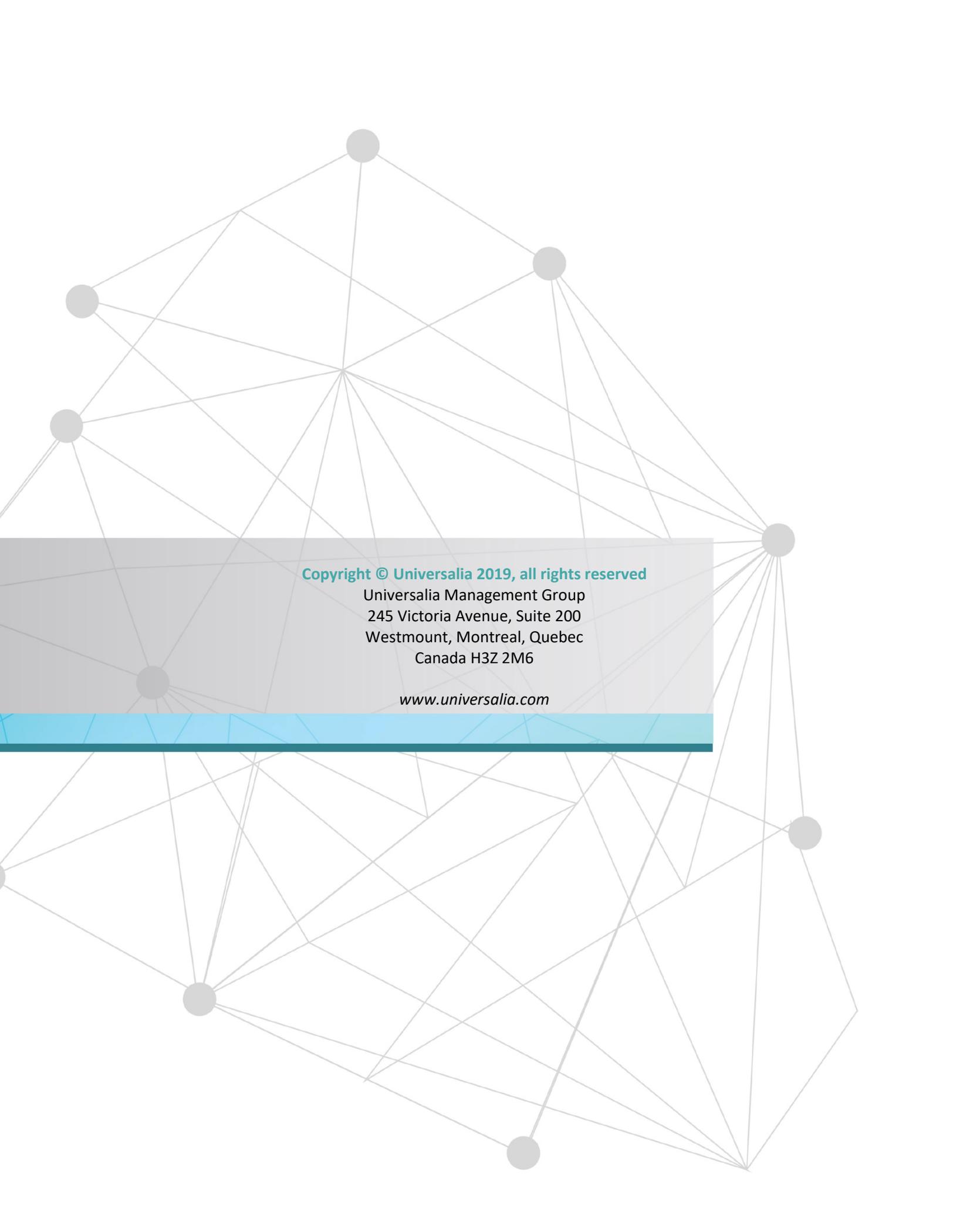


Evaluation of the GPE's Support to Sector Plan Development

Including through Education Sector Plan Development
Grants (ESPDG) in the context of GPE 2020

FINAL DESK STUDY REPORT | MAY 2019



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Executive Summary

Introduction

This report summarizes preliminary insights deriving from the Desk Study Phase of the Evaluation of the Global Partnership for Education's (GPE) support to education sector planning through its Education Sector Plan Development Grant (ESPDG) and other modalities. This study responds to three questions:

- 1) To what extent have ESPDG and other types of GPE support for sector planning been relevant and appropriate?
- 2) To what extent has GPE support led to improved quality of sector plans and sector planning?
- 3) How well has GPE managed its support to sector planning?

GPE aims to contribute to quality learning outcomes, equity and gender equality for all children by strengthening systems and efficiently promoting coordination, harmonization and alignment of international development support to countries' education policies, strategies and priorities, in support of the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4. Three core levers underlie GPE's Operational Model: (i) national sector planning cycles, (ii) education sector coordinating mechanisms, and (iii) sector financing, all of which have to work together in ways that are appropriate and adapted to local contexts. GPE seeks to influence and support all three of these areas, by influencing development cooperation and financing, as well as through its financial support.

Methodology

This evaluation uses a formative approach in order to assist GPE in taking stock of achievements made between 2012 and 2018 and further improving its approach to supporting country-level education sector planning processes. The intention of the Desk Study, therefore, is to formulate preliminary conclusions and related hypotheses that are to be further explored in upcoming country-level evaluations.

The guiding frameworks for this Desk Study report were the evaluation matrix and the draft theory of change (ToC) for GPE support to sector planning. The evaluation tests the ToC by attempting to establish whether the results and assumptions predicted were realized and/or whether some expected links within the ToC could not be supported by the available evidence.

A sample of 16 development country partners (DCPs) that developed education sector plans (ESPs/TEPs) with the support of ESPDGs allowed the evaluation team to assess and analyse how the ESPDG and other GPE modalities were used, how relevant these were, and what their effect was in improving sector planning and sector plan quality. A total of 27 ESPDGs and 27 ESPs/TEPs from the 16 DCPs made up the sample, and the GPE Secretariat's assessment on Indicator 16 was used as a basis for identifying changes in ESP/TEP quality.

In addition to reviewing Indicator 16 data, the evaluation team conducted a small number of interviews with key global stakeholders, as well as a thorough document review, drawing upon a wide range of primary and secondary data to answer the three evaluation questions.

Relevance and appropriateness of ESPDG and GPE support to sector planning

The Desk Study primarily focused on the *strategic relevance* of GPE's support for sector planning, which analyzes relevance in relation to GPE's strategies and the expected results of GPE 2020. Overall, the ESPDG and other modalities of GPE's support were found to be strategically relevant to GPE's objective of strengthening sector planning. Modalities of support include ESPDG funding requirements that provide an incentive for developing good quality plans, the development of a common language and guidance on sector plan development, promotion of comprehensive, participatory and inclusive planning processes, ESPDG funding for these processes, and, finally, enhanced quality assurance (QA) that gives a structured and consistent way of supporting DCPs in meeting the GPE strategic objective of countries developing good quality sector plans. The combined strategic relevance of these modalities derives from the potential that, together, they are suited to remove different types of barriers that countries may face when developing sector plans.

The notion of *operational* relevance, which focuses on the needs and priorities of DCPs, will be further developed in the next phase of the evaluation. Preliminary evidence from the country-level evaluations (CLEs) raises questions about how well the GPE model is aligned with the needs and priorities of DCPs, particularly around the question of whether the development of 'good' sector plans (that meet minimum standards) respond to the practical needs of DCPs, as observations so far note that sector plan quality does not guarantee that stakeholders will make use of the plan. A second related question centers on the extent to which DCP governments (and other in-country stakeholders) truly feel ownership of the plan as opposed to seeing it mostly as a means to access GPE funding. Although national ownership is central to the GPE

model, neither GPE's 2020 Strategy nor the related corporate Results Framework explicitly define or try to measure the notion of 'ownership', thereby implying that it is a clear and unambiguous concept. These questions are to be further explored in the second phase of the study.

Improved quality of sector plans and sector planning through GPE support

Based on GPE Secretariat's Indicator 16 ratings for ESPs and TEPs, the quality of the sector plans in the study sample improved over time during the review period (2012-2018). These improvements were seen for most of the seven standards, but especially for the standards of 'achievable' and 'strategic', which saw the greatest improvements over time.

Improvements were seen in both non-fragile and fragile states (FCACs). Although GPE developed a more flexible and targeted approach for FCACs through the introduction of the TEP and associated guidelines, few FCACs in our sample chose to develop TEPs. The reasons are still unclear and are to be further explored in the next phase.

The ESPDG mechanism makes a key contribution to the development of robust and credible ESPs, when comparing plans that were developed without ESPDG support with those that received support. However, it is still unclear how changes to the ESPDG process, such as the requirements to develop a detailed roadmap or the introduction of the new funding window for education sector analyses (ESAs), has affected sector planning processes. The introduction of the detailed roadmap in 2016 has not led to more realistic planning as processes were still considered to be rushed in many DCPs. As for ESAs, there has been an increase in absolute funding for developing ESAs since the introduction of the new window, with more countries making use of this funding. Sector plans are also rated as being more evidence-based as

they make better use of more recent sector analyses. However, the ESPDG may not be increasing the level of ESA activity in countries as ESAs were being conducted even prior to the introduction of the new window.

The ESPDG and other support mechanisms have also contributed to the use of participatory and inclusive planning processes at the country-level by providing resources (national and sub-national level) for consultations, meetings and enhanced dialogue with stakeholders. While these processes are likely to have positively influenced plan ownership, there is no clear evidence on whether and how this contributed to plan quality. This topic will be explored during the next phase of the study.

Evidence suggests that the new quality assurance (QA) process, in particular, the enhanced independent appraisal mechanism, has contributed to better quality sector plans. In 2016, GPE began to formalize and institutionalize the QA process. When comparing plans that did not undergo the new QA process versus plans that did, we see a clear improvement in sector plan quality for the latter.

The evaluation team also looked at individual components of the new process, such as Secretariat Initial Comments, the enhanced independent appraisal, and the requirement of the Appraisal Memo. Initial Comments are now more formal, comprehensive, detailed and standardized. Similarly, appraisal reports are now more likely to address all key areas identified by the appraisal guidelines and are now conducted by trained appraisers. The introduction of the Appraisal Memo is also a positive step as it has created a formal opportunity for in-country actors to discuss and agree/disagree with the recommendations from the appraisal report. However, some issues around the quality of appraisal reports remain, namely with regard to providing recommendations that are specific and limited in number and inconsistencies in the way appraisal reports use the appraisal guidelines. There is also concern about the role of appraisals during country-level processes, which may be

perceived as a mere 'check-the-box' exercise as opposed to a valuable component for improving ESP quality.

Overall, the new QA process and its various components have likely had a positive contribution to ESP quality. The upcoming CLEs will begin to identify ways in which the combination of QA procedures may have contributed to improved quality of sector plans.

Lastly, it is not yet clear to what extent other GPE modalities of support to sector planning, such as guidelines, technical assistance, knowledge events and capacity building/training, have contributed to improving sector plan quality. Evidence from CLEs conducted to date point to the positive influence of these elements, but it is difficult to clearly identify their role and contribution to changes in sector plan quality. We also cannot trace specifically how GPE's support for sector planning has contributed to strengthening related country capacity. While contributions to capacity development are likely, GPE does not systematically address capacity development objectives nor does it trace related results. The absence of tailored metrics, plans and performance data make GPE's contribution to national capacity development difficult to assess. In addition, existing country capacity for sector planning may be the result of supportive actions of various actors, including GPE, as well as through mere practice.

GPE management of its support to sector planning

Overall, GPE has strengthened the management of its support to sector planning. Since 2016, GPE introduced several changes to the ESPDG mechanism to improve the application process and better respond to the GPE 2020 Strategy and the new funding model requirements. These include clearer guidelines, separate funding windows for ESP and ESA, a more detailed and thorough application process, and a stronger grant approval process. However, some aspects

of the ESPDG management cycle are weak, in particular, the lack of a mechanism to facilitate learning from past experience. The ESPDG application process does not consider past experience in sector plan development and implementation. In addition, the monitoring and reporting on ESPDG grants is focused on technical and financial aspects, and provide few opportunities to learn about the grant process and effects at the country level. The grant review process does not adequately take into account the capacity building dimension of plan development and related planning deliverables such as the ESA, thematic studies, simulation model, etc. There are also questions around whether the review process sufficiently integrates an independent technical input as part of the QA of ESPDG applications. Finally, despite changes to the ESPDG process to encourage better planning at the country-level, tight timelines and the need for grant extensions continue to be an issue.

Preliminary conclusions

Based on the findings and the questions raised, the Desk Study presents several preliminary conclusions and related hypotheses to be further tested during Phase 2 of the evaluation, as well as in upcoming CLEs.

- **Conclusion 1:** Current modalities of GPE support to sector planning complement each other and are *strategically* relevant to the GPE objective to help countries develop education sector plans that meet common standards.
- **Conclusion 2:** It is less evident to what extent GPE support to sector planning is equally and consistently *operationally* relevant to helping country governments implement sector plans.
- **Conclusion 3:** GPE support has some potential to help strengthen in-country capacity for sector planning but does not

yet pursue this aim consistently and systematically.

- **Conclusion 4:** Overall, GPE is employing good management practices for its support to sector planning, especially in managing ESPDG applications and approvals. There is room for improvement, however, in monitoring and learning from past experience in providing ESPDGs and other types of support.

While not replacing the broader questions outlined in the evaluation matrix, the conclusions and hypotheses (summarized in Table below) outline specific issues to focus on in the context of these broader questions. The final evaluation report will include a brief overview (probably in table format) summarizing the extent to which the evaluation team has been able to collect relevant data on each of the noted conclusions and hypotheses, as this will likely vary by topic and by country.

Summary of conclusions and hypotheses

CONCLUSION	RELATED HYPOTHESES AND SUB-HYPOTHESES TO BE TESTED (IF/AS FEASIBLE)
<p>1. Current modalities of GPE support to sector planning complement each other and are <i>strategically</i> relevant to the GPE objective to help countries develop education sector plans that meet common standards.</p>	<p>1.1 The revised ESPDG application process – especially the requirement to develop an integrated roadmap – helps countries develop more realistic plans for completing the ESP and TEP.</p> <p>1.2 The availability of a separate funding window for ESAs, and the increased overall amount available for ESPDGs, helps countries carry out sector analyses that are relevant to and reflected in the development of quality sector plans.</p> <p>1.3 The revised QA process for sector plan development provides a more systematic approach to quality assurance that contributes to improving the quality of resulting sector plans</p>
<p>2. It is less evident to what extent GPE support to sector planning is equally and consistently <i>operationally</i> relevant to helping country governments implement sector plans.</p>	<p>2.1 If DCPs perceive QA processes for ESP development, including the independent appraisal process, not as obstacles to overcome in order to access GPE funding, but as opportunities for strengthening the education system, then implementation will become a more central task.</p> <p>2.2 The existence of a detailed action plan that spells out roles and responsibilities of key actors as well as realistic indicators and targets, and that is linked to national annual planning/budget systems would increase the likelihood of successful sector plan implementation</p> <p>2.3 Increased government capabilities (knowledge, skills, experience, data and monitoring systems) will lead to more effective monitoring that informs implementation. One specific issue in this context on which more information is needed are what factors support or hinder countries in using data deriving from education sector analyses.</p> <p>2.4 Motivation (right types/number of incentives, political will, sense of ownership) is essential to encourage implementation.</p> <p>2.4.1 Ownership of sector plans is influenced by a variety of factors, including the extent to which the DCP government has exercised (and perceives itself as having demonstrated) active leadership for and influence on both the content and processes leading to ESP/TEP development. More insights are required to better understand key factors, and correlations among these factors that determine degrees of ownership.</p> <p>2.4.2 The more sector plan development is led by the Ministry of Education and is based on participatory policy dialogue processes, the more likely the ministry is to use the plan.</p> <p>2.4.3 The stronger leadership the Ministry of Education displays for sector plan development, the more likely development partners are to align and harmonize their own activities with the plan.</p>

CONCLUSION	RELATED HYPOTHESES AND SUB-HYPOTHESES TO BE TESTED (IF/AS FEASIBLE)
	<p>2.4.4 Disseminating key elements of the sector plan and, as appropriate, some recommendations from the ESA in meaningful and accessible ways will increase the likelihood of implementation</p> <p>2.5 Country-level stakeholders, in particular government actors, but other sector actors including development partners and civil society organizations, do not always have adequate <i>opportunities</i> (such as adequate amounts and types of funding and a conducive external environment) to use the sector plan.</p> <p>2.5.1 The extent to which relevant government actors other than the Ministry of Education (e.g. Ministry of Planning, Finance, Economic Affairs, Prime Ministers' office) have ownership of the sector plan is a crucial factor influencing plan implementation</p> <p>2.6 Applying differentiated approaches to sector planning that are adjusted to specific country contexts could be more relevant and effective in certain country contexts.</p>
<p>3. GPE support has some potential to help strengthen in-country capacity for sector planning but does not yet pursue this aim consistently and systematically.</p>	<p>3.1 One reason why countries strongly rely on external consultants is that sector plan development is primarily perceived as a hurdle to overcome as quickly and efficiently as possible on the way to accessing ESPIG (and, potentially, other donors') funding.</p> <p>3.2 Demand for capacity development from ministries in charge of education is limited and largely confined to addressing competencies of individuals, rather than also reflecting the capacity needs of the ministries in charge of education and the institutions of the sector as a whole, including related organizational and political economy challenges.</p>
<p>4. Overall, GPE is employing good management practices for its support to sector planning, especially in managing ESPDG applications and approvals. There is room for improvement, however, in monitoring and learning from past experience in providing ESPDGs and other types of support.</p>	<p>4.1 Countries tend to submit applications for the two ESPDG funding windows (for ESA and sector plan development) together rather than using ESA findings to inform an application for the second window because of tight overall timelines for sector plan development, which are tied to when the country needs the next ESPIG application to be approved.</p> <p>4.2 Country-level actors' (including GA) roles in the overall management of ESPDG and other modalities of support to education sector planning do not always play out in practice as theoretically intended.</p>

Acronyms

CA	Coordinating Agency
CL	Country Lead
CLE	Country Level Evaluation
CST	Country Support Team
DCP	Developing Country Partner
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
EEMECA	Eastern Europe, Middle East and Central Asia
EFA	Education for All
ESA	Education Sector Analysis
ESP	Education Sector Plan
ESPDG	Education Sector Plan Development Grant
ESPIG	Education Sector Program Implementation Grant
FCAC	Fragile and conflict-affected countries
FTI	Fast Track Initiative
GA	Grant Agent
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
GRA	Global and Regional Activities Program
IIEP	International Institute for Educational Planning
JSR	Joint Sector Review
LAC	Latin America and Caribbean
LEG	Local Education Group
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation

MCA	Maximum Country Allocation
MoE	Ministry of Education
PDG	Program Development Grant
QA	Quality Assurance
QAR	Quality Assurance Review
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
TEP	Transitional Education Plan
ToC	Theory of change
ToR	Terms of Reference
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
US\$	United States dollar

Terminology

Capacity	The ability of people, organizations and society as a whole to manage their affairs successfully. The notion of capacity incorporates the key dimensions of capabilities (knowledge, skills), motivation (e.g. incentives), and opportunities (conducive environment, funding, time). ¹
Capacity development	The process whereby people, organizations and society as a whole unleash, strengthen, create, adapt and maintain that ability over time. ²
Capacity building	Capacity building is the same as capacity development, however, the term usually preferred now is capacity development or capacity strengthening, to reflect the understanding that (i) capacity strengthening does not start from zero but always bases on existing capacity, and (ii) capacity cannot be 'built' by others. i.e. external support can assist in or facilitate capacity development, but cannot 'build it'; and (iii) the realization that capacity development is a non-linear and emergent process that is different from a linear, planned and always deliberate 'building' process.
Technical assistance	One modality that can be used to support capacity development. It refers to non-financial assistance provided by local or international specialists. It can take the form of sharing information and expertise, instruction, skills training, transmission of working knowledge, and consulting services and may also involve the transfer of technical data. ³
GPE Standards	GPE standards refer to the seven criteria (five criteria in the case of transitional education plans) used by the Secretariat to evaluate the quality of education sector plans. The Standards are based on the GPE/IIEP guidelines for education sector plan preparation. The GPE standards are used to help DCPs develop better quality and robust sector plans.

¹ OECD DAC 2006: *The challenge of Capacity Development. Working towards good practice*. DAC Guidelines and Reference Series. Paris; Mayne, John. "The COM-B Theory of Change Model." Working Paper, February 2017

² Over the past decade, important changes in the global discourse on capacity development (CD) include: (i) a shift from a focus on the skills of individuals to placing emphasis on performance of wider groups or organisations, which was then replaced by the notion that the capacity to deliver results is but one dimension of capacity that must extend to the broader abilities needed to make an organization or system endure and perform over time; and, (ii) a shift from viewing capacity development as linear and externally generated or stimulated, especially by technical assistance (Boesen, in Greijn et al 2015), to seeing it as self-organizing, emergent and part of a complex adaptive system (Baser and Morgan 2008, De Weijer and Mc Candless, in Greijn et al 2015).

³ Source: <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/cultural-diversity/cultural-expressions/programmes/technical-assistance/what-is-technical-assistance/>

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

1. Established in 2002, the Global Partnership for Education ("Global Partnership," or GPE), formerly the Education for All Fast-Track Initiative (EFA FTI), is a multi-stakeholder partnership focused on supporting and financing basic education in developing countries. It provides its developing country partners support to build and implement sound education plans.⁴ GPE aims to achieve quality learning outcomes, equity and gender equality for all children by strengthening systems and efficiently promoting coordination, harmonization and alignment of international development support to countries' education policies, strategies and priorities.
2. Given the central role of robust education sector plans in achieving Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 at the country level, and thus their central role in GPE's overall theory of change, the GPE Board mandated the Secretariat to pursue a programmatic evaluation of GPE's support to sector plan development, including through Education Sector Plan Development Grants (ESPDG) and other modalities.
3. This report summarizes preliminary insights deriving from the first phase of the Evaluation of GPE Support to Sector Planning consisting of a Desk Study to explore the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of GPE modalities of support to sector planning, especially through the ESPDG funding mechanism.⁵ The study focuses on the period 2012 – 2018.⁶ Emerging insights will be complemented by a second phase focusing on interviews to elicit additional country-level data.
4. The study aims to respond to three key questions from the assignment's evaluation matrix (Appendix II) related to:
 - 1) The relevance and appropriateness of the ESPDG and of other types of GPE support to sector planning;
 - 2) The extent to which GPE support led to the development of quality sector plans; and
 - 3) How well GPE has managed its support to sector planning.

1.2 Evaluation Purpose and Methodology

5. This section provides a brief summary of the evaluation methodology. For further details, please see the Methodology Note in Appendix I.

⁴ This includes providing support for effective, inclusive and participatory sector dialogue and monitoring, and for more and better education sector financing.

⁵ Other modalities include quality assurance mechanisms for sector plan development, Secretariat advice, guidance documents on sector plan preparation and education sector analysis, and direct technical assistance provided by the grant agent, coordinating agency and/or other development partners.

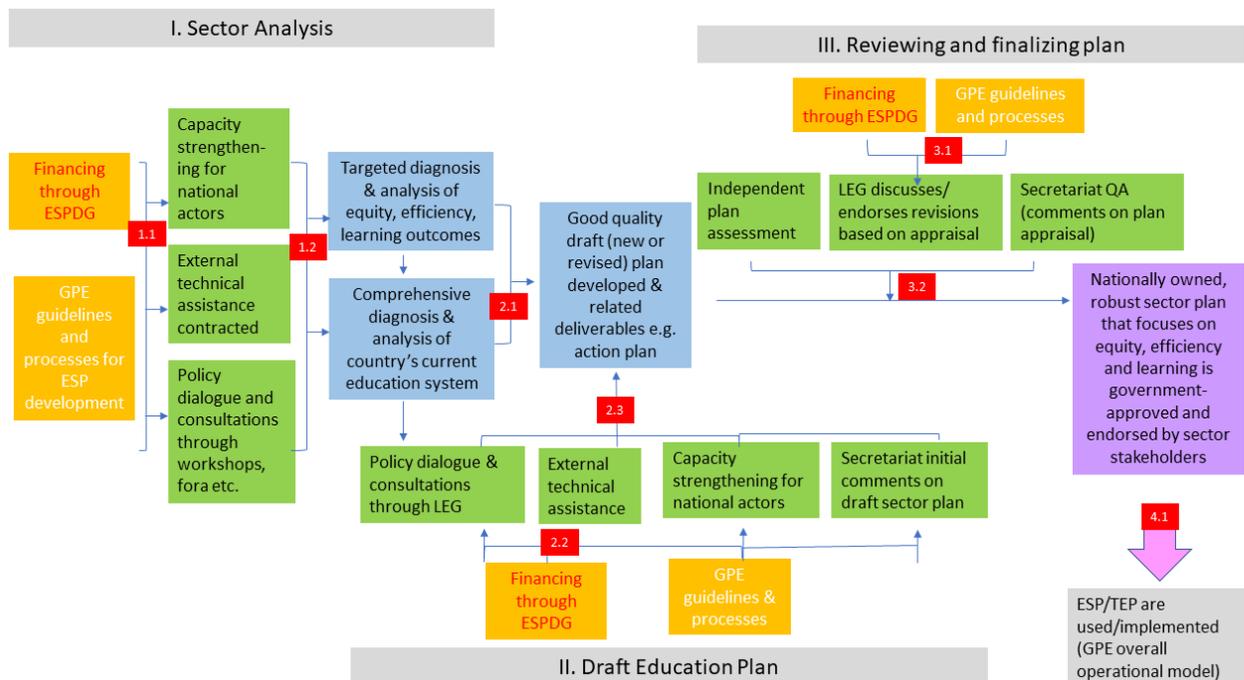
⁶ The period under review begins in 2012 because the EFA-FTI was rebranded as GPE in 2011 and GPE's first Strategic Plan was from 2012 to 2015. The Education Sector Plan Development Grant was also established in 2012.

6. The guiding frameworks for this Desk Study report were (i) the evaluation matrix that had been agreed in the inception report and presented in Appendix II, and (ii) the draft theory of change (ToC) for GPE support to sector planning shown below and elaborated on in the Methodology Note, Appendix I.⁷

7. The visual representation of the ToC in Figure 1.1 distinguishes between GPE financial inputs (amber box/red font) and non-financial inputs (amber/white font), direct GPE contributions deriving from these inputs (green boxes), intermediate results (blue boxes) as well as the overall objective (purple boxes). The numbered red boxes (from 1.1 to 4.1) indicate key logical linkages (assumptions) that connect different elements of the theory of change to one another ('IF *x*, THEN *y* happens'). These are elaborated on in Appendix I. The numbering of these boxes is aligned with the anticipated sequencing of achievements (1. Sector analysis, 2. Development of draft sector plan, 3. Review and finalization of sector plan, and 4.1 link to the broader GPE operational model that anticipates use/implementation of the Education Sector Plan/Transitional Education Plan (ESP/TEP) and, ultimately, contributions to strengthening the respective education system, learning outcomes, equity and gender equality).

8. The evaluation tests the ToC by attempting to establish, based on the gathered evidence, whether the results and assumptions predicted in the ToC were realized and/or whether some expected links within the ToC could not be supported by evidence. Testing the ToC also includes reflecting, again based on available evidence, on whether the 'package' of support provided by GPE appears to be the *only* factor likely to have influenced the observed changes, in which case one could conclude *causation* rather than contribution – or whether additional factors are likely to have played a role, in which case GPE support is likely to have *contributed* to the change (unless there is evidence that the other factors alone were sufficient to cause the results).

Figure 1.1 Draft theory of change of GPE's support to sector planning



⁷ The draft ToC will be validated and finalized in the final evaluation report.

9. The overall approach to the evaluation is formative in that the study aims to assist GPE in taking stock of achievements made to date and– if and as required – further improving its approach to supporting country level education sector planning processes. The evaluation team’s approach to answering the evaluation questions has been theory-based, with the intent to test the envisaged changes and underlying assumptions outlined in the Theory of Change for GPE support to sector planning.

10. As outlined in the inception report for this assignment, the intention of the Desk Study, the first of two components of the study, is to formulate preliminary conclusions and related hypothesis to be further explored in upcoming country level evaluations⁸ and the second part of this study. The final evaluation report (envisaged for December 2019) will summarize overarching insights and present a set of targeted recommendations to GPE. Figure i.1 in Appendix I shows the lines of inquiry, timeframe and linkages between this Desk Study and the Final Report.

11. The evaluation questions call for an assessment of what changed as a result of various changes in GPE processes described in Section 2 (GPE context for education sector planning),⁹ thus requiring a pre-post (or timeline-based) analysis where feasible, taking into account the fact that changes are still relatively recent and that it is not possible to isolate the effects of each of these changes. In order to provide this analysis, the evaluation team primarily used the year 2016 as a cut-off point for examining effects of those changes in developing country partner (DCP) ESPs and related products.¹⁰ Where possible, and given that the evaluation considered the period 2012 – 2018, the evaluation team considered how GPE support to education sector planning evolved in relation to the main issues/challenges identified with regard to sector planning prior to 2012.

12. The sample for the evaluation (and for this Desk Study) consists of 16 DCPs that developed ESP/TEPs with the support of ESPDGs.¹¹ Table 1.1 provides the general characteristics of the sample. The sampling strategy for the evaluation is described in Appendix I.

Table 1.1 *Characteristics of sample of countries*

COUNTRIES	NUMBER OF ESPDGS RECEIVED	NUMBER OF ESPS AND TEPs IN SAMPLE RATED BY GPE SECRETARIAT	CLE STATUS	ESP PERIODS	DCP USED THE NEW QA PROCEDURES ¹² OR THE NEW APPRAISER TRAINING
Burkina Faso	1	2	Complete (FY18)	2012-2020 ESP	-
				2017-2030 ESP	New QA + trained appraiser
Cambodia	2		FY19	2014-2018 ESP	-

⁸ As described in the Inception Report, the second deliverable for the present evaluation will draw synergies with in-country consultations held as part of the GPE country-level evaluation (CLE) effort undertaken until end-2019.

⁹ In particular changes in the funding model, the quality assurance (QA) approach for ESPs (including enhanced independent assessment), and the ESPDG application process – see Section 2 for details.

¹⁰ All processes were fully in place in 2017, but that would leave only 7ESP/TEPs in the sample in the “post” scenario.

¹¹ Two countries in our sample (Guinea and Uzbekistan) applied for separate ESPDGS in 2017-2018 under windows 1 and 2.

¹² QA procedures refer to the full Quality Assurance process applied to ESPs including: initial comments, independent appraisal, appraisal check, and appraisal memo.

COUNTRIES	NUMBER OF ESPDGS RECEIVED	NUMBER OF ESPS AND TEPs IN SAMPLE RATED BY GPE SECRETARIAT	CLE STATUS	ESP PERIODS	DCP USED THE NEW QA PROCEDURES ¹² OR THE NEW APPRAISER TRAINING
		2 ¹³		Revised 2014-2018 ESP	-
Chad	1 ¹⁴	2	-	2013-2015 TEP	-
				2018-2020 TEP	New QA only
Comoros	2	2	-	2013-2015 TEP	-
				2018-2020 TEP	New QA + trained appraiser
Congo DR	1	2	FY19	2012-2014 TEP	-
				2016-2025 ESP	New QA + trained appraiser
Côte d'Ivoire	1	1	Complete (FY18)	2016-2025 ESP	New QA + trained appraiser
Eritrea	2	2	-	2013-2017 ESP	-
				2018-2022 ESP	New QA + trained appraiser
Gambia	2	2	Complete (FY18)	2014-2022 ESP	-
				2016-2030 ESP	New QA + trained appraiser
Guinea	3	1	FY19	2015-2017 TEP	-
Lesotho	2	1	-	2016-2026 ESP	Trained appraiser only
Liberia	1	1	Complete (FY18)	2017-2021 ESP	Trained appraiser only
Rwanda	1	2	FY19	2013/14-2017/18 ESP	-
				2018/19-2023/24 ESP	New QA + trained appraiser
Sierra Leone	2	2	Complete (FY18)	2014-2018 ESP	-
				2018-2020 ESP	New QA + trained appraiser
	1	2	FY19	2012-2017 ESP	-

¹³ Cambodia's 2014-2018 ESP was rated twice, once before and once after the plan was revised in 2016. The pre- and post-revised plans are counted separately in our sample.

¹⁴ The 2014 ESPDG application for Chad was removed from the sample as no documents or information was available.

COUNTRIES	NUMBER OF ESPDGS RECEIVED	NUMBER OF ESPS AND TEPs IN SAMPLE RATED BY GPE SECRETARIAT	CLE STATUS	ESP PERIODS	DCP USED THE NEW QA PROCEDURES ¹² OR THE NEW APPRAISER TRAINING
South Sudan				2017-2021 ESP ¹⁵	New QA + trained appraiser
Tajikistan	2	1	FY19	2012-2020 ESP	-
Uzbekistan	3	2	-	2013-2017 ESP	
				2019-2023 ESP	New QA + trained appraiser ¹⁶
Total: 16 countries	27 ESPDGs	27 (20 ESPs and 7 TEPs)	11 countries (5 completed in FY18 and 6 in FY 19)		12 countries used new appraiser training 11 countries used the new QA procedures

13. The evaluation based its assessment of changes in ESP quality primarily on the GPE Secretariat's assessment of indicators 16a-16d in the GPE results framework (see Box 1 below). This data was available for 27 ESPs/TEPs for the 16 DCPs in the sample. The sub-criteria for Indicator 16a are based on standards developed by GPE that draw on the GPE/IIEP (International Institute for Educational Planning) guidelines on preparation of ESPs/TEPs. The standards were developed based on in-depth consultation and review of the literature and, initially, were intended as quality benchmarks. They became requirements in 2015 when the GPE Board adopted "operational model strengthening" measures requiring Secretariat review and independent appraisals.¹⁷

¹⁵ Rated by GPE Secretariat as a TEP

¹⁶ Not identified as such during Inception phase, but confirmed by the appraiser, who was interviewed for this evaluation

¹⁷ Based on stakeholder observations and GPE BOD-2015-10 DOC 06, GPE Proposal for a More Effective Operational Platform, October 14-16, 2015.

14. Data on the sector planning indicators and their sub-criteria are collected regularly by the GPE Secretariat based on a robust methodology.¹⁸ The evaluation team did not re-rate the ESPs, but instead reviewed available documentation to better understand the specific nature of *changes* in ESP/TEP quality over time in cases that such change had been indicated by Secretariat's assessment.¹⁹

15. The evaluation team's assessment of Education Sector Analyses (ESAs) and Appraisal reports focused on the extent to which related GPE guidelines had been applied (as opposed to independently judging the quality of these documents based on new/different criteria). When reviewing ESAs, the team placed special emphasis on whether and how the documents discussed issues of national implementation capacity, given that this was identified as a key issue emerging from the FY 2018 CLE Synthesis report.

16. The Desk Study draws upon a range of primary and secondary data provided through relevant documents and selected literature (see Appendix IV), ESPDG thematic coding data sets, the final reports of the six CLEs conducted during FY 2018 and included in the Desk Study Sample,²⁰ as well as the CLE synthesis report for FY 2018. In addition, interviews were conducted with seven GPE Secretariat staff and five global stakeholders (see Appendix III).²¹

17. The intended users of the evaluation are the Secretariat and GPE Board, members of GPE, including DCP governments, development partners, and other members of local education groups (LEG). Secondary intended users include the wider education community at global and country levels.

Box 1: Indicator 16 a-d

Indicator 16 is one of the core indicators of the GPE results framework and part of the set of indicators the Secretariat uses to monitor progress on the key results they wish to achieve. Indicator 16 falls under GPE's first strategic objective of strengthening education sector planning and policy implementation. It specifically aims to measure GPE's support of the development of evidence-based, nationally owned sector plans that are focused on equity, efficiency and learning. The indicator features four parts:

16a: Looks at the proportion of endorsed ESPs or TEPs that meet GPE standards

16b: Looks at the proportion of ESPs/TEPs that have a teaching and learning strategy that meets GPE standards

16c: Looks at the proportion of ESPs/TEPs with a strategy to respond to marginalized groups (incl. gender, disability and other context-relevant dimensions) that meets GPE standards

16d: Looks at the proportion of ESPs/TEPs with a strategy to improve efficiency that meets GPE standards

The ratings of ESPs/TEPs also form the basis for the Secretariat's quality assurance process and assessment of whether a plan meets the minimum standards.

