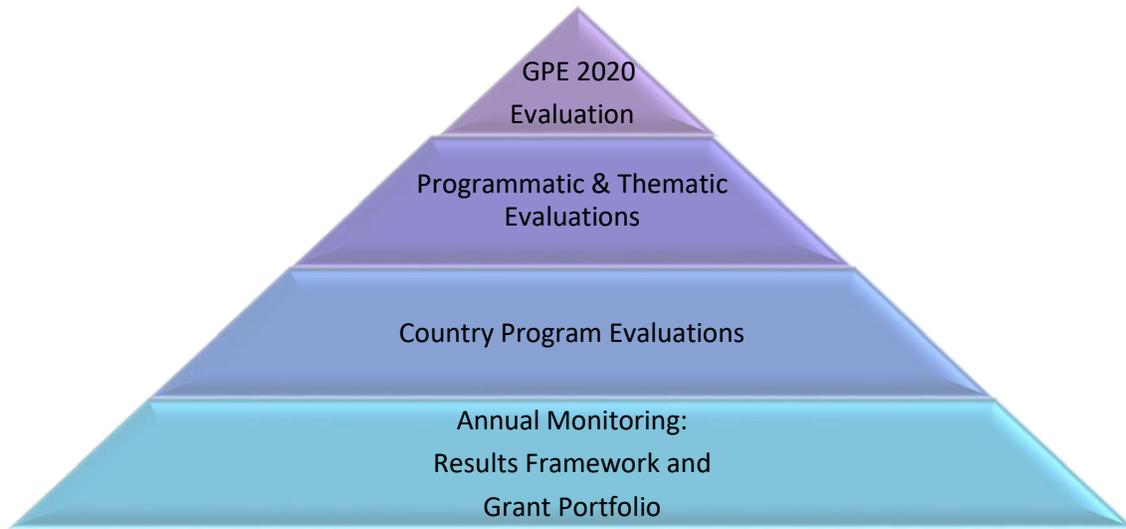
4.2 In contrast to past practice, this evaluation framework proposes a movement away from a singular investment in summative evaluation at the end of GPE’s five-year plan. Instead, evaluations will be undertaken periodically during the implementation of GPE’s strategic plan.

4.3 The proposed suite of evaluations will focus on two types of country-level evaluations — one at the end of the grant cycle, and one that will evaluate GPE’s operational model in a small number of countries to provide formative information that can be used to improve GPE’s effectiveness. In addition, programmatic evaluations and thematic evaluations are proposed. These evaluations will

contribute to the summative evaluation of GPE’s impact in the final year of GPE 2020. Figure 1 illustrates this tiered approach to evaluation, which builds upon data collected through GPE’s monitoring activities.

4.4 The scale of evaluations undertaken can be modified depending on the overall ambition of the Board.

Figure 1: The GPE Monitoring and Evaluation Pyramid



4.5 Table 4 below summarizes the evaluation types that will be conducted. Cells highlighted in yellow indicate evaluation types that are considered essential.

Table 4: Summary of Evaluations by Type and Purpose

Level	Type	Purpose and Scope
<i>Summative evaluation</i>	Evaluation of GPE 2020 (summative)	Assesses the overall contribution of the GPE and its ToC to country-level results.

<i>Thematic/ programmatic evaluations</i>	Thematic evaluation (summative/formative)	Reviews GPE investments in specific sub-sectoral areas that highlight best practice and value for money.
	Program evaluation (summative/formative)	Evaluation of specific grant and financing windows or initiatives: ESPDG (planning); CSEF; GRA/KGPE.
<i>Country evaluations</i>	Summative country program evaluation	Assesses GPE's ToC and the extent to which GPE achieves its intended outcomes and results at the country level through its grants and support to country planning and monitoring processes.
	Prospective country evaluation (formative)	Reviews the effectiveness of GPE's operational model, including its support for planning, policy dialogue and implementation of its funding model over the course of a policy cycle, to allow for course correction.

Country Program Evaluations

4.6 GPE's strategic goals over the period 2016–2020 are to achieve results in learning outcomes and equity through strengthened educational systems within developing partner countries. Because of the centrality of country-level results within GPE 2020, the majority of the GPE's evaluation resources will be used to assess how GPE adds value at the country level through sector planning, support for inclusive policy dialogue and improved financing.

