STRATEGIC PLAN 2016-2020
CONCEPT NOTE FOR CONSULTATION
STRATEGIC PLAN 2016-2020 at a glance

VISION
Inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all.

MISSION
The Global Partnership for Education mobilizes global and national efforts to achieve quality education and learning for all, through inclusive partnership, a focus on effective education systems, and financing for basic education.

PRINCIPLES & VALUES
- EDUCATION IS A HUMAN RIGHT and an enabler of other rights.
- RESOURCES focused on equity, inclusion, and the most vulnerable.
- COUNTRY OWNERSHIP based on inclusive and effective policy dialogue.
- SUPPORT LINKED TO COUNTRY COMMITMENT performance and nationally identified needs.
- IMPROVED DEVELOPMENT EFFECTIVENESS through harmonization and the use of modalities aligned to country systems.
- MUTUAL ACCOUNTABILITY and increased transparency across the partnership.
- INCLUSIVE PARTNERSHIPS as an effective means of achieving development results.

Goal #1: EQUITY AND INCLUSION
Increase the proportion of girls and boys in GPE partner developing countries receiving a full cycle of quality education of at least 10 years (including at least one year of pre-primary education), targeting the poorest and most vulnerable, including girls, children affected by conflict and crisis, and children with disabilities.

Goal #2: QUALITY TEACHING AND LEARNING
Significantly improve teaching and learning in order to increase relevant learning outcomes as measured by standards agreed by national and/or subnational authorities.

Goal #3: STRONGER EDUCATIONAL SYSTEMS
Significantly improve the capacity, effectiveness and efficiency of education systems to achieve tangible gains in equity and learning for all children.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE #1: MORE AND BETTER FINANCING
- International financing: Mobilize and advocate for more and better quality financing for basic education for countries and populations most in need.
- Domestic financing: Advocate for expanded, effective domestic financing of basic education by a) Investing in national capacity to utilize financing equitably and efficiently.
b) Promoting transparency in monitoring and reporting on educational finance and its allocation.

- Diversity: Diversify the Global Partnership’s financing mechanisms and its donor base.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE #2: STRONGER SECTOR PLANNING AND POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

- Finance sector analysis and planning: Effectively finance sector analysis and planning as fundamental building blocks in the creation of stronger education systems capable of delivering improvements in equity and learning.
- Monitor planning processes: Monitor and assess the quality of sector policy and planning processes through to implementation, so that all involved can learn and improve.
- Support capacity development: Support capacity development and the dissemination of knowledge and good practice to improve sector planning and policy implementation, especially on issues related to equity and learning.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE #3: EFFECTIVE AND INCLUSIVE POLICY DIALOGUE

- Support evidence-based monitoring of results: Support governments, Coordinating Agencies and Local Education Groups to utilize consistent and evidence-based approaches for monitoring and evaluating progress on the implementation of national education sector plans and policies, with a focus on financing, equity and learning.
- Push for stronger accountability: Build the capacity of national stakeholders, including civil society, to engage in evidence-based policy dialogue, leveraging social accountability as a tool to enhance the delivery of results.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE #4: BUILDING A STRONGER PARTNERSHIP

- Support partnership roles: Promote and support consistent roles, responsibilities and practices across the partnership – using cross-national learning, capacity development, monitoring and evaluation to enhance common understanding of the roles and responsibilities of Local Education Groups and their individual members, Coordinating Agencies as well as Supervising/Managing Entities.
- Invest in cross-national learning: Make strategic, cross-national investments in monitoring, mutual accountability and South-South capacity development, drawing on resources and experiences across the partnership.
- Improve effectiveness of the Secretariat: Improve the organizational effectiveness of the GPE Secretariat through the strengthened capacity to support technical excellence, promote partnership principles, assure quality, and ensure sound grant management and fiduciary oversight in the Global Partnership’s country-facing activities.
- Invest in monitoring and evaluation: Invest in monitoring and evaluation – recognizing this as a fundamental tool for mutual accountability and essential if the partnership is to learn and improve its effectiveness.
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1. Introduction

The Global Partnership for Education (‘the Global Partnership’ or GPE) is a multi-stakeholder partnership that supports the development of equitable, efficient, and high-quality education systems in low- and lower-middle-income countries so that all girls and boys learn and achieve their right to good-quality education. Throughout 2015, the Global Partnership will develop a new five-year Strategic Plan (2016-2020).

This Concept Note is a consultation tool to support the development of the new Strategic Plan. It is accompanied by an online survey, and it will also be used in face-to-face consultations, to stimulate input from across the partnership.

