TERMS OF REFERENCE AND WORKING MODALITIES

PREAMBLE:

The Global Partnership for Education (“GPE”) Implementation Plan focuses on operationalizing the five Strategic Objectives defined in the GPE Strategic Plan 2012-2015. It monitors the achievements of the five Strategic Objectives by outlining the process for their attainment, setting out the core outcomes, actions, indicators and timelines required to make progress.

For a more efficient and effective implementation process for the remaining operating period, there has been a need to streamline, re-orientate and refocus both the substance of the Plan and its delivery mechanisms. In such a way that will enable the Partnership to better deliver and advance upon current commitments. In practice, this has meant articulating a revised Implementation Plan for five strategic objectives, while also moving from a Communities of Practice (COP) led approach as the primary delivery mechanism to that of Technical Reference Groups (TRG)\(^1\).

This ToR for the GPE-TRG has been developed, as a guiding framework. It defines the purpose and role of the TRGs and sets out the coordination and communication structure between the TRGs and the Secretariat as well as governance arrangements with the GPE Board Committees. This document, therefore, contains both the ToR for the GPE-TRG, and as an Annex, their working modalities.

GPE-TRGs would be a flexible structure orientated toward taking forward not only the Implementation Plan but also function in an advisory capacity as a sounding board on the thematic content of the Partnership’s work, particularly those pertaining to country level processes and financing. This would involve utilizing and leveraging the diversity of knowledge, expertise, evidence and practices within the education community to help guide and shape the technical content of the Secretariat’s work and the Partnership as a whole. This also involves leveraging a wide set of technical knowledge that can be taken up including at the country level\(^2\).

The aim is to be more strategic in how these delivery mechanisms function, with partners providing feedback and advice to the Secretariat on the technical specificities of its work while also promoting stronger linkages between the TRGs and LEGs, with the former serving as a repository of expertise that can be tapped into by LEGs for contributions to thematic sector issues at the country level. Thereby helping to strengthen how the Partnership works together to develop and deliver on its priorities. This new approach takes into consideration the recent evolution in the role, mandate and structure of the Secretariat.

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\(^1\) Replacing the CoP led approach with the TRGs does not preclude, current CoP continuing to operating as practice groups working on issues and themes the Communities deem important, rather their interface with the Partnership is in an advisory and collaborative role.

\(^2\) The Partnership aims to influence meaningful change at the country level, By refocusing Implementation Plan activities towards better supporting country level Education Sector Plan (ESP) development and appraisal processes, the link between TRG and the LEGs is strengthened.
PURPOSE:

It is proposed that the GPE-TRGs would be task-based advisory and consultative mechanisms that are proactive and responsive, focused on GPE core business (financing and country level processes for ESP development and monitoring). This would entail acting as a sounding board in the development of policies, guidelines and tools, whose content requires technical specificity.

Through its membership base and networks, and in some cases its additional role as an independent CoP, the GPE-TRGs would also encourage partners to contribute towards the realization of relevant outcomes in the Implementation Plan. Whilst also serving as a readily available pool of knowledge and expertise from which the Secretariat can draw upon for specific product based collaborations.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE TRGs:

Advisory: Provide advice, guidance and feedback in the development of the technical content of guidelines and tools. Work streams requiring external input would emanate from the mandate of the Secretariat, actions within the implementation plan or decision of the Board of Directors. The GPE-TRGs would serve as ‘sounding boards’, helping to ensure the content GPE processes and mechanisms are aligned with the strategic objectives set out in the Strategic Plan, while also taking into consideration relevant technical issues.