¹⁸ The Indicator 16 methodology has changed over time. To allow for pre- and post- comparison in the Desk Study, adjustments were made to take into account these changes, which entailed matching older sub-criteria and/or standards to their equivalent in the newer methodology.

¹⁹ The CLEs in FY2019 and 2020 (conducted from November 2018 onward) are conducting a more detailed comparison of changes in ESP quality at the country level, and of the extent to which the ESPDG and other GPE modalities contributed to quality improvements. The findings from five of these studies will be utilized in the Final Report to validate the hypotheses presented in the Desk Study.

²⁰ These CLEs are Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Gambia, Liberia and Sierra Leone. The final evaluation will draw from additional CLEs conducted during FY18-19, including Rwanda, South Sudan, Cambodia, Guinea and Tajikistan.

²¹ Other global stakeholders included IIEP and Pôle de Dakar, as well as small group of independent appraisers.

18. The compilation of the Desk Study report faced the following limitations:
- Filling gaps in incomplete documentation on country-level processes required additional effort and calendar time and contributed to a delay in the start of the in-depth document review, which then limited the time available for analysis and synthesis.
 - Prior to the introduction of the new ESPDG application template (2015), budgets were presented inconsistently or missing from the sample. This made it difficult to do some of the analysis that was envisioned in the Terms of Reference (TOR) and even in the Inception Report.
 - The Desk Study included a small number of interviews at the global level, which have not yet been triangulated with sufficient country-level perspectives. Nevertheless, insights from these interviews are brought in to foster reflection with regard to strategic questions for GPE and hypotheses to be tested in the next phase of the evaluation.

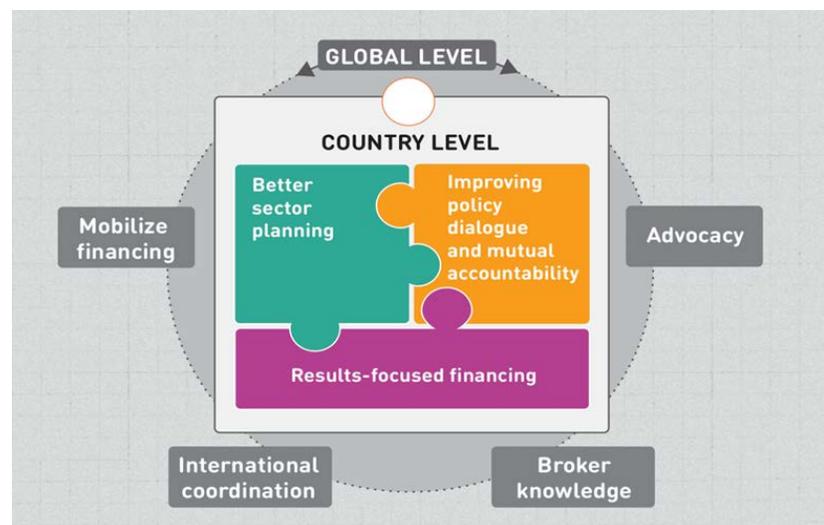
2 Context for GPE Support for Education Sector Planning

2.1 Background

19. Education Sector Plans are strategic policy instruments that articulate a country's long-term vision for their education system and specify the strategies to achieve it. At the World Education Forum in Dakar in 2000, the international community pledged that "no country with a credible plan to achieve the Education for All goals would be thwarted by a lack of resources." Since then, the Education for All Fast-Track Initiative (2002-2011) and subsequently the GPE (2012 to date) prioritized support to Developing Country Partners (DCPs) in the development of Education Sector Plans (ESP) and Transitional Education Sector Plans (TEPs), which are suitable for countries where the education sector operates in a particularly challenging and complex context (i.e., when a country is emerging from conflict).

20. Sector planning is one of three core levers of the GPE operational model. For this model to work optimally, the core levers of (i) national sector planning cycles, (ii) education sector coordinating mechanisms and (iii) financial support have to work together in ways appropriate and adapted to the respective context. The partnership seeks to impact country-level processes in all three of these areas through levers that influence development cooperation and financing, and through its financial support. Global level

Figure 2.1 GPE at country and global levels



efforts related to mobilizing financing, advocacy, international coordination and knowledge brokering aim to support and facilitate country-level processes.²² See Figure 2.1.²³

²² Sources: GPE (undated): GPE 2020. Power Point Presentation. GPE. *Country-level Process Guide. An overview*. GPE, 2017. The specific nature and envisaged effects of different types of GPE support to sector planning are discussed in section 1.2 (theory of change for sector planning).

²³ Adapted from: Global Partnership for Education. *GPE 2020. Improving learning and equity through stronger education systems*. Power Point Presentation. GPE 2017.

2.2 Strategic orientation for GPE's support to sector planning

21. Two key strategic shifts have been of direct relevance to GPE's support to sector planning. In 2014, the GPE Board – as part of introducing a **new funding model (NFM)** – decided to require countries to submit a good quality and credible ESP as part of their application for education sector program implementation grants (ESPIG) to ensure that education aid, including from the GPE, (i) is based on a solid, nationally-owned analysis of the challenges of delivering quality basic education to all boys and girls, including those from marginalized groups, and (ii) builds institutional capacity to deliver education services equitably and efficiently".²⁴ Previously, including under the FTI, ESPIG funding had been conditional on countries submitting an LEG-endorsed sector plan. The NFM shifted attention to the quality of the plan as measured against established quality requirements, the plan's underlying evidence-base through a thorough ESA, the existence of a multi-year implementation plan, and a requirement that the ESP is submitted at least three months before the ESPIG application to ensure that the ESP drives the ESPIG-financed program.²⁵ Submitting quality sector plans became the condition for countries to access the fixed portion of the Maximum Country Allocation (MCA). To access the variable, performance-based share of the MCA, countries must achieve agreed-upon results linked to their learning, equity, and efficiency strategies as outlined in their ESP/TEP.²⁶

22. In 2015, the GPE Board adopted a **new strategic plan (GPE 2020)**, followed by a results framework and a monitoring and evaluation strategy, which was completed in 2017. The results framework comprises 37 indicators, 12 of which have been identified as 'core indicators'. Of these, indicators 16a-d measure the proportion of endorsed ESPs or TEPs that meet GPE standards (see Box 1 above).²⁷ The GPE Secretariat has developed a methodology for measuring these indicators.

2.3 Modalities of GPE support to sector planning

23. As per its 2020 strategic plan (strategic objective 1a), GPE aims to support countries in developing "*evidence-based, nationally owned sector plans focused on equity, efficiency and learning.*" To achieve this objective, GPE offers multi-pronged types of support to sector planning processes that (currently) encompass three broad areas.²⁸ The three sections below describe these modalities as they are today. However, there have been changes introduced in each of these areas since 2012 to better reflect the strategic importance given to credible plans that meet the minimum standards, both in the new Funding Model and in GPE 2020. Those changes are reflected in Figure 2.2.

²⁴ Global Partnership for Education (2014). Report of the Country Grants and Performance Committee Part 1: Operational Framework for Requirements and Incentives in the Funding Model of Global Partnership for Education and Results (BOD/2014/05-DOC 03), Meeting of the Board of Directors, May 28, 2014.

²⁵ Stakeholders note that, in the past, the ESP sometimes arrived at the same time as the ESPIG application.

²⁶ GPE (2016): Monitoring Sheet for Global Partnership for Education (GPE) Indicators – Indicator 16.

²⁷ GPE (July 2017). GPE Monitoring and evaluation strategy.

²⁸ Sources: 1. Evaluation TOR; 2. GPE (2016). Roadmap for education sector plan development grants. Available at <https://www.globalpartnership.org/content/roadmap-education-sector-plan-development-grants>, 3. GPE (2017). How GPE works in partner countries. Available at <https://www.globalpartnership.org/content/how-gpe-works-partner-countries>.

Figure 2.2 Evolution of GPE's approach to supporting sector planning²⁹

Earlier process	Current process	Timeline of changes
<p>ESPDG (max \$250,000)</p>	<p>ESPDG (max \$500,000, half for ESA)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2014: Increased maximum amount; separate funding window for ESAs; • 2015: Streamlined application form (incl. roadmap); new ESPDG guidelines. • 2016: Stronger review of application, more comprehensive completion assessment.
<p>ESP development (2012 guidelines)</p>	<p>ESP development (2015 guidelines)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2014: ESA methodological guidelines (Volume I and II) • 2015: New ESP guidelines (no substantive changes from 2012 guidelines). • 2016: TEP preparation guidelines
<p>QA process</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. GPE Secretariat feedback (no formal approach) 2. Independent appraisal (recommended, but not required) 3. External quality review of appraisal and plan 4. LEG endorsement 	<p>QA process</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Formalized Secretariat feedback through Initial comments 2. Independent Appraisal: This part is now mandatory and must be conducted by a trained appraiser. This phase now also includes the Appraisal quality check and Appraisal memo by DCP govt. 5. ESP finalization and LEG endorsement 7. Final assessment (indicator 16) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2015: Strengthened Operational Model adopted by the Board; New ESP appraisal guidelines (previous ones from 2012); Strategic Plan (GPE 2020) and new monitoring and evaluation strategy (incl. Indicator 16); Updated GPE country-level process guide • 2016: Revised QA process introduced; TEP appraisal guidelines developed • 2017: Mandatory trainings for appraisers; new QA process fully implemented; New Funding and Financing Framework (FFF)
<p>ESPIG funding (2010 country-level process)</p> <p>Resources to implement ESP available, defined by MCA. Two key requirements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Country has developed a credible plan 2. LEG has endorsed the plan and commits to align their support to it 	<p>ESPIG funding</p> <p>Introduction of New Funding Model. Three key requirements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Country have developed a credible and evidence-based plan. The plan must include a multi-year costed implementation plan. 2. LEG has endorsed the plan and commits to align their support to it. DCP commits to increase domestic financing (towards overall 20%/ primary education 45% threshold). 3. Data requirements: (1) must have done ESA in last 3 years, must have or plan to develop (2) EMIS and (3) LAS. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2014: New Funding Model (NFM) with introduction of a fixed and variable (performance-based) portion of MCA: credible, endorsed ESPs now a condition for ESPIG fixed portion. Variable tranche (30%) is dependent on performance according to pre-determined indicators. • 2018: Study on Key Actor's Roles in GPE country-level operational model; GPE country-level evaluations year 1 synthesis report

1) Financing of sector planning processes and products

24. Originally referred to as the Education Plan Development Grants, the Education Sector Plan Development Grant (ESPDG), created in 2012, provides funding of up to US\$500,000 to support Developing

²⁹ The QA process includes both country-level and Secretariat-level processes. The latter has been underlined for clarity. Although the revised QA process was introduced in 2016, elements of the new QA process were introduced in stages and some may have pre-dated 2016.

Country Partners during sector planning processes.³⁰ This grant mechanism built on the experience of the Education Program Development Fund (EPDF), which had fulfilled a similar function under EFA-FTI prior to 2012.

25. GPE has allocated US\$23.5 million to 86 ESPDGs since 2012 in 61 countries. Eligible activities that can be funded through ESPDG are (i) the conduct of sector analyses and other targeted studies; (ii) support for the preparation (development or revision) and finalization of quality sector plans³¹ including through technical assistance, capacity development and policy dialogue and consultations; and (iii) independent plan appraisal.³² See Table 2.1.

26. The ESPDG application template was revised in FY2015 to help the Secretariat begin to support the ESP development process earlier in the national planning cycle. A series of changes were introduced that year as illustrated in Figure 2.2 above.

Table 2.1 *Characteristics of the ESPDG Mechanism*³³

CHARACTERISTIC	DESCRIPTION
Eligibility	All Lower and Lower-Middle Income Countries (as per GPE classification) Upper-Lower Middle-Income countries with Primary Completion Ratio below 85% All IDA-eligible Small Island and Small Land-locked Developing States Countries that are not already a member of GPE may also apply based on expressed interest in joining
Purpose	Support effective and inclusive process to develop an ESP or TEP that the LEG can endorse and that meets GPE funding requirements
Overall portfolio of active grants (FY 2018)	42 active grants to 41 DCPs for a total of nearly US\$14.3 million. Of these DCPs, 21 (or half) were countries affected by conflict or fragility.
Grant Agent (GA)	Develops ESPDG application in collaboration with government and LEG UNICEF or World Bank were the GA in 77% of the grants in FY 2018.

2) Quality Assurance for ESPs

27. GPE has applied a quality assurance (QA) process to ESPs since 2012, which has involved both country-level actors and the Secretariat. However, beginning in 2016 this process became more systematic and institutionalized (see Figure 2.2 above).

³⁰ The maximum funding allocation of US\$500,000 is of two separate components: US\$250,000 is intended to fund the Education Sector Analysis (ESA) and other analyses that will inform the development of the sector plan, while up to US\$250,000 is intended to fund planning activities as well as the independent appraisal of the plan.

³¹ Either Education Sector Plans (ESP) or Transitional Education Sector Plans (TEPs) in the context of conflict and/or fragility.

³² Additionally, a few ESPDGs were used to finance the preparation and organization of Joint Sector Reviews (JSRs), for instance in Djibouti.

³³ Based on GPE, Guidelines for Education Sector Plan Development Grants – ESPDG, December 2018 and GPE, Annual Portfolio Review, 2018.

- **Quality assurance mechanisms for sector plan development, which includes four phases:**³⁴ (i) sharing of tools, resources and guidelines during initial consultation; (ii) providing Secretariat initial comments on the draft ESP/TEP to complement the feedback from country-level actors on an early draft of the plan; (iii) the obligation (since 2016) to have the draft ESP/TEP appraised by an external, GPE/IIEP-trained reviewer based on GPE standards; followed by an Appraisal Check during which the Secretariat reviews the Appraisal Report for coverage and depth of analysis, and provides feedback to the LEG. The members of the LEG also provide feedback on the Appraisal Report. The DCP government then prepares an Appraisal Memo that identifies how appraisal findings and recommendations will be considered during the finalization phase of the ESP/TEP. In the final stage (iv), the Partnership, through the Coordinating Agency, provides support to the country during ESP/TEP finalization to ensure that the LEG endorses the sector plan.
- Special emphasis has been placed on strengthening the independent appraisal mechanism that was intended to inform ESP and GPE financing decisions.³⁵ Since 2016, the Secretariat has put in place efforts to ensure that all external appraisals have been developed using a consistent approach, to improve their quality and ensure fair/equitable assessments. Related efforts included the development of revised appraisal guidelines, the introduction of a mandatory training for independent experts selected by development partners to undertake an appraisal (if they have not already participated in a training), and conduct of global meetings to bring appraisers together to share learning and questions on the appraisal process.
- The QA for ESPs feeds in to the Quality Assurance Review (QAR) process that is used for making funding decisions on the Education Sector Program Implementation Grants (ESPIG).

3) Other modalities of support to sector planning

28. In addition to Secretariat advice typically provided at a distance (at any stage of plan preparation), other modalities include:

- **Direct technical assistance** to partner countries through the grant agent, the coordinating agency, and/or other development partners, including IIEP/Pôle de Dakar.
- **Guidance documents** developed jointly with UNESCO/IIEP on sector plan preparation that outline quality criteria for both the process of plan development and content characteristics of 'good' ESP/TEP, and Methodological Guidelines for conducting ESAs.
- **Knowledge exchange** and other activities supported through GPE's Global and Regional Activities program, such as the Gender Responsive Education Sector Planning guidelines and workshops.
- **Other initiatives** such as the Sector Monitoring Initiative, which was implemented in 2013 and 2014 and aimed to determine the extent to which ESPs included the operational information necessary for proper implementation monitoring, and whether critical links existed between the ESP's financing chapter, results framework and multiyear action plan.³⁶

³⁴ The evaluation analyzes these phases in greater detail.

³⁵ GPE, Independent Assessment of Education Sector Plans – Costed Options (BOD/2015/12 Doc09 Rev.1), December 9-10, 2015

³⁶ GPE, Annual Portfolio Review 2015, p. 60. This was noted in one interview and in the comments provided on the draft report.

3 Preliminary Findings: GPE Contributions to Sector Planning since 2012

3.1 To what extent have ESPDG and other types of GPE support for sector planning been relevant and appropriate?

3.1.1 Overview

29. This section addresses three evaluation questions focused on relevance of GPE's support to sector planning:³⁷ the relevance of the ESPDG and other planning support modalities to the Partnership (E.Q. 1.2 and 1.4) and the relevance of support to sector planning to DCP needs and priorities (E.Q. 1.1).³⁸

3.1.2 Understanding relevance in the context of this study

30. The dimension of 'relevance' can be explored from different angles. This Desk Study focuses on the *strategic* relevance to the Partnership of GPE support for sector planning (see Box 2), considering the strategies and expected results of GPE 2020. The analysis of strategic relevance is based primarily on review of the literature on sector planning and GPE's strategic documents, guidelines, and the country-level evidence emerging from the five CLEs completed in FY 2018.

31. The notion of *operational* relevance, which focuses on the needs and priorities of DCPs, will be further developed in the next phase of the evaluation, which adds a set of phone interviews with country-level actors and feedback from an additional five CLE missions to be conducted in FY 2019 and FY2020. This Desk Study offers some hypotheses/questions on operational relevance to be tested in the next phase of the evaluation.

Box 2: Strategic versus Operational Relevance

In the context of this Desk Study, we differentiate between two aspects of relevance:

Strategic relevance – refers to alignment with organizational priorities, in this case, alignment with the goals and objectives outlined in the GPE strategic plan.

Operational relevance – refers to alignment with the practical needs of intended beneficiaries, in this case DCP governments.

The (reconstructed) theory of change for GPE's support for sector planning is based on the implicit assumption that what is relevant to GPE goals is also relevant to DCP needs. This evaluation is aiming to test this assumption and this initial desk review is taking some first steps in this regard.

³⁷ Types of support include guidelines, training and knowledge sharing events, direct technical assistance through the Grant Agent (GA), Coordinating Agency (CA) or other Development Partners (DPs), funding, and quality assurance (QA) processes used up to plan appraisal.

³⁸ Relevance also included EQ 1.3, which focused on use of appropriate processes to review ESPDG application. This is addressed in Section 3.3,

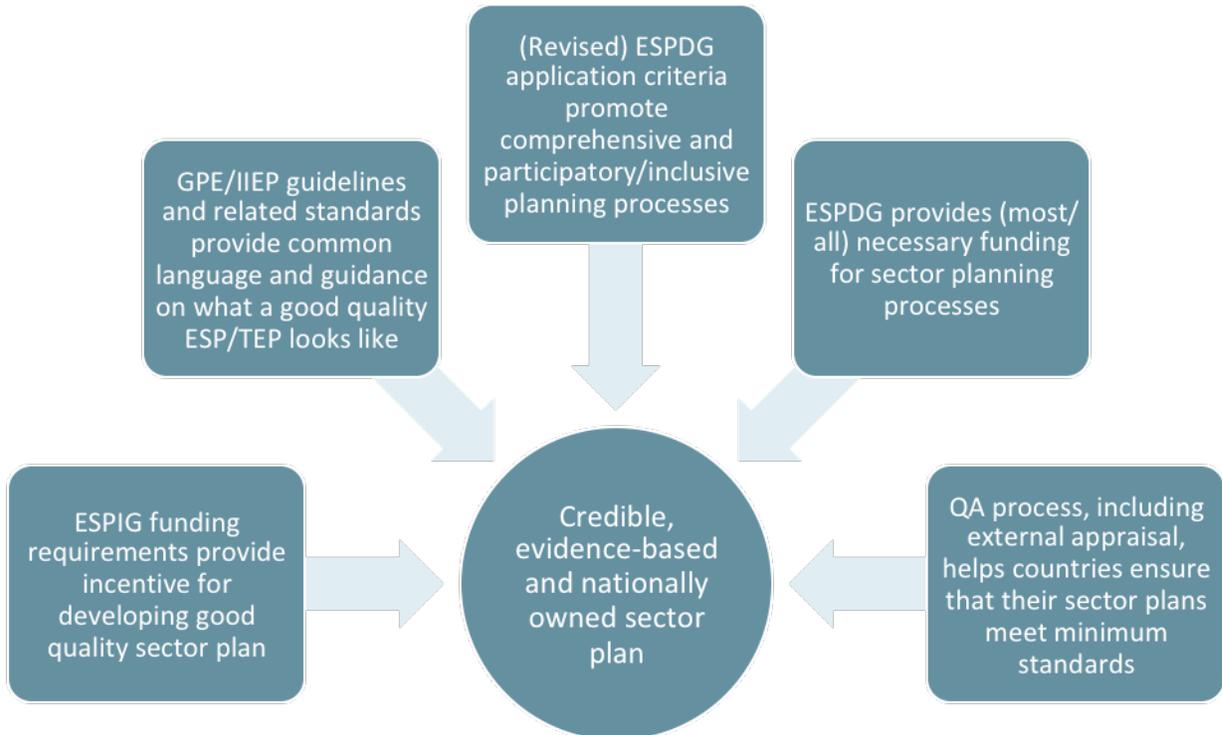
3.1.3 Relevance to the Partnership of the ESPDG mechanism and other planning support modalities (EQ 1.2 and 1.4)³⁹

Finding 1: The ESPDG and other modalities of GPE support for sector planning are of strategic relevance to GPE’s objective of strengthening education sector plans.

32. The GPE 2020 strategic plan includes a country-level objective of strengthening education sector planning and policy implementation, to be monitored through four indicators, including the core Indicator 16a “improved education sector plans meeting quality standards, including in countries affected by fragility and conflict.”⁴⁰

33. Figure 3.1 provides an overview of the key modalities used by GPE to support sector planning processes in partner countries (including the ESPDG). The combined strategic relevance of these modalities derives from the potential that, together, they are suited to remove different types of barriers that countries may face when developing sector plans.⁴¹

Figure 3.1 Relevance of GPE support to objective of countries developing quality ESP/TEP



34. The main functions of GPE planning support presented in Figure 3.1, i.e., the ways in which different modalities are likely to remove existing barriers to developing good sector plans, are discussed below.

³⁹ Evaluation Question 1.3 is addressed in Section 3.3 on GPE’s Management of support to sector planning.

⁴⁰ This formulation is from GPE Strategic Plan 2015-2020 “Results: Our Core Indicators”. Indicators 16 b, c and d complement Indicator 16a by focusing on the strategies used for addressing equity, learning and efficiency.

⁴¹ This assertion is based on evaluation team’s review of literature, GPE strategic documents, country-level documentation and insights emerging from the CLEs.

Establishing a common language around and clarity over what constitutes a good quality sector plan and providing guidance on how to develop such a plan

35. The emphasis on having sound sector plans is not new. The existence of a ‘credible’ plan was advanced as one indicator of commitment to Education for All, and a prerequisite for external funding. However, no explicit agreement was reached at the time on “who was to judge credibility, and on what criteria.”⁴² The EFA-FTI (2002-2012) went on to clarify some of these requirements through the FTI Indicative Framework and appraisal guidance and provided a specific funding mechanism, the Education Program Development Fund (EPDF), which was the predecessor of the ESPDG. As noted in the 2010 Mid-Term Evaluation of the EFA-FTI, these requirements changed over time and were applied inconsistently, thus having mixed effects on improving education sector plans and contributing to sustainable education sector planning capacity at country level.⁴³

36. Since 2012, GPE has provided greater clarity on the concept of ESP quality through the development of GPE/IIEP guidelines for sector plan development and the related GPE standards. The standards were intended to ensure fair and equitable treatment of grant applicants, act as levers for driving policy dialogue, and as a way for the Secretariat to monitor the quality of ESPs and TEPs, a cornerstone of the GPE country-level Theory of Change. Consulted stakeholders at the global level suggest that the Guidelines for Education Sector Plan Preparation are relevant in view of supporting countries to improve the robustness and credibility of their plans. The new guidelines are noted for providing a clear orientation with regard to good practice in ESP/TEP development and creating common ground for all parties, including Appraisers, DPs, and DCP planning teams about what makes a credible plan.

Providing financial incentives to DCPs to develop good sector plans

37. Prior to 2012, one key incentive for developing a credible sector plan was the possibility to access program funding from the EFA-FTI Catalytic Fund, which influenced the direction of sector planning during the FTI period.⁴⁴ Today, this incentive still plays a role in country-level actors’ decisions to develop a sector plan that meets the GPE standards (encompassing planning processes and products). The CLE Synthesis Report for FY 2018 noted that the prospect of accessing ESPIG funding based on the condition of submitting a quality ESP was among the incentives for developing a sector plan in at least ten (out of 15) countries.⁴⁵ ESPIG funding is an incentive for sector plan development also in FCAC contexts, such as in South Sudan, as is indicated in a UNESCO case study (2016) and the draft CLE for South Sudan.

⁴² Lewin, Keith M, “Looking back to see the future: Four decades of development in educational planning,” p. 253 in IIEP, Mark Bray and N. Varghese, eds, Directions in educational planning: International Experiences and Perspectives, 2011.

⁴³ During the FTI period, the assessment and endorsement process was conducted in-country, led by local donor agency representatives, with the rationale that they are best placed to evaluate the feasibility and credibility of sector plans. The FTI provided both Appraisal Guidelines and the Indicative Framework to assist with the country-level assessments of the primary education component of the sector plan. Riddell, Abby, “Educational Planning and the EFA Fast Track Initiative,” p. 109-126, in UNESCO/IIEP, Mark Bray and N. Varghese, eds, Directions in educational planning: International experiences and perspectives, 2011.

⁴⁴ The link between external funding and education sector planning is discussed in UNESCO/IIEP, Mark Bray and N.V. Varghese, eds, Directions in educational planning: International experiences and perspectives, 2011, p. 26 and 27 and in the chapter by A. Riddell, “Educational Planning and the EFA Fast Track Initiative,” p. 109-126.

⁴⁵ Summative CLEs: Burkina Faso, Sierra Leone, Cote d’Ivoire, Liberia, The Gambia, Pakistan (Sindh and Balochistan). Prospective CLEs: Likely in DRC, Kenya, Malawi and Zimbabwe.

38. The continued importance of funding that is linked to quality sector planning is also validated by the November 2018 evaluation of IIEP – Pôle de Dakar, which notes that ESA reports supported by the Pôle (known as RESEN – *Rapport d'état du système éducatif national*) tend to be seen, first and foremost, as documents that allow countries to be eligible for international finance, such as from GPE.⁴⁶

39. CLEs completed to date have not yet elicited information on whether and how the introduction of the fixed and variable tranches under GPE's New Funding Model (NFM) established in 2014 may have influenced the potency or functioning of the incentive provided by the variable tranche.⁴⁷ ESPIG variable tranche requirements offer the potential to strengthen sector approaches, including the sector plan, given that the indicators selected "must be core indicators of the ESP, reflecting progress on key strategies and policies designed to drive overall progress in the sector and incentivize the unlocking of key sector bottlenecks."⁴⁸ This will be further explored in CLEs to be completed in FY 2019 and 2020, including the question on the extent to which the NFM provides additional motivation for actors to base sector planning on a comprehensive ESA.

Providing financial assistance for sector plan development processes

40. The ESPDG mechanism introduced in 2012 replaced the FTI's Education Program Development Fund (EPDF) – a grant funding mechanism that supported education sector planning. The EPDF was noted for having several successes, but these tended to focus on products (quality sector plans, country status reports, simulations), while not systematically paying attention to the processes used to develop these and how they would contribute to sustainable planning capacities in country, including whether these were country-driven and inclusive.⁴⁹

41. As further noted in Finding 7, evidence from the CLEs considered in this review illustrates the relevance (and effectiveness) of the 2014 ESPDG and the 2015 sector plan preparation guidelines with regard to advocating for and demanding (more) participatory and inclusive processes to support ESP development.⁵⁰ A Secretariat review of budgets for the ESPDGs considered in the Desk Study Sample, suggest that almost all of the ESPDG grants (18 out of 22) used funds for policy dialogue.⁵¹ In two countries (Chad and Comoros), most ESPDG funds were allocated in this area.

42. Evidence from the Desk Study does not allow us to confirm, at this stage, whether DCPs are carrying out activities (such as ESA, simulations, consultative processes) that they otherwise might not do.

⁴⁶ ICON INSTITUTE Consulting Group, Évaluation de l'IIEP-Pôle de Dakar, 12 November 2018, p. 32 and 48.

⁴⁷ Universalialia, R4D, ITAD, GPE Country Level Evaluations – Synthesis Report Financial Year 2018, Final Report. The report notes that this is the case in countries that are part of this evaluation: Burkina Faso, Sierra Leone, Cote d'Ivoire, Liberia, The Gambia, DRC. In five of these six countries, ESPs considered by the CLEs were completed prior to new funding model (established in 2015), which specifies the need for credible ESPs in order to access the 70% fixed portion of the MCA, yet the incentive of funding is still reported.

⁴⁸ GPE, Guidelines for ESPIG, August 2017, 12. Similar guidance provided in GPE Guidelines for ESPDG, December 2018, 9.

⁴⁹ This critique was raised in the mid-term evaluation of the EFA-FTI. Cambridge Education, Mokoro, Oxford Policy Management, *Mid-Term Evaluation of the EFA Fast-Track Initiative*, p. 57-59

⁵⁰ The 2015 Guidelines for Education Sector Plan states in chapter 1 on the principles for effective plan preparation that "It is important that the process be fully participatory and include a range of stakeholders" (p. 11). Similarly, the ESPDG guidelines (2018) state in the section on the grant application process that the plan development process "should be government-led and participatory in a meaningful way" (p. 9).

⁵¹ The types of activities funded consist of national policy workshops and stakeholder meetings.

43. The relevance of ESPDG funding for sector planning processes is emphasized by the observation that in most of the countries reviewed through CLEs in FY2018, other comparable sources of dedicated funding for sector plan development have either not been available or have not been used.⁵² In a majority of DCPs in this study (11 out of 16), an average of 70 percent of the total budget for developing the ESP came from an ESPDG grant. While this emphasizes the high relevance of the funding mechanism for recipient countries, it also indicates a potential challenge for GPE: in theory, the ESPDG is intended to be *additional* and complement other funding sources,⁵³ rather than being the main source.

Supporting countries in ensuring that their final plans meet the standards for a ‘good’ sector plan

44. The enhanced QA process for ESPs is relevant to the GPE 2020 strategy in that it provides a structured and consistent way of supporting DCPs in meeting the GPE strategic objective of countries developing good quality sector plans. The QA process is discussed in Section 2.3.

3.1.4 Alignment of ESPDG and other support modalities with DCP planning needs and priorities (EQ 1.1 and 1.4)

Finding 2: Currently available data deriving from CLEs conducted in FY 2018 raise questions about the operational relevance (i.e., alignment with the practical needs of intended beneficiaries, in this case DCP governments) of the ESPDG and other modalities of GPE support for sector planning. These questions will be further explored in Phase 2 of this evaluation as well as in upcoming CLEs.

45. As discussed in Section 3.1.2, the ESPDG and other modalities of GPE support for sector planning are relevant to DCP planning needs in that they are suited to removing barriers that may keep the country from developing a sector plan that meets GPE standards and that may, in turn, limit its ability to access implementation funding from GPE. The ESPDG in particular provides financial resources for sector planning that, in many contexts, would not be otherwise available.

46. During the review period 2012-2018, GPE has undertaken several steps to increase the relevance of its standards and guidelines in different contexts, specifically by developing standards and related guidelines for preparation and appraisal of Transitional Education Sector Plans (TEP). In doing so, GPE responded to the new global education agenda 2030 and filled a previously noted gap related to meeting the needs of countries in challenging and unstable situations, such as countries emerging from conflict.⁵⁴ However, as noted in Finding 4, many countries do not choose to develop TEPs. The reasons for this and related operational relevance of the noted changes to DCPs need to be further explored.

47. A critical issue that has emerged from CLEs conducted in FY 2018 is whether and to what extent developing ‘good’ sector plans (that meet minimum GPE standards) meets the practical needs of (all/most) developing countries. This primarily derives from the observation that, as noted in five of seven summative

⁵² Other development partners such as UNICEF, World Bank, and UNESCO-IIEP do, occasionally, fund sector planning or ESAs. In South Sudan, for example, the first ESP 2012-2017 received technical support from UNESCO-IIEP, paid for by UNICEF’s Juba office.

⁵³ GPE (2018): Guidelines for Education Sector Development Grants – ESPDG, page 3.

⁵⁴ Under FTI, much shorter and less detailed guidance was provided on “How to Develop an Interim Education Plan” (2010).

CLEs conducted to date, sector plan quality does not guarantee that stakeholders will use the sector plan as a common and evolving reference document.⁵⁵ This occurs despite the fact that GPE standards consider plan “achievability” and thus reflect on the potential for implementation. (This is further discussed in Section 3. 2. 2.)

48. If countries develop but do not use sector plans, then another question arises, namely: to what extent do DCP governments (and other in-country stakeholders) truly feel ownership of the plan as opposed to seeing it simply as a means to access GPE funding.⁵⁸ See Box 3.

49. Despite, or possibly because of, the centrality of ‘country ownership’ within the GPE model, neither GPE’s 2020 Strategy nor the related corporate Results Framework explicitly define or try to measure the notion of ‘ownership’, thereby implying that it is a clear and unambiguous concept. Preliminary findings emerging from the CLEs and this Desk Study indicate, however, that this is not the case.

Box 3: National Ownership

The notion of national ownership for education sector development is at the core of GPE’s identity. “GPE’s core belief is that development can only be effective and sustainable if it is owned by national governments, and if the support and financing provided by development partners is aligned and harmonized with governments’ priorities.”⁵⁶

For GPE, country ownership entails DCP governments taking the lead in developing, implementing and monitoring sector plans, and providing adequate financing for their implementation.⁵⁷

However, the notion of ownership for a sector plan not only implies that the structure and content of the respective plan reflect government views on sector priorities, but also suggests that key government stakeholders consider the plan a useful and relevant tool to guide upcoming implementation, sector dialogue and monitoring work.

3.1.5 Key questions for next phase of the evaluation

50. The analysis of relevance of ESPDG and other modalities of support to sector planning identifies several areas for further inquiry in the next phase of this evaluation in order to identify:

⁵⁵ In the recent evaluation of Pôle de Dakar (2018), a similar question was raised regarding the use of education sector analyses: ESAs helped to make the plans credible, but were not seen as a tool that aids decision making or supports the implementation of sector policies. This is partly due to the technical nature of the ESA reports, although efforts are being made to better communicate results to help make the link to policy. ICON Institute Consulting Group, Évaluation de l’IPE Pôle de Dakar, 12 November 2018.

⁵⁶ Source: GPE website - <https://www.globalpartnership.org/focus-areas/development-effectiveness>. Retrieved February 28, 2019. The site further notes that GPE has both adopted effectiveness principles in its own charter, and has actively participated in, or contributed to, the various high-level meetings of the international community on this topic (in Paris, Accra and Busan).

⁵⁷ M. Baldeh and C. Manion, “Education for All and the Global-Local Interface: A case study of The Gambia,” p. 59 – 81, in Carolyn A. Brown, Ed, Globalization, International Education Policy and Local Policy Formation: Voices from the Developing World, Springer, 2015.

⁵⁸ Perceiving the sector plan as a means to access GPE funding does not preclude true government commitment to structured and systematic sector planning. The question is, however, whether governments would conduct as extensive, structured and detailed planning exercises were it not for GPE funding criteria.

- What does it look like if a country is “taking the lead” for sector planning?
- Are there degrees of national ownership and, if so, what do they look like?
- What factors enhance or limit the likelihood of DCP governments taking or perceiving themselves as taking the lead for sector planning?
- To what extent is there evidence of a link between high degrees of country ownership for the sector plan and subsequent plan implementation?
- What factors enhance or limit the likelihood of development partners in-country actively supporting the government in this role?
- To what extent has GPE support to sector planning remained relevant given changes in country needs and priorities?
- To what extent are modifications in approaches to sector planning for FCAC (such as the TEP) viewed as relevant to DCP needs and priorities?
- Is ESPDG funding fulfilling the intention of providing “additional” funds for the financing of sector planning? How do the DCPs decide what to fund with the ESPDG?

