

## Quality Standards for the Assessment of Program Documents

Criteria	Description of Criteria	Assessment Questions	Comments <i>Please provide your assessment with supporting page references from the program document when possible.</i>
<b>1. Program Design</b>	The program addresses critical challenges identified in the sector analysis and its design is informed by available evidence, including lessons learned from past programs in the country, as well as evidence more broadly.	<p><b>1.1 <i>Is the program appropriate? Check whether the program includes:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Program addresses critical challenges as identified in the sector analysis</li> <li>b. Informed references to results achieved and lessons learned from the implementation of past programs</li> <li>c. Appropriate references to other evidence informing program design, as relevant, or explanation of how the program will produce new evidence or fill knowledge gaps</li> <li>d. Logical and evidence-based theory(ies) of change or results chain(s) identifying causal links between supported activities or interventions, outputs and outcomes*, and including explicit assumptions (and risks) inherent to the program</li> </ul>	
	GPE's strategic goals are adequately reflected in the design.	<p><b>1.2 <i>Are GPE's strategic goals adequately reflected? Check whether:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The program's objectives and the activities or interventions it supports reflect GPE's strategic goals</li> <li>b. For GPE strategic goals not reflected in the program, the program document includes information on government and/or development partner programs that reflect GPE's strategic goals</li> <li>c. For targeted interventions, the targeting criteria are clear, well-justified, and align well</li> </ul>	

		with GPE’s strategic goals, in particular the goal to improve equity	
<b>2. Program Budget</b>	Program costs and grant agent costs are reasonable within the country context and vis-à-vis program objectives.	<p><b>2. Are program costs reasonable? Check whether the program includes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. A budget outlining the cost of each component, sub-component, and activity or intervention as well as grant agent implementation support costs. (Budget can be provided in a separate document from program document, preferably in a spreadsheet format). For budget support or results-based financing, detailed costs may not be required.</li> <li>b. A breakdown of the budget for each year of the program and a timeline for disbursements</li> <li>c. Estimated unit costs and quantities are clearly indicated for school construction, teacher training, textbooks and other major activities, and if such unit costs are higher than typical for the context, a justification is provided indicating why this still represents good value for money</li> <li>d. The budget, and its assumptions, is coherent with other parts of the program design</li> <li>e. A justification is provided for any unallocated funds or contingency funds</li> <li>f. Clear indication of the program’s sources of funding, including which parts of the program are supported by each source</li> </ul>	

<p><b>3. M&amp;E</b></p>	<p>The program includes a monitoring and evaluation framework, which supports the monitoring of implementation progress and progress towards delivery of outputs and outcomes. It also includes opportunities to reflect on progress and lessons learned to improve the current and future programs.</p>	<p><b>3.1 Is there an appropriate M&amp;E framework? Check whether:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The M&amp;E framework is clearly described and appropriate to support the monitoring of and reporting on the program’s implementation progress</li> <li>b. Monitoring arrangements, incl. institutional roles and responsibilities, enable the monitoring of progress towards delivering the outputs and outcomes vis-à-vis the program’s theory of change*</li> <li>c. The M&amp;E framework is aligned with the ESP M&amp;E framework</li> <li>d. Program includes one or more opportunities to reflect on progress and lessons learned in order to improve the current and future programs (e.g. mid-term review, final evaluation, impact evaluation, technical audit, etc.)</li> </ul>	
	<p>The results framework is appropriate, covers important outputs and outcomes, and allows for measuring progress along the program’s theory of change. It includes baselines and targets for outputs and outcomes, and relevant disaggregated indicators, data sources and responsibility for data collection.</p>	<p><b>3.2 Is there an appropriate and comprehensive results framework or logframe? Check whether:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The results framework includes the most important outputs and outcomes of the program, including for classroom construction, teacher training and textbooks, as relevant (to inform GPE’s results framework)</li> <li>b. The results framework is coherent with and allows for measuring progress along the program’s theory of change*</li> <li>c. Outputs and outcome indicators are SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attributable, Realistic</li> </ul>	

