

THE TEACHING PROFESSION

Working Together for Effective Partnership

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WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A GPE PARTNER?

SUMMARY

Teachers are an essential resource for ensuring a quality education for every child, and a critical part of the Global Partnership for Education. Representatives of the teaching profession engage both at global and country level to make GPE a stronger, better and more inclusive partnership. Teachers are represented in GPE through Education International, the world's largest global sectoral organization of unions.

GPE supports the development, implementation and monitoring of government-led education sector plans. These plans set out sector reforms and strategies with significant implications for teachers. It is therefore critical that teachers be involved in the country-level dialogue and decision-making processes supported by GPE. Teachers are also best placed to capture how policies, plans, programs and strategies play out in schools and classrooms, and what might be done to improve their effectiveness.

How the Teaching Profession Contributes to an Effective Partnership

Teachers are an essential resource for ensuring a quality education for every child. As such, they are a critical part of GPE. In turn, GPE helps teachers engage in policy dialogue at national and global level by addressing issues that are of critical importance to them such as training, teaching aids and materials, pedagogical support, curriculum, teacher recruitment and career paths.

GPE seeks to mobilize partners to act on the belief that inclusive collaboration is the most effective means of achieving development results. Representatives of the teaching profession engage both at global and country level to make GPE a stronger, better and more inclusive partnership. They participate in 'building' GPE by weighing in on GPE strategies, policies and grant decisions through GPE's governance structures.

GPE is governed by a constituency-based, multi-stakeholder Board of Directors, including a constituency representing the teaching profession. Like other constituencies, this constituency selects a Board member and an alternate Board member, with members changing on a rotational basis. Constituencies also nominate members to GPE's various governance committees.

Teachers are represented in GPE through [Education International](#), the world's largest global sectoral organization of unions. Education International represents more than 32.5 million trade union members in 384 organizations in 178 countries and territories. Education International representatives on GPE's Board and committees reach out to constituency members to consult on proposed decisions and policies and agree on input to GPE governance structures. You can find out [here](#) who the Board and alternate Board members representing the teaching profession are. You can also find out more about representation in GPE's Board committees.

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The space for teachers to engage in policy dialogue varies from context to context. This means that strategies for enabling teacher representation in local education groups need to be context sensitive. GPE is committed to working with teachers in the long term to promote their effective inclusion in local education groups across GPE partner countries.

The Role Played by Teachers in GPE's Country-Level Work

Although GPE's grants are often in focus at country level, the grant processes are meant to have an impact beyond the funding. GPE processes should lead to:

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- Strengthened data and analysis
 - Gender-responsive education sector plans and policies
 - Sufficient and equitable domestic education financing
 - Addressing underfunded priorities such as gender equality
 - Capacity building for strengthened education systems
 - Effective, harmonized and inclusive policy dialogue and aligned donor support
 - Learning and adaptation for the achievement of results
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All of these areas have a particular focus on vulnerable and marginalized populations.

What role teachers play in GPE at country level differs from context to context, depending on how teachers and local education groups are organized and how open governments and other local education group partners are towards the engagement of teacher organizations. GPE would like to see teachers represented in every local

education group as a critical stakeholder in policy dialogue.

Through local education group representation, teacher organizations can be helpful in sector diagnostics, policy development, and monitoring of implementation. Given their presence in schools, teachers unions and associations can quickly identify shortcomings in the implementation of a new policy or identify unintended consequences of new approaches that require remedial action.

Representatives of the teaching profession, when included in local education groups, also engage specifically in GPE grant processes including discussions on the scope and implementation modalities of GPE grants and the selection of a grant agent. They also review and provide feedback on draft grant proposals and engage in discussions and updates on implementation. Representatives can also give valuable feedback to the government, grant agent or other local education group partners on implementation issues. In some countries, teachers unions have trained local representatives and established focal points to follow up on the implementation of GPE grants.

Teaching Profession Accountabilities

In 2019, GPE's Board of Directors adopted an '[Accountability Matrix](#)' to clarify what is expected from different GPE stakeholders to enable the partnership to achieve its vision and goals. These accountabilities were then added to the [GPE Charter](#). There are no specific accountabilities for representatives of the teaching profession, but the accountabilities of civil society partners are relevant. These include:

For the partnership

- Support efforts to achieve SDG4 and SDG5 goals and objectives
- Provide support to sector analysis as well as development, implementation and monitoring of government-owned education sector plans

For grants

- Support GPE processes and principles in grant agent selection
- Aid in defining scope of grant programs, and in processing and endorsing grant applications
- Contribute to monitor progress of GPE-financed programs

Delivering on these accountabilities depends on the space provided by governments and other partners for teachers to engage. The other stakeholder sections of this portal provide information on their accountabilities.

Teachers' Engagement in Practice and How to Get Involved

There are various ways to find out how to connect with GPE processes in a specific country.

You can find information about GPE's engagement in a country by selecting the country on the '[Where we work](#)' section of the GPE website. You will be able to see which partner holds the coordinating agency role and who the GPE Secretariat contact person for the country is. You will also find a copy of the country's education sector plan, as well as documents for GPE grants.

You can also reach out to a teachers union or professional organization in the country to enquire whether they are represented in the local education group or engaged in GPE, and to discuss how you can get involved.

When trying to engage in policy dialogue, teachers' organizations are often faced with challenges, including:

- Structural: there are no established social dialogue and workers' consultation mechanisms
- Cultural: there is a perception that the only role of the teachers' unions is to discuss salary and working conditions, and the broader education policy issues are perceived as 'too technical'
- Practical: teacher organizations may lack the time or resources to engage regularly in policy dialogue or may lack capacity for policy analysis and planning

GPE promotes and monitors the inclusion of teacher organizations in local education groups, but when teachers are included in order to meet a GPE standard this does not necessarily mean that inclusion is meaningful and effective. It is important to open the door to teacher representation in local education groups, and to then support consistent participation that builds trust and meaningful engagement over time.

Education International helps teachers' organizations engage in policy dialogue and education sector planning by building their policy analysis capacity and raising awareness of GPE-related processes. In some cases, the GPE Secretariat has also helped teacher organizations access policy dialogue, and has been working with government and other partners to gradually overcome structural, cultural and practical challenges.

GPE has varying degrees of influence across different partner countries, but the power of partnership can make a difference.

RESOURCES

[Country-Level Guide: Recommended Education Sector and GPE Grants Processes](#)

[Principles Toward Effective Local Education Groups](#)

[LEG Self-Assessment and Performance Feedback Tools](#)

[Terms of Reference for GPE Secretariat's Country-Level Role](#)

[Improving Teacher Support and Participation in Local Education Groups](#)

[Education Out Loud](#)

[Knowledge and Innovation Exchange \(KIX\)](#)

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