3.2 To what extent has GPE support led to the improved quality of sector plans and sector planning?

3.2.1 Overview

51. This section addresses the effectiveness of GPE’s support to sector planning. It encompasses the following areas:

- Trends in the improvements in ESP/TEP quality between 2012-2018, based on GPE standards and the Secretariat’s ratings for Indicator 16; this includes discussion of how ESPs/TEPs performed on individual standards and the nature of progress in Fragile and Conflict-Affected Countries
- ESPDG contribution to the development/revision of credible sector plans, which responds to Evaluation Question (EQ 2.1)
- Contribution of the revised QA process to the development of credible sector plans (EQ 2.3)
- Contribution of other GPE sector planning modalities to the development of credible sector plans (EQ 2.2)
- GPE’s support to capacity development for sector planning (EQ 2.4 and 2.5).

3.2.2 Improvement in ESP/TEP quality over 2012-2018 (EQ 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3)

52. This section describes the overall changes in quality of ESPs/TEPs, which is necessary for determining likely contributions of the ESPDG, the QA process and other GPE modalities.

Box 4: Indicator 16 and ESP standards

Standard 1 - Overall vision: Is the plan guided by an overall vision?

Standard 2 - Strategic: Does the plan address the three dimensions of Equity, Learning and Efficiency and are programs and activities aligned with the strategy?

Standard 3 – Holistic: Does the plan cover all education sub-sectors?

Standard 4 – Evidence-based: Is the plan based on and use the results of a recent sector analysis?

Standard 5 – Achievable: Is the plan implementable, financially sustainable, feasible and monitorable?

Standard 6 – Sensitive to context: Does the plan identify risks to implementation and mitigation strategies?

Standard 7 – Attentive to disparities: Does the plan address gender, geographic disparities and learners with disabilities?

(See Box 6 for TEP standards)

Finding 3: ESP/TEP quality, as measured by GPE standards, improved during the review period (2012-2018), with more plans considered ‘achievable’ and ‘strategic’.

53. The GPE Secretariat ratings for Indicator 16 are based on seven standards for ESPs and five standards for TEPs as per GPE/IIEP’s Education Sector Plan Preparation Guidelines, as shown in Boxes 4 and 6.

54. In the Desk Study Sample of 16 countries, Indicator 16a results show that overall quality of ESPs/TEPs improved over time (i.e., comparing pre- and post-2016) as shown in Figure 3.2, and between first and second plans, as shown in Figure 3.3.⁵⁹

⁵⁹ Of the 16 countries in the sample, almost all had 2 ESPs or TEPs that were in place during the review period (2012-2018), except for Tajikistan who only had one ESP during the same period. However, Indicator 16 data was not available for both plans for four countries (Côte d’Ivoire, Lesotho, Liberia, and Guinea).

Figure 3.2 Number of ESPs/TEPs in Desk Study Sample (N=27) that meet or do not meet minimum number of standards before and after 2016⁶⁰

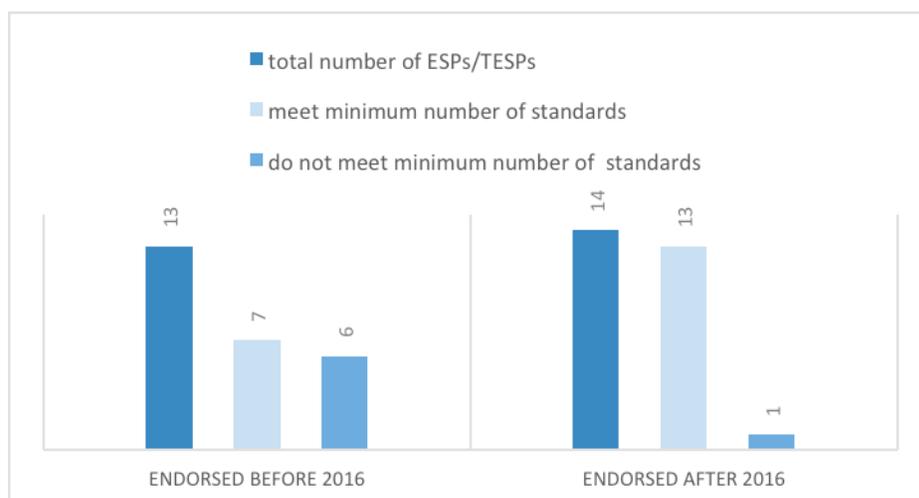
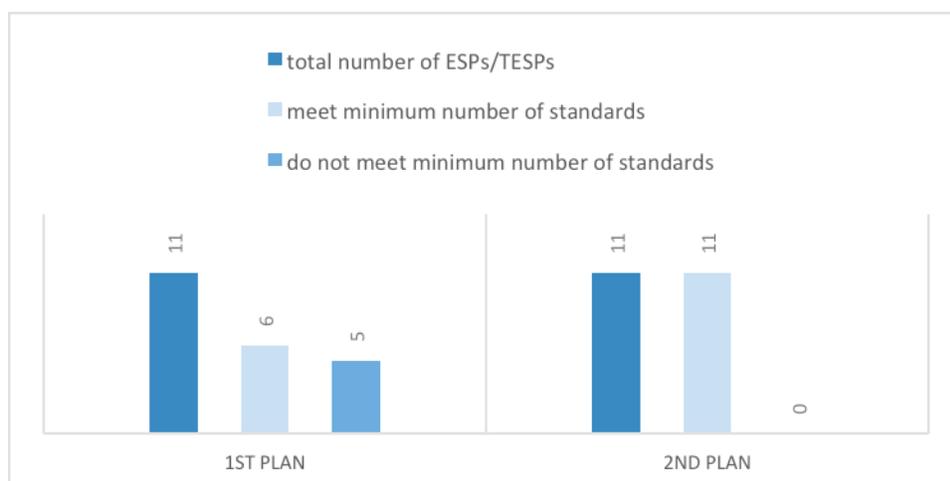


Figure 3.3 Comparison between 1st and 2nd plans (N=22) that meet or do not meet the minimum number of standards⁶¹



55. The number of standards being met by ESPs also improved over time, as shown in Figure 3.4. Of the 20 ESPs in our sample that were rated by the GPE Secretariat, most plans that were endorsed before 2016 met less than five standards, whereas all plans endorsed after 2016 met at least six of the seven standards.

56. For indicators 16b-d, most countries in our sample met the required 'four out of five' criteria⁶² (see Appendix VIII). Out of 16 ESPs/TEPs, 13 met at least 4/5 criteria for Indicators 16b, and 14 met at least 4/5

⁶⁰ 2016 was chosen as a cut-off year based on when most new GPE processes and methodologies were implemented. Indicator 16 data was not available for Côte d'Ivoire (2010-2013 ESP), Lesotho (2005-2015 ESP), Liberia (2010-2020 ESP), and Guinea (2008-2015 ESP).

⁶¹ Looking at the 11 countries in our sample that had two plans with Indicator 16 data available: Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Chad, Comoros, Congo DRC, Eritrea, Gambia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, South Sudan, and Uzbekistan.

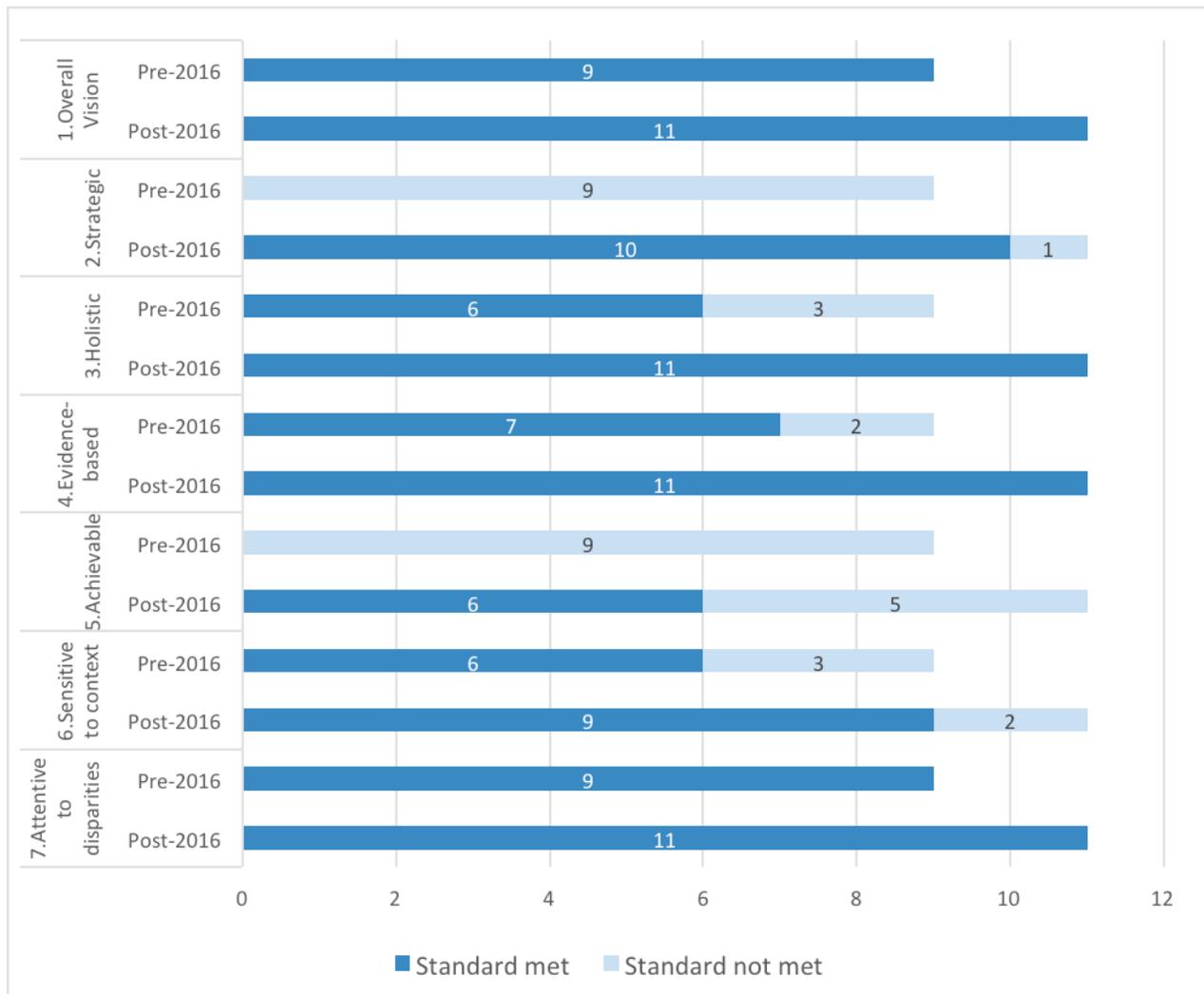
⁶² Indicator 16b-d data was available for 16 out of 27 ESPs/TEPs in our sample

criteria for Indicator 16c and 16d.⁶³ More discussion on Indicators 16b-d is provided later in this section (see Focus on Standards 2 and 5).

ESP performance on individual standards

57. When looking at individual standards (Figure 3.4), all ESPs met Standard 1 (Overall Vision) and Standard 7 (Attentive to Disparities) both before and after 2016. Improvements can be seen for the remaining standards, with the greatest improvements in Standard 2 (Strategic) and Standard 5 (Achievable). These are discussed in more detail below the figure.

Figure 3.4 Number of ESPs (N=20) meeting each Indicator 16 standard before and after 2016⁶⁴



⁶³ Considering that indicators 16b-d were only developed in 2014-2015, there are only two countries in the sample with pre-2016 data available for these indicators. It was therefore not possible to do a complete pre/post analysis.

⁶⁴ TEPs were not included in the graph as the methodology and the number of standards changed (from seven standards to five), making pre/post 2016 comparison not possible.

- Standard 1 (Overall Vision) assesses the overall vision of the plan, i.e. whether plans have a clear mission statement and overall direction, as well as the principles and values that guide the document. This was achieved by all 20 ESPs in the Desk Study Sample. In addition, three of the seven TEPs in the sample also met this standard (not shown in graph).⁶⁵
- Standard 3 (Holistic) assesses plan coverage of all education sub-sectors from pre-primary to post-secondary, including adult literacy and technical and vocational training (TVET). Post-2016 ESPs showed improvements compared to earlier plans in covering all education sub-sectors in its analysis, strategies and its action plan, whereas previous ESPs had the tendency to focus largely on basic education.
- Standard 4 (Evidence-based) assesses whether plans were based on an education sector analysis. ESPs generally achieved high ratings across both periods: seven out of nine ESPs endorsed before 2016 and all ESPs endorsed after 2016 met this standard. This standard was also met by five TEPs out of seven TEPs in our sample (four of which were endorsed after 2016) (not shown in graph). More discussion on this standard is provided in the ESA section (Finding 6).
- Standard 6 (Sensitive to Context) assesses whether a plan addresses vulnerabilities and risks to implementation. Of the 20 ESPs in our sample, 15 met this standard (six before and nine after 2016). As for TEPs, only one pre-2016 TEP met this standard, compared to all three post-2016 TEPs. Sierra Leone provides a good example of improvement in this standard. The 2014-2018 ESP did not meet this standard as it did not provide a comprehensive risk analysis, despite the country being considered fragile. In contrast, its subsequent plan for 2018-2020, which was developed following the Ebola crisis, presented risks for every intervention as well as possible mitigation strategies. The plan also included a section dedicated to Emergency Preparedness and Response to better deal with risks and vulnerabilities.
- Standard 7 (Attentive to Disparities) assesses whether plans address three dimensions of disparities: gender, geographic disparities and disability. As plans only need to address one of the three dimensions to meet the overall standard, this standard was successfully met by all 20 ESPs and all seven TEPs in our sample. However, the evaluation team noted that although countries met this standard, disparities were not always adequately addressed in all plans (see example in Box 5).

Box 5: Attention to Disparities

In the Gambia, while both reviewed ESPs were rated by the Secretariat as having met this standard, they had weaknesses in addressing learners with disabilities.

While the second ESP was rated to have met the 'disability' sub-criterion, neither ESP provided any data on the number of actual or estimated children with physical or mental disabilities or on the numbers of specialized schools, trained teachers or teaching and learning materials. Both plans outlined the same narrow strategy, i.e., the intent to carry out a nation-wide survey to determine the number of children with disabilities.

The reason for this discrepancy is that GPE standards aim to establish if plans meet a minimum requirement, in this case whether they include a strategy for addressing relevant disparities. The standards do not intend, however, to evaluate the *quality* of that strategy.

⁶⁵ Based on the old methodology, TEPs were rated using the same seven standards as ESPs. Of the seven TEPs in our sample, three used the old methodology.

Focus on Standards 2 and 5 – ‘Strategic’ and ‘Achievable’

58. When comparing pre-2016 to post-2016, ESPs showed the greatest improvement in meeting Standards 2 and 5. These two standards are the most difficult to meet, partially because they both require meeting several sub-criteria. CLEs and the Year 1 synthesis report highlighted the importance of Standard 5 (achievable) as potentially the most important of all standards in relation to subsequent use of the sector plan.

Standard 2 (Strategic)

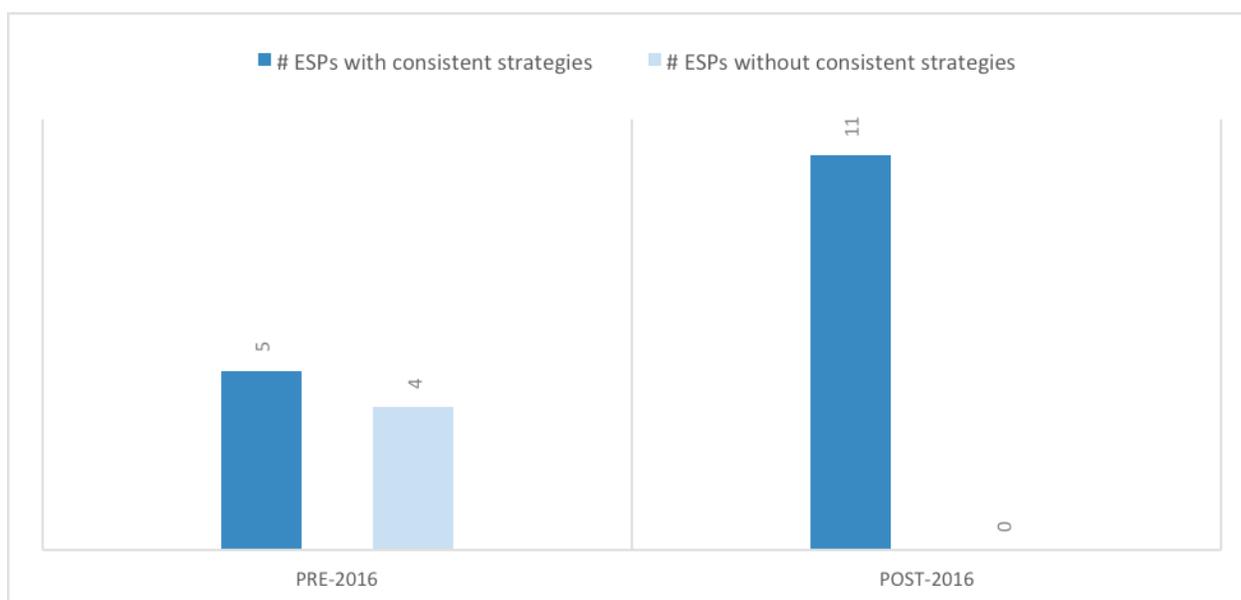
59. Standard 2 assesses how well plans address three critical issues in education: Learning, Equity and Efficiency. These are tied to Indicators 16b (Teaching and Learning Strategies), 16c (Strategies for Marginalized Groups) and 16d (Strategies for Efficiency). Most of the pre-2016 ESPs (7 out of 9) were rated as not adequately addressing all three issues. For the remaining two pre-2016 ESPs in our sample (Eritrea 2013-2017 and Sierra Leone 2014-2018), the programs and activities in the action plans were not adequately aligned with the strategies. As a result, none of the pre-2016 ESPs met the standard.

60. For post-2016 ESPs, 10 out of 11 ESPs in our sample showed great improvement in meeting Standard 2, and only one ESP (Gambia 2016-2030) did not meet the standard.

61. Although there was no significant difference between the three dimensions, Equity was met by slightly more ESPs (17 out of 20), compared to 14 and 15 out of 20 for the other two dimensions.

62. At the sub-criterion level, the assessment looked at whether ESPs presented programs and activities in their action plans that were consistent with their proposed strategies for each of the three dimensions. As shown in Figure 3.5, there was significant improvement between the pre- and post-2016 ESPs, with only one post-2016 plan (Congo DR 2016-2025) not achieving this sub-criterion.

Figure 3.5 *Number of ESPs (N=20) that met or did not meet Standard 2 sub-criterion on programs and activities being consistent with strategies*

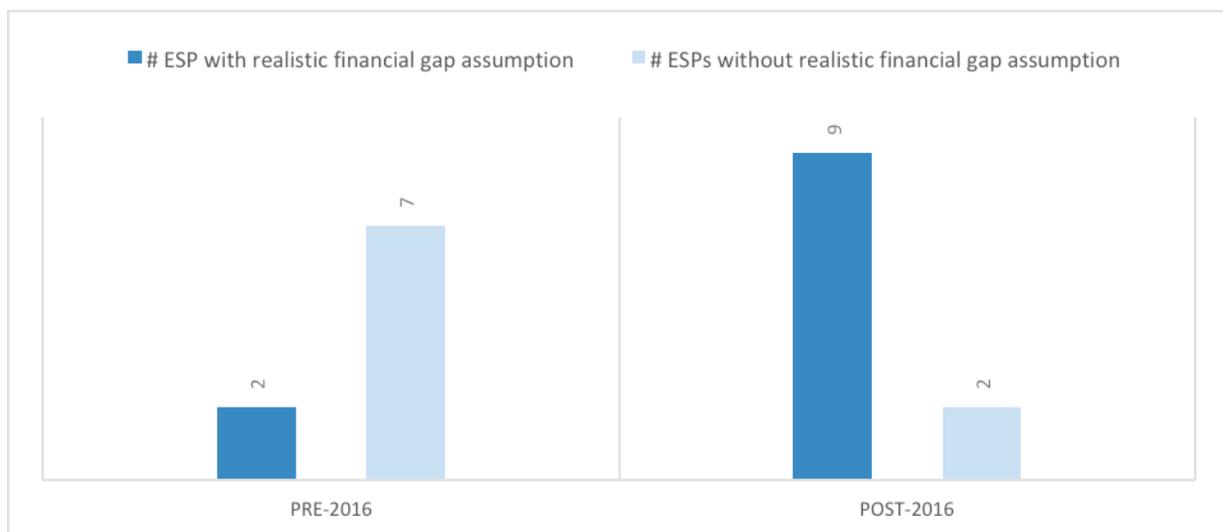


63. In comments provided by GPE Secretariat reviewers on Indicators 16b-d, the main criticism was plans not addressing or clearly identifying the underlying causes of Equity/Learning/Efficiency, followed by plans not providing clear outcomes, outputs or targets for the proposed activities.

Standard 5 (Achievable)

64. The standard for ‘achievable’ (Standard 5) is still the weakest in this set of ESPs but also shows significant improvement when comparing pre- and post-2016 ESPs. While none of the pre-2016 ESPs met the standard, six of the eleven post-2016 ESPs did. The standard requires plans to be implementable, financially sustainable, feasible and monitorable. Financial sustainability raises the biggest concern, particularly with regard to large (anticipated) funding gaps in the ESPs for which strategies are either largely absent or inadequate. Large funding gaps⁶⁶ also influence the extent to which more ambitious education targets appear feasible. Not surprisingly, the sub-criterion with the lowest overall success rate relates to the estimation of the financial gap with only eleven (out of 20) plans rated as having realistic funding gaps. For pre-2016 ESPs, only Eritrea (2013-2017) and the Gambia (2014-2022) met this sub-criterion whereas for post-2016 ESPs, all ESPs except for two (Côte d’Ivoire 2016-2025 and Liberia 2017-2021) met the sub-criterion.⁶⁷

Figure 3.6 Number of ESPs (N=20) that met or did not meet Standard 5 sub-criterion on realistic financial gap assumption



⁶⁶ Examples of countries with large funding gaps include Eritrea (2018-2022 ESP) at 50 percent, Lesotho (2016-2025 ESP) at 30-40 percent, and the Gambia (2014-2022 ESP) with a 25 percent gap. Data was not available for all countries nor was it presented in a consistent way (some are presented as figures and others as percentages) to be able to provide country comparisons.

⁶⁷ The way this sub-criterion is assessed was changed in 2016. Previously, reviewers looked at country projections and assessed whether they were reasonable. In 2016, the assessment was formalized and government projections are now compared to IMF projections. Plans meet the criterion if their projections are close enough (less than 2% difference) to the IMF projections.

Progress noted in Fragile and Conflict-Affected Countries (FCAC)⁶⁸

Finding 4: The quality of ESPs/TEPs in FCACs has also improved over time; however, few FCACs choose to develop TEPs.

65. As part of its 2020 Strategy, GPE committed to providing additional support to fragile and conflict-affected countries (FCACs), including increasing funding allocations to these countries and increasing the number of FCACs in the partnership. In parallel, GPE created guidelines for developing Transitional Education Sector Plans (TEPs) that provide more flexibility and a more targeted approach for countries emerging from a crisis. TEPs allow governments and partners to address immediate needs, ensure continuous support to education in the short and medium term, while working towards meeting longer-term education goals.⁶⁹ Given the objectives and short-term nature of TEPs, GPE proposes fewer standards for TEPs (five instead of seven, see Box 6), and only requires three of the five to be met to be considered as meeting standards.

Box 6: TEP guidelines and standards (2016)

The five standards for TEPs are:

- 1- Evidence-based
- 2- Sensitive to context and pays attention to disparities
- 3- Strategic
- 4- Targeted
- 5- Operational

Of these, only Standard 4 “Targeted” is unique to TEPs, which require plans to identify critical needs in education and clearly differentiate between short, medium and long-term priorities. In addition, TEPs should include a plan for developing a more comprehensive ESP following the transition period.

Standard 5 “Operational” is the equivalent of “Achievable” for ESPs. However, it contains fewer sub-indicators (5 instead of 9) requiring plans to have an action plan, that they be carefully costed, and have outcomes, indicators, and M&E mechanisms to be monitorable.

66. Of the 16 countries in our sample, 11 are classified by GPE as FCAC.⁷⁰ The trends for FCACs are similar to non-FCACs, in that all ESPs/TEPs post-2016 met the minimum number of standards⁷¹ (Figure 3.7). When looking at individual standards, most of the post-2016 ESPs that did not meet Standards 2 or 5 (Strategic and Achievable) were from FCAC DCPs.⁷²

⁶⁸ <https://www.globalpartnership.org/content/list-gpe-partner-countries-affected-fragility-and-conflict>

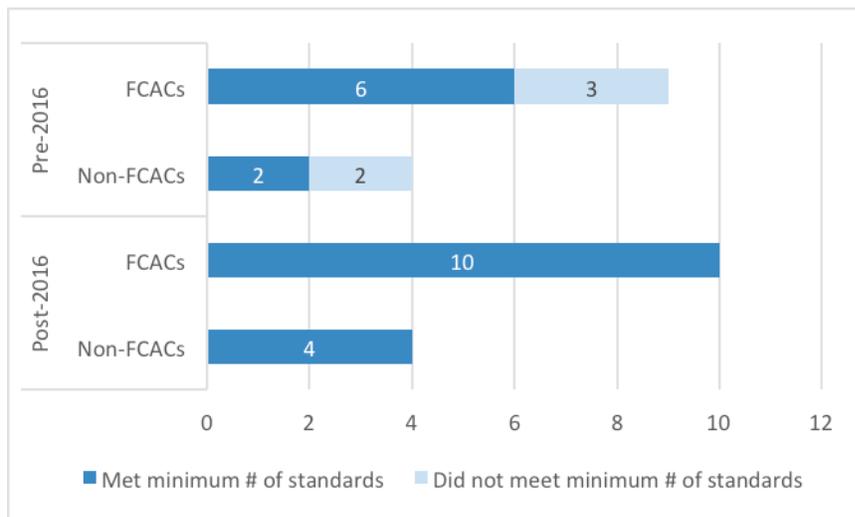
⁶⁹ Global Partnership for Education. “GPE’s Work in Conflict-Affected and Fragile Countries”, Policy Brief, April 2016, <http://www.educationcannotwait.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/GPEs-Work-in-Conflict-affected-and-Fragile-Countries-PDF-1MB.pdf>

⁷⁰ FCACs in Desk Study sample are: Chad, Comoros, Congo DRC, Côte d’Ivoire, Eritrea, Gambia, Liberia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone and South Sudan.

⁷¹ Either 5 out of 7 standards for ESPs (and older TEPs) or 3 out of 5 standards for recent TEPs

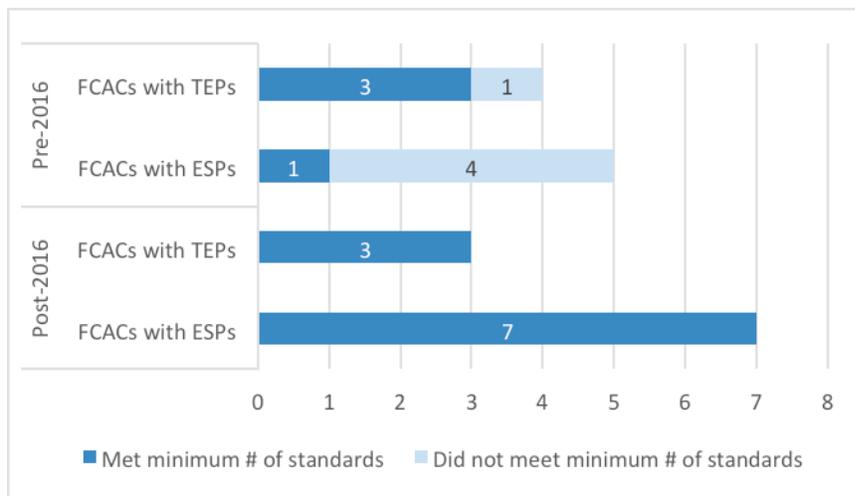
⁷² This may or may not be significant as there were so few non-FCACs in our sample to make a true comparison between the two groups.

Figure 3.7 Comparison of ESPs/TEPs from FCACs and non-FCACs in Desk Study Sample (N=27) pre- and post-2016 that met or did not meet minimum number of standards



67. Prior to 2016, most FCACs that developed ESPs were not able to meet the minimum number of standards. However, for plans endorsed after 2016, all were able to meet the minimum standards, with four plans meeting six out of seven standards⁷³ and two meeting all seven standards.⁷⁴ Eritrea (2018-2022) met five out of seven standards.

Figure 3.8 Comparison of FCACs that developed ESPs vs TEPs in Desk Study sample (N=19)⁷⁵ pre- and post-2016 that met or did not meet minimum number of standards



⁷³ Congo DRC, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, and Liberia

⁷⁴ Rwanda and Sierra Leone

⁷⁵ As this is based on GPE ratings, Sierra Leone's 2018-2020 plan is counted as an ESP and South Sudan's 2017-2021 plan is counted as a TEP.

68. Of the 11 FCACs in our sample, only four chose to develop TEPs as opposed to ESPs during the review period (2012-2018) and only seven TEPs are present in our Desk Study Sample (see Appendix IX).⁷⁶

69. It is unclear why so few fragile countries develop TEPs. We hypothesize that countries do not want to be seen as fragile or be classified as such for political reasons. This was the case for South Sudan's 2017-2021 ESP, for instance, where despite insistence by partners and the GPE Secretariat, the Ministry of Education was opposed to developing a TEP. The appraisal report states that "the Government wanted to send a strong and optimistic message to the international community about their commitment to build a new South Sudan in peace and stability."⁷⁷ However, the South Sudan plan does incorporate a Transitional Sector Plan for 2017-2018 embedded within the full ESP. The plan also makes frequent reference to limitations imposed by the country's reality that would limit the success of the strategies and activities proposed for 2019-2021. In other cases, like the Gambia, the reasons driving the country's choice to develop an ESP instead of a TEP are not clear. It may also be that the TEP concept and preparation guidelines are less well known. This will be further explored in the subsequent phase.

3.2.3 ESPDG contribution to the development of robust and credible sector plans (EQ 2.1)

Finding 5: ESPDG funding makes a key contribution to robust and credible ESPs. However, it is still too early to assess the effects on sector plan quality of changes to ESPDG processes introduced in 2015, such as a new funding window for ESAs and the requirement to develop a detailed roadmap for the sector planning process.

ESPDG Funding

70. Of the 27 ESPs/TEPs reviewed in the Desk Study sample of 16 countries, 20 were developed through the support from one or more ESPDGs.⁷⁸

71. As shown in Table 3.1, the review team compared the Secretariat's ratings for the eight countries in the sample that developed the first plan without an ESPDG and the second plan with ESPDG support. In these cases, we see improvement in sector plan quality for four countries: Burkina Faso, Congo DRC, Rwanda and South Sudan. For the other four countries considered, indicator 16a data were not available for the earlier plans, thus rendering any comparison over time unfeasible. Overall, while currently available data indicate a possible link between use of ESPDG and changes in sector plan quality, it is difficult to verify this assumed connection due to the limited country sample reviewed and the likelihood that changes relate to other factors as well.⁷⁹ This issue will continue to be explored in upcoming CLEs.

⁷⁶ Chad (2013-2015 TEP and 2018-2020 TEP), Comoros (2013-2015 TEP and 2018-2020 TEP), DRC (2012-2014 TEP) and Guinea (2015-2017 TEP). In the case of South Sudan, an ESP was developed for 2017-2021, but it was rated by GPE as a TEP.

⁷⁷ Begue, Aguado, Alberto. "Appraisal Report of the General Education Strategic Plan in South Sudan 2017-2021", Final Version, April 21, 2017, p.7.

⁷⁸ Not all 27 ESPDGs in the sample supported ESP development. In the case of Guinea, Lesotho and Uzbekistan, the latest ESPDGs supported ESA development and for Tajikistan, both ESPDGs supported the development of 2-year action plans. See Appendices VI and VII for summary tables on ESP and ESPDG samples.

⁷⁹ As noted in section 3.1, ESPDG funding is important for countries to be able to conduct planning processes, but it is more challenging to trace the effects of the grant mechanism on ESP/TEP quality.

Table 3.1 *Comparison of the Secretariat's overall ratings of ESPs/TEPs on Indicator 16a for ESPs/TEPs developed with and without an ESPDG (N=8 DCPs with 1st plan developed without ESPDG, and 2nd plan developed with ESPDG)*

COUNTRY	1 ST ESP/TEP WITHOUT ESPDG		2 ND ESP/TEP SUPPORTED BY AN ESPDG		IMPROVEMENT IN OVERALL QUALITY BETWEEN TWO ESPS/TEPS (GREEN: INCREASE; BLANK: N/A)
	TOTAL STANDARDS MET	MINIMUM NUMBER OF STANDARDS MET	TOTAL STANDARDS MET	MINIMUM NUMBER OF STANDARDS MET	
Burkina Faso	5 (out of 7)	Yes	7 (out of 7)	Yes	
Congo DRC ⁸⁰	4 (out of 7)	Yes	7 (out of 7)	Yes	
Cote d'Ivoire	Unknown	Unknown	5 (out of 7)	Yes	
Guinea ⁸¹	Unknown	Unknown	4 (out of 5)	Yes	
Lesotho	Unknown	Unknown	6 (out of 7)	Yes	
Liberia	Unknown	Unknown	6 (out of 7)	Yes	
Rwanda	5 (out of 7)	Yes	7 (out of 7)	Yes	
South Sudan ⁸²	5 (out of 7)	Yes	5 (out of 5)	Yes	

72. Of the 27 ESPDG applications in our sample, 16 were approved in or after 2016 and 13 of these used the revised application template and procedures (Box 7).

73. ESPDG application requirements promote comprehensive planning processes.⁸³ Two key changes that were intended to contribute to better plan quality were: a) the requirement for applicants (i.e., DCPs) to submit a detailed roadmap and budget for the overall ESP development process (not just the ESPDG funded parts, and b) separate funding windows for conducting a sector analysis and sector planning processes respectively. With both of these, it is too early to verify the assumed link with changes to ESP quality.

⁸⁰ Congo DRC's 2012-2014 TEP was followed by the 2016-2025 ESP.

⁸¹ Guinea had two TEPs.

⁸² South Sudan's 2012-2017 ESP was followed by the 2017-2021/2022 ESP. Even though the country considered the latest plan to be an ESP, GPE Secretariat rated the plan using the standards for a TEP.

⁸³ As per the ESPDG guidelines (GPE, 2016), there are four deliverables that form part of the application: 1) a concept note that provides the rationale and background for the application, as well how the ESA, ESP and Appraisal will be coordinated; 2) ToRs for the technical assistance needed during the plan preparation process; 3) an integrated roadmap that provides a timeline for planned activities along with sources of funding; and 4) a detailed budget that shows the costs of activities for which ESPDG funding is requested as well as the overall costs for plan preparation.

Integrated Roadmap

74. All of the ESPDGs approved in or after 2016,⁸⁵ as well as ESPDGs approved for Congo DRC and South Sudan in 2015 (N=17), include a roadmap. In the Burkina Faso ESPDG Completion Report (2016), the roadmap was explicitly mentioned as a potential factor contributing to the overall effectiveness of the planning process and the development of the most recent 2017-2030 ESP as it ensured that all planned activities were realized in an appropriate timeframe in spite of some delays. Despite the introduction of the roadmap, planning processes in several countries still appear to be rushed and do not always follow established timelines; these include Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, Eritrea, and Sierra Leone. (See also Section 3.3 on Management.)⁸⁶ The evaluation team conducted a quick assessment of the quality of roadmaps.⁸⁷ The majority of roadmaps in the sample (60 percent, 10 out of 17) were considered of decent quality while seven (40 percent) were less clear and lacked detail. However, no clear link could be made between the quality of roadmaps and whether overall development of the sector plan was considered to be rushed. Interestingly, grants that had roadmaps with the longest timelines were more likely to request extensions than those with shorter timelines. Therefore, more realistic planning was not a guarantee for being able to complete activities in time.

