

Terms of Reference for GPE Secretariat's Country-Level Role

May 2019



GLOBAL
PARTNERSHIP
for EDUCATION

I. Introduction

The Global Partnership for Education (GPE) is a multi-stakeholder partnership and funding platform that aims to strengthen education systems in developing countries in order to dramatically increase the number of children who are in school and learning.

GPE brings together developing countries, donors, international organizations, civil society, teacher organizations, the private sector and foundations. Its mission is to mobilize global and national efforts to contribute to the achievement of equitable, quality education and learning for all, through inclusive partnership, a focus on effective and efficient education systems, and increased financing.

GPE has adopted as its vision the [global goal for education](#), calling for inclusive, equitable quality education for all by 2030. [GPE 2020](#), GPE's strategic plan, turns this vision into actionable goals and objectives. GPE 2020 tasks the partnership with three clear and ambitious goals:

1. Improved and more equitable learning outcomes
2. Increased equity, gender equality and inclusion
3. Effective and efficient education systems

At country level, GPE partners hold each other accountable for delivering on GPE 2020's three country-level objectives:

1. Strengthening education sector planning and policy implementation
2. Supporting mutual accountability through inclusive policy dialogue and monitoring
3. Ensuring efficient and effective delivery of GPE support

The partnership is based on *mutual accountability*, whereby every partner is expected to commit and adhere to the accountabilities expressed in the Compact set out in the GPE Charter and fulfill corresponding roles and responsibilities. Each partner has a necessary and specific role to play to achieve the shared objectives of the partnership.

At country level, the partnership functions within the forum where the primary consultation on education sector development takes place between a government and its partners, referred to in GPE terms as the *local education group* (LEG). *Partnership framework* is a general term used by GPE to refer to the terms of reference (TOR), memorandum of understanding or other agreement established between the government and its partners to frame this collaboration and associated responsibilities.

The following *terms of reference* sets out the definition, roles and responsibilities of the Secretariat at country level.

II. Definition and Framing

While the Secretariat provides support to the partnership at both global and country levels, these terms of reference provides guidance on the Secretariat's country-level role.

Often, "GPE" is confused with "the Secretariat." GPE is not a development agency/organization but a *collective partnership*, for which the Secretariat provides *day-to-day support*. The Secretariat is accountable to the government, local education group (LEG) and GPE Board.

At the *global level*, the Secretariat supports the Board, its committees and all of the Board constituencies in promoting partnership objectives and monitoring their realization and leads fundraising efforts for the GPE Fund. The Secretariat also reports to the Board on the partnership's status on meeting GPE 2020 goals and objectives, including its results framework targets. The Secretariat has overall responsibility to inform the partnership's governance structures and ensure information is transparently shared on the GPE website.

The primary *country-level* role of the Secretariat is to *support partner countries in the achievement of GPE's three country-level strategic objectives*. To do this, the Secretariat provides the government and its partners with information, advice and support, as appropriate, related to sector planning and monitoring, coordination and dialogue, and GPE grants.

The Secretariat's CEO holds the highest-level relationship with developing country partner (DCP) governments and engages directly at senior political levels to strengthen collaboration and pursue GPE's goals and objectives.

At the operational level, the Secretariat's regional managers are responsible for the Secretariat's support to partner countries within their assigned regions, while country leads (CLs)¹ are at the forefront of dialogue with country-level partners and coordinate Secretariat engagement with partner countries. CLs work closely with other Secretariat staff engaged in country support, including those engaged in monitoring, knowledge development and dissemination, and advocacy.

The Secretariat's main partners in dialogue at the country level are the DCP governments (in particular the DCP focal point assigned by the minister of education [MOE]), the coordinating agency (CA) and grant agents (GAs) of GPE grants. When conducting in-country missions, the Secretariat engages with a wider range of partners, in particular those included in the LEG. In cases where civil society organizations (CSOs) are not included in the LEG, the Secretariat seeks to engage them outside the LEG.

¹ The designated CL for each country may be found on the country pages on the GPE website.

Specifically, the Secretariat has the following roles in supporting partner countries:

Relationship management

- Build and sustain strong, positive working relationships with governments and country-level partners.
- Ensure effective support to GPE processes is provided to the government and LEG representatives and adapt support to specific countries' political economy, needs, priorities and capacities.
- Ensure consistency and streamlining of GPE messaging and enable broad understanding of GPE's mission, vision, goals and objectives, ensuring related expectations are clear and transactions are minimized, and enabling Board oversight of the overall performance of the partnership.
- Facilitate conflict resolution in accordance with *GPE Conflict Resolution Procedures*.