4.7 Country program evaluations will build upon the grant-level evaluations that are provided by grant agents within the timeframe of the country program evaluations. More complete country evaluations — that review contribution of all GPE processes, its different grants and activities to sector-level results — are needed in part because ESPIG grant evaluations are focused only on one

grant and do not address the issue of sector change. Going forward, GPE will also work with grant agents to introduce common standards for the grant evaluations, including for ESPDGs and ESPIGs.

4.8 Two types of country evaluations are proposed to allow both formative and summative insights into GPE’s impact at the country level:

- a. **Formative or “prospective” country evaluations**⁹ that follow GPE’s programs in a small sample of countries, in order to provide a continuous review of the effectiveness of GPE’s operational model and Theory of Change, including the funding model introduced in 2014, at the country level, so that course correction and improvements can be made.
- b. **Summative country program evaluations** in a sample of countries around the time of grant completion, to assess GPE’s outputs and contributions to outcomes and results through a full policy cycle – from plan development through to program implementation.

4.9 Sampling will be decided during the evaluation design stage. However, this strategy includes eight countries for prospective evaluations.

4.10 Cost scenarios for the summative country evaluations are based on grants over a particular total dollar threshold. Thus all countries with active ESPIG grants valued at or above the average ESPIG value of US\$20 million or greater would receive summative evaluations.¹⁰

4.11 Other potential sampling considerations include inclusion of countries affected by conflict or fragility; regional coverage; level of operational risk; and length of membership in GPE. Sampling by previous ESPIG history could generate a counterfactual scenario, which represents a cost-effective way of additionally assessing GPE’s contribution to impact.

4.12 In the selection of evaluation contractors, preference will be given for those that include local evaluation expertise and that include opportunities for engagement of country stakeholders.

⁹ GAVI uses a prospective evaluation approach in its full country evaluations in order to understand the factors that influence successful transformation of country immunization systems. For further background on prospective evaluation, see *Prospective Evaluation Methods — The Prospective Evaluation Synthesis*, United States General Accounting Office, Program Evaluation and Methodology Division (1990).

¹⁰ Based on an investment amount of US\$4,362,780,308 (2015) and 120 ESPIGs.

4.13 In the spirit of its evaluation principles (see § 1.10), the Paris Declaration and the very idea of partnership, GPE will explore the opportunity for harmonization of country-level evaluations with those of other organizations — building, for example, on the model of the ***Joint Evaluation of External Support to Basic Education*** commissioned by 13 bilateral and multilateral donors to education in 2003.¹¹

4.14 Findings from the country evaluations will be shared in the annual results report beginning in FY 2018 (December 2017). They will also feed into the GPE 2020 evaluation, widening the availability of good quality information about GPE’s country-level impacts (and therefore lowering the final cost of the comprehensive evaluation).

Thematic and Program Evaluations

4.15 Two additional evaluation streams will be conducted as part of the suite of evaluations that will be used to assess GPE contributions:

Program evaluations are designed to assess and analyze the effectiveness of specific GPE grant programs (ESPDG, CSEF, GRA/KGPE activities, DCP pre-Board meetings). They assess the specific contributions of these grants to the achievement of intermediate outcomes (stronger educational systems) and to results in the areas of learning and equity.

Thematic evaluations are intended to inform the partnership on value for money and best practice when making educational investments. They will review GPE investments in specific sub-sectoral areas that are considered within its Theory of Change and in the broader literature on educational development as critical requirements for the achievement of educational results. Thematic evaluations will be small-scale, primarily desk-based studies that draw on country-level evaluation findings. They will highlight best practice and value for money of investments in such areas as data systems, teacher development, early childhood education, gender, etc.

GPE 2020 Comprehensive Evaluation

4.16 In 2020, a comprehensive evaluation of GPE’s contribution to development results in education will be conducted. The GPE 2020 Evaluation will utilize a theory-based methodology. It will assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact of the partnership along

¹¹ See full evaluation report and summary at: http://www.unicef.org/evaldatabase/index_29684.html.

the entire results chain in its ToC, from global and country-level outputs through to outcome and impact levels, following OECD/DAC criteria for the evaluation of development activities.

4.17 This evaluation will draw on all of the data collected through GPE’s results framework and its grant monitoring activities. It will also use data from country, program and thematic evaluations described above and will complement these with a review of GPE’s organizational effectiveness. It will include cross-national analyses and may also include additional probes into the country-level outcomes of the partnership.