GPE-TRGs would leverage and channel technical expertise and knowledge within the broader education community to help guide and shape the work of the Secretariat. In so doing, sharing evidence based knowledge and good practices, including innovation in the education sector, and taking into consideration evolutions in the global education debate. The following are a list of activities the TRGs would contribute to in an advisory capacity:

i. Provide comments on the development/revision of GPE operational tools and guidelines for use in country level processes;
ii. Advise in the development of GPE policy and its entry into new policy domains;
iii. Provide comments on the implications of certain tools and mechanisms at country level; and
iv. Alert the GPE to new research, thinking and evidence that could inform part of its work and advance mandate.

v. Alert the Secretariat to potential partners (North and South) with technical expertise and interest in leading/contributing to the realization of certain deliverables in the Implementation Plan.

vi. Be both proactive and responsive: its members may identify opportunities for engagement and suggest areas for strengthening. The Secretariat focal points may also seek out advice from the TRG on specific issues.

Collaborative: The GPE-TRG or its members can also collaborate with the Secretariat in the development of various products. It would serve as a repository of skills and expertise that the Secretariat and LEGs at the country level can draw upon for specific expertise. This would, however, need to be negotiated independently of any advice rendered to the Secretariat by a GPE-TRG.

The following are a list of activities the GPE-TRGs, as a repository of technical knowledge and expertise could contribute to on a collaborative basis:
i. Support the delivery of the Implementation Plan by leading and contributing to theealization of relevant outcomes;

ii. Develop tools and methodologies and assess their impact; and

iii. Collaborate in the development of knowledge products.

COMPOSITION/MEMBERSHIP:

GPE-TRGs would be encouraged to be inclusive, representing the various constituencies of the Partnership at the global and country level. With representation from developing country governments, donors, civil society (North and South), teachers associations and unions, private sector/foundations, multilateral organizations and representatives from the Local Education Groups at country level. GPE-TRGs are also encouraged to involve technical expertise, including institutions and technical bodies that are Southern as well as Northern based.

The intention is to work with GPE-TRGs that have broad representation and geographical coverage for purposes of ensuring representative advice and feedback reflective of the diversity within the education Community and the Partnership as a whole. How each TRG is organized to be able to provide advice to any given deliverable will be based on dialogue with each Secretariat focal point. It is anticipated that each group will be dynamic and will organise themselves accordingly in a manner that is both efficient and manageable.

INFORMATION ON HOW TO JOIN³:

Accompany each of the revisions to the Implementation Plan should be a one (1) page description of each GPE-TRG associated with each strategic objective. This should be developed in close collaboration with chairs of the TRGs, the related Technical Reference Groups and the Secretariat focal points, setting out the following:

i. Description – describe each of the TRG, their focus, historical background, objectives, membership base (categories of stakeholder members);

ii. Joining the TRGs will be based on a proposal and consensus from among members;

iii. Chair - name and contact details of the chair of each TRG nominated to interface with the Secretariat.

iv. Name and contact details of GPE Secretariat focal points; and

v. Contact information – details of the contact person and website.

Annex 1: WORKING MODALITIES

COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION STRUCTURE: For a clear communication channel between the GPE Secretariat and the TRGs, the following is the communication and coordination structure and their related roles and responsibilities.

| GPE-TRG chair: | To ensure efficient, effective and streamlined coordination and monitoring with the Secretariat, each GPE-TRGs are invited to nominate a chair to act as an interlocutor with the Secretariat and allow for a clear communication channel. |

³ This will be made available on the GPE website and updated periodically as changes occur.
The role of the chairs would be to:
- Act as a point person for the TRG with whom the Secretariat could interface and coordinate;
- Provide the Secretariat with regular updates and information on the progress of their strategic objective, particularly those deliverables supported by a TRG as part of periodic monitoring activities;
- Represent the TRG in joint discussions with the Secretariat and broader SPC on the Implementation Plan; and
- Represent the TRG in GPE Board Committees.