Support to sector coordination, analysis, planning and monitoring

- Support the CA as needed in promoting partnership and the accountabilities defined in the GPE Charter.
- Support the CA as needed to promote inclusive and effective LEGs and evidence-based policy dialogue including through the support of the Advocacy and Social Accountability (ASA) and Knowledge and Innovation Exchange (KIX) mechanisms.
- Support government and other LEG representatives to access relevant knowledge, evidence and data to inform policy dialogue and different stages of the planning cycle through ASA and KIX.
- Stay informed on sector progress and policy dialogue, both to provide relevant, needs-based support through agreed mechanisms and to ensure the partnership at global level is informed.
- Provide guidance, good practice and feedback on ESP development (including through quality assurance processes), promoting policy dialogue that includes discussion on equity, efficiency and learning outcomes and thereby laying the groundwork for the ESPIG variable part where applicable.
- In coordination with the CA, promote and support government counterparts and the LEG to integrate domestic financing discussions in sector planning and monitoring processes, using data and inputs as well as GPE guidance.
- In coordination with the CA, support the government and its partners to strengthen education sector monitoring and information systems and mechanisms, including joint sector reviews, (JSRs) the use of social accountability tools, civil society analyses and other sector exercises and analyses.
- Track JSRs and share good practices and experience from other contexts.

Support to GPE grant program development, monitoring and implementation

- For all country-level grants, provide timely and accurate guidance and support to governments and their partners, including LEG, GA and CA, on eligibility, requirements, timelines, procedures, and processes.
- Provide guidance for education sector plan development grant (ESPDG) and program development grant (PDG) applications, including ensuring partners (DCP government, LEG, CA, ESPDG GA and ESPIG GA) are informed of GPE funding model requirements and ESPIG quality assurance process and milestones so these can be taken into account in the preparation of applications.
- Review and approve ESPDG and PDG applications and revisions.
- Provide guidance on and verification of education sector program implementation grant (ESPIG) GA selection process, including ensuring alignment and/or appropriate delivery modality and most strategic use of GPE funds relative to the GPE goals of equity, learning outcomes and systems building. Verify that the GA process has been transparent and in accordance with agreed criteria and alert the LEG where this is not the case, as well as report to the Grants and Performance Committee (GPC) on the GA selection process.
- Provide guidance and feedback on funding model requirements.
- Promote inclusive processes for the development of applications for GPE support, including consultation with national civil society stakeholders.
- Provide guidance on GPE quality standards, agree ESPIG quality assurance timeline with the government, GA and CA and provide timely feedback to the government and GA with copy to the CA/LEG as per the agreed quality assurance process.
- Strengthen an evidence-based sector planning culture, facilitating access to relevant knowledge, evidence and information through KIX to inform ESPDG and ESPIG applications.
- Monitor the GA's execution of its responsibilities, grant disbursements and overall grant performance, contributing to early warning of delays and bottlenecks.
- Stay informed on grant performance to ensure good flow of information, discuss grant progress and issues, and reduce risks, by meeting with the GA on a biannual basis.
- In collaboration with the GA and CA, when carrying out the above responsibilities, draw particular attention to the contribution of GPE grants towards system reform within the framework of the ESP.
- Monitor progress on variable part indicators and disbursements by liaising with the government, CA or GA as appropriate, depending on the agreed mechanism for the variable part.
- Monitor and seek feedback from GA or CA as appropriate on GPC ESPIG report-back actions.
- Process and approve grant revision requests in line with the ESPIG policy.
- Review grant reports and compile information on grant progress and results for the GPC.

- Ensure links between different GPE grant mechanisms and their overall coherence with GPE goals and objectives.

Annex 1: Useful documents

USEFUL DOCUMENTS

- [GPE Charter](#)
- [GPE Country-Level Process Guide](#)
- Terms of Reference for Grant Agents: ESPDG and [ESPIG](#)
- [ESPDG Guidelines](#)
- [PDG Guidelines](#)
- [ESPIG Guidelines](#)
- [Multiplier ESPIG Guidelines](#)
- [Policy on ESPIGs](#)
- [Conflict Resolution Procedures](#)
- [JSR Guidelines](#)
- [Sector Planning Guidelines](#)
- [Budget Monitoring](#)
- Sector Analysis Guidelines