The Concept Note presents a revitalized statement of the partnership’s vision, mission and principles, and proposes key goals and objectives for the Global Partnership over the coming five years. It also positions the Global Partnership to play a key role in the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), building on its longstanding commitment to the equitable provision of quality basic education for girls and boys in the most difficult circumstances.¹

2. Our History

Founded as the Education For All Fast Track Initiative in 2002, the Global Partnership was created to deliver on global education commitments made at the Dakar World Education Forum and the Millennium Summit. Over the past decade, the Global Partnership has evolved from its origins as a modest, gap-filling venture managed entirely by the World Bank to become an independently governed, multi-stakeholder partnership. The Global Partnership has grown, is now the fourth-largest donor to basic education in the world, and has allocated more than US$4.3 billion to partner countries since 2003, disbursing more than US$500 million in 2014 alone.

Partnership is at the heart of the Global Partnership’s theory of change. At the global level, the partnership promotes coordination and cooperation among bilateral and multilateral donor agencies, developing countries, and key stakeholders from civil society and the private sector, in order to raise awareness and mobilize international resources to meet the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable, focusing primarily on the basic education sub-sector.² The Global Partnership is governed by a constituency-based Board with representation from key stakeholders, including 60 developing country partners, civil society, teachers’ organizations, multilateral organizations, and donor partners.

The Global Partnership’s theory of change at the country level is captured in Figure 1 below. At the country level, the Global Partnership is focused on supporting governments and local stakeholders to deliver results in the areas of equity, access, and learning in the basic education sub-sector.

To achieve these results, it uses three primary levers:

a) The Global Partnership funds and supports the development and implementation of credible sector-wide policies and plans;

b) The Global Partnership fosters inclusive and evidence-based sector policy dialogue, focused on critical barriers to implementation and the achievement of results in equity and learning;

c) The Global Partnership provides financing to governments to support the implementation of efficient programs and activities that lead to the achievement of results in equity and learning in basic education.

¹ The Plan will be accompanied by a Results Framework, a Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy, and a five-year Implementation Plan.
² Basic education refers to the whole range of educational activities, taking place in various settings, which aim to meet basic learning needs as defined in the World Declaration on Education for All (Jomtien, Thailand 1990). According to ISCED standard, basic education comprises primary education (first stage of basic education) and lower-secondary education (second stage). It also covers a wide variety of non-formal and informal public and private activities intended to meet the basic learning needs of people of all ages, including pre-primary education and adult literacy programs.
Figure 1: The Global Partnership for Education’s Country-Level Levers and Theory of Change

Image description: The image above is a flow chart. The three key Global Partnership for Education levers shown are: Financing, Support for Education Sector Planning and Monitoring and Support to Inclusive Policy Dialogue & Mutual Accountability. Based on these levers are Plans and Implementation monitoring and reporting mechanisms finally resulting in the outcome which is "Robust policies and targeted investments Leading to Improved Access, Equity and Learning in the Basic Education Subsector."

The plans, implementation, monitoring and reporting based on the three levers are all interconnected.

Financing leads to Education Sector Plan Development Grant, Program Development Grant and Education Sector Program Implementation Grant which comprises of Funding Model results-based tranche and Supervising Entity/Managing Entity provides oversight.

Support for Education Sector Planning and Monitoring leads to Sector Analysis, Education Sector Plan – with targeted improvements in the basic education sector and Annual Monitoring & Evaluation of Sector Plan Results by Govt.

Support to Inclusive Policy Dialogue & Mutual Accountability leads to Local Education Group and Joint Sector Reviews. Local Education Group is led by Government and co-chaired with Coordinating Agency - Includes civil society, teachers organizations, and private sector.

Today, the Global Partnership is the fourth-largest donor to basic education in the world. It is increasingly recognized for the role it has played in bringing financing to countries most in need. According to the most recent UNESCO Global Monitoring Report (2015), 81 percent of Global Partnership disbursements between 2010 and 2012 were to low-income countries, compared to 42 percent among other OECD DAC members. Furthermore, the share of Global Partnership grants to fragile and conflict-affected states has more than doubled since 2008, reaching 49 percent of all approved grants in 2014. Since 2011, the Global Partnership has supported approximately 16.8 million children in entering primary and lower-secondary school, of whom 8.1 million are girls and approximately half live in fragile and conflict-affected states. [Results for Learning Report 2014/15]
In 2014, the Global Partnership introduced a new funding model [GPE Funding Model] to reinforce the partnership’s focus on results. The new funding model requires governments to invest in monitoring and data and to maintain high level of domestic financing for education. It also introduces a results-based tranche of funding that rewards tangible achievements in three key dimensions: equity, efficiency, and learning.

