Terms of Reference
Technical Advisory Panel, Advocacy and Social Accountability (ASA) Design

Background and objectives

The Global Partnership for Education is a multi-stakeholder partnership and funding platform bringing together donors, developing country governments, international organizations, civil society, teacher organizations, the private sector and philanthropy. It is committed to fulfilling the right to education by ensuring access to inclusive, equitable, quality education for all children and youth, including second chance learning– as reflected in the ambition of Sustainable Development Goal 4 on education which guides GPE’s Strategic Plan.

Financing and Funding Framework

In March 2017, GPE adopted its new Financing and Funding Framework, which, among other things, includes two reinforcing funding mechanisms to support Advocacy and Social Accountability (ASA), and Knowledge and Innovation Exchange (KIX). The goal of ASA is to enhance civil society capacity to further GPE2020 goals in learning, equity, and stronger systems, by improving their participation, advocacy and efforts to ensure transparency and increased effectiveness in national educational policy and implementation processes. Regarding the ASA funding mechanism, the GPE Board of Directors has asked the Secretariat, under the oversight of the Strategy and Impact Committee (SIC), to commission the operational design of these two funding mechanisms, as part of the operationalization of the Financing and Funding Framework as a whole. ASA will provide a minimum of $60 million and maximum of $100 million to support advocacy and social accountability activities between 2018 and 2020, and GPE’s current replenishment campaigns aims to fully resource ASA.

ASA Design Process

With the aim of launching the ASA funding mechanism in 2019, it is being designed in two phases. Phase 1 took place from July to December 2017 and encompassed the development of goals, objectives, outputs and operational components, in order to better define the purposes of GPE’s financing for ASA and its role within GPE’s larger strategy. The ASA mechanism will include three operational components: (1) support for national education coalitions (building on its investments in the Civil Society Education Fund); (2) social accountability grants and (3) grants for transnational advocacy. In December 2017, the GPE Board endorsed this framework for ASA and delegated authority to the Strategy and Impact Committee to oversee the second design phase which will take place from January to October 2018. Phase 2 will include the development and selection of operational design options for ASA grant-making. This includes, but is not limited to, the grant agent role and selection criteria, the application cycle including call for proposals process, eligibility criteria, and proposal requirements, as well as approaches to embedding learning and capacity development in the ASA mechanism’s operations. The operational components of ASA will be established in late 2018 with the first call for proposals in early 2019. A tentative timeline of
design deliverables due to the SIC for input/decision has been presented in Annex 1 (Table 1) for reference, along with a tentative schedule of design topics for discussion by the members of the TAP. These timelines and topics are indicative, given the iterative approach which will be required in the sequencing of design options and decisions taken by the SIC.

Role of the Technical Advisory Panel

Technical Advisory Panel

The Global Partnership Secretariat is establishing a Technical Advisory Panel (TAP) to support Phase 2 efforts to develop an operational design for ASA. The aim is to use the TAP as a sounding board and information resource for the Secretariat as it explores the above elements of the ASA operational design. The TAP will provide regular feedback on iterations of the design options, provide recommendations for relevant information and pertinent approaches to consider, and ensure the technical rigor and relevant good practice is reflected in the final operational design.

TAP Composition

The Technical Advisory Panel will be comprised of 3 to 5 technical experts in the fields of social accountability, advocacy and grant making. Michael Gibbons, Director of Children’s Services, Wellspring Philanthropic Fund, will chair the advisory panel. TAP members will have extensive experience and expertise in advocacy, social accountability or education systems and policy reform in developing countries. They will especially be able to advise on best practices in grantmaking in advocacy and social accountability and be familiar with the Global Partnership for Education model, including its current investments in civil society advocacy and social accountability. It is desired that the TAP will also reflect a diversity of geographic expertise, experience in funding or implementing activities. It should be noted that members of the TAP should have no material interest in applying for funding from the ASA mechanism once it is operational, to ensure that there is no conflict of interest in the advice provided by the TAP to the GPE Secretariat. Participating in the Technical Advisory Panel offers the chance to take advantage of this rare and strategic opportunity to help shape an important funding mechanism that will help define the advocacy and social accountability component of this field going forward.

Scope of work and deliverables

The TAP is expected to participate in teleconferences, provide feedback via email, and participate in at least one face to face meeting with the GPE Secretariat design team. While phase 2 design will take place between January and October, it is expected that the majority of TAP inputs will be required in the period from March to June. The total expected time commitment required is expected to be approximately 10-12 days over the course of phase 2 design.

In particular, the key responsibilities of the panel will include:
• Provide guidance on the GPE Secretariat’s methodology to develop and assess design options (including those proposed by any firm or consultant hired to support the Secretariat)
• Provide guidance on the diverse roles required for the management of grant funding (fiduciary, programmatic, due diligence etc.), with a view to inform the roles and business processes required of a grant agent; and provide suggestions for potential grant agents (philanthropic advisors, bilateral or multilateral agencies or others)
• Provide guidance on good practice in grant making for social accountability and transnational advocacy, including:
  o contribution to a stock take of current good practices in the field
  o direct experience-sharing on education-advocacy/accountability best practices
  o lessons learned about funding education-advocacy/accountability most effectively
  o consultation with implementation experts to solicit broader views and lessons
  o referrals or links to sources of additional technical information about advocacy, social accountability and effective funding thereof.
• Provide recommendations for how to improve GPE’s current support for national education coalitions through a successor to CSEF based on the findings of the mid-term evaluation and related similar grant-making and advocacy/accountability experiences, including how to maximize the advantages of linkages with the other two operational components of ASA.
• Review and provide feedback on design options (including management structure, calls for proposals process and selection, M&E systems, and capacity building support).
• Review various components of the final ASA design and provide expert opinion on the rationale for certain design recommendations, including through written submission to the SIC as needed.