Quality Assurance and Independence

4.18 **Principles to guide evaluation quality.** All of GPE’s evaluation activities will adhere to the OECD/DAC principles and criteria¹² for the evaluation of development assistance, as noted in Section 1, § 10. Evaluations will focus on relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, contributions to impact, and sustainability. All GPE evaluations will be guided by principles of:

- a. Ethics: independence and impartiality
- b. Participation and inclusion: engagement of beneficiaries and incorporation of their views
- c. Transparency and disclosure
- d. Credibility
- e. Usefulness

4.19 Partnership-based development organizations typically ensure independence and quality assurance in one or both of two ways: (1) they assign the design of terms of reference (ToRs), contracting of evaluations and quality assurance to a professional evaluation unit within the organization that is separated from other operational units, reporting to the Board or a designated Board subcommittee; or (2) to ensure greater independence, they create an arm’s-length evaluation reference group that is charged with design, oversight and quality assurance, similar to the Independent Evaluation Committee created to oversee GPE’s interim evaluation.¹³

4.20 For this evaluation framework, we propose a mixed approach in which most evaluations are managed by the Secretariat, reporting to the Board, but the final summative evaluation of GPE 2020

¹² OECD/DAC, *Principles for evaluation of development assistance* (1991); OECD/DAC, *Guidance for Evaluating Humanitarian Assistance in Complex Emergencies* (1999). See also: IEG World Bank/DAC Network on development evaluation, *Sourcebook for Evaluating Global and Regional Partnership Programs* (Washington DC: The World Bank, 2007).

¹³ According to the World Bank’s IEG, global partnerships use their part-time governing bodies to commission evaluations, ensuring that these are conducted by independent teams of consultants or independent experts. In larger GRPPs, such as the Global Fund, there may be a mandate and sufficient resources for a separate internal evaluation unit (*Sourcebook for Evaluating Global and Regional Partnership Programs*).

is led by an independent steering committee. This will help guarantee an appropriate level of behavioral and organizational independence,¹⁴ with a higher degree of independence for products most likely to need more complete independence and appropriate distance for quality assurance.

- For country-level, thematic and programmatic evaluations, the Secretariat Results & Performance sub-team will be responsible for ensuring independence, reporting through the Chief Technical Officer (CTO) to the Strategy and Impact Committee (SIC).
- For the GPE 2020 summative evaluation, an independent evaluation steering committee of evaluation and education experts will be formed for a limited term. It reports to the Board chair through the Strategy and Impact Committee. This evaluation steering committee designs the ToRs, selects the evaluation contractors, and reviews and quality-assures the final product, ensuring that all parts of the partnership are rigorously evaluated without undue influence by any GPE member.

Table 5: Timetable for the Evaluation Portfolio

	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021
Summative country studies 22 in total		6	12	4	
Prospective country studies (formative) 8 in total		8	Continued	8 complete	
Thematic evaluations* (formative) 4 in total		TBD			
Programmatic evaluations (summative/formative) 5 in total	• DCP meetings	CSEF ESPDG	GRA TBD		
Evaluation of GPE's development impact (summative)				Begins	Ends

*Note: *Thematic evaluations are optional and selection of themes is illustrative only.*

¹⁴ Behavioral independence is constituted by the ability to produce, publish and disseminate credible and objective reports in the public domain without undue influence by any party. Organizational independence guarantees that the central evaluation function is not controlled or unduly influenced by any party. It includes the ability of the evaluation function to set its own evaluation agenda and report directly to the governing body and/or the executive head.

5. DISSEMINATING AND LEARNING FROM RESULTS

5.1 Effective evaluation requires a strategy for the dissemination of findings, as well as opportunities to discuss and learn from findings. Over the term of GPE 2020, GPE will embed a culture of M&E into the partnership, ensuring that evidence is analyzed, shared and used for the purposes of accountability, learning and decision making.¹⁵

5.2 GPE will annually publish a results report. This report will first be presented at each year's December Board meeting and then released to the public in April of the subsequent year. It will report on progress on 37 indicators and include the findings from grant monitoring and from country, programmatic and thematic case studies. Chapters of the report will be organized around the levels within GPE's Theory of Change: impact, outcomes, and country and global-level outputs, as follows:

- a. Overview/Executive Summary
- b. Country-Level Impact and Outcomes: Learning, Equity and Systems
- c. GPE Support for Improved Planning, Monitoring and Mutual Accountability at the Country Level
- d. GPE Grant Portfolio
- e. Global-Level Contributions: More and Better Financing, Global and Cross-National Activities, Strengthening the Partnership

5.3 To report on its M&E data, GPE has developed a designated "[Data & Results](#)" page on its website. All the data generated through this M&E strategy will be shared on this page, serving as a portal for the general public on the results framework, methodologies and evaluation data.