3. The Global Partnership for Education's Role in Realizing the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals

The SDGs being developed by the members of the United Nations in 2015 call for a renewed focus on development and poverty alleviation, and for a more inclusive and sustainable globalization to address the interconnected economic, social, and environmental challenges our world faces today. Improving education is a central goal within the sustainable development agenda.

Because the Global Partnership is committed to playing an important role in achieving the SDG vision for education, the partnership will adopt SDG 4 as its vision statement in its new Strategic Plan 2016-2020.

In alignment with the SDGs and the Incheon Declaration, the Global Partnership supports the focus on the provision of twelve years of free, publically funded, equitable quality primary and secondary education (of which at least nine are compulsory), at least one year of free and compulsory quality pre-primary education, and second chance opportunities for youth who have missed out on a basic education. Given the Global Partnership for Education’s current mandate and comparative advantages, the Concept Note proposes that the Global Partnership align with SDGs and Incheon Declaration while still prioritizing its longstanding commitment to the equitable provision of quality basic education. The Global Partnership’s primary geographic focus will remain low-income and lower-middle-income countries, especially those countries with high numbers of out-of-school children and those affected by crisis and fragility.

Furthermore, as recognized in the Incheon Declaration: Education 2030—Towards Inclusive and Equitable Quality Education for All, the Global Partnership will serve as a co-convener of the 2030 Education Agenda, supporting the activities developed under the leadership and coordination of UNESCO, including national-, regional-, and global-level processes for tracking progress against the education SDG targets.

4. Revitalizing the Global Partnership for Education's Vision

The new vision statement for the Global Partnership for Education (2016—2020) will be:

*Inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all.*

This vision reflects the Global Partnership’s commitment to the achievement of the Sustainable Development agenda and its vision for our world in 2030.

5. Strengthening the Global Partnership's Mission

The Global Partnership’s new mission sets out what the partnership itself will contribute to the achievement of inclusive, equitable, quality education:

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3 The Global Partnership’s Education Sector Plan Development Grants will continue to emphasize a whole-of-sector approach to planning.

4 The Global Partnership’s previous vision was: “A good quality education for all children, everywhere, so they fulfil their potential and contribute to their societies.”

5 The Global Partnership’s previous mission was: “To galvanize and coordinate a global effort to deliver a good quality education to all girls and boys, prioritizing the poorest and most vulnerable.”
The proposed mission statement for the Global Partnership for Education (2016-2020) is:

The Global Partnership for Education mobilizes global and national efforts to achieve quality education and learning for all, through inclusive partnership, a focus on effective education systems, and financing for basic education.

This mission statement more clearly and specifically articulates what the Global Partnership will contribute to the achievement of its vision. It outlines what the Global Partnership will do to accelerate education progress: mobilize increased financing for basic education, and work through inclusive partnerships to strengthen education systems.

6. Revisiting the Principles of the Global Partnership for Education

The Global Partnership has established an approach to partnership that has been widely commended.\(^6\) The Sustainable Development agenda also places a high premium on the role of inclusive partnerships in achieving the SDGs.

The Global Partnership’s new Strategic Plan will include a revitalized commitment to the principles of partnership that were established in the GPE Charter and its current Strategic Plan (2012-2015). Partnership is embodied in the Global Partnership’s commitment to coordinating an aligned approach to international financing for education; in its emphasis on exchange of knowledge and good practice among its partners; in the inclusive, partnership-based policy dialogue it fosters at the country level; and in its emphasis on mutual accountability for results.

The Global Partnership’s principles will remain aligned with the 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, the 2008 Accra Agenda for Action, and the 2011 Busan Partnership for Effective Development. However, the new Strategic Plan is an opportunity to revise these principles to better underscore the Global Partnership’s commitment to alleviating poverty and reducing inequality, to promoting education as a human right, and to proposed changes to the Global Partnership’s operational platform. In sum, the proposed principles reflect the need for commitment to a deeper and more substantive partnership.

The proposed Global Partnership for Education principles and values are:

1) Education is a human right and an enabler of other rights.
2) Resources focused on equity, inclusion, and the most vulnerable.
3) Country ownership based on inclusive and effective policy dialogue.
4) Support linked to country commitment, performance and nationally identified needs.
5) Improved development effectiveness through harmonization and the use of modalities aligned to country systems.
6) Mutual accountability and increased transparency across the partnership.
7) Inclusive partnerships as an effective means of achieving development results.