75. Further inquiry on if and how the ESPDG process changes made a difference to developing country partners will be explored in CLEs and in the next phase of the study.

New ESPDG window reserved for ESA

76. The CLE Synthesis Report for 2018 noted that increased access to data on the education sector has likely helped countries develop more evidence-based sector plans. This section attempts to address whether the introduction of the new ESPDG funding window for ESAs led to 1) increased ESA funding, 2) more evidence-based plans, and 3) better quality ESAs.

Box 7: Key changes in ESPDG mechanism implemented between 2014 and 2016

Expansion to two funding windows: one dedicated to ESA and the other to ESP/TEP development

Maximum grant amount increased to US\$500,000 (from US\$250,000), with US\$250,000 allocated to ESA

Rolling application

Streamlined application form, but greater number of complementary document requirements, including a Concept Note and an Integrated Roadmap using the GPE template

Modifications in the ESPDG approval process to enhance review component⁸⁴

Revised completion report format now encompasses dimensions of effectiveness, efficiency, and relevance.

⁸⁴ The approach to technical review continued to evolve throughout the period and is further described in Section 3.3. Using members from the Secretariat's technical team (Education Policy and Planning) was tested for a period of time and later discontinued. They were replaced by members of the Country Support Team, who still provide an enhanced but slightly less technical review.

⁸⁵ 2016 is used as a cut-off date as this is when most key changes were implemented in our sample.

⁸⁶ As discussed in section 3.3, CL Assessment forms make note of tight timelines, however, it is unclear whether this issue is addressed during the ESPDG review process, i.e., whether timelines are adjusted to take this into account.

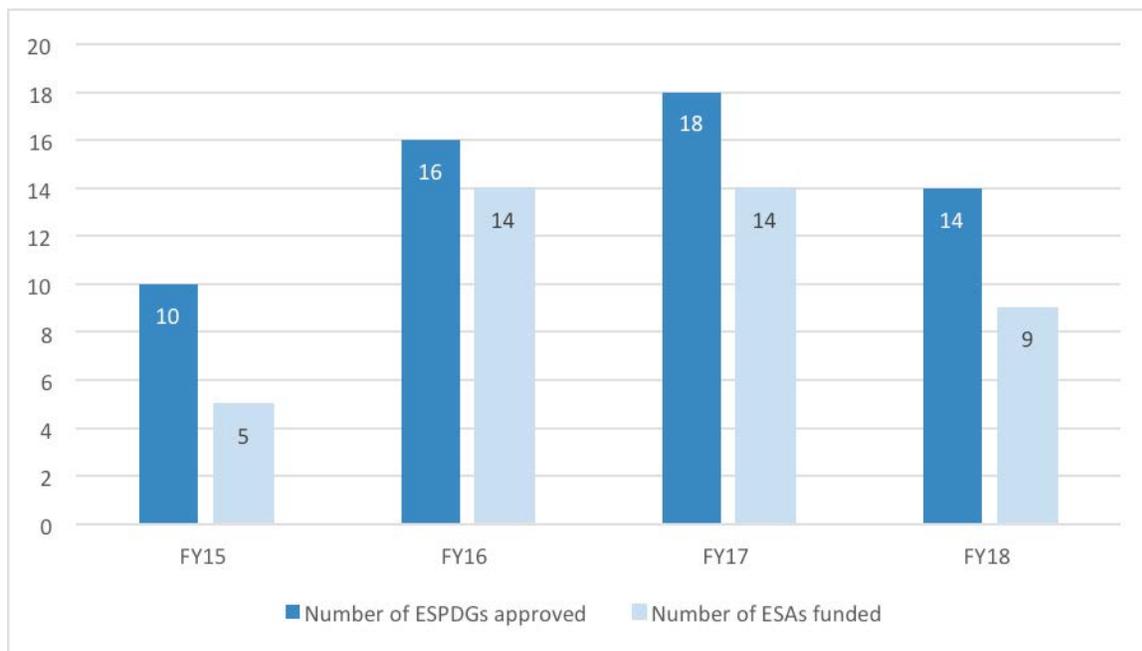
⁸⁷ Criteria assessed were: whether deliverables are clearly stated, whether timelines are specific and detailed, whether timing allocated to activities (comparing ESA and ESP development activities) was logical, and whether timing in relation to GARC approval was logical). Logic of actual content/line items in the budget and timeline were not assessed.

Increased ESA funding

77. There was an overall increase in absolute funding to ESAs after introduction of the ESA funding window with more countries taking advantage of the separate funding windows. The majority of ESPDGs (18 out of 27)⁸⁸ in the Desk Study Sample were used to fund education sector analyses (both comprehensive and targeted analyses),⁸⁹ either as a separate activity or linked to ESP development or mid-term reviews. In this sample, ESA funding represented 50 percent⁹⁰ of the overall funding allocated through the ESPDG.

78. A similar pattern of funding of ESAs can be seen in the broader ESPDG portfolio. Based on a review of the past five GPE Portfolio Reviews, which provide information on ESPDG funding for ESAs and ESPs, most ESPDGs approved in FY16, FY17 and FY18 received funding for the purpose of conducting an ESA and approximately half of all ESPDG funding over the past three fiscal years has been used for ESAs.⁹¹ Since FY16, roughly 50 percent of ESPDG funding has been allocated to ESAs, compared to around 27 percent and 32 percent for FY13-14 and FY15, respectively. See Figure 3.9.

Figure 3.9 Number of ESPDGs approved and ESAs funded by fiscal year, based on GPE Portfolio Review data for FY15 to FY18⁹²



⁸⁸ For the 16 countries in Desk Study sample, there were 27 ESPDG applications during the review period (2012-2018). Documents were not available for Chad's 2014 ESPDG application and was therefore removed from the sample. Burkina Faso, Congo DRC, Côte d'Ivoire, Rwanda and South Sudan each had one (1) ESPDG application. All other countries had two (2) applications, except Guinea and Uzbekistan, which had three (3).

⁸⁹ 14 ESPDGs (out of 27) in our sample funded comprehensive ESAs while nine ESPDGs funded targeted studies.

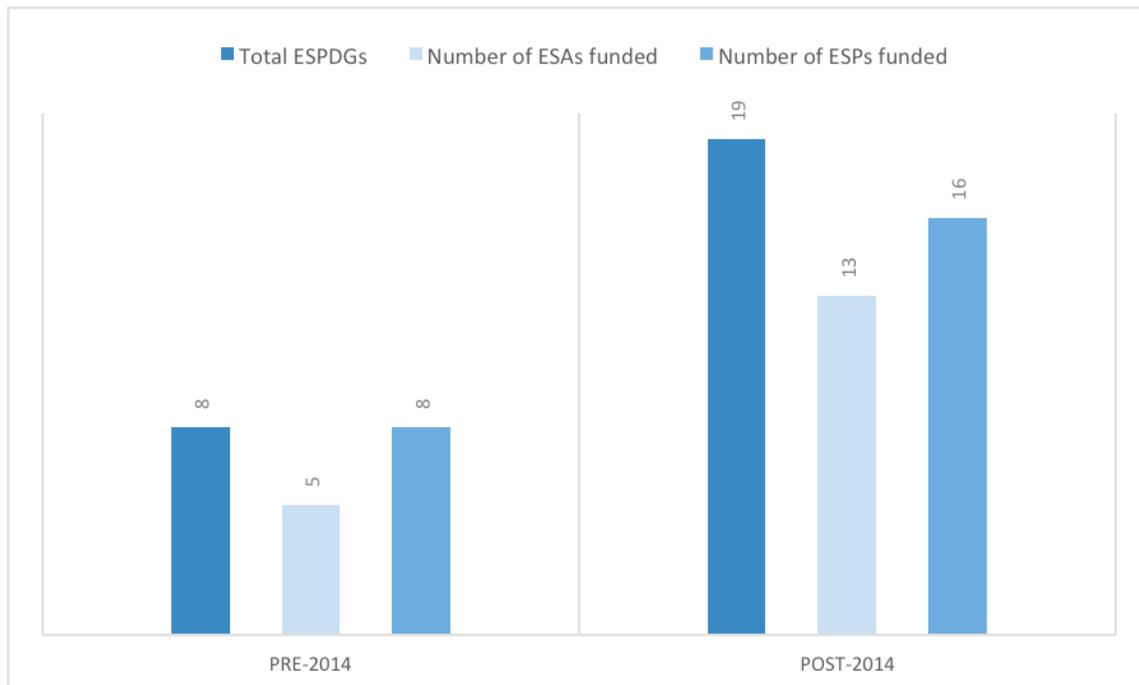
⁹⁰ ESPDG funding for sector analysis ranged from 36 percent (Lesotho 2017) to 100 percent (several countries that only used the ESA window such as Cambodia (2016) to conduct an MTR, as well as Guinea and Uzbekistan that submitted separate ESPDGs for an ESA and ESP in 2017-2018).

⁹¹ GPE Portfolio Review (2018), p. 50 and GPE Portfolio Review (2017), p. 17.

⁹² For FY13-14, the number of ESAs funded by ESPDGs was not available; only funding amounts were given.

79. Similar to the data from the GPE portfolio reports, there was an increase (albeit of smaller magnitude) in the number of ESAs and the amount of ESPDG funding going to ESAs in the Desk Study sample after the introduction of the funding window in 2014. ESA funding as a proportion of ESPDG amounts increased from 45 percent to 50 percent of total funding after 2014. In terms of absolute funding, there was an increase in the average funding to ESAs when comparing pre- and post-2014 ESPDGs in the sample, with pre-2014 ESA funding averaging US\$162,273 and post-2014 averaging US\$209,075.⁹³ In addition, prior to 2014, there were no ESPDGs that funded only ESAs in the sample, but after 2014, three ESPDGs funded only ESAs (Cambodia, Guinea and Uzbekistan).

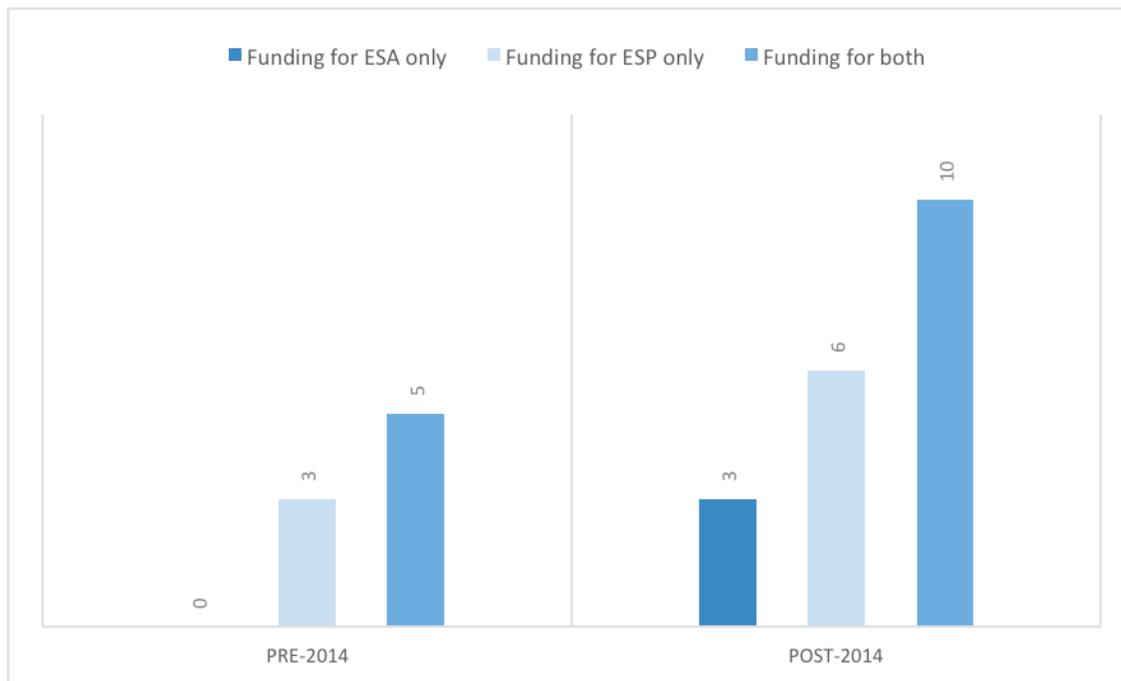
Figure 3.10 Number of ESPDGs and number of ESAs and ESPs funded in the Desk Study Sample (N=27)⁹⁴ before and after 2014



⁹³ Pre-2014 ESA funding ranged from US\$95,000-\$250,000 and Post-2014 ESA funding ranged from US\$61,945-\$350,000.

⁹⁴ Data was not available for Chad's 2014 ESPDG application and was therefore removed from the sample. Some countries only obtained funding through the ESA window such as Cambodia (2016) to conduct an MTR, as well as Guinea and Uzbekistan that submitted separate ESPDGs for an ESA and ESP in 2017-2018.

Figure 3.11 Number of ESPDGs that funded only ESAs, only ESPs, or both in Desk Study Sample (N=27) before and after 2014



Effects of increased funding on more evidence-based plans

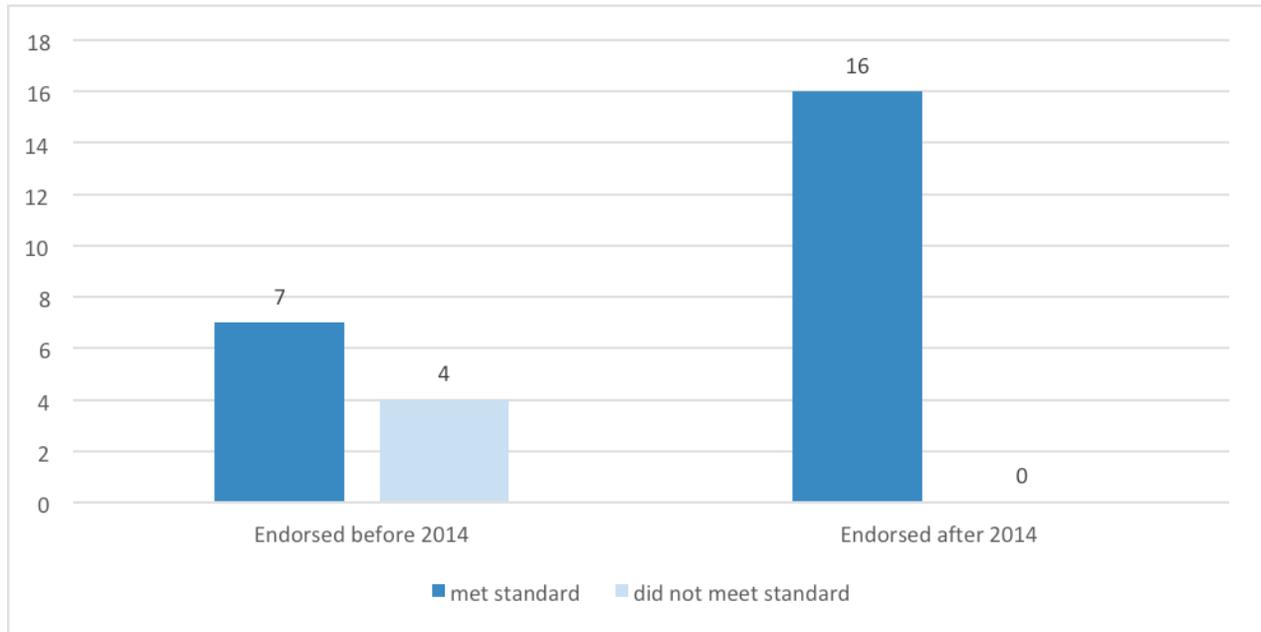
80. Whether and what effect the increase in funding to ESAs has had on whether countries develop ESAs and on whether subsequent ESPs meet the evidence-based standard is not clear.

81. In the Desk Study sample of 27 ESPs/TEPs with Indicator 16 data, only four did not meet the standard for evidence-based (Figure 3.12): Chad (2013-2015 TEP), Congo DRC (2012-2014 TEP), Eritrea (2013-2017 ESP), and Tajikistan (2012-2020 ESP). In all four cases, the plans were developed prior to 2014. Of these, only Chad and Eritrea had received ESPDG funding and only Congo DRC had an ESA. However, most ESPs/TEPs in the sample, even those that were not supported by an ESPDG⁹⁵ or that received an ESPDG prior to the introduction of the ESA funding window in 2014,⁹⁶ still met the evidence-based standard and were based on comprehensive sector analyses. In fact, out of all ESPs/TEPs in our sample that were developed prior to 2014 (15 of the 30 ESPs/TEPs), eight of these plans were based on comprehensive ESAs. In other words, ESA development was already standard practice in most countries in the sample, even prior to the introduction of the funding window.

⁹⁵ Burkina Faso 2012-2020 ESP and Rwanda 2013/14-2017/18 ESP

⁹⁶ These include Cambodia 2014-2018 ESP (prior to MTR and revision in 2016), Comoros 2013-2015 TEP, Gambia 2014-2022 ESP, Guinea 2015-2017 TEP, Sierra Leone 2014-2018 ESP and Uzbekistan 2013-2017 ESP

Figure 3.12 Comparison of ESPs/TEPs in Desk Study Sample (N=27) that met or did not meet Standard for evidence-based endorsed before and after introduction of ESA window in 2014



82. Nevertheless, qualitative evidence from CLEs included in the Desk Study sample point to sector analyses being better used over time, with later ESPs/TEPs being based on better quality and more recent ESAs compared to earlier plans. In the case of Burkina Faso, for instance, the earlier plan (2012-2021 ESP) was based on an ESA dating from 2008 and made insufficient use of the sector analysis to inform its strategies. The later plan (2017-2030 ESP) drew more explicitly on data and recommendations from a 2017 sector analysis. Similarly, in the Gambia, the older sector plan (2014-2022) made use of an outdated Country Status Report from 2010. The later plan (2016-2030 ESP) was based on a stronger and more recent ESA (from 2017) that had benefited from ESPDG funding, allowing for better integration of population data, analysis of learning outcomes, and regional and national education data. In Rwanda, the 2017 ESA was highlighted⁹⁷ as a significant factor in strengthening the evidence base for the most recent ESP.

83. Currently available qualitative evidence from CLEs is insufficient to determine if the increase in funding has led to better quality sector analyses. While the evaluation team did not conduct a full review of the quality of ESAs in our sample, content was analyzed to assess coverage of the five core areas identified in the GPE/IIEP Guidelines for Education Sector Plan Preparation (see Figure 3.13). These guidelines identify the core areas that should be covered in the ESA, which include: context analysis, analysis of existing education policies, analysis of costs and finance, analysis of education system performance and analysis of system capacity. Each of the core issues is further broken down into sub-issues that should be considered in the analysis and methodological guidance is provided in the more expansive ESA Methodological Guidelines.⁹⁸ Most ESAs reviewed in the Desk Study⁹⁹ address three of the core issues

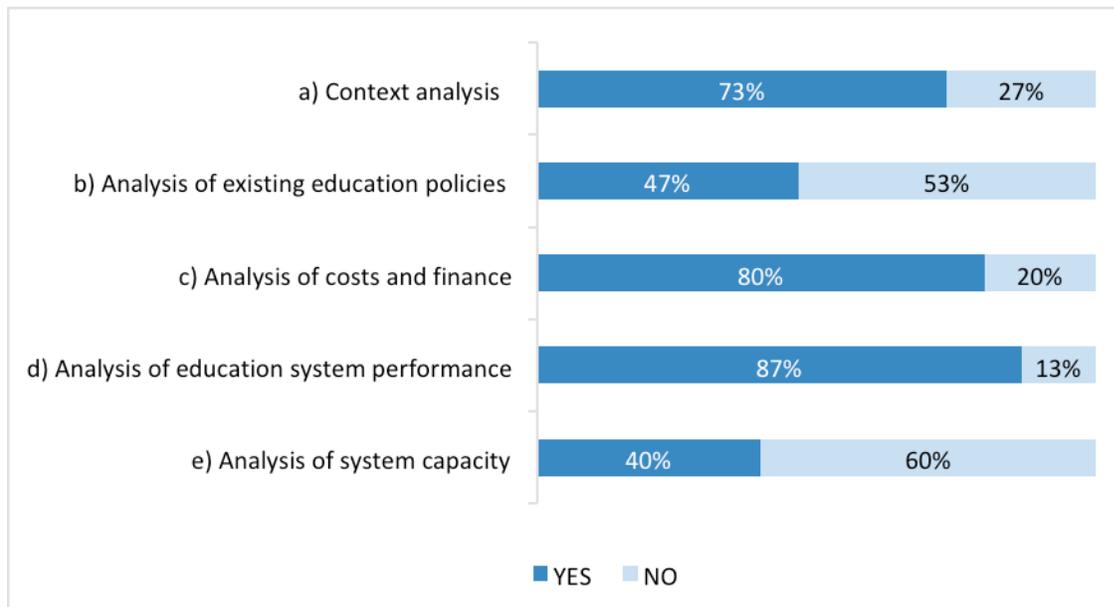
⁹⁷ According to findings from the Rwanda CLE draft report (2019), this was stated by several government officials and development partners.

⁹⁸ Volumes I and II were prepared by UNESCO, IIEP, Pôle de Dakar, World Bank, UNICEF, and GPE in 2014. Volume III is currently under development,

⁹⁹ The evaluation team did not conduct an in-depth review of each ESA, but assessed which core areas were covered.

(context, costs and finance, and education system performance) but omitted or did not fully assess existing education policies and system capacity. This reinforces the observation that the notion of capacity is not systematically addressed during the planning process.¹⁰⁰

Figure 3.13 Review of ESA content alignment with GPE/IIEP guidelines for ESA (N=15)¹⁰¹



Better quality ESAs

84. In addition to assessing coverage of the five core areas, the evaluators looked at other factors that could contribute to ESA quality, including who was involved in the preparation of the ESA. The majority of ESAs reviewed (9 out of 15)¹⁰² were prepared by a team of experts (instead of an individual), thus following the related GPE/IIEP recommendation (the remaining did not provide information on team composition). We also determined whether there was collaboration between national teams and external experts, such as IIEP/Pôle de Dakar and the World Bank. Of the 18 ESAs that were looked at, ten were developed through collaboration, four were developed by external consultants and four were developed solely by the country. However, no correlation could be drawn between collaboration and level of coverage of core areas.

¹⁰⁰ UNESCO, The World Bank, UNICEF and GPE also collaborated to produce the two volumes composing the Education Sector Analysis Methodological Guidelines, which were published in September 2014.

¹⁰¹ This only includes ESAs prepared after 2012. GPE Guidelines for Education Sector Plan Preparation include a brief overview of the recommended areas for an ESA, which encompass these five areas of analyses.

¹⁰² There were 23 Sector Analyses in our Desk Study sample; due to time constraints, only 15 were assessed.

85. In the Desk Study sample, sector analyses in francophone countries were more likely to adhere to the guidelines (i.e. covering the five core areas and developed through collaboration with national teams). Our hypothesis is that this may be due to the influence of Pôle de Dakar as one of the primary partners/service providers in this area. All seven (7 out of 15) ESAs in our sample conducted by Pôle de Dakar were conducted collaboratively with national teams. Of these seven, five were conducted after 2012¹⁰³ and four of these covered all core areas (Congo DRC 2014 ESA, Chad 2014 ESA, Comoros 2012 ESA, and Côte d'Ivoire 2015 ESA), the only exception being Burkina Faso's 2017 ESA that only covered three of the five core areas. Due to the small sample size, however, it is not possible to draw any firm conclusions. Box 8 provides an example from the DRC, where despite having a strong ESA, limited analysis of institutions in the education sector still affected ESP implementation.

Box 8: Implications of limited institutional analysis – Democratic Republic of Congo

The DRC developed a comprehensive ESA in collaboration with the Pôle de Dakar in 2014 for its current ESP (2016-2025) that exhaustively analyzed available data. It covered costs, performance, learning, equity, capacity, including data from several sources such as Early Grade Reading Assessment and Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys. The report is notable in that it includes an additional chapter on violence affecting schooling, as well as conflict and other risks that are not always included in other ESAs. However, while the report noted that sector management was inadequate, it did not address the institutional challenges of having four ministries involved in the delivery of education and how this could fragment delivery, increase resources spent on administration, and create coordination problems concerning sector policies and plans and their implementation. The CLE Prospective Evaluation (2018) on the DRC has noted this issue as one of the factors affecting the early stages of implementation of the ESP.

86. The Desk Study suggests that the specialized ESPDG funding window for ESA financing has increased the level of GPE funding for ESAs, although it may not be increasing the level of ESA activity in countries. The effects on ESA quality are, however, difficult to establish. We also suspect that the GPE ESPDG funding requirements, under the new funding model, of having a recent ESA on which sector plans are based, may influence countries to develop and make use of recent and up-to-date ESA during planning.

Finding 6: The ESPDG and other support mechanisms have contributed to the use of participatory/consultative planning processes in sector plan development. However, it is less clear whether and how these have contributed to improving plan quality.

87. As noted in the CLE Synthesis report, most countries reviewed through summative and prospective CLEs in FY 2018 (N=15) had strengthened consultative processes around plan development during or preceding the respective review periods, albeit with room for improvement in the inclusion of certain stakeholder groups from planning consultations.¹⁰⁴ The synthesis report notes that this is a likely positive effect of GPE contributions, both through ESPDG funding, and through non-financial support provided through advocacy and facilitation roles of GPE actors and related GPE/IIEP guidelines. In 10 of the 16

¹⁰³ GPE/IIEP guidelines for ESAs were developed in 2012.

¹⁰⁴ Universalia, Results for Development, ITAD, GPE Country Level Evaluations – Synthesis Report, January 2019, p. 21 – 23. Groups that were sometimes excluded include representatives from not-government approved schools (e.g., Pakistan, Sierra Leone), non-basic education stakeholders (e.g., Burkina Faso, Guyana), and stakeholders at local levels (e.g., Liberia).

countries¹⁰⁵ in the Desk Study, the evaluators identified evidence that ESPDGs enabled a more inclusive and participatory approach to sector plan development by providing resources for (national and sub-national level) consultations, meetings, enhanced dialogue across a broader range of stakeholders. All available ESPDG completion reports (N=11) report on the participatory nature of the planning process, though they also suggest that some stakeholder groups were not adequately represented.¹⁰⁶

88. While these participatory approaches are likely to have positively influenced ownership of the resulting plan among relevant stakeholders, there is no clear evidence to illustrate exactly how such processes have influenced changes in sector plan quality when measured in terms of GPE standards. The issue of "ownership" has been identified as a factor to further explore when analyzing the operational relevance of GPE's approach to sector planning (see Box 3).

3.2.4 Contribution of the revised QA process to the development of credible sector plans (EQ 2.3)

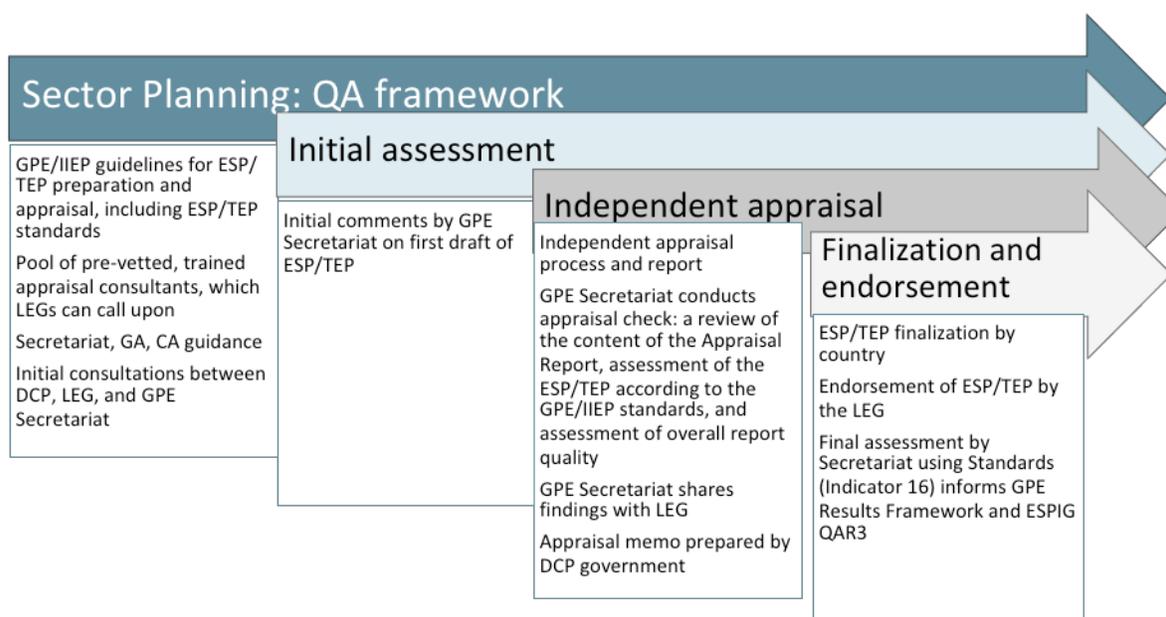
Finding 7: Early indications are that new quality assurance procedures, in particular the enhanced independent appraisal mechanism, have contributed to better quality ESPs/TEPs as measured by GPE standards.

89. One of the key questions for this evaluation is whether revised GPE quality assurance (QA) process and tools have contributed to an improvement in the quality of sector plans. In 2016, the GPE Secretariat began to formalize and institutionalize QA for ESP/TEPs, with a view to applying a more coherent and consistent process. The current stages of that QA system, and the key documents produced, are illustrated in Figure 3.14. Guidelines, standards, and trained appraisal consultants provide the framework that supports implementation of each stage of the process. Although still in early stages of implementation (less than two years since fully rolled out in 2017), some of the key changes in the QA process are beginning to show effects in country-level processes.

¹⁰⁵ Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Chad, Comoros, Sierra Leone, South Sudan, Rwanda, The Gambia, Liberia, and DRC

¹⁰⁶ In the Completion Report for Burkina Faso (2016), the GA noted that the planning process was participatory and inclusive, yet it was limited (mostly) to government ministries, and did not meaningfully include civil society and communities.

Figure 3.14 Elements of Enhanced Quality Assurance of ESP/TEP (2016 – to date)¹⁰⁷



90. In a comparison of ESP/TEP quality between older plans that did not undergo the new QA process and newer plans that did, we see clear improvement in sector plan quality for the eight countries in the sample with available data (see Table 3.2).

Table 3.2 Comparison of Secretariat's overall ratings of ESPs/TEPs in Desk Study sample based on whether they used the new QA process¹⁰⁸ (N=8)

COUNTRY	FIRST PLAN		SECOND PLAN		IMPROVEMENT IN OVERALL QUALITY BETWEEN TWO ESPS/TEPS (GREEN: INCREASE; YELLOW: SAME; RED: DECREASE; BLANK: N/A)
	USED NEW QA PROCESS	TOTAL STANDARDS MET	USED NEW QA PROCESS	TOTAL STANDARDS MET	
Burkina Faso	NO	5 (out of 7)	YES	7 (out of 7)	
Chad	NO	4 (out of 7)	YES	5 (out of 5)	
Comoros	NO	4 (out of 7)	YES	5 (out of 5)	

¹⁰⁷ It is our understanding that, for the most part, this is the QA-ESP process that was incrementally rolled out after 2016 and thus applies to the most recent education sector planning cycles included in the sample of 16 DCP. The Secretariat introduced further adjustments to this process in 2018/early 2019. For example, in stage 2, the "appraisal check" table (which looked at whether the appraisal addressed the guidelines) has been eliminated. A consultant assesses the ESP against the GPE standards. The QA team focal point reviews the appraisal report and the consultant's assessment and provides feedback to the Country Lead.

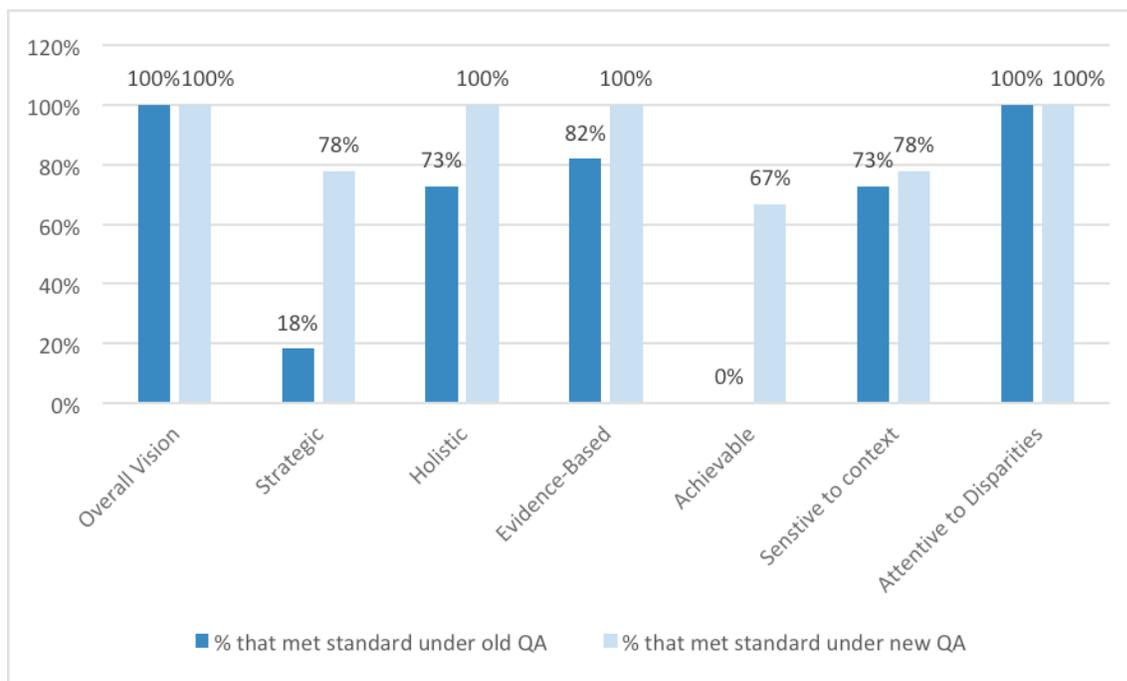
¹⁰⁸ Use of new QA process was based on whether new Secretariat Initial comments, Appraisal Check and Appraisal Memo were available. We judged that the new process was followed if two out of three documents were available. Appraiser training was not considered here.

COUNTRY	FIRST PLAN		SECOND PLAN		IMPROVEMENT IN OVERALL QUALITY BETWEEN TWO ESPS/TEPS (GREEN: INCREASE; YELLOW: SAME; RED: DECREASE; BLANK: N/A)
	USED NEW QA PROCESS	TOTAL STANDARDS MET	USED NEW QA PROCESS	TOTAL STANDARDS MET	
Congo DRC	NO	4 (out of 7)	YES	7 (out of 7)	
Eritrea	NO	2 (out of 7)	YES	5 (out of 7)	
Gambia	NO	4 (out of 7)	YES	6 (out of 7)	
Rwanda	NO	5 (out of 7)	YES	7 (out of 7)	
Sierra Leone	NO	4 (out of 7)	YES	7 (out of 7)	
South Sudan	NO	4 (out of 7)	YES	5 (out of 5)	
Uzbekistan	NO	5 (out of 7)	YES	6 (out of 7)	

91. In the overall sample, all plans that used the new QA process met the minimum number of standards. This corroborates the findings from the 2018 Internal Review which found improvements in quality for all plans that used the new QA process.¹⁰⁹ Improvements were also seen at the level of individual standards, in particular Strategic and Achievable (Figure 3.15).

¹⁰⁹ GPE. "Findings from the Internal Review of the Strengthened Independent Assessment Mechanisms", Grants and Performance Committee Meeting, London and Washington DC, January 2018.

Figure 3.15 Percentage of ESPs that met individual Standards under the old and new QA process (N=20)¹¹⁰



Secretariat Initial Comments

92. The effect of Secretariat Initial Comments on sector plan quality is difficult to determine.

93. Based on our review of 14 Secretariat Initial Comments, the comments provided in the new template (7 out of 14) are more formal, comprehensive, detailed, standardized and geared to the GPE/IIEP guidelines provided to countries during the consultation phase. However, earlier versions of Initial Comments in our sample provided observations outside of the seven areas covered by the GPE standards that may also be useful/relevant to the countries.