5.4 In addition to the annual results report, all GPE evaluations will have an accompanying communications and dissemination strategy, which might include short policy briefs to inform decision-makers on key messages and recommendations; webinars or a launch event; and presentation at conferences, international forums and face-to-face workshops.

5.5 Country-level evaluations — which are the major focus of the evaluation framework — will be shared with country-level partners. Evaluators will communicate with local education stakeholders, facilitated by local education groups, to ensure they have the opportunity for input into country-level

¹⁵ J. Mayne, *Building an Evaluative Culture for Effective Evaluation and Results Management*, ILAC Working Paper 8 (Rome: Institutional Learning and Change Initiative, 2008). See: http://www.focusintl.com/RBM107-ILAC_WorkingPaper_No8_EvaluativeCulture_Mayne.pdf.

evaluations at the design and drafting phases. This increases the understanding and ownership of evaluation findings, creating an opportunity for further learning and improvement. Workshops with country-level partners will be organized at the end of country-level evaluations.

6. RESOURCES AND CAPACITY

6.1 This strategy will be implemented by the Results and Performance (R&P) sub-team and Grant Monitoring Team within the Secretariat. These teams include a senior evaluation specialist, an evaluation specialist and two statisticians, as well as three monitoring specialists on the Grant Monitoring Team, overseen by a lead evaluation officer.

6.2 The M&E strategy includes additional resources to support the suite of evaluations presented in Section 4, to ensure dissemination of findings and to develop an information platform that ensures transparency and availability.

6.3 The budget associated with this M&E Strategy was approved by the GPE Board. The costing for this was still considerably lower than the common recommendation from evaluation experts that between 3 and 5 percent of the budget of any development program should be spent on evaluation to ensure learning and accountability.¹⁶ It also compares favorably to the average proportion of program costs spent on evaluation by larger organizational members of the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) — which is 0.31 percent, excluding monitoring costs.

6.4 In the approved budget, total annual expenditure is 0.32 percent as a share of GPE's annual disbursements of approximately US\$500 million. Costs considered in this scenario include:

- a. Variable costs for the annual collection of data in the results framework and the grant monitoring framework, including investment in a web-based data information platform
- b. Costs for 22 summative country evaluations
- c. Costs for 8 prospective country evaluations
- d. Costs for 5 program evaluations
- e. Costs for 3 thematic evaluations
- f. Costs for the production, translation and dissemination of the GPE 2020 Evaluation — including for an independent evaluation committee

¹⁶ World Health Organization, *Evaluation practice handbook* (Geneva: World Health Organization, 2013). Retrieved May 16, 2016, from http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/96311/1/9789241548687_eng.pdf.

- g. Costs for publication, translation and dissemination activities for all other evaluation reports, policy briefs and knowledge products

Table 6: Approved budget (all amounts in US\$)

	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021	#	Total
Monitoring							
Results framework	48,200	56,600	48,200	56,600	65,000		274,600
Informatics system	197,000	200,000	75,000	75,000	75,000		622,000
Evaluations							
Summative country program evaluations	190,000	700,000	700,000	700,000	0	22	2,290,000
Prospective country evaluations	0	680,000	680,000	680,000	0	8	2,040,000
Thematic Evaluations	60,000	60,000	60,000	0	0	3	180,000
Program evaluations	120,000	120,000	60,000		0	5	300,000
GPE's development impact evaluation				350,000	350,000	1	700,000
Independent evaluation committee				100,000	100,000		200,000

Reporting and Learning							
Annual results report (production, translation)	150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	5	750,000
Production & translation of evaluation reports, preparation of briefs, blogs and workshops	39,500	149,500	204,500	194,500	149,500		737,500
TOTAL	804,700	2,116,100	1,977,700	2,306,100	889,500		8,094,100

Note: Annual allocations are flexible and can be adjusted from year to year.

