

Principles toward effective local education groups

The principles and related tools facilitate reflection and actions for optimizing the potential of sector dialogue and coordination mechanisms. The underlying rationale is that partners achieve more through cooperation, mutualizing resources and complementary efforts than individually.

Why guiding principles?

The importance of multi-stakeholder dialogue and coordination in supporting sector outcomes is widely recognized and a direct objective of GPE's Effective Partnership Roll-out. However, the performance of local education groups (LEGs) (and their sub-groups) as country-led dialogue platform has been marked by mixed results and, until recently, there was little reflection on the conditions that influence LEG effectiveness.

As with partnerships in other sectors, GPE recognizes that education coordination structures face many challenges. To that end, the Partnership is interested in supporting country partners to understand:

- **What is the added value of LEGs to sector dialogue and coordination?**
- **What works well, what works less well, within countries' LEGs?**
- **What do partners want to see improved?**

The guiding principles were developed to empower national teams to reflect, self-assess, identify gaps, build capacities, set improvement agendas and agree on actions. This includes greater clarity of roles, responsibilities and mutual accountabilities to learn and adapt towards achieving LEG effectiveness.

What do we mean by LEG effectiveness?

Based on research across a range of disciplines and fields of application on what makes multi-stakeholder coordination and partnerships effective, we consider effectiveness through three inter-connected pieces: An effective LEG requires: 1) clear and agreed functions; 2) to be fit-for-purpose and 3) committed stakeholders:



A LEG is *strategically effective* when it leverages country-led, inclusive policy dialogue around shared priorities to accelerate progress towards education results. LEG members are able to advance towards agreed objectives when both *organizational and collaborative capacities* are in place or being fostered.

[Principles towards effective local education groups](#) outline core **functions** of policy dialogue and coordination, common **challenges** to realizing these functions, and **seven guiding principles** as foundations for success.

[LEG self-assessment and performance feedback tools](#) can be used together with the principles, or independently, to facilitate reflection on the purposes and quality of policy dialogue and agree on improvement areas.

What are the core functions?

The functions performed by local education groups vary across countries. Strategic effectiveness is reflected in the LEG's success in:

- Supporting plan development, implementation and monitoring
- Addressing education financing and resource use
- Promoting harmonization and alignment; and
- Fostering mutual accountability

Optimizing these core functions is dependent on enabling arrangements and healthy partnership dynamics. It is these elements that the principles toward effective LEGs seek to address.

What are the principles?

Reflecting organizational and collaborative capacities, the seven guiding principles can be understood as the foundation of a well-functioning dialogue and coordination mechanism, but do not imply “minimum standards”:

- 1 The LEG mandate, functions and objectives are clear**
A clear mandate and core policy dialogue functions are agreed by key education stakeholders, based on a shared understanding of focus areas the sector dialogue can add most value. Specific objectives are aligned to the whole policy cycle, with partners regularly reviewing key priorities.
- 2 The partnership framework generates inclusion and engagement**
The LEG engages stakeholders at key junctures - including plan development, joint review and monitoring of sector progress and key reform areas, evaluation and learning - with different forms of targeted engagement linked to partner interests, capacities and resources.
- 3 There is a clear governance structure for coordination**
The governance arrangements clarify relationships between the LEG and other bodies (including with other sectors), recognizing authorities over different types of policy dialogue and decision-making and establishing clear leadership roles and responsibilities.
- 4 Working arrangements are flexible, ‘fit-for-purpose’, and well communicated**
The working arrangements for core and technical working groups are flexible, adapted to context, and fit for taking priorities forward. They are also well communicated to ensure that members are informed about LEG activities, wider modalities for collaboration, roles and responsibilities.
- 5 Regular monitoring contributes to learning and improved performance**
The LEG has clear milestones for what it wants to contribute to the sector through policy dialogue. Review arrangements look at whether sector dialogue and partnership dynamics are getting stronger over time and support adaptive learning in the partnership.
- 6 Leadership and ownership are demonstrated in practice**
Leaders, decision makers and education champions demonstrate a willingness to support participatory policy dialogue through active participation in the LEG and communicate clearly on the level of stakeholder engagement expected.
- 7 Key actors contribute to healthy partnership dynamics**
The partnership is built on a genuine willingness and commitment of all partners to cooperate in accelerating education sector progress, with recognition of the influence of healthy partnership dynamics on LEG performance and realistic strategies for overcoming obstacles.