THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLAN 2016-2020 – “GPE STRATEGY 2020”

Rev. 1 – This document has been revised extensively based on feedback provided by members of Board Reference Group 2.

1. OVERVIEW

The Global Partnership for Education (“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 children and youth achieve their right to a quality education, particularly those marginalized by poverty, gender, disability, ethnicity, conflict or fragility.

Building upon its origins as the “Education for All - Fast Track Initiative,” which was designed to accelerate progress towards the education Millennium Development Goal, the Global Partnership’s Strategic Plan 2016 to 2020 (“GPE Strategy 2020”) reinforces the Global Partnership’s long-standing commitment to the equitable provision of quality basic education, defined as pre-primary, primary, and lower secondary education and second-chance learning. GPE Strategy 2020 positions the organization to play a central role in accelerating progress towards the newly adopted Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The GPE Strategy 2020 sets out three strategic goals for the partnership over the next five years: improving learning outcomes; enhancing equity for all; and strengthening the capacity of education systems to deliver improved educational services. To achieve these goals, the Global Partnership will center its work on three key country-level objectives that anchor its unique partnership-based operational model. In addition, two global-level objectives will play an enabling role in support of the partnership’s country-level objectives.

At the core of the GPE Strategy 2020 is the Global Partnership’s unique ability to lock together improved sector planning, a partnership-based approach to government-led sector dialogue and monitoring, and the financing needed to improve equity for all, learning outcomes, and education systems. Through the GPE Funding Model, Global Partnership grants leverage incremental and sustained domestic resource investment in education and progress in equity, efficiency and learning.

These three elements -- planning, partnership, and financing -- lie at the center of the Global Partnership’s powerful country-focused operational model and are captured as three strategic objectives in the GPE Strategy 2020. Over the coming five years, the Global Partnership will strengthen each of these elements of its work, which together form a strong and effective operational model, to ensure that it has the ability to deliver results and support the expanded vision and ambitious goals set out in the strategy.

The GPE Strategy 2020 also commits the Global Partnership to harnessing its comparative advantage at the global level. Over the coming five years, the partnership will use its convening and advocacy power to raise global commitment and mobilize international and domestic resources to meet the educational needs of the poorest and most marginalized. While the Global Partnership’s financing will remain focused primarily on basic education, the partnership will seek additional financing to support equity-focused investments in the progressive realization of the SDG vision of a world in which
to quality upper-secondary education and early childhood development, care and pre-primary education are available for all.

The Global Partnership will also build a **stronger partnership platform** using its global and cross-national reach to promote better coordination, knowledge exchange and improved mutual accountability for results among developing country partners, bilateral and multilateral donor agencies, stakeholders from civil society, teachers’ organizations, and the private sector. It will strengthen the capacity of the GPE Secretariat to support effective and technically sound sector planning, improved implementation of grants, and stronger monitoring and oversight of results. The partnership will also strive to ensure that all partners understand and play their part in the achievement of the common goals set out in GPE Strategy 2020, using monitoring, evaluation and a focus on results to inform the work of the partnership.

In summary, the GPE Strategy 2020 commits the partnership to achieving significant advances in learning and equity, as well as to improving the capacity of national education systems to deliver these results. At the country level, the Global Partnership will support improved **sector planning and implementation**; mutual accountability through **stronger, partnership-based sector dialogue and monitoring**; and grant-based **financing**. The Global Partnership’s global-level objectives enable the partnership’s unique partnership-based, country-level operational model, by enabling the availability of **more and better financing**, and **building a stronger partnership** through knowledge exchange, a strengthened focus on implementation and mutual accountability for results, and improved partnership coordination.

2. **THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP’S HISTORY AND ADDED VALUE**

Founded as the Education for All – Fast Track Initiative in 2002, the Global Partnership for Education’s initial mission was to deliver on global commitments made in 2000 at the Dakar World Education Forum on Education for All, and on the Millennium Development Goals at the Millennium Summit. Over the past decade, the Global Partnership has evolved from its origins as a modest, gap-filling venture managed by the World Bank to an independently governed, multi-stakeholder partnership. Its constituency-based Board has representation from a range of stakeholders, including 61 developing country partners, civil society, teachers’ organizations, multilateral organizations, foundations, the private sector, and 20 bilateral donor partners. The Global Partnership’s Strategic Plan for 2012 to 2015 focused on access for all, learning for all, reaching every child, and strengthening national systems.

The Global Partnership is recognized by the international community for the unique role it has played in bringing financing to countries and children most in need and catalyzing resources from a broad array of donors, both public and private.¹ The Global Partnership is among the five largest donors to basic education in the world - having disbursed almost US$1.9 billion since 2011, and US$524 million in 2014 alone. Since 2011, its financing has annually supported on average 5.3 million children in primary and lower secondary school, of whom almost half are girls and approximately two-thirds live in fragile and conflict-affected states.² Approximately 91 percent of Global Partnership disbursements between 2010 and 2013 were to low-income countries (LICs), compared with 41 percent to basic education in LICs among other members of the Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development’s Development Assistance Committee. With 61 developing country partner members in 2015, the Global Partnership reaches a wide geography that is often beyond the reach of individual donors.