94. In the Desk Study, we tried to see if and how Secretariat Initial Comments were taken on in producing the final ESP, yet this was not always possible due to the documentation available and/or difficulties in tracing how comments were addressed. Additionally, although Secretariat Initial Comments are supposed to be provided on an early draft of the ESP/TEP so that Secretariat recommendations are addressed before the Independent Appraisal is conducted, this has not been the case in all countries in the sample. In Eritrea and Uzbekistan's latest ESPs, there was clear overlap between the Secretariat Initial Comments and Independent Appraisal. The Eritrea draft report was submitted to the appraiser 10 days before the Initial Comments were delivered. In Uzbekistan, the Initial Comments were provided a week before the final draft was submitted to the appraiser, so it is unlikely that the country had sufficient time to respond to or incorporate Secretariat comments before appraisal. We do not know the reasons for this, but they may be due to delays either on the part of the Secretariat or on the part of country-level actors, who do not always share documentation with the Secretariat in a timely way. Nonetheless, as noted in the CLE for South Sudan,

¹¹⁰ TEPs were not included here as the assessment methodology for TEPs was changed, making comparison not possible.

this can lead to perceptions of duplication of effort if the Secretariat's comments and appraisal come at the same time.

Independent Appraisal

95. In 2016 and 2017, the GPE Secretariat rolled out the GPE Board-approved enhanced appraisal mechanism, which requires that GPE/IIEP Guidelines for ESP Appraisal be used to perform the independent assessment and that assessments be carried out by consultants trained on the use of the guidelines.¹¹¹ Appraisal reports are expected to discuss the planning process and ESP/TEP quality in relation to i) leadership and participation; ii) soundness and relevance; iii) equity, efficiency, and learning in basic education; iv) coherence; and v) feasibility, implementability and monitorability. The GPE Secretariat's internal review of this assessment mechanism concluded that the strengthening of the QA process contributed to a positive trend in the quality of the ESPs.¹¹² In fact, preliminary data on ESPs appraised in 2017-2018 shows significant improvement in quality between the appraisal stage and the ESPIG application stage (QAR3 stage). At appraisal stage, only 55.5 percent (10 out of 18) ESPs met the minimum number of standards. In comparison, at the application stage, all ESPs (18 out of 18) met the minimum number.¹¹³

96. The Secretariat's 2018 Internal Review also identified concerns with regard to quality of appraisal reports, namely: extent of coverage of the major dimensions of the ESP/TEP appraisal guidelines, quality of recommendations, quality of analysis, and appraiser methodology. The Secretariat had already put in place several measures to try to address these issues, such as recommending that two appraisers carry out the assessment (so that they bring complementary skills to the task) and bringing appraisers together annually to receive and provide feedback on processes and guidelines.¹¹⁴

97. The evaluation team assessed application¹¹⁵ of the GPE/IIEP appraisal guidelines for 24 appraisal reports in the Desk Study sample. Most appraisal reports since 2015 did use the guidelines, meaning that the approach taken to preparing appraisal reports has become more consistent across countries.

¹¹¹ See GPE Board Decision BOD/2015/12-14 – Independent Assessment of Education Sector Plan. Prior to 2016, there were no formal guidelines or methodologies followed and consultants were chosen at the discretion of the LEG.

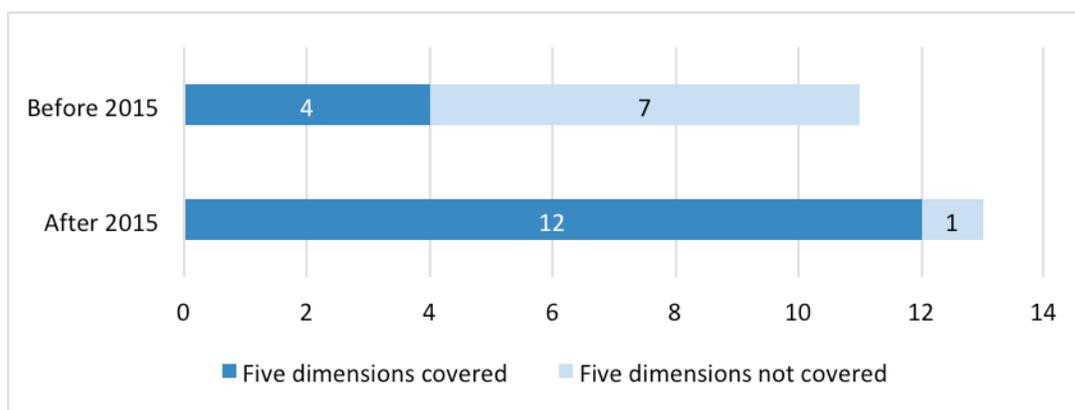
¹¹² GPE, "Findings from the Internal Review of the Strengthened Independent Assessment Mechanism, Grants and Performance Committee Meeting", January 17-19, 2018, p.10

¹¹³ Preliminary data from GPE Results Report 2019 obtained from GPE Secretariat

¹¹⁴ GPE, "Findings from the Internal Review of the Strengthened Independent Assessment Mechanism, Grants and Performance Committee Meeting", January 17-19, 2018, p. 8-12.

¹¹⁵ The evaluation team only assessed whether each area was covered and not the quality of the analysis provided for each dimension.

Figure 3.16 Number of Appraisal Reports that address the five dimensions identified in the GPE/IIEP Appraisal Guidelines in the Desk Study Sample (N=24) before and after 2015¹¹⁶



98. Appraisal reports and the overall appraisal process were also assessed based on the following criteria: i) whether appraisers underwent training, ii) whether appraisals were conducted by two or more consultants, iii) whether appraiser methodology was presented in the report, iv) whether reports provided a limited number of clear and explicit recommendations, and v) level of coverage of appraisal guidelines. There was clear improvement between pre-2016 and post-2016 for most criteria except for assessments being conducted by more than one appraiser, with more appraisals being conducted by a single consultant after 2016. The reason for this is unclear, but may be due to the requirement of having all consultants trained in the new methodology before conducting an appraisal.

Table 3.3 Comparison of pre/post 2016¹¹⁷ appraisal process (N=24 appraisal reports)

CRITERIA	NUMBER OF PRE-2016 APPRAISALS THAT MET CRITERIA	NUMBER OF POST-2016 APPRAISALS THAT MET CRITERIA	IMPROVEMENT BETWEEN TWO PERIODS (GREEN: INCREASE; YELLOW: SAME; RED: DECREASE; BLANK: N/A)
Trained appraisers	0 (out of 12)	12 (out of 12)	Green
Conducted by two or more appraisers	6 (out of 12)	2 (out of 12)	Red
Appraisal methodology present in report	5 (out of 12)	10 (out of 12)	Green
Limited number of recommendations provided	3 (out of 12)	6 (out of 12)	Green
Covers all guideline dimensions	4 (out of 12)	12 (out of 12)	Green

¹¹⁶ 2015 was chosen as a cut-off date as this is when GPE/IIEP guidelines were introduced.

¹¹⁷ 2016 was chosen as a cut-off date as this is when most elements would have been incorporated into the process

99. Appraisal reports show some improvement in the way that they formulate recommendations. Prior to 2016, the majority of reports (9 out of 12) did not include specific recommendations or recommendations were not made explicit in the document. This changed in more recent reports, with at least six reports providing clear recommendations, although there are still inconsistencies.¹¹⁸ One positive example is the difference between the Gambia's 2014 and 2017 reports: the second appraisal provides 10 clear, actionable recommendations, all of which appear¹¹⁹ to have been addressed in the final version of the ESP, whereas the 2014 appraisal noted three general areas requiring improvement but did not formulate explicit and actionable related recommendations.

100. Since 2017, draft appraisal reports are systematically assessed by the GPE Secretariat, partially through an Appraisal Check "table/checklist" that assesses coverage of GPE/IIEP Appraisal Guidelines. The Desk Study only had access to these "checklists", which do not fully illustrate this stage of the ESP-QA process. For the nine appraisals in the sample that were conducted after 2017, six had an Appraisal Check "table/checklist" from the Secretariat; three Appraisal Check "table/checklist" were also available for four appraisal reports from 2016.

101. The noted improvements in appraisal report quality (when measured against the application of GPE appraisal guidelines and quality criteria) likely derive from the clearer guidance on report content and structure and from the greater number of trained external consultants conducting the assessments.¹²⁰ At the same time, based on CLEs completed in FY 2018, as well as observations made by the evaluation team during the Desk Study phase, it is clear that the processes that have been developed in theory do not always play out the same way in practice, as shown above in regard to perceptions of overlap between Secretariat Initial Comments and appraisals. In the case of appraisals:

- Although guidelines are used in all recent appraisal reports, the way they are applied is not consistent in all reports. Some simply provided a checklist or table based on the guidelines (e.g., Burkina Faso 2017), whereas others structured their reports according to the guidelines and commented on each of the five areas (e.g., Uzbekistan 2018).
- Appraisals are sometimes conducted in a short window of time so as not to hold up the application for ESPIG funding. This can contribute to the perception of the appraisal process as a check-the-box exercise, as opposed to a valuable component for improving ESP quality.
- Appraisals are often conducted with insufficient documentation, which can affect their quality. Documents may still be works in progress at the time of appraisals, meaning appraisers are not able to assess the latest version of the sector strategic plan. In addition, certain documents may not yet be available or are still very early drafts, such as the multi-year action plans (e.g., South Sudan appraisal 2017). In addition, it is not always clear whether Secretariat and DP comments have already been considered before submitting the draft plans to the appraiser.

¹¹⁸ As in the Secretariat's Internal Review, which noted weaknesses in this area, the Desk Study found that there are still some appraisal reports that do not clearly specify recommendations, have some duplication across recommendations, or do not cluster or organize them in a way that facilitates action.

¹¹⁹ A full assessment of whether recommendations were incorporated into final ESPs was not possible because earlier and final versions of plans were not available for comparison.

¹²⁰ For post-2016 appraisal reports, all reports that were conducted by a trained appraiser used the appraisal guidelines. The evaluation team did not assess how well the guidelines were applied.

102. Prior to the introduction of the Appraisal Memo, it was not always clear whether appraisal recommendations were incorporated into final versions of the ESP. In Sierra Leone, for instance, the 2014-2018 ESP was endorsed around the same time that the appraisal report was published, with no evidence that the appraisal recommendations had been taken into account. In contrast, for the 2018-2020 ESP, the appraisal report explicitly states that endorsement of the plan is conditional on the Ministry addressing the recommendations. Appraisal memos were prepared by LEGs for almost 85 percent (11 out of 13) of the appraisal reports developed after 2016 in the Desk Study sample. Most of these memos seem to embrace the recommendations and indicate that comments have been or will be taken into account in the final version of the ESP, although these are sometimes expressed in vague terms. In the 11 appraisal memos available, 95 percent of recommendations were either fully or partially addressed. Therefore, the Appraisal Memo appears to be an important addition to the process, creating a formal opportunity for in-country actors to discuss and agree/disagree with the recommendations of the independent assessment. This is an issue to be further explored in subsequent CLEs.

Box 9. How GPE's new Quality Assurance process contributes to a better ESP: an example from South Sudan

2012: The General Education Strategic Plan (GESP) 2012-2017 is accompanied by a timed and costed action plan, but the action plan does not stipulate funding sources or implementation responsibility by activity. The appraisal, written by the LEG, comments on the limitations of the action plan, but no action is taken.

2015: GPE/IIEP guidelines on ESP appraisal are published and include a section on "soundness of the action plan".

February 2017: Initial comments from the GPE Secretariat on the second GESP (2017-2022) suggest the need for developing an action plan to accompany the GESP. An action plan is subsequently developed.

April 2017: The independent GESP appraisal, which is structured along GPE/IIEP guidelines, makes a recommendation (#8) on the draft action plan. This recommendation appears to have been incorporated into the final GESP 2017-2022, as the final action plan is higher-quality (alignment to plan, completeness) than the draft seen by the appraiser and the action plan from GESP 2012-2017.

103. The upcoming CLEs will begin to identify ways in which the combination of QA procedures may have contributed to improved quality of sector plans. (See Box 9 for South Sudan). In Rwanda, both the Independent Appraisal and the Secretariat's Initial Comments note that the shortfall of the *draft* ESP was that it made inadequate use of empirical data for the strategies adopted in spite of the fact that the data was readily available. The Ministry of Education addressed some of these issues in preparing the final ESP, which was then considered to meet the 'evidence-based' standard.¹²¹

¹²¹ Ministry of Education (MINEDUC), Government of Rwanda, Draft Appraisal Report of the Education Sector Plan 2018/19 – 2022/2023, Annex 1, p. 34-35.

3.2.5 Contribution of other GPE sector planning modalities to the development of robust and credible sector plans (EQ 2.2)

Finding 8: It is not yet clear to what extent other GPE sector planning modalities such as guidelines, technical assistance, knowledge events and capacity building/training have contributed to improving the quality of sector plans.

104. At the time of writing, there is insufficient evidence to provide firm conclusions on how other GPE modalities contributed to sector plan quality. Evidence from CLEs conducted to date point to the positive influence of GPE/IIEP guidelines, technical assistance and other types of GPE support but also note that it is difficult to clearly identify their role and contribution to changes in sector plan quality. For example:

- In both Burkina Faso and Sierra Leone, stakeholders indicated that the guidelines provided valuable process and content-related direction to the teams that prepared the sector plans.¹²²
- In terms of technical assistance, the Ministry of Education of Sierra Leone, for instance, benefited from technical assistance, provided by the Grant and Coordinating Agencies, in economic forecasting and budgeting required for ESP development.¹²³
- The types of GPE support provided in Côte d'Ivoire included frequent visits (10 visits) by the Secretariat Country Lead to support the development of the 2016-2025 ESP. The Country Lead provided guidance and technical input to the LEG on international lessons learned and best practices in sector planning, which were very much appreciated.¹²⁴
- GPE also organizes knowledge events through the Global and Regional Activities (GRA) program, which has led to the development of guidelines and methodological tools, regional and country level workshops and reference documents that have supported countries in sector plan development and improving overall robustness of sector plans. For instance, the Out of School Children Initiative allowed participating countries to better address out of school children in sector plans.¹²⁵ Similarly, Gender Responsive Education Sector Planning guidance and workshops have promoted a systematic approach to addressing gender-based violence in sector plans in four countries, notably Côte d'Ivoire.¹²⁶ However, the specific influence of these events is not possible to be determined at this stage.

¹²² Burkina Faso CLE Final Report, p.17 and Sierra Leone CLE Final Report, p. 15

¹²³ Sierra Leone CLE Final Report, p.16

¹²⁴ Côte d'Ivoire CLE Final Report, p.18

¹²⁵ GPE. "Annual GRA Portfolio Status Report as of June 30, 2018", Global and Regional Activities (GRA) Program, 2018, p.4.

¹²⁶ Ibid. p. 14

3.2.6 GPE support to sector planning and capacity development (EQ 2.4 and 2.5)

Finding 9: Currently available data do not permit tracing specifically how GPE support for sector planning has contributed to strengthening related country capacity. While some such contributions are likely, GPE does not systematically address capacity development objectives nor does it trace related results.

105. Several factors make it difficult to identify the extent to which and how GPE support for sector planning has contributed to country capacity development during the review period 2012-2018. These factors are not unique to GPE; they are core concerns for other DPs and reflect the complexity of capacity development.¹²⁷

Absence of tailored metrics, plans and performance data

106. The GPE 2020 strategy describes GPE support for sector planning in terms of “enabling needs analysis, working to strengthen technical capacity and bringing in talent and resources of others.”¹²⁸ The intention to strengthen planning capacities is also made explicit in ESPDG application guidelines and criteria, as well as in GPE/IIEP knowledge products and tools. However, the GPE 2020 Results Framework does not include related targets or indicators,¹²⁹ and ESPDG completion reports have, until now, not been systematically analyzed to capture insights on ESPDG-funded capacity development activities or their likely results.

107. According to the first-year CLE Synthesis report, the extent to which GPE has contributed to strengthening national planning capacity is difficult to assess. This is partly because, until now, the notion of capacity (for planning and/or implementation) has not been clearly defined or systematically addressed by GPE.¹³⁰ The examination of key actors’ roles in GPE’s country-level operational model also stressed the lack of clarity with regard to capacity development in GPE’s model and what is expected from key actors.¹³¹

Existing country capacity for sector planning may be the result of supportive actions of various actors (including GPE) during and prior to 2012-2018, as well as through mere practice.

108. Capacity development in the education sector is a complex and long-term process. Over the past decades, many actors, including but not limited to the EFA-FTI, UNICEF and UNESCO/IIEP, have invested in supporting related processes through training, technical advice, exchange of experience, research, and policy advice and the practice of education sector planning.¹³²

¹²⁷ Over the past decade, UNESCO/IIEP have researched and published on this topic as it relates to the education sector. See for example UNESCO/IIEP, Anton De Grauwe, Without Capacity, there is no development, 2009.

¹²⁸ GPE, Strategy 2020, p.6

¹²⁹ In the results framework, capacity is raised in relation to sector plan implementation and civil society/teacher organization capacity in the context of sector dialogue and mutual accountability (SO1, Result B: Enhance sector plan implementation through knowledge and good practice exchange, capacity development and improved monitoring and evaluation, particularly in the areas of teaching and learning and equity and inclusion and SO 2, Result B: Strengthen the capacity of civil society and teacher organizations to engage in evidence-based policy dialogue and sector monitoring on equity and learning, leveraging social accountability to enhance the delivery of results.

¹³⁰ Universalialia, R4D, ITAD, GPE Country Level Evaluations – Synthesis Report Financial Year 2018, Final Draft, p. 23

¹³¹ Nicola Ruddle, Kelly Casey, Gabi Elte, Anaïs Loizillon (2018): “Examination of key actors’ roles in GPE’s country-level operational model towards GPE 2020 delivery”. Oxford Policy Management, June 2018, p.68.

¹³² UNESCO/IIEP, Anton de Grauwe, Without capacity, there is no development, 2009

109. According to the GPE/IIEP ESP preparation guidelines, the process of plan preparation is itself considered a form of capacity development and hence is as important as the final product.¹³³ The guidelines for preparation of the TEP put a similar emphasis on process, but recognize that there may be additional constraints due to the context of fragility.¹³⁴ Since 2012, 11 of the 16 countries in the sample have carried out at least two ESPs that took into account GPE/IIEP guidelines and related standards. While these countries have thus had opportunities for ‘learning by doing’ and while GPE support (e.g., through guidelines, standards, QA and/or ESPDG funding) may have facilitated this learning, available data do not permit establishing to what extent and how exactly related improvements occurred because of GPE support.

110. In addition, as noted above, the absence of clear (GPE or other) definitions of what constitutes (improvements in) sector planning capacity makes it difficult to determine whether and what types of capacity strengthening have taken place. Improvements in sector plan quality over time as well as stakeholder perceptions of the extent to which planning processes have been led by in-country stakeholders can serve as proxy indicators in this regard, but do not fully answer the question of how and how much planning capacity has changed over time.

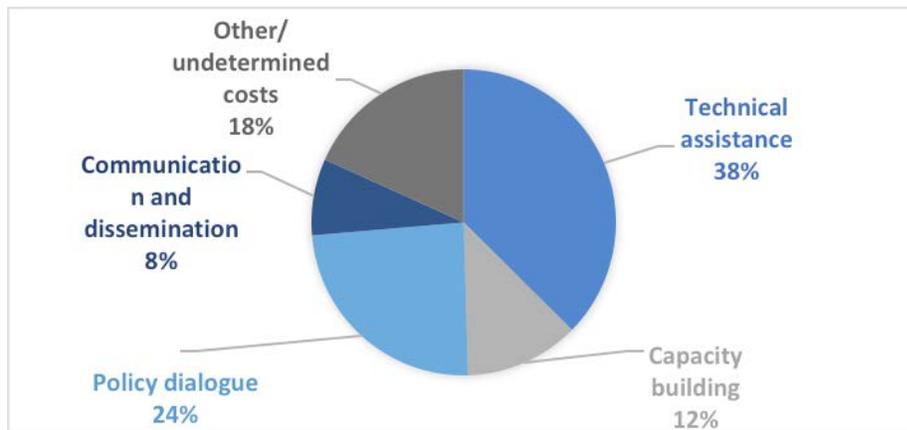
111. In many countries, some portions of ESPDG funding are used to support capacity development through targeted activities, mostly training. In 2018, the Secretariat coded the proposed use of ESPDG funds since 2012 at application stage, to better understand where funds were being allocated.¹³⁵ In 45 percent (10 out of 22) of the ESPDGs with data available for this coding exercise, over 50 percent of the ESPDG budget was allocated to technical assistance (TA) (i.e., hiring consultants to lead parts of sector analysis and sector plan development). The average amount used for technical assistance was 38 percent (see Figure 3.17). With a few exceptions, the proportion of funds allocated to capacity building, which can include training and workshops, was much smaller, with an average of 12 percent, and only 1 out of 22 ESPDGs allocated more than 50 percent of the budget to capacity building.

¹³³ GPE and UNESCO/IIEP, Guidelines for Education Sector Plan Preparation, 2015, p.12.

¹³⁴ For example, the TEP guidelines note that increased technical assistance may be required and that participatory processes may be more challenging than usual, depending on the nature of conflict.

¹³⁵ The purpose of the coding exercise was to provide more in-depth analysis of ESPDG grants to see exactly how grants were being used, for example to assess what proportion of funding was being used for capacity building (which only considered workshops and training sessions) and technical assistance (which considered the hiring of external consultants). This study draws on data available as of September 2018.

Figure 3.17 Proportion of ESPDG funds used for each type of activity (N=22)¹³⁶



112. These figures alone provide an incomplete picture. Technical assistance can be delivered in such a way as to support capacity development.¹³⁷ A recent evaluation suggests that the IIEP/Pôle de Dakar has been effective in implementing an integrated approach that combines TA to help develop sector analysis, which is done with national partners, the development of knowledge products and tools, and formal training through programs such as Sectoral Analysis and Management of the Education System.¹³⁸ The approach to capacity development, including through technical assistance, was not explored through the CLEs completed to date.

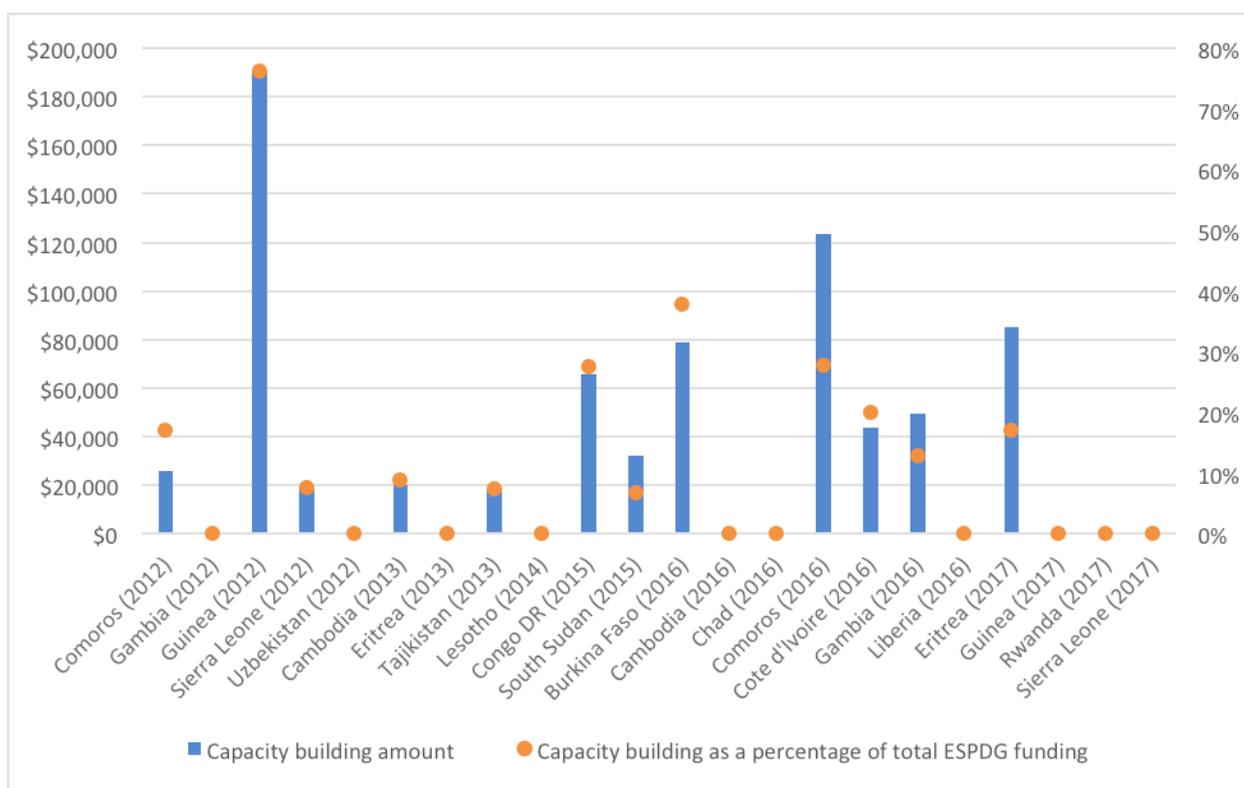
113. In addition, the varying emphasis placed by countries on capacity development (at least in terms of ESPDG funding use) raises questions about reasons for respective allocations and this will be further explored in phase 2 data collection and upcoming CLEs. Figure 3.18 illustrates the proportion of funds allocated to capacity building in ESPDG grants included in the coding exercise. Of the 22 countries in the sample, ten did not have any funding dedicated to capacity building, and of these ten, seven had a significant amount dedicated to technical assistance. However, it was not always clear why some budget items were coded as technical assistance and some as capacity building. In the case of Guinea, for example, which is an outlier with 76 percent of its budget dedicated to capacity building, the majority of this was for hiring local and external consultants to conduct a targeted sector analysis.

¹³⁶ Based on GPE Secretariat Coding exercise of ESPDGs, which included 22 of the 27 ESPDGs in the Desk Study sample

¹³⁷ Given the dearth (and low quality) of ESPDG completion reports, we cannot say whether or what proportion of technical assistance also included capacity development aspects.

¹³⁸ ICON INSTITUTE Consulting Group, Évaluation de l'IIEP-Pôle de Dakar, 12 November 2018.

Figure 3.18 Percentage and amount of ESPDG funding allocated to capacity building (N=22)¹³⁹



3.2.7 Key questions for next phase of the evaluation

114. The analysis of the contributions of ESPDG and other modalities of support to education sector planning identified several areas for further inquiry in the next phase of this evaluation:

- To what extent are the GPE standards used in Indicator 16 providing an accurate picture of plan quality, which is being used as a measure of GPE contribution to sector planning?
- What are some of the reasons driving a country's choice to develop an ESP instead of a TEP?
- What effects does the ESPDG review process have on establishing more realistic road maps and ensuring that the process contributes to capacity strengthening? Also, what effect does the roadmap have on facilitating LEG engagement in plan development?
- What are the factors that seem to influence ESA use and ownership? How do DCPs view the trade-offs between developing a high-quality, very rigorous ESA that takes a long time to produce and producing a less perfect ESA that takes less time, maintains political momentum and helps to ensure that data is less likely to be outdated?

¹³⁹ Based on GPE Secretariat coding exercise of ESPDGs, which included 22 out of the 27 ESPDGs in the Desk Study sample.

- How do inclusive participatory processes lead to better quality plans?
- What are the factors that determine the ways in which ESPDG funds are used, for TA and for capacity building? What do country-level actors see as the advantages/disadvantages of these types of activities?

3.3 How well has GPE managed its support to sector planning?

3.3.1 Overview

115. This section addresses the management of GPE's support to sector planning, covering the following areas:

- The ESPDG mechanism and the quality of grant management structure (E.Q. 3.1)
- GPE Secretariat monitoring of the ESPDG portfolio (E.Q. 3.2)

3.3.2 ESPDG and quality management practices (EQ 3.1)

116. GPE's management of its support to education sector planning is reflected in the way that the Secretariat and other actors in the Partnership manage the ESPDG funding mechanism and other modalities of support. The latter includes quality assurance of sector plans, knowledge exchange, the development of guidance, as well as direct technical assistance and capacity building. This section focuses primarily on the management of the ESPDG mechanism, as the primary emphasis of the Desk Study.

Finding 10: The ESPDG mechanism has been strengthened since 2016 and is well-structured.

117. Since 2016, GPE has introduced several changes in the ESPDG mechanism to strengthen the ESPDG application process and better respond to GPE 2020 Strategy and the new funding model requirements. Key changes are illustrated in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4 Key changes in ESPDG mechanism since 2012

STAGE IN GRANT CYCLE	ESPDG MECHANISM FROM 2012- 2016	ESPDG MECHANISM SINCE 2016
Grant preparation (Guidelines)	<p>Purpose of grant: supporting education sector plan development and ESA (2014)</p> <p>Amount of grants revised up to US\$500,000; two windows created, one specifically for ESAs and the other for plan development (2014)</p> <p>Application deadlines: unclear¹⁴⁰</p>	<p>Purpose of grant: Supporting sector analyses and sector plan development</p> <p>Application dates: Any time of year (rolling)</p>

¹⁴⁰ The evaluation team was not able to confirm if there were fixed dates for submission of grant applications.

STAGE IN GRANT CYCLE	ESPDG MECHANISM FROM 2012- 2016	ESPDG MECHANISM SINCE 2016
Grant application	<p>Long form (30 pages) with sections on program management, description of objectives and activities, implementation and budget</p> <p>Document requirements: LEG meeting minutes</p>	<p>Streamlined and shorter application form (5 pages) containing minimal information, but needs to be accompanied by a detailed concept note (averaging 10-15 pages long), an integrated roadmap, and ToRs for potential technical assistance needs.¹⁴¹</p>
Grant approval	<p>ESDPG approval process was similar to the Program Development Grant (PDG) and other small grants. Primarily a financial review.</p>	<p>Introduction of a technical review approach, requiring a more in-depth technical review. More time and effort dedicated to ESPDG application review.</p> <p>Introduction of review by experts, initially drawn from the GPE Secretariat Education Policy and Planning Team. This was discontinued and replaced with review by Country Support Team (CST) regional manager. There are different views in the Secretariat on the extent to which this still constitutes an independent technical review of the application.</p> <p>Changes to the Country Lead assessment form to conform to the new application form.</p>
Grant closing, evaluation and learning	<p>Completion assessment was based on one question: Did grant achieve its objective?</p>	<p>Completion assessment revised and based on three dimensions: effectiveness (implementation of the roadmap based on intended objectives), efficiency (use of funds) and relevance (added value in process and quality)¹⁴²</p>

¹⁴¹ Other documents required for the application include the LEG meeting minutes and TOR for the Grant Agent.

¹⁴² GPE Portfolio review 2018, p. 52

118. Clear guidelines communicated to partners and stakeholders: The revised ESPDG application guidelines are clear and comprehensive and readily available to stakeholders. They describe the entire grant management cycle, from the criteria for approval, approval process, to grant management and closing (see Box 10 for approval criteria). However, the evaluation has no information from stakeholders on how useful the guidelines have been for in-country stakeholders and this can be a point to follow up on during the next phase.

119. Separate funding windows for ESA and sector plan development: According to the revised ESPDG guidelines, applicants are encouraged to apply for the two different ESPDG funding windows separately as the outcome of the sector analysis can influence the definition of sector plan development activities. In practice, this does not happen frequently.

Based on our 16-country sample, Guinea and Uzbekistan are the only ones to have completed two separate applications for an ESA and sector plan development in consecutive years (2017 and 2018 in both cases) while 7 out of 14 post-2016 ESPDGs in our sample applied for both windows in a single application. It is not clear why this is the case, although it is possible that the prospect of having to develop two applications is seen as a greater burden for country partners.

120. More detailed and thorough application process: The application form was revised into a more streamlined template. The older template was longer (30 pages), featuring more sections to complete, and requiring fewer or no supporting documents.¹⁴³ The level of detail required in the older template was also quite variable, including the way budgets were presented. The new template requires more detailed supporting documents, namely: i) a Concept Note¹⁴⁴ describing the status of the education sector in the country and the rationale for applying for the ESPDG, ii) the Integrated Roadmap, which provides a detailed timeline and identifies sources of funding for ESP preparation (including from sources other than ESPDG), and iii) budget for the implementation of the ESPDG, whether for conducting the ESA or developing the

Box 10: ESPDG approval criteria as described in the 2016 guidelines

- Sector analyses: Do the planned analytical activities provide a sufficient analytical grounding for the launch of the ESP development process?
- Capacity development: Does the application demonstrate how the proposed activities lead to strengthening of the national systems responsible for sector analysis and planning?
- Partnership: Are the activities to be financed part of a broader and coherent set of activities and does the application demonstrate evidence of a broad consensus around proposed activities?
- Quality assurance: Does the roadmap clearly incorporate the three quality milestones for ESP/TEP development?
- Budget: Is the budget reasonable for the activities and for the grant agent costs? Is there a clear case presented for how costs will be managed to ensure value for money? To what extent will the ESPDG financing be additional and fill an existing gap?
- Risk assessment: Are there any risks to carrying out the activities outlined against the timeline, and if so, what mitigation measures are included?

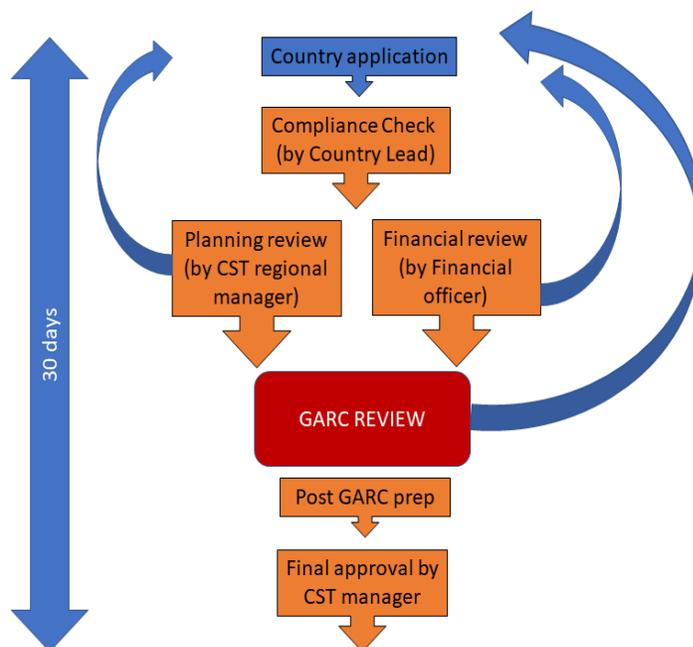
¹⁴³ In our sample of 25 applications prior to 2016, five required no additional supporting documents, and eight only required LEG meeting minutes in addition to the application form.

¹⁴⁴ Based on guidelines, the Concept Note includes the following: i) background and rationale for ESPDG application; ii) scope of work; iii) methodological approach; iv) modality of work; v) ownership and dissemination plan; and vi) staffing, timeframe, and budget.

ESP. Overall, the new application appears to be an improvement, but it is still too early to assess if this is making a difference in ESP quality.

121. **A stronger grant approval process:** ESPDG approval now follows a structured process overseen by the Grant Application Review Committee (GARC), comprised of Secretariat staff, that reviews and makes recommendations for approval of all small grants such as the ESPDGs and PDGs.¹⁴⁵ The GARC includes the GARC Chair, a Financial Lead, the Country Lead (CL), a Peer Reviewer from the Country Support Team (CST), an Education Specialist (ES) and the GARC coordinator.¹⁴⁶ The extent and nature of the technical review, which is now carried out by regional managers in the CST, is a concern that was raised by stakeholders interviewed, as further discussed in Finding 11 below. The GPE Board is not involved in the approval process.

Figure 3.19 GARC process map



122. Throughout this process, there is back and forth between GARC and the country, facilitated by the Country Lead (CL) and Grant Agent (GA), who help obtain clarifications, further documentation or simply strengthen the application in general. This part of the process appears to be critical and is likely the reason there are no rejections of applications in our sample.¹⁴⁷ However, these early exchanges at the country level are not documented (e.g., the type of feedback provided, the nature of the communications, the types of information shared, and country responses to these), which limits our understanding of the process.