7. Setting the Global Partnership for Education's Five-Year Goals

The Global Partnership will focus on the achievement of two high-level goals: equity and inclusion, and quality teaching and learning. In addition, a third goal is proposed, which is focused on building stronger educational systems, as a logical pre-requisite for achieving improvements in equity and learning.

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\(^6\) The Global Partnership for Education’s partnership model earned it a special commendation in 2013 as a model for sustainable development from the UN Secretary General’s High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda
Thus the proposed goals for the new Strategic Plan are:

**GOAL 1:**

**Equity and Inclusion:** Increase the proportion of girls and boys in GPE partner developing countries receiving a full cycle of quality education of at least 10 years (including at least one year of pre-primary education), targeting the poorest and most vulnerable, including girls, children affected by conflict and crisis, and children with disabilities.

**Rationale:**

Among the global educational challenges identified in the SDG framework, the fact that approximately 58 million children worldwide are still out of school remains among the most urgent. Inequality and exclusion remain major barriers within developing country partners, where the intersection of gender, poverty, disability, geography, and other factors continues to exclude the most marginalized and vulnerable children from basic education. The Global Partnership’s first goal addresses this challenge.

The Global Partnership’s focus on equity for the poorest and most vulnerable also implies that its financing will remain primarily focused on low-income countries, lower middle-income countries with high numbers of out-of-school children in primary and lower secondary, and countries affected by conflict and crisis, where the right to a full cycle of good-quality basic education of at least 10 years is still a distant dream. The Global Partnership’s support to children in these contexts is all the more important today, given the decline of international finance for basic education to low-income countries and countries affected by conflict and fragility.

**GOAL 2:**

**Quality Teaching and Learning:** Significantly improve teaching and learning in order to increase relevant learning outcomes as measured by standards agreed by national and/or subnational authorities.

**Rationale:**

The Global Partnership is committed to improving learning outcomes for all children. It is estimated that 250 million primary-aged children worldwide face “silent exclusion” from education, meaning they are either out of school or enrolled in school but learning little. This learning crisis in basic education has implications for access and success at all subsequent levels of education.

The Global Partnership also recognizes that more teachers and better teaching lie at the heart of any solution to the learning crisis. A significant and growing body of research suggests that pedagogical reforms that better match teaching to student learning levels early in the school cycle are among the most cost-effective places in which to invest when addressing improvements in learning outcomes and enhanced rates of participation (Kremer et al. 2013; Pritchett 2013; Hattie 2013; McEwan 2014).

Pre-primary education is increasingly recognized as among the best investments in learning, especially when provided for children from disadvantaged communities, and when combined with health interventions (Glewwe and Kraft 2014). Yet across developing country partners, only 1 in 4 children have access to pre-primary education, as compared to about 50 percent worldwide. The Global Partnership’s focus on teaching and learning will address this challenge.

**GOAL 3:**

**Stronger Educational Systems:** Significantly improve the capacity, effectiveness, and efficiency of education systems to achieve tangible gains in equity and learning for all children.

**Rationale:**

Underpinning the goals of equity and learning is the need for stronger educational systems supported by efficient, equity-focused financing, evidence-based planning, and inclusive policy dialogue. Building stronger systems through a combination of better planning, improved financing, enhanced monitoring, policy dialogue, and mutual accountability will continue to be central to the Global Partnership’s theory of change over the next five-year period.
The Global Partnership’s partnership-based approach to building stronger systems begins with its unique support for sector-wide analysis and planning, around which it leverages the exchange of knowledge, innovation, and good practice from across its partners. Countries receiving GPE financing are further required to invest in stronger data and monitoring systems while maintaining strong levels of domestic financing for education.

The Global Partnership’s Education Sector Program Implementation Grants, in turn, support critical components of National Education Sector plans, focusing on the implementation of actions most likely to yield key results in the dimensions of equity, learning, and efficiency in the basic education subsector.

At all phases of the policy cycle, the Global Partnership will continue to work with local partners to leverage stronger monitoring of outcomes and more effective and evidence-based policy dialogue. Through its focus on mutual accountability for the achievement of results, the Global Partnership will continue to spur educational systems to implement their plans and achieve tangible results.

8. Setting the Global Partnership for Education's Strategic Objectives

In its new Strategic Plan, the Global Partnership’s Strategic Objectives will focus on the three key levers identified in its theory of change (see Figure 1) as central to the support the partnership provides to education systems in view of spurring results in equity and learning.

1) More and better financing;
2) Stronger sector planning and policy implementation;
3) Effective and inclusive policy dialogue; and
4) Building a Stronger Partnership.