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<tr>
<th>Secretariat focal points:</th>
<th>The Secretariat has put in place the following to facilitate coordination and communication between it and the TRGs:</th>
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<td><strong>Focal persons</strong> - point persons within the Secretariat for each of the five strategic objectives covered in the Plan. The focal points will also be members of the TRG that falls under their respective strategic objective, acting as a communication channel between the Secretariat and the TRG and working closely with the chair of the TRG in coordinating the work of the strategic objective⁴. The Secretariat focal point may also seek out advice from the TRG on specific issues. Along with each TRG chair, the Secretariat focal points will also assist in providing regular updates on the progress of their strategic objective as part of periodic Plan monitoring activities.</td>
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<td><strong>One Secretariat Partnership Specialist</strong> - a dedicated human resource for the overall Plan, coordinating periodic monitoring and reporting of its delivery, a communication channel and focal point across all aspects of the Plan and for partners involved in Plan implementation, facilitating exchange of information and encouraging broad partner engagement. Also acting as the communication channel between the TRGs and the SPC and leading the organization of annual joint discussions between the SPC, the chairs of the TRGs and the Secretariat.</td>
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<td>Overall, the Secretariat would be responsible for leading actions in the implementation Plan that are directly linked to its mandate and core functions:</td>
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<td><strong>i) Country level processes:</strong> Funding model (diagnostic element and screening tools on quality, equity and learning), the ESP/sector policy development tools, grant application processes and Quality Assurance Review (QAR), systems on implementation monitoring and sector review; and LEG functioning and composition.</td>
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<td><strong>ii) Financing:</strong> Funding architecture.</td>
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⁴ Flexibility is built in for each TRG to define and develop with the respective Secretariat focal point for the five strategic objectives an appropriate approach to communication.
Communication between the chairs of the TRGs and the Secretariat will mostly be via phone or internet platforms with the possibility of a face-to-face video conference meeting once annually for joint discussions with the Strategy and Policy Committee.

**GOVERNANCE INTERFACE:** The relationship of the TRGs to GPE governance structures is the following:

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<th>Strategic Planning Committee ⁵</th>
<th>Outputs from the TRGs, in its work with the Secretariat will be feed directly to the SPC in the form of regularized Implementation Plan updates.</th>
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<td>The GPE-TRGs, represented by its chair, would jointly discuss annually by video conference with the SPC and the Secretariat progress on the Implementation Plan, bottlenecks and challenges. The SPC would provide the necessary strategic guidance and feedback. Outcomes of which will also inform annual Board reporting on the progress of the Plan.</td>
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| Other Board Committee         | With the oversight function of the SPC on the Implementation Plan, it will serve as the main interlocutor between the TRGs and other Committees. Through the Secretariat's work with the other Board Committees relevant issues arising from the TRGs may also be channeled, through the Secretariat focal points. |

**MONITORING OF THE PLAN:**

| Quarterly monitoring:         | The Secretariat would be responsible for regularly tracking the progress of the Plan. Updates on Plan implementation would be provided directly from the chairs of the TRGs and Secretariat focal points to the Partnership Specialist, consolidated and made available on the GPE website. |

| Reporting to the GPE Board of Directors | • A report to the Board of Directors, through the SPC, will be drafted annually on progress of the Implementation Plan. This will be led by the Secretariat Partnership Specialist with updates and implementation information provided from TRG chairs and Secretariat focal points;  
• Identifying implementation challenges and means of alleviating bottlenecks to facilitate progress. This would also be informed by the outcome of annual joint discussions between the Secretariat, chairs of the TRGs and SPC. |

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⁵ The Strategy and Policy Committee (the “SPC”) is a standing committee established by the Board of Directors (the “Board”) of the Global Partnership for Education (“GPE”) to oversee the development of strategies and policies of the GPE to ensure that they promote best practices, including innovation in the education sector. Part of their role involves tracking progress on the current applicable strategic plan approved by the Board, and providing advice to the Board on alleviating bottlenecks to facilitate implementation of the strategic plan. In addition to the SPC, the GPE Board of Directors approved the creation of three other standing Committees (Country, Grants and Performance Committee (CGPC), the Governance, Ethics, Risk, Finance Committee (GERF) and the Coordinating Committee). The Committees are chaired and represented by various constituencies of the Board and their representation has been since been approved, and it does not include the recognition of observer status.