123. **Grant approval process is efficient and in line with GPE Secretariat targets:** The GARC approval process aims to be as efficient as possible, providing grant decisions within 30 days (see Appendix VIII). This

¹⁴⁵ The GPE Board of Directors is not involved in the approval process.

¹⁴⁶ The GARC was also supposed to include a representative of the Secretariat's QA team, but this has not happened due to lack of capacity in the QA team to take this on.

¹⁴⁷ As noted by one respondent, "there are times when ESPDG applications are not approved at a given GARC meeting, but it is not an outright rejection. It is a question of improving the application."

has generally been the case in the Desk Study sample, where application processing times varied from 4-60 days (average of 25 days) with 10 out of 16 falling under the 30 days.¹⁴⁸ The approval process is efficient if all documents are complete when the application is submitted to GARC. Factors that may contribute to what is perceived as a streamlined internal process included: up-front exchanges with GA prior to grant application; clear procedures, roles and responsibilities in the GARC; and intentional efforts to ensure short meetings and quick turnaround times (e.g., two days for writing up GARC minutes).

Finding 11: Some aspects of the ESPDG management cycle are weak. The most important limitation is the lack of a mechanism to facilitate learning from past experience.

124. ESPDG application and review processes do not consider past experience with sector plan development and implementation. Neither application forms (old or new), nor the GARC application review process assess and/or incorporate a historical perspective.¹⁴⁹ Concept Notes focus primarily on the context and rationale for developing a new plan or conducting an ESA, with no explanation of challenges faced under previous plans, nor do they link any progress in the sector to the previous plan. In fact, based on a subset of five Concept Notes that were reviewed in detail,¹⁵⁰ little is mentioned about the previous plan except the reasons for why it needs to be updated (e.g., expiration, new government, new policies, no longer relevant). These Concept Notes also provided little/no information on the DCP's past experience in implementing the ESPDG. Similarly, CL Assessment Forms focus on the rationale for countries applying for the ESPDG and how the funds will be used, but no information is provided on past experience with plans. This is an important limitation as there is no assessment of challenges or lessons learned during previous plan development or plan implementation or what can be improved to ensure better planning processes within countries. See also discussion on use of ESPDG completion reports below.

125. Despite the emphasis given in the ESPDG guidelines, the grant applications and review process do not place emphasis on the capacity building dimension of plan development and related planning deliverables such as the ESA, thematic studies, simulation model, etc.¹⁵¹ The new CL Assessment Form does require an assessment of how the grant builds capacity development strategies into the process.¹⁵² However, of the eight new CL Assessment Forms available in our sample, only three said how capacity development would be addressed through the ESPDG; three did not comment on capacity and two addressed it only vaguely. A review of GARC meeting minutes in the Desk Study sample reveals that half (7 out of 14) did not discuss capacity development issues.

126. GPE Secretariat stakeholders question whether the grant review process integrates sufficient independent technical input as part of the QA of ESPDG applications. As noted above, in 2016, the GPE Secretariat introduced a formal process for technical and financial review of the ESPDG applications. Between 2016 and 2018, the Secretariat tested an approach to technical review in which the Secretariat's Education Policy and Planning (EPP) team members provided comments on grant applications.¹⁵³ As

¹⁴⁸ The 30 days is counted when the CL submits the application to the GARC coordinator up till it is signed by the CST manager. During this time, there can be back and forth between the country and GARC.

¹⁴⁹ Based on interviews (3 out of 12), review of 25 ESPDG applications, including a set of 5 Concept Notes, and CL assessment process

¹⁵⁰ Concept notes for Burkina Faso, Gambia, Eritrea, Lesotho and Uzbekistan.

¹⁵¹ GPE, ESPDG Guidelines 2018, p. 9-10

¹⁵² Under section III.4, Situating the ESPDG in the broader context, it asks "To what extent does it build capacity development strategies into the education sector analysis and planning process?"

¹⁵³ They provided in-depth comments in writing that assessed the country's background and context with regard to the application (including data collection and analysis, capacity development, the use of participatory processes,

technical experts, they were not directly involved in managing the country relationship and were perceived to provide a technical and more independent perspective to the GARC review process. However, this practice was discontinued in 2018, partly due to capacity constraints at the Secretariat (the process was viewed as time consuming) and due to questions about the relevance of such a technical review at the final stage of grant approval. At present, the technical review is performed by one of three CST regional managers with planning expertise, but time constraints limit the scope of this review. It is not clear if this revised approach to the technical review will bring greater focus on some of the key issues noted above, such as DCP experience with implementation of ESPs, capacity development in the context of the ESPDG, and lessons learned from DCP experience in using ESPDG grants.

127. To date, according to interviews, the Secretariat's QA unit has not been involved in providing quality assurance for ESPDG grants, nor does it have the capacity to do such reviews.

128. Despite ESPDG process changes that encourage better planning and sequencing of ESP development (Integrated Roadmap), the proposed duration of grant/timeline for completing planning activities is often not realistic. ESPDG policy states that extensions are limited to one six-month extension per grant cycle,¹⁵⁴ except under exceptional circumstances.¹⁵⁵ In our sample of 25 ESPDGs, 11 requested grant extensions to complete activities as the original timelines were unrealistic (eight of these were after 2016 and included a roadmap as part of the ESPDG application). GPE's recent Portfolio Review reports make similar observations. In FY18, 60 percent of ESPDGs received extensions with an average length of nine months (ranging from 1 to 24 months) and some countries obtained two and even three extensions.¹⁵⁶ In our sample, three countries (Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire and South Sudan) were granted two extension requests.

129. In addition, several Country Lead Assessments, which are made at the technical review stage, comment on the tight timelines for completing activities (6 out of 21 available assessment forms make note of this, and five of these were post-2016).¹⁵⁷ This is despite the continuous feedback (facilitated by the CL) provided to the country between application submission and approval.

3.3.3 GPE monitoring of ESPDG portfolio and other sector support modalities (EQ 3.2)

Finding 12: The monitoring of and reporting on ESPDG grants is focused on technical and financial aspects. The process to date has provided few opportunities for GPE to learn about the grant process and effects at the country level.

130. GPE's 2017 Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy provides a framework for monitoring ESPDG, ESPDG, and PDG grants at the country level and portfolio level. The Secretariat and Grant Agents play key roles in this process.

assessing past ESPs, sector financing, etc.) A small sample of technical reviews were provided to us, including Burundi, Djibouti, Eritrea, Guinea, Rwanda, Somalia, Sao Tome, and Timor Leste.

¹⁵⁴ GPE, ESPDG guidelines (2018), p.21

¹⁵⁵ Reasons for exceptional circumstances included: elections causing delays, change in ministry leadership, weak capacity (especially in fragile contexts), alignments with government timelines and increased emphasis on consultative processes and quality of plans (GPE, Portfolio Review 2018, p.52)

¹⁵⁶ GPE Portfolio Review (2018), p. 51-52. The Portfolio Review noted similar challenges for ESPDGs.

¹⁵⁷ Côte d'Ivoire (2016), Chad (2016), Eritrea (2013 and 2017), Guinea (2017), Rwanda (2017)

131. For ESPDGs, country-level performance monitoring at the Secretariat focuses on the completion of activities and on financial and process issues such as the timelines of grant approval, grant allocations and disbursements, and the status of grants based on GA progress reports, disbursement tracking data and CL mission reports.¹⁵⁸

132. Grant Agents are responsible for monitoring individual ESPDG grants, using their own monitoring system, policies and procedures.¹⁵⁹ Apart from completion reports, there is little other documentation available that provides evidence of GA monitoring the ESPDGs in this sample. The completion reports are a key source of monitoring of ESPDG grants for the Secretariat, yet non-compliance with submission of completion reports and poor-quality reports may limit their utility, despite improvements in the Completion Report assessment.¹⁶⁰ Few completion reports were available in our sample – only 11 out of 24 closed grants had completion reports. This problem is identified in the 2018 GPE Portfolio Review where only 10 completion reports were submitted out of the 17 ESPDGs closed in FY18.¹⁶¹ Most completion reports reviewed by the evaluation team provide only superficial information and focus more on the positives. The GARC plays no role in ESPDGs after grants are approved and does not consider past completion reports when reviewing new ESPDG applications.

133. At the portfolio level, the Secretariat monitoring draws on the data presented in the annual portfolio report (focused on type of support provided by ESPDG, extensions, and other aspects of grant management) and in the results report (through Indicator 16). It is also developing different approaches to tracking ESPDG. In January 2019, the Secretariat completed a coding exercise on ESPDG grant applications and other data, which tracks basic grant characteristics (amount, approval date, start date, end date, etc.) and data on the funds allocated to different types of activities (policy consultation, capacity development, technical assistance, ESA, ESP, appraisals, for example).

134. At this stage, none of these monitoring tools provide feedback on the implications/effects of ESPDGs on country capacity, the factors that limited implementation, or how/whether ESPDGs helped to improve the quality of ESPs and related planning deliverables such as ESAs. The new approach to “End-of-Cycle Country Summary,” as described in the M&E Strategy, may fill some of these gaps as it will document how GPE’s contribution throughout the policy cycle has contributed to country-level outputs. This will also enable consideration of the different modalities of support to education sector planning, which are not necessarily considered in the current monitoring of ESPDGs.

3.3.4 Key questions for next phase of the evaluation

135. The analysis of the management ESPDG and other modalities of support to sector planning identified several areas for further inquiry in the next phase of this evaluation:

- To what extent is the technical review of ESPDG application sufficient given the purpose of the grant?
- How useful are the ESPDG guidelines for in-country stakeholders? Is the ability to split the ESPDG into two different grants (one for ESA and one for sector planning) a helpful feature?

¹⁵⁸ This is also what is expected in the GPE Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy, July 2017, p. 7

¹⁵⁹ GPE, Guidelines for ESPDG, December 2018.

¹⁶⁰ There are more questions in the enhanced completion assessment introduced in 2016. Of the 11 completion reports available in the Desk Study, seven were prepared in or after 2016 and followed the new format.

¹⁶¹ GPE 2018 Portfolio Review, p. 52

- What are the strengths and limitations of the role of the GA in ESPDG management, including monitoring and reporting on grant implementation and completion?

4 Preliminary Conclusions and Hypotheses

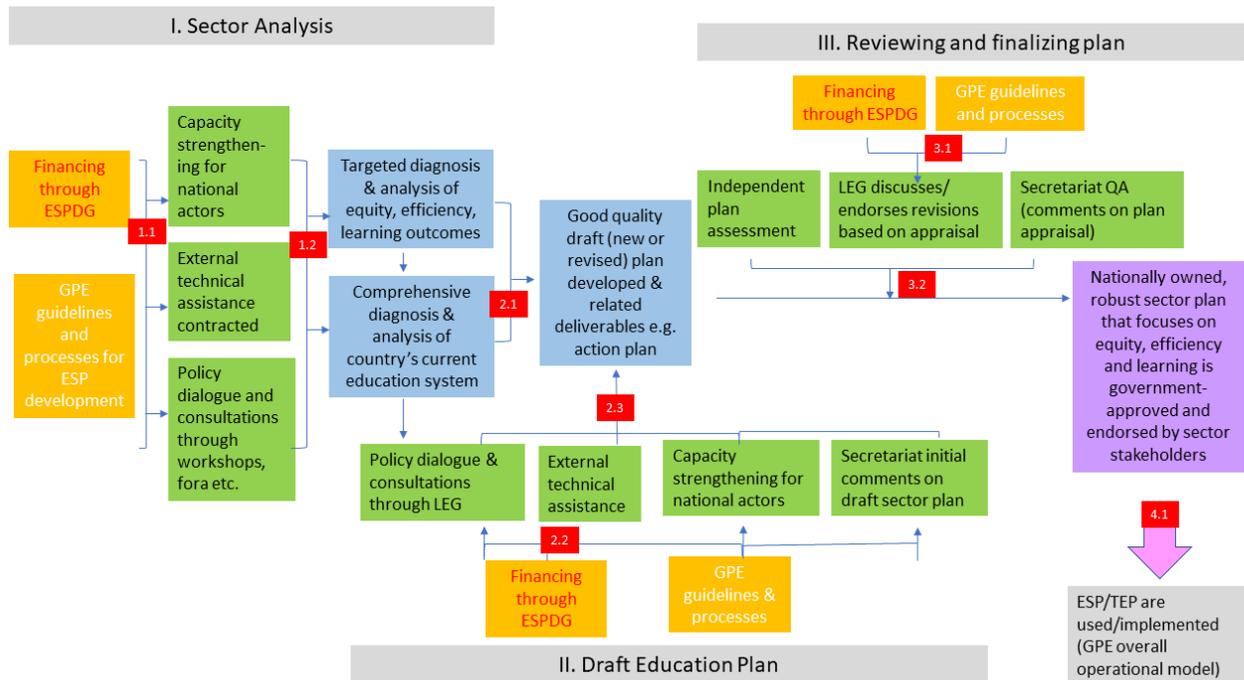
136. GPE's support to education sector planning since 2012 builds on the efforts of the EFA-FTI and other development partners to support DCPs in developing credible, robust, education sector plans that, if implemented, can help strengthen education systems. Based on the findings and questions raised in the previous sections, the Desk Study team presents the following preliminary conclusions and related hypotheses. These will be further explored during Phase 2 data collection as well as in upcoming CLEs in FYs 2019/2020.

Conclusion 1: Current modalities of GPE support to sector planning complement each other and are *strategically* relevant to the GPE objective to help countries develop education sector plans that meet common standards.

137. The combination of the ESPDG instrument, ESPIG funding requirements, content and process guidance on ESP and TEP development, and quality assurance processes provides a comprehensive set of support suited to provide countries with: i) an incentive to develop a comprehensive sector plan aligned with GPE standards, ii) a common definition of standards and systematic process for assessing sector plan quality, and iii) help to eliminate potential roadblocks (financing and/or technical expertise required) that might stand in the way of this objective. Members of the Partnership, such as UNESCO/IIEP/Pôle de Dakar, provide training and technical assistance that aim to strengthen individual and organizational capabilities for education sector planning and management.

138. The Desk Study findings generally confirm the draft theory of change of GPE's support to sector planning that was developed as part of this evaluation (Figure 4.1), up to the envisaged result of 'a robust sector plan being government approved and endorsed by sector stakeholders' (purple box on right side of diagram). This generalization is subject to wide variations at the country level, depending on the experience and technical skills of individual authors and consultants, the strength of government overall planning capability and changing political environments. As is further discussed under Conclusion 2, there is a need to continue to understand how the current approach to education sector planning in different contexts is meeting the needs of DCPs and leading to sector plans that are truly 'nationally owned'. Similarly, and as also addressed under Conclusion 2, the Desk Study highlights the need to better understand the various factors (and the interactions between them) that determine the extent to which sector plans are used to guide implementation and monitoring. These questions will be further explored in the next phase of this evaluation.

Figure 4.1 Draft theory of change of GPE's support to sector planning



139. Overall, the quality of sector plans completed during the review period (2012-2018) improved when measured against GPE standards, albeit with some variance/remaining weaknesses related to the criterion of being 'achievable'. Also, given the nature and purpose of Secretariat reviews, ESP/TEP ratings can only be indicative of the overall quality of plans and are not designed to capture every detail.

140. The Desk Study provides preliminary insights on the effects of revised GPE processes (enhanced QA procedures and new ESPDG application guidelines/tools), which have been in place only since 2016, and on the relevance and effectiveness of GPE support to sector planning. Emerging insights suggest some positive effects, including that the independent appraisal mechanism likely contributes to enhancing the quality of sector plans so that more plans meet the GPE standards, at least partly due to the introduction of the appraisal memo that is required as part of the ESPIG application.

141. The following hypotheses derive from the Desk Study findings and indicate key issues to be further explored in upcoming CLEs and country data collection during the second part of this study.

- **Hypothesis 1.1:** The revised ESPDG application process – especially the requirement to develop an integrated roadmap – helps countries develop more realistic plans for completing the ESP and TEP.
- **Hypothesis 1.2:** The availability of separate funding windows for ESAs, and the increased overall amount available for ESPDGs, helps countries carry out sector analyses that are relevant to and reflected in the development of quality sector plans.
- **Hypothesis 1.3:** The revised QA process for sector plan development¹⁶² provides a more systematic approach to quality assurance that contributes to improving the quality of resulting sector plans.

¹⁶² i.e., Secretariat initial comments on ESP/TEP, enhanced independent appraisal (including appraiser training), appraisal check, and appraisal memo from the LEG

Conclusion 2: It is less evident to what extent GPE support to sector planning is equally and consistently operationally relevant¹⁶³ to helping country governments implement sector plans.

142. Within the draft theory of change, this indicates that there is not enough evidence to confirm validity of the assumed link (labeled 4.1 in Figure 4.1 above) between the existence of a quality ESP and its use/implementation. As indicated in CLEs conducted in FY 2018, implementation of ESPs/TEPs and related monitoring of progress have shown (sometimes severe) weaknesses in a number of countries. This raises questions about the extent to which sector plans produced with GPE support meet the practical needs of DCPs.¹⁶⁴ There are a number of possible reasons why plans are not used, all of which will be explored in the next stage. These could include: (a) the view of Government may be that the plan is written with the main purpose of securing external funding; (b) the plan itself may not comprise appropriate instruments for ensuring realistic implementation and effective monitoring, with clear accountability mechanisms; (c) plans may not match existing government capacity, reflecting the fact that they have not been informed by detailed capacity assessments or related strategies for capacity strengthening; (d) since any plan is also a “political” document, there may be proposals that are not feasible but are necessary in terms of seeking support from country interest groups, lobbies, the Ministry of Finance, etc.; (e) contextual changes – including changes in government, as well as political, economic or health crises – may influence the extent to which the respective government perceives the sector plan as still being relevant.

143. The above-noted conclusion and related observations lead to the following hypotheses that will be further tested in upcoming country-level evaluations and the second part of this evaluation. These hypotheses reflect the key underlying assumptions for the link between sector plan quality and its use/implementation that are outlined in the draft ToC.

- **Hypothesis 2.1.** If DCPs perceive QA processes for ESP development, including the independent appraisal process, not as obstacles to overcome in order to access GPE funding, but as opportunities for strengthening the education system, then implementation will become a more central task.
- **Hypothesis 2.2:** The existence of a detailed action plan that spells out roles and responsibilities of key actors as well as realistic indicators and targets, and that is linked to national annual planning/budget systems would increase the likelihood of successful sector plan implementation.
- **Hypothesis 2.3:** Increased government *capabilities* (knowledge, skills, experience, data and monitoring systems) will lead to more effective monitoring that informs implementation. One specific issue in this context on which more information is needed are what factors support or hinder countries in using data deriving from education sector analyses.
- **Hypothesis 2.4:** *Motivation* (right types/number of incentives, political will, sense of ownership) is essential to encourage implementation. This hypothesis includes several sub-hypotheses:
 - Ownership of sector plans is influenced by a variety of factors, including the extent to which the DCP government has exercised (and perceives itself as having demonstrated) active leadership

¹⁶³ As described in section 3.1, *operational relevance* refers to alignment with the practical needs of intended beneficiaries, in this case DCP governments. It is used to distinguish from *strategic relevance*, which refers to alignment with organizational priorities, in this case, alignment with the goals and objectives outlined in the GPE strategic plan.

¹⁶⁴ It should be noted that the summative CLEs completed in FY 2018 focused on DCPs and policy cycles that pre-dated the new GPE Funding Model (ESPIG requirements introduced in 2015), enhanced QAR-ESP procedures, and revised ESPDG guidelines.

for and influence on both the content and processes leading to ESP/TEP development. More insights are required to better understand key factors that determine degrees of ownership.¹⁶⁵

- The more sector plan development is led by the Ministry of Education and is based on participatory policy dialogue processes, the more likely the ministry is to use the plan.
 - The stronger the leadership that the Ministry of Education displays for sector plan development, the more likely development partners are to align and harmonize their own activities with the plan.
 - Disseminating key elements of the sector plan (and, where appropriate, recommendations from the ESA) in meaningful and accessible ways¹⁶⁶ will increase the likelihood of implementation.
- **Hypothesis 2.5:** Country-level stakeholders, in particular government actors, but other sector actors including development partners and civil society organizations, do not always have adequate *opportunities*¹⁶⁷ (such as adequate amounts and types of funding and a conducive external environment) to use the sector plan. Future data collection will need to further explore to what extent external factors, such as economic or political shocks, corruption, natural disasters or conflict, likely are responsible for lack of sector plan implementation. This will be contrasted with gaps in plan implementation that are (more) likely to derive from characteristics of the sector plans themselves and/or internal factors related to key actors' capabilities or motivation. A related sub-hypothesis is:
 - The extent to which relevant government actors other than the Ministry of Education (e.g., Ministry of Planning, Finance, Economic Affairs, Prime Minister's office) have ownership of the sector plan is a crucial factor influencing plan implementation.
 - **Hypothesis 2.6:** Applying differentiated approaches to sector planning that are adjusted to specific country contexts could be more relevant and effective in certain country contexts. GPE has been using the same model to support sector planning that was used during the EFA-FTI period (2002 -2012). It may be time to review the idea of comprehensive education plans that cover multiple years (typically between three and ten-year periods) which has characterized the requirements of funding agencies for the past three decades. Alternative approaches, such as those using "rolling plans" updated yearly on the basis of progress, might be more appropriate in some country contexts, especially those that have established good sector monitoring practices.¹⁶⁸

144. Insights on these six hypotheses can inform later recommendations to GPE on what types of adjustments may be required in its support to sector plan development and/or post sector plan completion, i.e., during ESP/TEP implementation and monitoring. The aim of further testing these hypotheses is also to gain insights on factors that likely influence this process and which, if any, of these apply in a certain context.

¹⁶⁵ Data may also reveal correlations among factors, such as between ESP/TEP ownership on the one side and (combinations of factors such as) the respective country's aid dependency, degree of aid fragmentation, and/or overall government capacity on the other side.

¹⁶⁶ I.e. dissemination that goes beyond making available the full document, but including, for example, easily readable brochures, posters and/or dissemination and awareness raising events.

¹⁶⁷ The evaluation team understands the concept of 'capacity' to be constituted by the sum of (i) actors' capabilities (knowledge and skills), (ii) motivation (e.g. incentives), and (iii) external factors described as "opportunities".

¹⁶⁸ In theory, even now longer-term sector plans should be accompanied by shorter-term operational plans that would fulfill the idea of a 'rolling plan'. However, CLEs conducted to date found that most sector plans reviewed so far either had no or weak action/operational plans, and that in most cases there was no evidence of such plans being updated annually. In addition, this model still requires the development of a comprehensive longer-term plan, and the evaluation raises the question whether this 'big' plan is the best approach to take in all contexts. There are issues to consider in making these shifts, including the timeliness and adequacy of data.

Conclusion 3: GPE support has some potential to help strengthen in-country capacity for sector planning but does not yet pursue this aim consistently and systematically.

145. ESPDGs provide countries with financial means to pursue capacity development-related activities, both in terms of strengthening staff capabilities and in strengthening the evidence base for sector planning through ESAs and related deliverables. Also, going through sector planning processes repeatedly over time can contribute to key stakeholders (individuals and organizations) gaining experience in related processes and content.

146. GPE has not clearly defined its envisaged role in capacity development for education sector planning, monitoring and evaluation, and it does not have a way to track country progress in this regard. It is difficult to identify specific measures that are able to capture a ministry of education's increased capacities over a 10 to 20-year period. Numerous actors in the Partnership, such as UNESCO/IIEP have thought about this particular issue over the past decade.¹⁶⁹ GPE, UNESCO/IIEP Pôle de Dakar, UNICEF and World Bank are introducing a new chapter on the assessment of education management capacities as part of the methodological guidelines for ESA. It will be important for GPE to come up with at least a broad concept of what it means for countries to have strengthened planning capacity.

147. The following hypotheses derive from these observations and indicate key areas for further exploration in FY 2019.

- **Hypothesis 3.1:** One reason why countries strongly rely on external consultants is that sector plan development is primarily perceived as a hurdle to overcome as quickly and efficiently as possible on the way to accessing ESPIG (and, potentially, other donors') funding. Given that sector plans have to meet GPE standards, using external consultants to lead plan preparation is 'safer' in contexts where the DCP does not have the national capacity to do so.
- **Hypothesis 3.2:** Demand for capacity development from ministries in charge of education is limited and largely confined to addressing competencies of individuals, rather than also reflecting the capacity needs of the ministries in charge of education and the institutions of the sector as a whole, including related organizational and political economy challenges.¹⁷⁰ Approaches to capacity development are not based on institutional analysis (comprising capacity assessments to enable priority setting for capacity strengthening) related to the country's key sector priorities.

Conclusion 4: Overall, GPE is employing good management practices for its support to sector planning, especially in managing ESPDG applications and approvals. There is room for improvement, however, in monitoring and learning from past experience in providing ESPDGs and other types of support.

148. GPE's ESPDG grant approval process is efficient, in line with the targets that the Secretariat has set, and suited to minimizing financial risk for GPE. The Secretariat has also strengthened the grant approval process, which is characterized by clear guidelines and transparent approval criteria. Separate funding

¹⁶⁹ For example, UNESCO/IIEP, Anton de Grauwe, *Without capacity, there is no development*, 2009 and UNESCO/IIEP, Lynne Bethke, *Capacity development in education planning and management in fragile states*, 2009.

¹⁷⁰ The notion that capacity needs are rarely translated into effective demand for capacity development in education sector is based on Frederiksen (2016) and discussed in Bashir, Sajitha, Marlaine Lockheed, Elizabeth Ninan, and Jee-Peng Tan. 2018. *Facing Forward: Schooling for Learning in Africa*. Africa Development Forum series. Washington, DC: World Bank. doi:10.1596/978-1-46481260-6. License: Creative Commons Attribution CC BY 3.0 IGO, p. 426. This was also noted in the recent evaluation of Pôle de Dakar, Icon Institut, Évaluation de l' IIEP-Pôle de Dakar, 12 November 2018, p. 44.

windows for ESA and sector plan development leave room for context-specific flexibility while clearly supporting GPE priorities (i.e., evidence-based sector planning).

149. The ESPDG approval process focuses primarily on the financial dimensions of the grant. The ESPDG application and review processes do not consider past experience with ESP development and implementation or with past ESPDG use. In addition, there are recurring problems such as unrealistic timelines for completing ESPDG activities, which lead to questions about whether and how the Secretariat can/should strengthen the review process for ESPDG applications in terms of providing a more in-depth technical review.

150. Secretariat efforts around ESPDG management center on the approval process and give less weight to the implementation and closing stages of ESPDG grants. The little emphasis on monitoring greatly reduces the potential for learning from these experiences. The Desk Study did not explore the role of the GA in the management of the ESPDG and other modalities of support to sector planning, which is to be done in next phase of interviews at the country level.

151. In relation to this conclusion and observations, the following hypothesis will be further explored during FY 2019.

- **Hypothesis 4.1:** Countries tend to submit applications for the two ESPDG funding windows (for ESA and sector plan development) together rather than using ESA findings to inform an application for the second window because of tight overall timelines for sector plan development, which are tied to when the country needs the next ESPIG application to be approved.
- **Hypothesis 4.2:** Country-level actors' (including GA) roles in the overall management of ESPDG and other modalities of support to education sector planning do not always play out in practice as theoretically intended. More information is needed on the actual division of labor between the Secretariat and country-level actors in different contexts and reasons for that division of labor (e.g., is it due to a lack of clarity among country-level actors about their respective roles as intended by GPE? Is it due to pragmatic reasons, i.e., do country-level actors including GA not see a need for, and/or lack motivation (incentives) to engage in a more 'hands-on' way?)

152. The above-noted conclusions and related hypotheses will guide the evaluation team during the next phase of the evaluation. While not replacing the broader questions outlined in the evaluation matrix, the conclusions and hypotheses outline specific issues to focus on in the context of these broader questions. Meanwhile, the evaluation team will continue to pursue the overall questions as described in the matrix and will remain open to identifying and testing other relevant hypotheses that may emerge in upcoming CLEs and/or data collection for this review. The final evaluation report will include a brief overview (probably in table format) summarizing the extent to which the evaluation team has been able to collect relevant data on each of the noted conclusions and hypotheses, as this will likely vary by topic and by country.

Table 4.1 Summary of conclusions and hypotheses

CONCLUSION	RELATED HYPOTHESES AND SUB-HYPOTHESES TO BE TESTED (IF/AS FEASIBLE)
<p>1. Current modalities of GPE support to sector planning complement each other and are <i>strategically</i> relevant to the GPE objective to help countries develop education sector plans that meet common standards.</p>	<p>1.1 The revised ESPDG application process – especially the requirement to develop an integrated roadmap – helps countries develop more realistic plans for completing the ESP and TEP.</p> <p>1.2 The availability of a separate funding window for ESAs, and the increased overall amount available for ESPDGs, helps countries carry out sector analyses that are relevant to and reflected in the development of quality sector plans.</p> <p>1.3 The revised QA process for sector plan development provides a more systematic approach to quality assurance that contributes to improving the quality of resulting sector plans</p>
<p>2. It is less evident to what extent GPE support to sector planning is equally and consistently <i>operationally</i> relevant to helping country governments implement sector plans.</p>	<p>2.1 If DCPs perceive QA processes for ESP development, including the independent appraisal process, not as obstacles to overcome in order to access GPE funding, but as opportunities for strengthening the education system, then implementation will become a more central task.</p> <p>2.2 The existence of a detailed action plan that spells out roles and responsibilities of key actors as well as realistic indicators and targets, and that is linked to national annual planning/budget systems would increase the likelihood of successful sector plan implementation</p> <p>2.3 Increased government capabilities (knowledge, skills, experience, data and monitoring systems) will lead to more effective monitoring that informs implementation. One specific issue in this context on which more information is needed are what factors support or hinder countries in using data deriving from education sector analyses.</p> <p>2.4 Motivation (right types/number of incentives, political will, sense of ownership) is essential to encourage implementation.</p> <p>2.4.1 Ownership of sector plans is influenced by a variety of factors, including the extent to which the DCP government has exercised (and perceives itself as having demonstrated) active leadership for and influence on both the content and processes leading to ESP/TEP development. More insights are required to better understand key factors, and correlations among these factors that determine degrees of ownership.</p> <p>2.4.2 The more sector plan development is led by the Ministry of Education and is based on participatory policy dialogue processes, the more likely the ministry is to use the plan.</p> <p>2.4.3 The stronger leadership the Ministry of Education displays for sector plan development, the more likely development partners are to align and harmonize their own activities with the plan.</p>

CONCLUSION	RELATED HYPOTHESES AND SUB-HYPOTHESES TO BE TESTED (IF/AS FEASIBLE)
	<p>2.4.4 Disseminating key elements of the sector plan and, as appropriate, some recommendations from the ESA in meaningful and accessible ways will increase the likelihood of implementation</p> <p>2.5 Country-level stakeholders, in particular government actors, but other sector actors including development partners and civil society organizations, do not always have adequate <i>opportunities</i> (such as adequate amounts and types of funding and a conducive external environment) to use the sector plan.</p> <p>2.5.1 The extent to which relevant government actors other than the Ministry of Education (e.g. Ministry of Planning, Finance, Economic Affairs, Prime Ministers' office) have ownership of the sector plan is a crucial factor influencing plan implementation</p> <p>2.6 Applying differentiated approaches to sector planning that are adjusted to specific country contexts could be more relevant and effective in certain country contexts.</p>
<p>3. GPE support has some potential to help strengthen in-country capacity for sector planning but does not yet pursue this aim consistently and systematically.</p>	<p>3.1 One reason why countries strongly rely on external consultants is that sector plan development is primarily perceived as a hurdle to overcome as quickly and efficiently as possible on the way to accessing ESPIG (and, potentially, other donors') funding.</p> <p>3.2 Demand for capacity development from ministries in charge of education is limited and largely confined to addressing competencies of individuals, rather than also reflecting the capacity needs of the ministries in charge of education and the institutions of the sector as a whole, including related organizational and political economy challenges.</p>
<p>4. Overall, GPE is employing good management practices for its support to sector planning, especially in managing ESPDG applications and approvals. There is room for improvement, however, in monitoring and learning from past experience in providing ESPDGs and other types of support.</p>	<p>4.1 Countries tend to submit applications for the two ESPDG funding windows (for ESA and sector plan development) together rather than using ESA findings to inform an application for the second window because of tight overall timelines for sector plan development, which are tied to when the country needs the next ESPIG application to be approved.</p> <p>4.2 Country-level actors' (including GA) roles in the overall management of ESPDG and other modalities of support to education sector planning do not always play out in practice as theoretically intended.</p>

Appendix I Methodology

This note describes the methodology the Evaluation of GPE's Support to Education Sector Planning, with emphasis on the Desk Study, which was conducted between October 2018 and January 2019.

Methodological approach

The overall approach to the evaluation is formative in that the study aims to assist GPE in taking stock of achievements made to date and– if and as required – further improving its approach to supporting country level education sector planning processes.

The guiding framework for the evaluation is the evaluation matrix presented in Appendix II and the draft constructed theory of change (ToC) for GPE support to sector planning presented in section 1.2. The evaluation team's approach to answering the evaluation questions was theory-based, which involved developing a ToC and testing the assumptions that lie behind it, many of which relate to factors in the context in which an ESP is developed. In theory-based evaluation, assumptions are examined in sequence along the causal pathway(s) and a determination through evidence is made regarding whether each holds or does not hold, and where breakdowns in the ToC's internal logic appear to have occurred.¹⁷¹

Theory of Change for GPE support to sector plan development

As per its 2020 strategic plan (strategic objective 1a), GPE aims to support countries in developing “evidence-based, nationally owned sector plans focused on equity, efficiency and learning.” To achieve this objective, GPE offers multi-pronged types of support to sector planning processes that (currently) encompass:¹⁷²

- **Financing** of sector planning processes through Education Sector Plan Development Grants (ESPDGs). These grants, one key component of GPE support, provide funding of up to US\$500,000 to support developing country partners (DCP) during sector planning processes.¹⁷³ Eligible activities that can be funded through ESPDG are (i) the conduct of sector analyses and other targeted studies; (ii) support for the preparation (development or revision) and finalization of quality sector plans¹⁷⁴ including through technical assistance, capacity development and policy dialogue and consultations; and (iii) independent plan appraisal.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷¹ See, for example: Sue C. Funnell & Patricia J. Rogers. 2011. *Purposeful Programme Theory: Effective Use of Theories of Change and Logic Models* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass).

¹⁷² Sources: 1. Evaluation TOR; 2. GPE (2016). Roadmap for education sector plan development grants. Available at <https://www.globalpartnership.org/content/roadmap-education-sector-plan-development-grants>, 3. GPE (2017). How GPE works in partner countries. Available at <https://www.globalpartnership.org/content/how-gpe-works-partner-countries>.

¹⁷³ The maximum funding allocation of US\$500,000 is for two separate components: US\$250,000 is intended to fund the Education Sector Analysis (ESA) and other targeted studies that will inform the development of the sector plan, while up to US\$250,000 is intended to fund planning activities as well as the independent appraisal of the plan.

¹⁷⁴ Be it Education Sector Plans (ESP) or Transitional Education Sector Plans (TEPs) in the context of conflict and/or fragility.

¹⁷⁵ Additionally, a few ESPDGs were used to finance the preparation and organization of Joint Sector Reviews (JSRs), for instance in Djibouti.

- **Direct technical assistance** to partner countries through the grant agent, the coordinating agency, and/or other development partners and other sources;
- **A set of guidelines and processes** used up until plan appraisal. In addition to Secretariat advice provided at a distance, these include:
 - **Guidance documents** on sector plan preparation that outline quality criteria both on the process of plan development and on content characteristics of a ‘good’ ESP/TEP; and
 - **Quality assurance mechanisms for sector plan development, which includes four phases**¹⁷⁶: (i) sharing of tools, resources and guidelines during initial consultation; (ii) providing initial comments on the draft ESP/TEP from the Secretariat; (iii) the obligation (since 2015) to have the draft ESP/TEP appraised by an external, IIEP-trained reviewer based on GPE/IIEP guidelines; followed by an Appraisal Check during which the Secretariat reviews the Appraisal Report against expected GPE standards and provides feedback to the LEG. The LEG then prepares an Appraisal Memo that identifies how appraisal findings and recommendations will be considered during the next phase of ESP/TEP development; before (iv) GPE, through the Coordinating Agency, provides support to the country during ESP/TEP finalization to ensure that the LEG endorses the sector plan.