Through Strategic Objective 4, Building a Stronger Partnership, the Global Partnership will pursue its commitment to improving its country-level operations and to ensuring that, as an organization, it is ready to assume some of the expanded responsibilities for the achievement of education goals set forth in the Sustainable Development agenda.

Strategic Objective 1: More and Better Financing

a) Mobilize and advocate for more and better quality financing for basic education for countries and populations most in need.

b) Advocate for expanded, effective domestic financing of basic education by: a) investing in the national capacity to utilize financing equitably and efficiently; and b) promoting transparency in monitoring and reporting on educational finance and its allocation.

c) Improve the development effectiveness of GPE financing by: a) improving the Global Partnership’s financing mechanisms; and b) promoting financing modalities aligned to country systems.

d) Diversify the Global Partnership’s financing mechanisms and its donor base.

Rationale:

Financing of education remains a key barrier to the achievement of inclusive, equitable, and good-quality education. This objective recognizes the central role that the Global Partnership for Education will play in mobilizing international finance and highlights the need for the Global Partnership to diversify its financing windows and thus expand the pool of available resources to meet its goals. This objective also recognizes the importance of leveraging domestic financing for education that is better targeted to meeting equity and learning outcomes. It identifies a role for the Global Partnership in assuring transparent reporting and monitoring of both domestic and international financing.
Strategic Objective 2: Stronger Sector Planning and Policy Implementation

a) Effectively finance sector analysis and planning as fundamental building blocks in the creation of stronger education systems capable of delivering improvements in equity and learning.

b) Monitor and assess the quality of sector policy and planning processes through to implementation, so that all involved can learn and improve.

c) Support capacity development and the dissemination of knowledge and best practices to improve sector planning and policy implementation, especially on issues related to equity and learning.

Rationale:
The Global Partnership for Education is now the largest provider of external support for education sector analysis and planning, which lies at the heart of its theory of change. Under its new Strategic Plan, the Global Partnership will invest in cross-national monitoring, capacity development, and knowledge exchange to support improvements in sector policy and planning across the partnership, focusing in particular on the goal of equity and learning.

Strategic Objective 3: Effective and Inclusive Policy Dialogue

a) Support governments, Coordinating Agencies and Local Education Groups (LEGs) in the effort to utilize consistent and evidence-based approaches for monitoring and evaluating progress on the implementation of national education sector plans and policies, with a focus on financing, equity, and learning.

b) Build the capacity of national stakeholders, including civil society, to engage in evidence-based policy dialogue on equity and learning, leveraging social accountability as a tool to enhance the delivery of results.

Rationale:
The Global Partnership for Education promotes inclusive and evidence-based policy dialogue at the national level to support and monitor the implementation of national plans and spur the realization of results. Actions under this objective aim to improve the consistency and efficacy of policy dialogue and implementation by building local capacity and supporting governments and other stakeholders in their efforts to monitor and assure progress in equity and learning.

Strategic Objective 4: Building A Stronger Partnership

a) Promote and support consistent roles, responsibilities, and practices across the partnership using cross-national learning, capacity development, and monitoring and evaluation to enhance the common understanding of the roles and responsibilities of LEGs and their individual members, Coordinating Agencies as well as Supervising/Managing Entities.

b) Make strategic, cross-national investments in monitoring, mutual accountability, and south-south capacity development, drawing on resources and experiences from across the partnership.

c) Improve the organizational effectiveness of the GPE Secretariat through the strengthened capacity to support technical excellence, promote partnership principles, assure quality, and ensure sound grant management and fiduciary oversight in the Global Partnership’s country-facing activities.

d) Invest in monitoring and evaluation, recognizing this as a fundamental tool for mutual accountability and essential if the partnership is to learn and improve its effectiveness.

Rationale:
This cross-cutting objective focuses on strengthening the partnership itself, so that the Global Partnership for Education can deliver on all of its goals and objectives, and assume expanded responsibilities for delivering on the SDGs. Four key actions are identified: promoting consistent and clear roles and responsibilities in the Global Partnership’s country-level operations; investing
strategically in data, capacity, and knowledge; improving the organizational effectiveness of the GPE Secretariat; and investing in monitoring and evaluation, both within partner countries and across the partnership.

9. Next Steps

This Concept Note will be used as a consultation tool to engage members of the Global Partnership in the formulation of its new Strategic Plan between July and September 2015. The consultation findings will be used to develop a draft of the Global Partnership for Education’s new Strategic Plan and Results Framework, which will be presented to the Board at its October 2015 meeting.