		<p>&amp; Timebound), have baselines and targets (cumulative or annual) and units of measurement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>d. Indicators are disaggregated by gender, as relevant</li> <li>e. Indicators, baselines and targets are aligned with the ESP results framework, if possible (if not, a rationale is provided)</li> <li>f. The number and type of direct beneficiaries of key interventions is provided either in the Program Document text, or in the results framework</li> <li>g. Frequency of data collection, data source, and responsibility for data collection is provided</li> </ul>	
<p><b>4. Implementation Arrangements and Readiness</b></p>	<p>The implementation arrangements are clearly described and appropriate based on (i) the country context, (ii) the grant agent's capacity &amp; previous experience, and (ii) grant size and complexity. The program is ready to be implemented.</p>	<p><b>4.1 Are implementation arrangements appropriate? Check whether:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Implementation arrangements are sufficiently well-described to identify responsible actors and processes. In case country systems** and processes are used, these are well described</li> <li>b. Implementation arrangements are sufficiently described to determine flow of funds</li> <li>c. Financial management, auditing, and procurement arrangements are well-described and appropriate for the country context</li> <li>d. Implementation support and oversight arrangements by the grant agent are well described</li> </ul>	

		<p><b>4.2 Is the program ready to be implemented?</b>  <b>Check whether:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Timeline for the implementation of major activities is clearly described</li> <li>b. For relevant interventions, appropriate targeting criteria have been agreed, and if possible, are in the process of being applied to the selection of beneficiaries / sites / localities</li> <li>c. Fiduciary and administrative arrangements allow for disbursement by start date</li> <li>d. It is clear what steps need to be completed before implementation start, and the timeline for their completion is realistic</li> </ul>	
<p><b>5. Risk Identification and Mitigation Measures</b></p>	<p>The program includes an appropriate Risk Identification Matrix, and appropriate mitigation measures address these risks.</p>	<p><b>5. Is the risk identification matrix appropriate?</b>  <b>Check whether:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. External risks, especially due to the political economy or fragility/conflict, are identified</li> <li>b. Risks related to fiduciary arrangements, including financial management, procurement, governance, and safeguards issues (harm to people or the environment) are identified</li> <li>c. Implementation capacity risks (human resources, skills, systems) are identified</li> <li>d. Identified risks are addressed by context-appropriate mitigation measures, taking into account experiences from the implementation of past programs as relevant</li> </ul>	

<p><b>6. Sustainability</b></p>	<p>Sustainability concerns are sufficiently addressed in the program design, in terms of both financial resources and institutional capacity.</p>	<p><b>6. <i>Has the program been designed to be sustainable? Check whether:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Measures to ensure capacity building / transfer of skills are included to address institutional sustainability</li> <li>b. The financial sustainability of interventions planned to be continued after the implementation period is discussed and ensured, or a rationale is provided</li> <li>c. The fiscal impact / financial sustainability of the program is consistent with the financing scenario of the ESP and the overall macroeconomic framework</li> </ul>	
<p><b>7. Aid Effectiveness</b></p>	<p>The program is aligned with the principles of the Paris declaration on Aid Effectiveness, particularly (i) country ownership and (ii) alignment on country systems.</p>	<p><b>7. <i>Is the program aligned with the main criteria of aid effectiveness? Check whether:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The program is aligned with the ESP (in particular, the program addresses key challenges identified in the ESP)</li> <li>b. The extent to which country systems** will be used and exceptions to the use of country systems are justified</li> <li>c. In case the program does not make full use of country systems, specific activities are included to build towards those</li> <li>d. The program uses harmonized approaches to monitoring and reporting, as relevant</li> <li>e. There is evidence that the Local Education Group has been fully consulted and supports the program</li> </ul>	

\* According to GPE's funding model, the program's theory of change and M&E/results framework may include the Variable Part indicators and monitoring arrangements, but it is not required to do so; rather, the Variable Part must align with the ESP. The Variable Part is assessed separately.

\*\* For Country Systems, the following dimensions are typically considered: Planning, Budget/Parliament, Treasury, Procurement, Accounting, Audit, Reporting.