Figure i.1 below provides a visual representation of the (partly implicit) theory of change that underlies GPE’s support to sector planning at the country level. The figure is based on the evaluation team’s preliminary understanding of this pathway of change based on a review of relevant GPE documents.¹⁷⁷

The visual representation of the ToC in Figure i.1 distinguishes between GPE financial inputs (amber box/red font) and non-financial inputs (amber/white font), direct GPE contributions deriving from these inputs (green boxes), intermediate results (blue boxes) as well as the overall objective (purple boxes). The numbered red boxes (from 1.1 to 4.1) indicate key logical linkages (assumptions) that connect different elements of the theory of change to one another (*‘IF x, THEN y happens’*). These are elaborated on in Table i.1 below. The numbering of these boxes is aligned with the anticipated sequencing of achievements (1. Sector analysis, 2. Development of draft sector plan, 3. Review and finalization of sector plan, and 4.1 link to the broader GPE operational model that anticipates use/implementation of the ESP/TEP and, ultimately, contributions to strengthening the respective education system, learning outcomes, equity and gender equality). The Desk Study phase provides insights to help refine the ToC by attempting to establish, based on the gathered evidence, whether the results and assumptions predicted in the ToC were realized and/or, if applicable, whether some expected links within the TOC could not be supported by evidence. Testing the ToC also includes reflecting, again based on available evidence, on whether the ‘package’ of support provided by GPE appears to be the *only* factor likely to have influenced the observed changes, in which case we could speak of *causation* rather than contribution – or whether additional factors are likely to have played a role, in which case GPE support is likely to have *contributed* to the change (unless there is evidence that the other factors alone were sufficient to cause the results).

¹⁷⁶ The evaluation analyzed these phases in greater detail.

¹⁷⁷ Including the GPE strategic plan 2020; the 2017 GPE country level process guide (*How GPE works in partner countries*); and the 2016 *Roadmap for education sector plan development grants*.

Figure i.1 Draft theory of change of GPE's support to sector planning¹⁷⁸

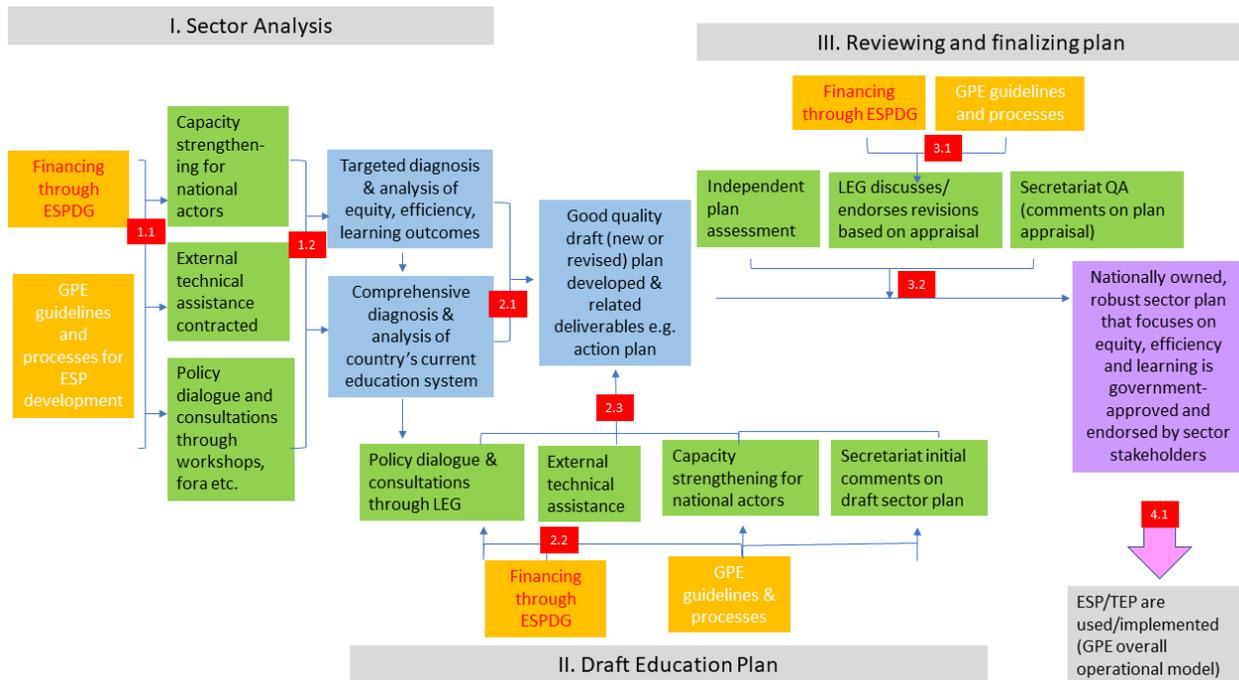


Table i.1 outlines some (largely implicit) logical assumptions that – based on the evaluation team’s understanding – underlie the depicted change processes.

Table i.1 Key underlying assumptions

TOC ELEMENT (THIS OCCURS ...)	LOGICALLY IMPLIED ASSUMPTIONS (...IF THESE CONDITIONS ARE IN PLACE)
A) GPE financial and non-financial inputs contribute to comprehensive and targeted sector analysis and related studies (1.1. and 1.2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GPE financial and non-financial inputs are relevant (e.g., based on reasonable criteria, appropriate in the specific country context, timely). • Country-level stakeholders¹⁷⁹ and (where applicable) external consultants have adequate <i>capabilities</i> (knowledge, skills, experience) to conduct quality and comprehensive sector analyses/targeted studies.¹⁸⁰ • Country-level stakeholders have sufficient <i>motivation</i> (right types/number of incentives, political will) to conduct quality and comprehensive sector analyses/studies. • Country-level stakeholders have sufficient <i>opportunities</i> (adequate amounts and types of funding, time) for carrying out relevant and comprehensive sector analyses/studies

¹⁷⁸ Same as Figure 1.1 presented in Background section of the report

¹⁷⁹ Developing country governments and LEG members, in particular

¹⁸⁰ Mayne (2017) suggests analyzing changes in individual or organizational ‘capacity’, as the foundation of behavioral and practice change, by exploring the three interrelated dimensions of *capabilities* (knowledge, skills), *motivation* (incentives, political will), and *opportunity* (funding, conducive external context). See: Mayne, John. *The COM-B Theory of Change Model*. Working paper. February 2017

TOC ELEMENT (THIS OCCURS ...)	LOGICALLY IMPLIED ASSUMPTIONS (...IF THESE CONDITIONS ARE IN PLACE)
	AND existing opportunities are not negatively affected by external factors (e.g., political, macro-economic, social contexts, timing of ESPIG funding).
B) GPE financial and non-financial inputs, together with comprehensive and targeted sector analysis, contribute to the development of a quality draft sector plan that meets GPE quality criteria related to sector planning processes and plan content. (2.1 – 2.3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GPE financial and non-financial inputs, including recommended processes for ESP development, are relevant (e.g., based on reasonable criteria, appropriate in the specific country context, timely). • Country-level stakeholders and (where applicable) external consultants have adequate <i>capabilities</i> (knowledge, skills, experience) for developing a draft plan drawing upon data deriving from recent sector analysis. • Country-level stakeholders have sufficient <i>motivation</i> (right types/number of incentives, political will) to develop an evidence-based plan using participatory and inclusive processes and drawing upon sector analysis findings. This includes the assumption that national stakeholders consider GPE guidelines and standards for ESP development as relevant and not just a requirement for receiving an ESPIG. • Country-level stakeholders have adequate <i>opportunities</i> (adequate amounts and types of funding, time) for developing a quality draft plan that meets GPE standards AND existing opportunities are not negatively affected by external factors (e.g., political, macro-economic, social contexts, timing of ESPIG funding).
C) GPE financial and non-financial inputs, together with a good quality draft plan, contribute to the approval and endorsement of a nationally owned evidence-based plan that meets GPE standards. (3.1-3.2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Country-level stakeholders (government, LEG) have adequate <i>capabilities</i> (knowledge, skills, experience) for revising and improving the draft plan to meet GPE standards. This includes the assumption that recommendations deriving from Secretariat quality assurance and external plan review are technically sound, relevant to the country context, realistic to be addressed at this stage of the planning process, and clearly formulated. • Country-level stakeholders have the <i>motivation</i> (right types/number of incentives, desire/conviction) to revise and improve the draft plan to meet standards. This includes the assumptions that stakeholders consider recommendations deriving from Secretariat quality assurance and external plan review as legitimate, relevant and realistic. • Country-level stakeholders have adequate <i>opportunities</i> (adequate amounts and types of funding, time) for revising and finalizing the plan to incorporate recommendations AND existing opportunities are not negatively affected by external factors.
D) Country-level stakeholders use the final sector plan to guide implementation of programs/projects, and regularly review and update the plan by means of participatory and inclusive sector monitoring and ongoing policy dialogue. (4.1).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Country-level stakeholders (government, LEG) have adequate <i>capabilities</i> (knowledge, skills, experience, data and monitoring systems) to use the sector plan, monitor its implementation and regularly review its continued relevance. • Country-level stakeholders have the <i>motivation</i> (right types/number of incentives, political will) to use, monitor implementation, and review continued relevance of the sector plan. • Country-level stakeholders have adequate <i>opportunities</i> (adequate amounts and types of funding, conducive external environment) to use, monitor, and review the sector plan.

Element 'D' in the table above goes beyond the issue of GPE support for sector planning. We have included it here nevertheless to emphasize that for GPE the development of sector plans is not a stand-alone final objective but a crucial element in the overall GPE theory of change and operational model that address the ongoing policy cycle. As such, sector planning is (or should be) a dynamic process rather than a one-off event. Data collection at the country level (to be conducted later in 2019) will therefore explore (to the extent possible based on available data) the extent to which in-country stakeholders have actually used and dynamically adapted existing sector plans to meet the evolving needs of their respective contexts.

Scope

The evaluation assignment encompasses two phases: this **desk study phase** that focuses on assessing the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of the ESPDG instrument and the relevance and effectiveness of the Quality Assurance (QA-ESP) process, and on identifying key hypotheses related to GPE support for sector planning, and a second **country consultation phase** that will test these hypotheses by gathering additional data at the country level.

Sampling strategy

Between 2012 and May 2018, a total of 78 ESPDGs¹⁸¹ worth US\$22.6 million were granted to 66 different countries, federal states¹⁸² and, in two cases, to regional groupings.¹⁸³ These 66 developing country partners (DCPs) constitute the core population from which the sample was taken. Among these, 14 countries received an ESPDG twice.¹⁸⁴ Also, consultations and review of documents during the inception phase indicated that since 2016, 13 of the 66 DCPs used the full, new quality assurance process (i.e., both the new QA procedure and new appraiser training),¹⁸⁵ while 11 DCPs had a trained appraiser only (no new QA procedure),¹⁸⁶ and two DCPs used the new QA procedure only (no trained appraiser).¹⁸⁷

These characteristics of the population became the basis for a **two-phase purposeful sampling** approach to allow the evaluation to focus on DCPs that have certain characteristics that are relevant to answering the evaluation questions. The sampling process identified a set of countries with ESPs/TEPs (developed with the support of an ESPDG) based on the following two sampling phases and related key criteria.

¹⁸¹ Excluding an ESPDG to Liberia that was canceled in 2013.

¹⁸² Sindh, Balochistan, Zanzibar (Tanzania) and the autonomous governments of Puntland and Somaliland in Somalia.

¹⁸³ The Organization of Eastern Caribbean States and the Pacific islands.

¹⁸⁴ Benin, Cambodia, Chad, CAR, Comoros, Djibouti, Eritrea, The Gambia, Guinea, Lao PDR, Lesotho, Sierra Leone, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan.

¹⁸⁵ Burkina Faso, Burundi, Comoros, Cote d'Ivoire, Eritrea, Ghana, Madagascar, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia Federal, South Sudan, The Gambia, and Zanzibar.

¹⁸⁶ Afghanistan, Cabo Verde, DRC, Guinea Bissau, Lesotho, Liberia, Myanmar, Nicaragua, PNG, Puntland, and Somaliland.

¹⁸⁷ Chad and Sudan.

Phase 1 sampling and related criteria – One of the key tenets of this evaluation is to examine whether changes (positive and negative) in the ESPDG process over time have had an effect on the quality of sector planning and of the sector plans. Also, a positive feature of this evaluation is that it develops synergies with the country-level evaluation (CLE). Therefore, the primary selection criteria for Phase 1 sampling were that countries:

- (a) must have received more than one ESPDG, to allow for comparison over time; and/or
- (b) must be included in the CLE sample, to allow for maximization of data collection efficiencies through maximum overlap between the countries included in this study and in the CLE.

The Phase 1 sampling and related criteria sought to ensure optimum coverage of both (a) and (b). Of note, the two criteria are not mutually exclusive, and a given DCP could be in the CLE group and have received more than one ESPDG. This Phase 1 sampling produced a stratum of 35 countries that either have had two ESPDGs or are in the CLE sample, and are then passed to Phase 2 sampling below.

Phase 2 sampling and related criteria – Two key questions for the evaluation to address are (i) the extent to which the revised quality assurance (QA) process related to the ESPDG cycle has contributed to improving the quality of sector plans and of the sector planning process; and (ii) the extent to which the new ESP appraisal process has contributed to improving the consistency and quality of the plans. In order to analyze the effect of the revised QA/appraisal processes on ESP quality, the evaluation compares sector plans developed after these processes were introduced (i.e., since 2016) with previous ESPs developed with the previous QA and/or appraisal processes. Therefore, once the stratum of 35 DCPs that met Phase 1 criteria was established, the criteria applied for the Phase 2 sampling helped select countries that:

- (a) had two or more ESPDGs (to maximize coverage of before/after comparisons of planning grants); and/or
- (b) had one or more elements of the quality assurance process (i.e., the new QA procedures, the new appraiser training, or both).¹⁸⁸

The Phase 2 sampling produced a final sample of 16 countries (shown in table i.2 below) that developed ESP/TEPs with the support of ESPDGs (and received a total of 26 ESPDGs).¹⁸⁹ The Desk Study included the full sample of 16 countries. The subsequent country consultation phase will focus on a subset composed of the 13 countries that are part of the CLE portfolio.¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁸ There are five countries that used the full new quality assurance process (i.e., both the new QA procedures and new appraiser training) but will not be investigated through this evaluation: Burundi, Ghana, Madagascar, Somalia, and Zanzibar.

¹⁸⁹ Two countries in our sample (Guinea and Uzbekistan) applied for separate ESPDGs in 2017-2018 under windows 1 and 2. They have been counted as one application here.

¹⁹⁰ From the full 16-country sample, Chad, Comoros, and Eritrea will not be part of the country consultation phase for the present evaluation, as they are not included in the CLE sample.

Table i.2 Characteristics of sample of countries¹⁹¹

COUNTRIES	NUMBER OF ESPDGS RECEIVED	NUMBER OF ESPS AND TEPS IN SAMPLE RATED BY GPE	CLE STATUS	DCP USED THE NEW QA PROCEDURES ¹⁹² OR THE NEW APPRAISER TRAINING
Burkina Faso	1	2	Complete (FY18)	New QA + trained appraiser
Cambodia	2	2 ¹⁹³	FY19	
Chad	2 ¹⁹⁴	2	-	New QA only
Comoros	2	2	-	New QA + trained appraiser
Congo DR	1	2	FY19	New QA + trained appraiser
Côte d'Ivoire	1	1	Complete (FY18)	New QA + trained appraiser
Eritrea	2	2	-	New QA + trained appraiser
Gambia	2	2	Complete (FY18)	New QA + trained appraiser
Guinea	3	1	FY19	
Lesotho	2	1	-	Trained appraiser only
Liberia	1	1	Complete (FY18)	Trained appraiser only
Rwanda	1	2	FY19	New QA + trained appraiser
Sierra Leone	2	2	Complete (FY18)	New QA + trained appraiser
South Sudan	1	2	FY19	New QA + trained appraiser
Tajikistan	2	1	FY19	

¹⁹¹ The table was updated during the evaluation process based on new information about ESPs that had been appraised by an appraiser trained in the use of the new appraisal guidelines.

¹⁹² QA procedures refer to the full Quality Assurance process applied to ESPs including: initial comments, independent appraisal, appraisal check, and appraisal memo

¹⁹³ Cambodia's 2014-2018 ESP was rated twice after the plan was revised. It is counted separately in our sample

¹⁹⁴ The 2014 ESPDG application for Chad was removed from the sample as no documents or information was available.

COUNTRIES	NUMBER OF ESPDGS RECEIVED	NUMBER OF ESPS AND TEPS IN SAMPLE RATED BY GPE	CLE STATUS	DCP USED THE NEW QA PROCEDURES ¹⁹² OR APPRAISER TRAINING
Uzbekistan	3	2	-	New QA + trained appraiser
Total: 16 countries	27 ESPDGS	27 (20 ESPs and 7 TEPs)	11 countries (5 completed in FY18 and 6 in FY 19)	12 countries used new appraiser training 11 countries used the new QA procedures

Table i.3 shows the breakdown of the overall population and sample based on the selection criteria.

Table i.3 *Characteristics of population and desk study sample based on selection criteria*

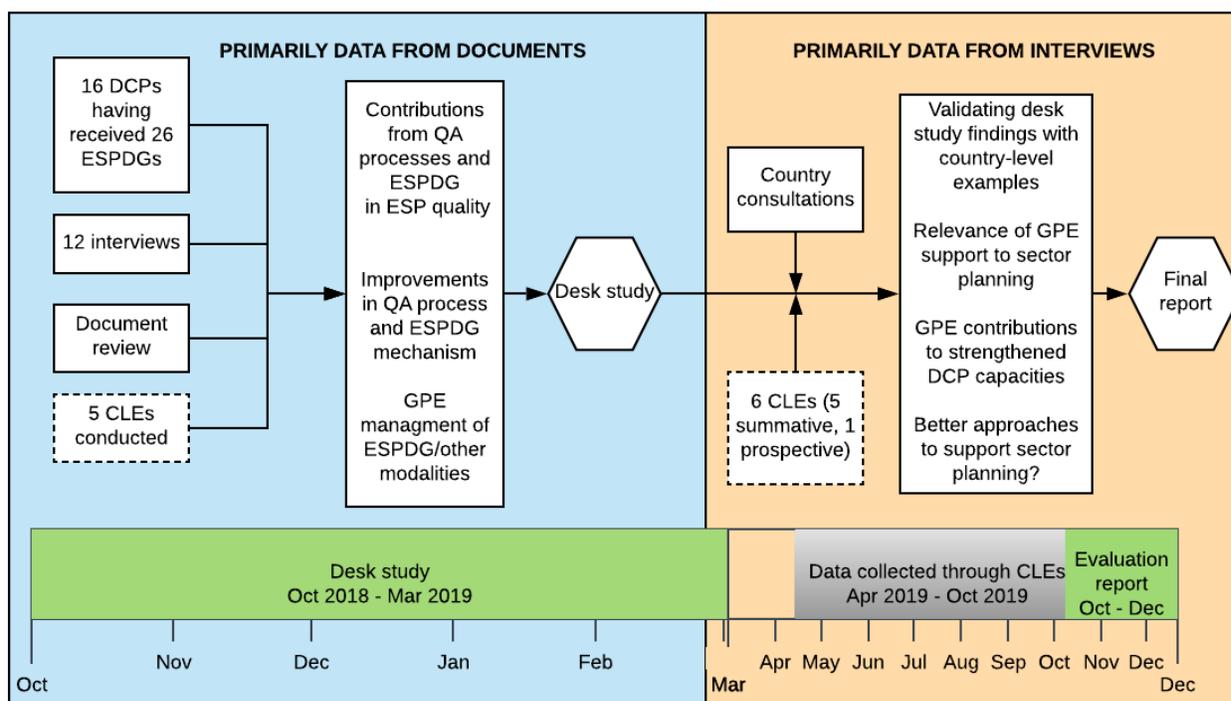
CRITERION	POPULATION	SAMPLE
Criteria	Population (78)	Sample countries (16)
Region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Africa 1: 21 percent (16) • Africa 2: 33 percent (25) • Africa 3: 12 percent (9) • Africa total: 64 percent (50) • Asia-Pacific: 21 percent (16) • LAC: 6 percent (5) • EEMECA: 9 percent (7) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Africa 1: 18 percent (3) • Africa 2: 37 percent (6) • Africa 3: 25 percent (4) • Africa total: 81 percent (13) • Asia-Pacific: 6 percent (1) • LAC: 0 percent (0) • EEMECA: 13 percent (2)
FCAC	34 out of 78 (43.6 percent)	9 out of 16 (56 percent)
Criteria	Population (78)	Sample ESPDGs (27)
Average ESPDG grant size	US\$285,257	US\$260,715 ¹⁹⁵
ESPDG grant agent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNICEF: 42 percent (33) • World Bank: 39 percent (31) • UNESCO: 8 percent (6) • ADB: 4 percent (3) • Swiss Development Cooperation, SIDA, Save the Children, DFID: 5 percent (1 each, four in total) • Unknown: 3 percent (2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNICEF: 50 percent (13) • World Bank: 31 percent (8) • UNESCO: 15 percent (4) • DFID: 4 percent (1)

Data collection and synergies with GPE CLEs

The main methods of data collection for the desk study phase were document review and selected stakeholder interviews. The full evaluation matrix (Appendix II) illustrates how the various lines of enquiry and their respective data collection methods have been used and triangulated to address the evaluation questions. Each of the noted methods of data collection and related data sources is discussed further below.

¹⁹⁵ The total value of the 26 ESPDGs is US\$6,778,583

Figure i2 Overview of two phases of evaluation



Document and data set review

The Desk Study Report is based on a systematic review of relevant documents and data sets. Table i.4 shows the main types of documents that informed the study. Appendix IV provides a complete list of documents reviewed and Appendix V provides an overview of the package of documents that was available (or unavailable) for each country.

Table i.4 Key types of documents

TYPES OF DOCUMENTS	EXAMPLES
Relevant background documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GPE Strategy 2020; GPE Strategic Plan 2012-2015; GPE (2016) monitoring and evaluation strategy GPE 2020 result framework and related methodology Board meeting minutes, decisions, presentations relevant to GPE support to sector planning ESP and TEP initial comments templates Methodology of the ESP and TEP standards ESPDG guidelines and country-level process guide Other relevant FTI and GPE guidance/tools related to ESPDG and ESP development GPE portfolio reviews and results reports (sections relevant to sector planning) 2015 Independent Interim Evaluation of GPE 2018 Internal Review of the Strengthened Independent Assessment Mechanism 2018 Examination of key actors' roles in GPE's country-level operational model

TYPES OF DOCUMENTS	EXAMPLES
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other documents/reviews/reports suggested by the Secretariat or in-country stakeholders
GPE Data sets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GPE RF indicator 16 (a, b, c, d) • GPE portfolio data on ESPDG disbursements/allocations • GPE coding exercise of roadmaps (i.e., budgets) from ESPDG applications • Grant Application Review Committee (GARC) grant decisions for 2016-2018 • Other documents pertinent to sampling (e.g., Review Meeting notes).
Documents pertinent to the sampled countries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Country ESPDG applications and related documents (application reviews/approvals, ESPDG completion reports) • Education sector analyses and thematic studies • Education sector plans/transitional sector plans of sampled countries since 2012 and related documents (e.g., education sector analyses underlying the sector plan) • Quality Assurance documents (initial Secretariat comments, Appraisal Report, Secretariat Appraisal Check, LEG Appraisal Memo) • Documents related to Secretariat quality assurance of draft plans; LEG appraisal and endorsement; and external plan reviews. • Other documents suggested by the Secretariat or in-country stakeholders, including relevant mission reports
Evaluative documents and research/studies¹⁹⁶	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selected literature illustrating developments in the global discourse and research on the relevance and nature of 'good' sector planning • Recent reports or studies on education sector planning commissioned by other development partners • Data from GPE summative and prospective country level evaluation reports (completed in 2018 and early 2019)

Key informant interviews

For the desk study phase, the evaluation team conducted 12 semi-structured interviews with IIEP and Pôle de Dakar stakeholders (2), Secretariat staff (including Country Leads (3), Quality Assurance Team (2), Education Planning and Policy Team (1), Grant Application Review Committee (GARC) (1), and external consultants (3) who have been trained in and have conducted ESP/TEP appraisals.

¹⁹⁶ Literature review was no formal line of inquiry, but the evaluation team considered selected relevant literature in order to complement other documents.

Data analysis and data quality assurance

Data analysis

To analyze data in the desk study phase, the evaluation team employed qualitative (descriptive, content, comparative) and quantitative techniques, as illustrated in Table i.5.

Table i.5 Data analysis

METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS	DESK STUDY PHASE
Descriptive analysis	Used to understand and describe the ESPDG instrument (understood as the ‘package’ of funding, procedures, guidelines, etc.) and its evolution since 2012 as well as other modalities of GPE support to sector planning and related changes during the review period.
Qualitative/ Content analysis	<p>Used to analyze and identify themes and patterns in relation to the evaluation questions and to flag diverging evidence on certain issues.</p> <p>For each of the sample countries, the evaluation team prepared a short briefing document following a standardized structure to summarize insights on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The quality of the ESP/TEP, noting observations on strengths and weaknesses based on the Secretariat’s assessment of Indicator 16a for the two plans available, identifying how better than before, and noting when it was not possible to detect notable differences. • The extent to which the sector analysis reflects the GPE/IIEP methodological guidelines. • Strengths and weaknesses of the ESP-related QA mechanism including the independent appraisal process, Secretariat Initial Comments, and whether there was any indication of the application of the recommendations in the final ESP/TEP;¹⁹⁷ this included identifying possible factors affecting the quality of QA product or process • Observations on plausible contributions of the ESPDG to ESP quality, and any strengths and weaknesses identified in grant-related documents • Observations on any strengths/weaknesses of the process of developing sector analysis and sector plans • Observations on the extent to which the planning process was participatory and inclusive
Comparative analysis	Comparative analysis (comparisons between countries; comparisons between time periods i.e., pre-/post relevant changes/reforms in GPE support) was used in relation to, for example, ESP/TEP quality (GPE RF indicator 16 data), CL assessment forms and ESPDG completion reports; changes in the ESPDG instrument since 2012, comparing ESP quality pre-2016 vs post-2016, and comparing the quality of ESPs with ESPDG vs without ESPDG.

¹⁹⁷ This relied on Appraisal Memos given that the evaluators did not have access to both the early draft (covered by the Appraisal) and the final draft of the ESP/TEP.

METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS	DESK STUDY PHASE
Quantitative/statistical analysis	Used to capture relevant trends e.g., related to ESPDG amounts, duration of related processes, or relative allocation of grant funds to different types of tasks. For each of the sampled countries, the evaluation team filled out a standardized Excel sheet to capture yes/no assessments of key characteristics, including: a) Results of GPE Secretariat assessment of Indicator 16 a (and, where data was available, 16 b, c, and d); b) assessment of the coverage of ESAs based on GPE/IIEP guidelines; c) assessment of the coverage of appraisal reports based on GPE/IIEP guidelines; d) QA-ESP process (use of initial comments templates, appraisal guidelines, appraisal check and appraisal memo); number of recommendations present in GPE initial guidelines and appraisal report; and number of recommendations incorporated into the final sector plan.

Triangulation will be further developed for the final evaluation report, where additional sources of data will be integrated to ensure reliability of information and to increase the quality, integrity and credibility of the evaluation findings and conclusions. Wherever possible, evaluation findings in the final report will be based on several lines of enquiry and data sources.

Data quality assurance

The evaluation team used several processes to check and clean the data, to the extent that this was possible given the compressed timeline to implement the study.

- Data deriving from stakeholder interviews were coded according to emergent themes and stored in a tailored data template dedicated to interview data. This allowed retrieving and analyzing interview data by stakeholder.
- Document review data were excerpted, as much as possible, directly from the respective sources to ensure accuracy. Insights have been stored in tailored data templates (in Microsoft Excel and Microsoft Word) dedicated to capturing country-specific data deriving from the desk study phase; the MS Word “brief” templates will be used to record additional data gathered through the country consultation phase.
- To the extent possible and where relevant, the report mentions Ns and percentages for both qualitative (e.g., stakeholder interviews) and quantitative data.
- Data analysis and aggregation were guided by the evaluation matrix.

Limitations

The Desk Study had several limitations that the evaluation team tried to mitigate and that are to be considered in reviewing the findings.

- There is still incomplete documentation related to country-level processes. The GPE Secretariat made enormous efforts to gather all the relevant information pertaining to each of the 16 countries in the sample. Transitions in Country Lead (CL) responsibilities and data management systems made it difficult to identify if a document existed for a particular country. In some cases, it was not clear if the document was the final version (some documents were still labelled as draft). As illustrated in Appendix V (Document Checklist), in the end most countries had a nearly complete set (two or less missing documents). Exceptions were Chad, Gambia, Eritrea, Guinea, Sierra Leone, Tajikistan, and

Uzbekistan which had more than two missing documents. Due to these challenges, the process of document collection took longer than expected, thus cutting into the time available for document review and analysis.

- Prior to the introduction of the new ESPDG application template (2015), budgets were presented inconsistently or missing from the sample. This made it difficult to do some of the analysis that was envisioned in the Terms of Reference (TOR) and even in the Inception Report.
- The Desk Study included a small number of interviews at the global level, which have not yet been triangulated with sufficient country-level perspectives. Nevertheless, insights from these interviews are brought in to foster reflection with regard to strategic questions for GPE and hypotheses to be tested in the next phase of the evaluation.

Appendix II GPE ESPDG Evaluation Matrix

MAIN EVALUATION QUESTIONS AND SUB-QUESTIONS	EVALUABILITY ASSESSMENT	LINES OF ENQUIRY	INDICATORS	MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION
EQ1: Relevance and appropriateness of the ESPDG and of other types of GPE support to sector planning				
EQ 1.1 How well does ESPDG's purpose of "support[ing] effective and inclusive dialogue during [sector planning]" ¹⁹⁸ , via "a common vision and roadmap to guide the (...) process" match with the planning needs and priorities of DCPs?	Can be fully addressed (combination of Desk Study and country consultation).	Document review Stakeholder consultations	Evidence of GPE ESPDG addressing gaps/needs or priorities identified by the DCP government related to inclusive sector planning and the achievement of a common sector vision and roadmap Stakeholder views (FCAC/non-FCAC) on the alignment between the ESPDG (purpose and components) and national DCP planning needs and priorities	Current and past sector plans (including from period prior to country receiving first ESPDG if available) GPE ESP/TESP quality assurance documents Appraisal reports Country-level national development plans/strategies Interviews with Secretariat staff, ESP reviewers (Desk Study), in-country stakeholders
EQ 1.2 To what extent is the ESPDG mechanism relevant for the partnership itself, considering its intended country support and strategies through GPE 2020? ¹⁹⁹	Can be addressed (Desk Study).	Document review Stakeholder consultations	Evidence that countries (FCAC/non FCAC) prior to receiving ESPDGs were struggling with sector planning and were unable to get financial and other support to conduct good planning	GPE 2020 and previous strategic plans; other corporate documents addressing the rationale for creating/revising the ESPDG mechanism; FTI/GPE

¹⁹⁸ <http://www.globalpartnership.org/content/roadmap-education-sector-plan-development-grants>, page 6.

¹⁹⁹ Objective 1: Strengthen education sector planning and policy implementation

Improved education sector plans meeting standards, including in countries affected by fragility and conflict

Education sector plans contain strategies on teaching and learning, marginalized groups and efficiency

MAIN EVALUATION QUESTIONS AND SUB-QUESTIONS	EVALUABILITY ASSESSMENT	LINES OF ENQUIRY	INDICATORS	MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION
				corporate evaluations identifying country level gaps/needs in sector planning Interviews with Secretariat staff and DCP stakeholders
<p>EQ 1.3 Does the GPE Secretariat employ an appropriate process to review/approve ESPDG applications?²⁰⁰</p> <p>(a) How have application criteria/processes changed since 2012?</p> <p>(b) What are strengths/weaknesses of the current process?</p>	Can be addressed (combination of Desk Study and country consultation).	Document review Stakeholder consultations	Types of changes to the ESPDG application and quality review processes since 2012 and underlying rationales Types of changes to the criteria for approving ESPDGs Effects of changes on length, content, and level of detail of applications; required partner and Secretariat level of effort; application processing times Comparison of ESPDG application process used for accessing non-GPE grants of similar size/amounts Stakeholder views on strengths and weaknesses (advantages and disadvantages) of the current ESPDG application process in terms of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) quality of applications; (ii) extent to which application effort is proportional to ESPDG benefits; (iii) extent to which application criteria ensure equitable opportunities for countries with varying levels of existing capacity 	ESPDG application templates and guidelines ESPDG applications from sampled countries and Secretariat assessments Documents illustrating application criteria for comparable grant(s) Interviews with Secretariat staff, external ESP reviewers, representative from comparator organization/grant maker (Desk Study), in-country stakeholders (country consultation)

²⁰⁰ This includes the requirements or criteria for ESDPDG applications: (1) Concept Note, (2) Terms of reference, (3) Roadmap, (4) Timeline, (5) Budget, (6) QA, (7) Risk assessment, (8) Any critical areas not included, (9 and 10) Grant management in terms of implementation and technical skills.

MAIN EVALUATION QUESTIONS AND SUB-QUESTIONS	EVALUABILITY ASSESSMENT	LINES OF ENQUIRY	INDICATORS	MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION
<p>EQ 1.4 How well do other modalities of GPE support (see below) address the needs of partner countries with regards to sector planning?</p> <p>(a) quality assurance processes for sector planning</p>	Can be addressed (combination of Desk Study and country consultation).	Document review Stakeholder consultations	<p>Evidence of GPE modalities addressing gaps/needs of DCPs related to sector planning</p> <p>Evidence of GPE modalities adapted to meet the technical, political and cultural requirements of the specific context in DCP countries (FCAC/non FCAC)</p> <p>Evidence of GPE modalities aimed at strengthening sustainable local/national capacities for sector planning or plan implementation</p> <p>Stakeholder views on the alignment between GPE modalities and partner countries in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addressing existing needs/priorities Respecting characteristics of the national context Adding value to country-driven processes (e.g., quality assurance provided by Secretariat) 	<p>GPE ESP/TESP quality assurance documents</p> <p>Other documents on technical assistance/advocacy Secretariat reports, e.g., country lead back to office/mission reports</p> <p>GPE country level evaluation reports (country consultation)</p> <p>Interviews with Secretariat staff, in-country stakeholders (country consultation)</p>
<p>(b) planning guidelines and technical resources</p> <p>(c) technical assistance such as knowledge events,²⁰¹ and</p> <p>(d) capacity-building opportunities?</p>	Can be partially addressed through country consultation. Based on initial country-level evaluations, evidence is likely to be limited related to these modalities.			
EQ2: To what extent has GPE support led to the development of quality sector plans? Why? Why not?				
<p>EQ 2.1 To what extent has ESPDG contributed to the development / revision of robust, credible sector plans (as per the GPE-IIEP guidelines)? If so, how?²⁰²</p>	Can be partially addressed (combination of Desk Study and country consultation)	Document review Literature review Stakeholder consultations	Extent to which observations/recommendations deriving from reviews by Secretariat and other actors (if available) and external ESP/TESP appraisal are reflected in final plans or accompanying documents	<p>GPE RF 16 data</p> <p>Education sector plans/Transitional Education Plans</p> <p>Quality assurance documents/Appraisal reports</p>

²⁰¹ The difference between technical assistance and capacity-building will be further defined with input from the GPE secretariat.

²⁰² The evaluation will also provide suggestion for better ways to support the development of quality sector plans.

MAIN EVALUATION QUESTIONS AND SUB-QUESTIONS	EVALUABILITY ASSESSMENT	LINES OF ENQUIRY	INDICATORS	MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION
Are there better ways to support the development of quality sector planning through a grant mechanism?			<p>Difference in GPE quality ratings (RF indicator 16) for ESPs in sampled DCPs</p> <p>Difference in GPE quality ratings (RF indicator 16) for ESPs developed under the old/new ESPDG guidelines</p> <p>Extent to which the ESPDG is aligned with and complements the QAR process.</p> <p>Types of strengths/weaknesses of draft ESPs developed under the old/new ESPDG guidelines, in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusive dialogue during and national stakeholders' ownership of sector planning processes. • Quality of education sector analyses (based on GPE guidelines for ESA)²⁰³ • Existence of simulation models and /or targeted studies²⁰⁴ • Plan addressing key challenges of the education sector in relation to equity, efficiency and learning <p>Realistic financing, implementation and monitoring</p>	<p>LEG endorsement</p> <p>Other relevant reports or reviews that comment on the quality of sector plans</p> <p>Country-level evaluations</p> <p>Interviews with Secretariat staff, ESP reviewers (Desk Study), in-country stakeholders (country consultation)</p> <p>Education sector analyses and targeted thematic studies; financial simulation models</p> <p>ESPDG completion reports</p> <p>ESPIG application</p> <p>Review reports from country-level partners</p>

²⁰³ The GPE guidelines (<https://www.globalpartnership.org/content/methodological-guidelines-education-sector-analysis-volume-1>) provide a framework. They identify core elements that can be addressed in an ESA, rather than precise criteria or standards. We will set up a protocol that asks questions such as: does the ESA cover all/most core topics suggested in the guidelines such as: context; enrollment, internal efficiency and out of school children; cost and financing; quality, system capacity and management; external efficiency; and Equity? Does the ESA provide information on all or only some education levels (pre-primary, primary etc.)?

²⁰⁴ Within the scope of this assignment it is not feasible to conduct an in-depth assessment of the quality of presented simulation models as had been indicated in the assignment TOR.

MAIN EVALUATION QUESTIONS AND SUB-QUESTIONS	EVALUABILITY ASSESSMENT	LINES OF ENQUIRY	INDICATORS	MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION
			<p>Stakeholder views on the strengths and weaknesses of the ESPDG (especially in a before/after comparison mode) in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grant management • Contribution of grant 'package' to meeting (or not meeting) ESP quality criteria <p>Stakeholder views on better/alternative ways to support sector planning.</p>	
<p>EQ 2.2 To what extent have other GPE sector planning modalities contributed to the development of quality sector plans?</p> <p>To what extent are these modalities aligned with and compliment ESPDG?</p> <p>(a) planning guidelines and technical resources</p> <p>(b) technical assistance such as knowledge events</p> <p>(c) capacity-building opportunities?</p>	<p>Can be partially addressed based on initial country-level evaluations, evidence is likely to be limited related to modalities b-d. In addition, it will likely be difficult to clearly distinguish ESPDG-related from other types of support.</p>	<p>Document review Literature review Stakeholder consultations</p>	<p>(a) GPE guidelines/technical resources explicitly referenced in draft/final ESP/TESP and/or related appraisal/endorsement letters</p> <p>(b) and (c) Types of technical assistance and capacity-building opportunities offered by GPE and attended by DCP stakeholders before/during ESP/TESP development</p> <p>(c) Stakeholder views on the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of other (non ESPDG-related) GPE sector planning modalities</p> <p>Extent to which these modalities (per list above) are aligned with and compliment ESPDG.</p>	<p>GPE ESP/TESP quality assurance documents</p> <p>Documents on technical assistance/advocacy provided by the Secretariat, CA, GA</p> <p>Documents on capacity building opportunities relevant to sector planning offered to in-country stakeholders</p> <p>GPE country level evaluation reports (country consultation)</p> <p>Interviews with Secretariat (Desk Study) and in-country stakeholders (country consultation)</p>

MAIN EVALUATION QUESTIONS AND SUB-QUESTIONS	EVALUABILITY ASSESSMENT	LINES OF ENQUIRY	INDICATORS	MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION
<p>EQ 2.3 To what extent has the revised QAR process²⁰⁵ for education sector plans contributed to improve the quality of sector plans vis-à-vis the quality of the country-level process? Specifically:</p> <p>(a) In comparison to the previous appraisal process, has the revised appraisal process²⁰⁶ contributed to improve the consistency and the quality of the appraisal of ESPs and TESP? Has the appraisal process contributed to improve the quality of ESPs and TESP?</p> <p>(b) During QAR, does the application of GPE standards for sector plans (which draw on the joint GPE/IIEP guidelines) contribute to plans that are of quality, that are country owned, and tied to policy dialogue?</p> <p>(c) Are there better quality assurance approaches to support sector planning?</p>	<p>Can be addressed (combination of Desk Study and country consultation)</p>		<p>(a) Evidence of Secretariat quality assurance recommendations having been integrated into final ESP/TESP (not supported by ESPDG)</p> <p>(a) Stakeholder views on the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of QAR process (before/after)</p> <p>(a) Extent to which technical advice from the independent appraisal process on efficiency, equity, learning outcomes have led to improvements in the ESP indicators 16(b), 16(c) and 16(d)</p> <p>(a) degree of alignment between appraiser reviews, Secretariat reviews, criteria met, and perceived quality of plans / changes of such over time</p> <p>(b) Extent to which the independent appraisal process has contributed to policy dialogue and ownership, and vice versa</p> <p>(b) Perception of whether the application of standards stimulates dialogue and ownership/changes over time</p> <p>(c) Perceived aspects of quality of plans not captured well enough through the application of these standards during the QAR process</p>	<p>Commissioned appraisal reports by development partners</p> <p>Appraisal memo</p> <p>Appraisal report</p> <p>Secretariat appraisal check</p> <p>Endorsement of the ESP/TESP by sector stakeholders</p> <p>GPE Results Framework indicators 16(a), 16(b), 16(c), and 16 (d)?</p>

²⁰⁵ i.e., ESP/TESP initial comments, independent appraisal, appraisal check, fixed part requirements matrix and two-pager, and QAR1

²⁰⁶ i.e., training of consultants, creation of a roster of consultants, new guidelines, and new secretariat QA process

MAIN EVALUATION QUESTIONS AND SUB-QUESTIONS	EVALUABILITY ASSESSMENT	LINES OF ENQUIRY	INDICATORS	MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION
EQ 2.4 What is the balance between the level of technical assistance and capacity development provided through the ESPDG?	Can be addressed through consultations and partially through analysis of documents and completed coding of selected ESPDG budgets (Desk Study)	Document review Stakeholder consultations	Stakeholder views on technical assistance and capacity development Amount (proportion) of ESPDGs that is used for national capacity development versus technical assistance/facilitation.	Stakeholder consultations GPE ESP/TESP quality assurance documents Documents from coding exercise of ESPDG budgets ESPDG completion documents Other documents on technical assistance/advocacy Country-specific grant applications ESPDG coding database
EQ 2.5 Has GPE support to sector planning, including through ESPDG, led to capacity development/ strengthening at national level (e.g., leadership, technical). If so, how?	Can be partially addressed. Available data from country-level evaluations provides limited evidence on the extent to which capacity-strengthening has occurred (country consultation)	Stakeholder consultations Document review	Evidence of GPE ESPDG grant (and related funding requirements) contributing to strengthening sustainable local/national capacities for sector planning or plan implementation.	Country-level evaluations Interviews ESPDG completion reports
EQ3: How well has GPE managed its support to sector planning?				
EQ 3.1 To what extent do ESPDG and other modalities of GPE support to sector planning (per list above) use good-	Can be addressed (combination of Desk Study and country consultation)	Document review Stakeholder consultations	Evidence that efficiency measures are being applied in the context of individual ESPDG applications/implementation, based on: Country-level stakeholder perceptions on the rigorousness of the ESPDG	Documents related to GPE's management of the ESPDG portfolio and QAR process (e.g., country level process guide; TOR for coordinating and grant agents) GPE Results Framework data

MAIN EVALUATION QUESTIONS AND SUB-QUESTIONS	EVALUABILITY ASSESSMENT	LINES OF ENQUIRY	INDICATORS	MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION
<p>quality management²⁰⁷ to ensure that adequate stewardship of resources, successful partnering and desired results are achieved?</p> <p>How and how well does GPE ensure the efficient use of funds for ESPDGs?</p>			<p>application process in relation to its perceived benefits</p> <p>Level of resources invested by the GPE Secretariat and country-level stakeholders into the ESPDG application process</p> <p>Comparison of the level of resources used for the ESPDG application process with the level of resources used for the ESPDG application process</p> <p>Evidence that the types of measures/tools put in place by GPE to ensure successful partnering in support of sector planning are consistent with good practices from current literature on sector planning</p> <p>Evidence of GPE contributions (through ESPDG and other modalities) to sector planning elicited under evaluation questions above</p> <p>Evidence that the implementation of ESPDG is quality assured</p> <p>Stakeholder views on strengths and weaknesses of current GPE management practices in relation to (i) stewardship of resources; (ii) successful partnering; and (iii) results achievement</p>	<p>GPE ESP/TESP quality assurance documents</p> <p>Secretariat portfolio reports; country lead back to office reports</p> <p>Interviews with Secretariat staff (Desk Study), with in-country stakeholders (country consultation)</p>

²⁰⁷ i.e. (Secretariat, grant agent, coordination agency), relationship building and management, roles and responsibilities assignment, dialogue promotion and guidance / tools, etc.

MAIN EVALUATION QUESTIONS AND SUB-QUESTIONS	EVALUABILITY ASSESSMENT	LINES OF ENQUIRY	INDICATORS	MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION
<p>EQ 3.2: How and how well does GPE monitor its ESPDG portfolio and other sector support modalities?</p>	<p>Can be addressed (combination of Desk Study and country consultation)</p>	<p>Document review Stakeholder consultations</p>	<p>Types of data collected by GPE for monitoring (i) its ESPDG portfolio and (ii) other sector planning support modalities Secretariat staff level of effort dedicated to monitoring (i) the ESPDG portfolio; (ii) other sector planning support modalities Stakeholder views on strengths and weaknesses of current GPE monitoring practices in relation to (i) the ESPDG portfolio; (ii) other sector planning support modalities</p>	<p>Documents related to GPE's management of the ESPDG portfolio and QAR process (e.g., country level process guide; TOR for coordinating and grant agents) GPE Results Framework data GPE ESP/TESP quality assurance documents Secretariat portfolio reports; country lead back to office reports Interviews with Secretariat staff (Desk Study), with in-country stakeholders (country consultation)</p>

Appendix III List of Respondents

ORGANIZATION	LAST NAME, FIRST NAME	TITLE	M/F
GPE Secretariat	BERNARD, Jean-Marc	Senior Education Economist	M
	SMITH, Matthew	Team Lead, Risk and Compliance; GARC chair	M
	MAJGAARD, Kirsten	Team Lead, Quality Assurance	F
	MARTINEZ, Raphaelle	Team Lead, Education Policy and Learning	F
	BAETEN, Sven	Country Support Team Regional Manager; Country Lead	M
	KANAZAWA, Daisuke	Country Support Team; Country Lead	M
	LEHMAN, Douglas	Senior Education Specialist; Country Lead	M
UNESCO/IIEP	DE GRAUWE, Anton	Team Lead, Technical Cooperation	M
	HUSSON, Guillaume	Coordinator, Pôle de Dakar	M
Independent	WEST, Robert	Appraiser	M
	RWEHERA, Mathias	Appraiser	M
	BEGUÉ-AGUADO, Alberto	Appraiser	M

Appendix IV List of Reviewed Documents

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Appendix V Document Checklist²⁰⁸

List of documents per country	Doc importance	Old/New ESPDG application	Burkina Faso 2016	Cambodia 2013	Cambodia 2016	Congo DR 2015	Côte d'Ivoire 2016	Comoros 2012	Comoros 2016	Chad 2014	Chad 2016	Gambia 2012	Gambia 2016	Eritrea 2013	Eritrea 2017	Guinea 2012	Guinea 2017	Guinea 2018	Lesotho 2014	Lesotho 2017	Liberia 2016	Rwanda 2015	Sierra Leone 2012	Sierra Leone 2017	South Sudan 2015	Tajikistan 2013	Tajikistan 2017	Uzbekistan 2012	Uzbekistan 2017-2018	
ESPDG-related documentation																														
ESPDG application form	Essential	both	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x (revised version only)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x (revised only)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x (2 separate applications for ESA and ESP)
ESPDG application assessment by Secretariat	Essential	both	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Grant application review committee meeting minutes	Low	both	x		x	x			x		x		x		x		x		x		x		x		x		x		x	
GPE approval letter		both		x	x		x													x	x									
LEG endorsement of ESPDG application	Medium	both					x				x		x									x		x						
ESPDG concept note	Essential	new only	x	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA		NA	NA	NA	x	NA	x	NA	x	x	NA	x	x		NA	x	NA	x	NA	x	NA	x
ESPDG Roadmap	Low	new only	x	x	x	x	x	NA	x	NA	NA	NA	x	NA	x	NA	x	x	NA	x	x	x	NA	x	x	x	NA	x	NA	x
ESPDG detailed budget	Low	if no roadmap	x	NA							x		unclear if final	x	x	x	x	x			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
ESPDG revision/extension request(s) documentation, if applicable	Medium	both	NA	x		NA	x		x		x	NA	x	NA	NA	NA	x	NA	x	NA	x	NA	NA	x	x (2)	NA		NA	x	
ESPDG completion report	Essential	both	x	x	x		x	x	x						x						likely not yet completed	x		likely not yet completed	x			possibly not yet available	possibly not yet available	
ESPDG financial report	Low	both		x		x			x																					
Education Sector analysis-related documentation																														
Sector analysis (ESA)	Essential	both	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x		x	x			x	x	x	x	NA	NA	x (draft)	not available	not completed	integrated into ESP	x	
If no ESA, then similar, e.g. Country/Edu Status Report	Essential (if no ESA)	probably only old																					Country status report	Mid-term review	x					
Education Sector Plan-related documentation																														
ESP/TEP (final version)	Essential	both	x (2017-2030)	x (2014-2018)	NA	x (2016-2026)	x (2016-2025)	x (2013-2015)	x (2017/18-2019/20)	x (2013-2015)	x (2018-2020)	x (2014-2022) DRAFT	x (2016-2030)	x (2013-2017)	x (2018-2022)	x (2015-2017)	NA	likely not yet completed	x (2016-2026)	NA	x (2017-2021)	x (draft 2018/19-23/24)	x (2014-2018)	x (2018-2020)	x (2017-2021)	x (2012-2020)	x (2012-2020)	x (2013-2017)	x (2019-2023)	
ESP action plan and/or implementation plan, if any	Medium	both	x	x	NA	x	x	x				x		x	x	x	NA	NA	x	NA	x		x		x	EAP 2015-2017	EAP 2018-2020		NA	
ESP Financial simulation model	Low	both	x		NA	x											NA	NA	x	NA	x	NA	x		x				NA	
Secretariat Initial comments on draft ESP	Essential	new, only post-2016	x	NA	NA	NA	x	x (?)	x	x	x		x (?)	x (?)	x	x	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	x	x	x	x		not completed		x	
Appraisal report (by independent appraiser/consultant)	Essential	both	x	x	NA	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	NA	NA	x	NA	x (of draft v5)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Appraisal check (by secretariat)	Essential	new, only post-2016	x		NA	x	x	NA	x	NA	x	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	x	NA	x	x	NA	not completed	NA	NA	
Endorsement (by LEG)	Medium	both	x	x	NA	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	NA	NA	x	NA	x	x	x	x		not completed		x	x	
Appraisal Memo (by LEG)	Essential	new, only post-2016	x	NA	NA	x	x	NA	x	NA	x	NA	x	NA	x	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	x	x	NA	NA	x	NA	not completed	?(Memo in response to issue raised by FAC)	x	
GPE Funding Model Requirements Matrix	?	?	x	x	NA	NA	x	NA	x	NA	x	x		NA		NA	NA	NA	x	NA	x	x	NA	x	x	NA	not completed	NA	NA	
Secretariat quality/check rating against results framework indicator 16	Essential	both	x	x	NA	x	x		x		x		missing detailed ratings				NA	NA	x	NA	x	x		x	x	NA	not completed		NA	
Overall status of documentation for this ESP and corresponding ESPDG? (good/ok/poor)																														
Overall number of essential documents missing?																														
			0	2	0	0	1	2	1	4	1	4	1	4	2	4	2	0	0	0	0	1	3	0	1	4	?	5	2	

²⁰⁸ Boxes in red show missing documents

Appendix VI ESPs/TEPs and ESAs included in Desk Study Sample

COUNTRIES	ESPS/TESPS ²⁰⁹	ESPDG SUPPORT	ESAS	ESPDG SUPPORT
Burkina Faso I	2012-2021 ESP	No	RESEN 2006	n/a
Burkina Faso II	2017-2030 ESP	Yes (2016 ESPDG)	RESEN 2017	no
Cambodia I	2014-2018 ESP	Yes (2013 ESPDG)	n/a	n/a
Cambodia II	revised 2014-2018 ESP ²¹⁰	Yes (2016 ESPDG)	RESA 2016	yes (2016 ESPDG)
Chad I	2013-2015 TEP	Yes (2014 ESPDG) ²¹¹	n/a	n/a
Chad II	2018-2020 TEP	Yes (2016 ESPDG)	RESEN 2014	no
Comoros I	2013-2015 TEP	Yes (2012 ESPDG)	RESEN 2012	no
Comoros II	2018-2020 TEP	Yes (2016 ESPDG)	Rapid Analysis 2017	yes (2016 ESPDG)
Congo DRC I	2012-2014 TEP	No	RESEN 2005	n/a
Congo DRC II	2016-2025 ESP	Yes (2015 ESPDG)	RESEN 2014	no
Côte d'Ivoire I	2010-2013 ESP	No	RESEN 2009	no
Côte d'Ivoire II	2016-2025 ESP	Yes (2016 ESPDG)	RESEN 2015	no
Eritrea I	2013-2017 ESP	Yes (2013 ESPDG)	n/a	n/a
Eritrea II	2018-2022 ESP	Yes (2017 ESPDG)	ESA 2017	yes (2017 ESPDG)
Gambia I	2014-2022 ESP	Yes (2012 ESPDG)	Country Status Report 2010	n/a
Gambia II	2016-2030 ESP	Yes (2016 ESPDG)	ESA 2017	yes (2016 ESPDG)
Guinea I	2008-2015 TEP	No	RESEN 2005	n/a
Guinea II	2015-2017 TEP	Yes (2012 ESPDG)	n/a	n/a

²⁰⁹ Boxes in grey are ESPs/TEPs that did not have Indicator 16 data available and ESAs that were not part of Desk Study analysis.

²¹⁰ The revised 2014-2018 ESP was assessed separately from the original as it benefited from an ESPDG and was re-rated by GPE Secretariat.

²¹¹ The 2014 ESPDG documents for Chad were not available for review. It is assumed that the 2013-2015 ESP was supported by the 2014 ESPDG.

COUNTRIES	ESPS/TESPS ²⁰⁹	ESPDG SUPPORT	ESAS	ESPDG SUPPORT
Lesotho I	2005-2015 ESP	No	n/a	n/a
Lesotho II	2016-2026 ESP	Yes (2014 ESPDG)	Diagnostic Study 2016	yes (2017 ESPDG)
Liberia I	2010-2020 ESP	No	n/a	n/a
Liberia II	2017-2021 ESP	Yes (2016 ESPDG)	ESA 2016	yes (2016 ESPDG)
Rwanda I	2013/14-2017/18 ESP	No	n/a	n/a
Rwanda II	ESP 2018-2023	Yes (2017 ESPDG)	ESA 2017	yes (2017 ESPDG)
Sierra Leone I	2014-2018 ESP	Yes (2012 ESPDG)	Country Status Report 2013	yes (2012 ESPDG)
Sierra Leone II	2018-2020 ESP	Yes (2017 ESPDG)	Mid-term review 2017	yes (2017 ESPDG)
South Sudan I	2012-2017 ESP	No	Country Status Report 2012	no
South Sudan II	2017-2021/22 ESP	Yes (2015 ESPDG)	ESA 2017	yes (2015 ESPDG)
Tajikistan I	2012-2020 ESP	No	n/a	n/a
Uzbekistan I	ESP 2013-2017	Yes (2012 ESPDG)	2012 ²¹²	yes (2012 ESPDG)
Uzbekistan II	ESP 2019-2023	Yes (2017 ESPDG)	ESA 2017	yes (2018 ESPDG)
TOTAL:	27	22	15	9

²¹² The ESA was not a standalone document (it was integrated into the ESP), but was assessed as an ESA.

Appendix VII ESPDGs included in Desk Study Sample²¹³

COUNTRY	ESPDG APPLICATION YEAR	GRANT AMOUNT (AT CLOSING)	FUNDING FOR ESAS (OR WINDOW 1)		FUNDING FOR ESPS (OR WINDOW 2)
			COMPREHENSIVE ANALYSIS	TARGETED ANALYSIS	
Burkina Faso	2016	208,041 \$	- \$	- \$	208,041 \$
Cambodia	2013	226,682 \$	- \$	- \$	226,682 \$
	2016	61,945 \$	- \$	61,945 \$	- \$
Chad ²¹⁴	2014	106,000 \$	Not available		
	2016	250,000 \$	- \$	- \$	250,000 \$
Comoros	2012	150,000 \$	- \$	- \$	150,000 \$
	2016	444,274 \$	220,635 \$	- \$	223,639 \$
Congo DR	2015	87,102 \$	- \$	- \$	87,102 \$
Côte d'Ivoire	2016	220,219 \$	- \$	- \$	220,219 \$
Eritrea	2013	114,985 \$	- \$	- \$	114,985 \$
	2017	500,000 \$	131,000 \$	119,000 \$	250,000 \$
Gambia	2012	249,717 \$	- \$	175,000 \$	14,350 \$
	2016	387,362 \$	100,422 \$	194,800 \$	92,140 \$
Guinea	2012	241,360 \$	- \$	250,000 \$	130,400 \$
	2017	219,401 \$	219,401 \$	- \$	- \$
	2018	218,055 \$	- \$	- \$	218,055 \$
Lesotho	2014	223,507 \$	95,114 \$	- \$	200,000 \$
	2017	205,000 \$	74,692 \$	- \$	62,548 \$
Liberia	2016	500,000 \$	- \$	299,500 \$	250,000 \$
Rwanda	2017	323,750 \$	148,433 \$	- \$	115,000 \$
Sierra Leone	2012	249,961 \$	5,000 \$	127,500 \$	175,137 \$

²¹³ Data obtained from multiple sources including Completion Reports and GPE coding data (for ESA and ESP funding allocations) and GPE grant tracking data (for final ESPDG grant amounts). Numbers in red were obtained from CL Assessment Forms as they were not available from other sources and therefore may not represent final amounts.

²¹⁴ Documents for Chad 2014 ESPDG application were not available and therefore was removed from the sample.

COUNTRY	ESPDG APPLICATION YEAR	GRANT AMOUNT (AT CLOSING)	FUNDING FOR ESAS (OR WINDOW 1)		FUNDING FOR ESPS (OR WINDOW 2)
			COMPREHENSIVE ANALYSIS	TARGETED ANALYSIS	
	2017	361,000 \$	108,000 \$	24,000 \$	229,000 \$
South Sudan	2015	467,079 \$	250,000 \$	- \$	249,774 \$
Tajikistan	2013	247,797 \$	89,400 \$	13,900 \$	163,700 \$
	2017	133,400 \$	248,000 \$	- \$	93,000 \$
Uzbekistan	2012	250,000 \$	130,000 \$	- \$	150,000 \$
	2017	350,000 \$	350,000 \$	- \$	- \$
	2018	150,000 \$	- \$	- \$	150,000 \$
Total:	27	7,146,638 \$	2,170,097 \$	1,265,645 \$	4,023,772 \$

Appendix VIII Desk Study Sample Data Table

COUNTRY	ESP/TEP PERIOD	ENDORSEMENT YEAR	ESPDG (YEAR)	NEW QAR PROCESS / TRAINED APPRAISER	FCAC STATUS	INDICATOR 16A STANDARDS MET	INDICATOR 16B	INDICATOR 16C	INDICATOR 16D
Burkina Faso	2012-2020	2013	n/a	n/a	No	5 (out of 7)	unknown	unknown	unknown
	2017-2030	2017	2016	Yes	No	7 (out of 7)	5 (out of 5)	5 (out of 5)	5 (out of 5)
Cambodia	2014-2018	2013	2013	n/a	No	4 (out of 7)	2 (out of 5)	2 (out of 5)	2 (out of 5)
	2014-2018*	2016	2016	No	No	6 (out of 7)	4 (out of 5)	5 (out of 5)	5 (out of 5)
Chad	2013-2015	2012	2014	n/a	Yes	4 (out of 7)	unknown	unknown	unknown
	2018-2020		2016	Yes	Yes	5 (out of 5)	5 (out of 5)	3 (out of 5)	5 (out of 5)
Comoros	2013-2015	2013	2012	n/a	Yes	4 (out of 7)	unknown	unknown	unknown
	2018-2020		2016	Yes	Yes	5 (out of 5)	5 (out of 5)	5 (out of 5)	5 (out of 5)
Congo DR	2012-2014	2010	n/a	n/a	Yes	4 (out of 7)	unknown	unknown	unknown
	2016-2025		2015	Yes	Yes	7 (out of 7)	5 (out of 5)	5 (out of 5)	5 (out of 5)
Côte d'Ivoire	2016-2025	2017	2016	Yes	Yes	6 (out of 7)	5 (out of 5)	5 (out of 5)	5 (out of 5)
Eritrea	2013-2017	2013	2013	n/a	Yes	2 (out of 7)	unknown	unknown	unknown
	2018-2022		2017	Yes	Yes	5 (out of 7)	5 (out of 5)	5 (out of 5)	5 (out of 5)
Gambia	2014-2022	2013	2012	n/a	Yes	4 (out of 7)	unknown	unknown	unknown
	2016-2030		2016	Yes	Yes	6 (out of 7)	4 (out of 5)	5 (out of 5)	4 (out of 5)
Guinea	2015-2017	2014	2012	No	Yes	4 (out of 5)	unknown	unknown	unknown
Lesotho	2016-2026		2014	No	No	6 (out of 7)	4 (out of 5)	5 (out of 5)	4 (out of 5)

COUNTRY	ESP/TEP PERIOD	ENDORSEMENT YEAR	ESPDG (YEAR)	NEW QAR PROCESS / TRAINED APPRAISER	FCAC STATUS	INDICATOR 16A STANDARDS MET	INDICATOR 16B	INDICATOR 16C	INDICATOR 16D
Liberia	2017-2021	2017	2016	Yes	Yes	6 (out of 7)	5 (out of 5)	5 (out of 5)	5 (out of 5)
Rwanda	2013/14-2017/18	2015	n/a	n/a	Yes	5 (out of 7)	3 (out of 5)	4 (out of 5)	4 (out of 5)
	2018/19-2023/24		2017	Yes	Yes	7 (out of 7)	4 (out of 5)	4 (out of 5)	4 (out of 5)
Sierra Leone	2014-2018	2013	2012	n/a	Yes	4 (out of 7)	unknown	unknown	unknown
	2018-2020		2017	Yes	Yes	7 (out of 7)	5 (out of 5)	5 (out of 5)	5 (out of 5)
South Sudan	2012-2017	2012	n/a	n/a	Yes	4 (out of 7)	unknown	unknown	unknown
	2017-2021		2015	Yes	Yes	5 (out of 5)	4 (out of 5)	4 (out of 5)	4 (out of 5)
Tajikistan	2012-2020	2012	n/a	n/a	No	4 (out of 7)	unknown	unknown	unknown
Uzbekistan	2013-2017	2013	2012	n/a	No	5 (out of 7)	unknown	unknown	unknown
	2019-2023		2017-2018	Yes	No	6 (out of 7)	unknown	unknown	unknown

Appendix IX FCACs and TEPs in Desk Study Sample

DESK STUDY SAMPLED COUNTRIES	ENDORSED BEFORE 2016	ENDORSED AFTER 2016
Chad	2013-2015 TEP	2018-2020 TEP
Comoros	2013-2015 TEP	2018-2020 TEP
Côte d'Ivoire	2010-2013 ESP (GPE rating not available)	2016-2025 ESP
Congo DRC	2012-2014 TEP	2016-2025 ESP
Eritrea	2013-2017 ESP	2018-2022 ESP (GPE rating not available)
Gambia	2014-2022 ESP	2016-2030 ESP
Guinea	2008-2015 ESP (GPE rating not available)	2015-2017 TEP
Liberia	2010-2020 ESP (GPE rating not available)	2017-2021 ESP
Rwanda	2013/14-2017/18 ESP	2018/19-2023/24 ESP
Sierra Leone	2014-2018 ESP	2018-2020 TEP (rated as an ESP by GPE)
South Sudan	2012-2017 ESP	2017-2021 ESP (rated as a TEP by GPE)

Appendix X ESPDG funding for each activity type based on GPE coding exercise

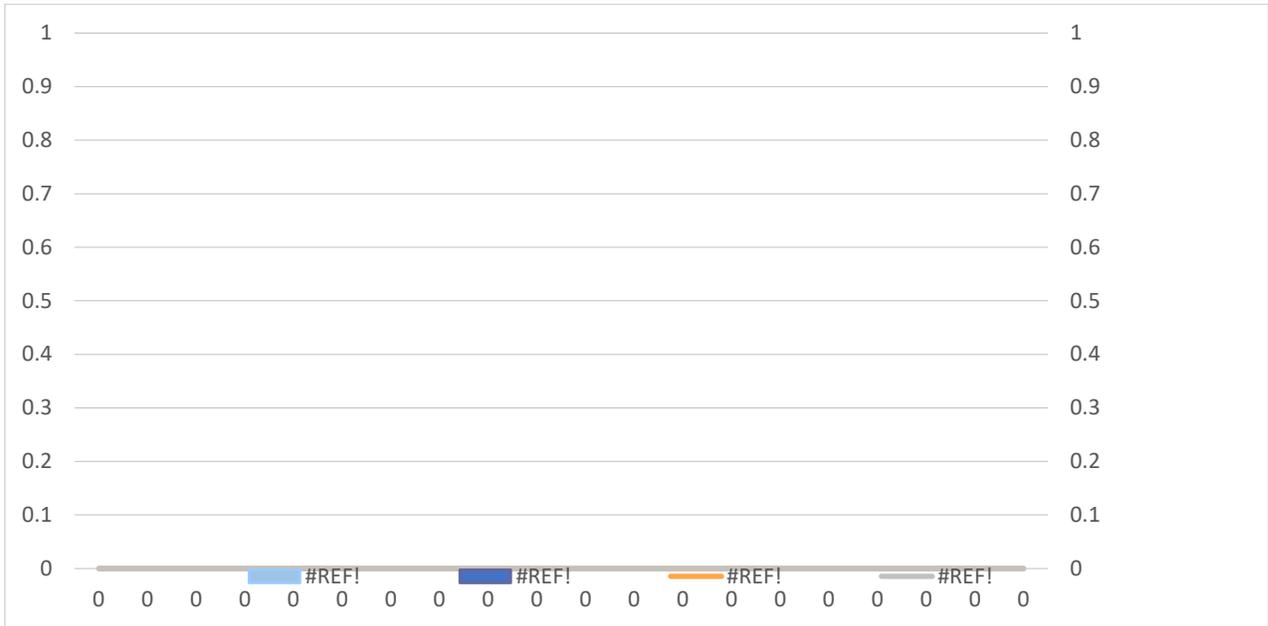
COUNTRY	ESPDG GRANT AMOUNT (AT APPROVAL)	TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE	TA AS PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL	CAPACITY BUILDING	CAPACITY AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL	POLICY DIALOGUE	POLICY DIALOGUE AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL	COMMUNICATION AND DISSEMINATION	COMMUNICATION AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL
Burkina Faso (2016)	\$208,041	\$0	0%	\$78,929	38%	\$80,878	39%	\$0	0%
Cambodia (2013)	\$226,682	\$155,000	68%	\$20,000	9%	\$30,000	13%	\$10,000	4%
Cambodia (2016)	\$61,945	\$48,516	78%	\$0	0%	\$0	0%	\$11,625	19%
Chad (2016)	\$250,000	\$100,800	40%	\$0	0%	\$141,530	57%	\$7,670	3%
Comoros (2012)	\$150,000	\$0	0%	\$25,750	17%	\$101,721	68%	\$22,529	15%
Comoros (2016)	\$444,274	\$69,030	16%	\$123,300	28%	\$177,381	40%	\$52,900	12%
Congo DR (2015)	\$237,875	\$68,700	29%	\$65,500	28%	\$82,050	34%	\$0	0%
Cote d'Ivoire (2016)	\$220,219	\$25,534	12%	\$43,946	20%	\$20,420	9%	\$94,795	43%
Eritrea (2013)	\$115,000	\$0	0%	\$0	0%	\$0	0%	\$0	0%

COUNTRY	ESPDG GRANT AMOUNT (AT APPROVAL)	TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE	TA AS PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL	CAPACITY BUILDING	CAPACITY AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL	POLICY DIALOGUE	POLICY DIALOGUE AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL	COMMUNICATION AND DISSEMINATION	COMMUNICATION AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL
Eritrea (2017)	\$500,000	\$250,000	50%	\$85,000	17%	\$108,000	22%	\$57,000	11%
Gambia (2012)	\$250,000	\$0	0%	\$0	0%	\$0	0%	\$0	0%
Gambia (2016)	\$387,362	\$255,684	66%	\$49,678	13%	\$44,820	12%	\$5,000	1%
Guinea (2012)	\$250,000	\$0	0%	\$190,389	76%	\$56,911	23%	\$2,700	1%
Guinea (2017)	\$219,401	\$0	0%	\$0	0%	\$22,700	10%	\$93,770	43%
Lesotho (2014)	\$230,000	\$120,414	52%	\$0	0%	\$94,525	41%	\$0	0%
Liberia (2016)	\$500,000	\$300,000	60%	\$0	0%	\$83,900	17%	\$8,100	2%
Rwanda (2017)	\$323,570	\$226,152	70%	\$0	0%	\$95,718	30%	\$1,700	1%
Sierra Leone (2012)	\$250,000	\$151,500	61%	\$19,000	8%	\$38,000	15%	\$11,500	5%
Sierra Leone (2017)	\$361,000	\$131,000	36%	\$0	0%	\$159,000	44%	\$40,500	11%
South Sudan (2015)	\$467,079	\$278,672	60%	\$32,155	7%	\$95,010	20%	\$30,200	6%

COUNTRY	ESPDG GRANT AMOUNT (AT APPROVAL)	TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE	TA AS PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL	CAPACITY BUILDING	CAPACITY AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL	POLICY DIALOGUE	POLICY DIALOGUE AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL	COMMUNICATION AND DISSEMINATION	COMMUNICATION AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL
Tajikistan (2013)	\$250,000	\$198,000	79%	\$18,800	8%	\$31,200	12%	\$2,000	1%
Uzbekistan (2012)	\$250,000	\$115,000	46%	\$0	0%	\$60,000	24%	\$0	0%
TOTAL:		\$2,494,002		\$752,447		\$1,523,764		\$451,989	
Average		\$113,364	37%	\$34,202	12%	\$69,262	24%	\$20,545	8%

Appendix XI ESPDG as a percentage of total planning budget

Figure xi.1 ESPDG as a Proportion of Total Planning Budget for Desk Study Sample of 16 DCPs²¹⁵



²¹⁵Data comes from all ESPDG applications in the Desk Study sample. Graph contains 20 out of 25 ESPDGs in our sample as not all applications were available for review or contained required information to calculate ESPDG contribution.

Appendix XII ESPDG application processing times based on Desk Study Sample

COUNTRY	ESPDG APPLICATION YEAR	PROCESSING TIME (DAYS) ²¹⁶
Burkina Faso	2016	4
Chad	2016	6
Uzbekistan	2017	8
Gambia	2016	11
Sierra Leone	2012	15
Congo DRC	2015	16
Eritrea	2013	17
Lesotho	2017	22
Lesotho	2014	25
Rwanda	2017	29
Eritrea	2017	36
Gambia	2012	38
Côte d'Ivoire	2016	42
Guinea	2017	43
Uzbekistan	2012	49
Comoros	2012	60

²¹⁶ Based on an analysis of the time between date of submission as stated in the application form and date of approval as stated in either the GARC meeting minutes or official approval letter (whichever was available).