¹ At its 2014 replenishment, the Global Partnership has received funding from several non-traditional donors, including the Government of the Republic of Korea, and the Children’s Investment Fund Foundation, and Dubai Cares.
² Results for Learning Report 2014-2015
The Global Partnership has been recognized for the unique support it provides for education in countries affected by conflict and fragility. Since 2008, Global Partnership grants to fragile and conflict-affected states have more than doubled, leading to strong commendation from the UNESCO Education for All Global Monitoring Report in 2015. The Global Partnership has designed a flexible approach to situations of conflict and fragility through an accelerated funding mechanism that allows for a simplified process to provide up to 20% of a country’s indicative allocation and/or reprogramming of existing GPE grants. Under those circumstances, the Global Partnership works through partner agencies that can ensure the delivery of services in emergency contexts. Since 2011, in countries such as Mali, the Central African Republic, Somalia and Yemen, the Global Partnership has been able to effectively continue support to education when instability has led to the suspension of other donor programs. Moreover, the Global Partnership has helped broker a return of partners through the development of transitional sector plans. As noted by experts in the field, the Global Partnership’s “role in raising the prospects of sector-wide and longer-term development-focused funding in situations of fragility and conflict is unique and holds the potential for transformative change in educational opportunities for some of the world’s most marginalized children.”

Since 2003, the Global Partnership has supported 41 countries to develop evidence-based sector plans through its Education Sector Planning Grants – which now include additional resources for sector analysis. By leveraging government-led local education groups (LEG) and joint sector monitoring processes, the Global Partnership promotes aid harmonization, ensures mutual accountability for the achievement of the results laid out in nationally-owned sector plans, and promotes the exchange of knowledge, innovation and good practice across the partnership. Two independent evaluations recognize that the Global Partnership’s unique, country-level operational model and partnership approach is able to deliver significant improvements and “powerful efficiencies” in education sector planning and sector coordination.

Furthermore, the Global Partnership is the largest supporter of national civil society coalitions, through the Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF) initiative, and it also supports increased engagement of teachers’ organizations in sector policy dialogue through grants from its Global and Regional Activities (GRA) Program. Through these two programs, the Global Partnership has reached civil society partners in more than 54 countries, enabling participation from civil society and teachers’ organizations in sector planning and monitoring, and creating new channels for social accountability and effective citizen engagement in education sector stewardship.

The Global Partnership’s core grant financing mechanism, the Education Sector Plan Implementation Grant (ESPIG), provides funding to support the implementation of national sector plans, with a particular focus on basic education. More than 60% of the Global Partnership’s programs active between 2011 and 2014 addressed the GPE 2012 to 2015 goal of reaching every child, through investments in classroom construction and rehabilitation, teachers, and learning materials. As reported in the GPE Portfolio Review for Fiscal Year 2015, active grants include a wide array of components to support equity, learning and system capacity – including interventions to enhance girls’ education, reduce the number of out-of-school children, expand the availability of classrooms and schools, and support inclusion of marginalized and disadvantaged groups.

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In 2014, the Global Partnership introduced a new GPE Funding Model to reinforce the partnership’s emphasis on results. The GPE Funding Model leverages investment in evidence-based sector plans, requiring governments to develop credible sector plans, to have or to commit to developing national education data strategies, and to commit to gradually raising domestic spending to at least 20% of the domestic budget. The GPE Funding Model also introduced a results-based funding mechanism that is triggered by the achievement of tangible country-chosen targets in the areas equity, efficiency, and learning. The GPE Funding Model reinforces the partnership’s focus on equity and learning and plays a critical part in stimulating stronger implementation of education sector plans.

Since 2011, the Global Partnership has had considerable success with supporting stronger outcomes in learning, equity and educational system capacity. However, based on findings from the Global Partnership’s independent evaluation and consultations across the partnership for this strategic plan, there are clearly areas where the partnership’s country-level operational model needs to be strengthened. In order to tap the Global Partnership’s full capacity and give investors confidence in its ability to deliver results, the GPE Board of Directors set out a framework for strengthening the GPE operational model in October 2015 (BOD/2015/10 DOC 06). This framework commits the partnership to the adoption of minimum standards and enhanced mechanisms for quality assurance of GPE grant investments and partnership processes; the development of clearer roles, responsibilities and accountabilities across the partnership; a conflict resolution mechanism to address situations when effective partnership breaks down; and an improved monitoring and evaluation framework, capable of measuring how well GPE financing and partnership levers are achieving the partnership’s desired impact and supporting learning and mutual accountability across the partnership.

3. THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR EDUCATION’S VISION AND MISSION

The GPE Strategy 2020 commits the partnership to accelerating progress towards achievement of the Sustainable Development Agenda, in particular for SDG 4. Education lies at the heart of the realization of all 17 SDG goals, underpinning global goals for sustainable development, gender equality, human rights, increased health and well-being, poverty alleviation, peace and shared prosperity. As Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen has argued, learning plays a central role in the full realization of human capabilities. By enhancing human agency and well-being and shaping knowledge, attitudes and behaviors, education plays an essential role in preparing and enabling citizens to address the interconnected economic, social, and environmental challenges our world faces today.

In the Incheon Declaration on Education 2030, the Education 2030 Framework for Action, and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda for financing international development, the international community called upon the Global Partnership to play a strengthened role in the achievement of SDG 4, in particular to enable “all children to complete free, equitable, inclusive and quality early childhood, primary and secondary education.”

Recognizing that the Global Partnership must play a central role in supporting accelerated progress towards this SDG 4 vision, the Global Partnership adopts SDG 4 as the vision statement for the GPE Strategy 2020: “Inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all.”

The Global Partnership’s mission statement articulates what it will contribute to the achievement of SDG 4 over the next five years. It commits the partnership to expanding the reach and comparative advantages of its partnership-based model; increasing public funding and further catalyzing financing from new donors and the private sector for education; and strengthening education systems so they

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deliver equitable, quality education and learning for all. The Global Partnership’s mission statement for 2016 to 2020 is:

“The Global Partnership for Education mobilizes global and national efforts to contribute to the achievement of equitable quality education and learning for all, through inclusive partnership, a focus on efficient and effective education systems, and increased financing for education.”

In referring to “education for all,” the Global Partnership addresses the full range of barriers to inclusion and equity set out by the global community in the Sustainable Development Agenda and the Education 2030 Framework for Action. Gender equality and the achievement of equitable education systems are central parts of the Global Partnership’s mission. Furthermore, and in alignment with the Education 2030 Framework for Action, the partnership commits to the elimination of all forms of exclusion in education, in recognition that:

“...all people, irrespective of sex, age, race, colour, ethnicity, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property or birth, as well as persons with disabilities, migrants, indigenous peoples, and children and youth, especially those in vulnerable situations or other status, should have access to inclusive, equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities.”

Based on the priorities of partner countries, as set out in evidence-based, nationally owned education sector plans, the Global Partnership’s financing decisions will maximize equity, efficiency and learning outcomes in accordance with the GPE Funding Model. Such criteria will necessarily mean the Global Partnership’s financing will continue to focus on basic education — defined as pre-primary, primary, lower-secondary education, and second-chance learning opportunities. In some contexts, the Global Partnership recognizes that equity issues in upper secondary education and a more comprehensive view of early childhood development, care and pre-primary education, will be appropriate for the Global Partnership to fund. Recognizing the importance of holistic education systems that sufficiently motivate and ensure students complete their education, the partnership remains committed to a sector-wide approach to education sector planning, and it will continue to support such a holistic approach through Education Sector Plan Development Grants.

The Global Partnership’s financing will continue to focus primarily on low-income and lower middle-income countries, especially those countries with high numbers of out-of-school children and significant gender disparities, as well as those countries affected by crisis and fragility.

4. THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR EDUCATION’S PRINCIPLES

The principles and values of the Global Partnership underpin its unique approach to partnership, as established in the GPE Charter and through its first Strategic Plan 2012 to 2015. Partnership is embodied in the Global Partnership’s commitment to coordinating an aligned approach to international financing for education; its emphasis on the exchange of knowledge and good practice among its partners; the inclusive, partnership and evidence-based policy dialogue it fosters at the country level; and its emphasis on mutual accountability for results. The Global Partnership’s inclusive approach to partnership has been widely commended as a model for others. The UN Secretary General’s High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda noted: “The Global Partnership for

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Education is getting quality education to marginalized children, coordinating education’s many players, offering aid without wasteful replication, and following local leadership.

As part of this new strategy, the Global Partnership will adopt an expanded set of principles to underscore its commitments to alleviating poverty and reducing inequality; promoting education as a public good and a human right; ensuring gender equality across all Global Partnership activities and goals; and improving the Global Partnership’s country-level operational model. While remaining aligned with the 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, the 2008 Accra Agenda for Action, and the 2011 Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation, the Global Partnership’s new principles bring the partnership closer in spirit and ambition to the Sustainable Development Agenda, laying the foundation for a deeper and more substantive partnership.

The Global Partnership’s Principles

1. Education as a public good, a human right and an enabler of other rights.
2. Resources focused on learning, equity, and inclusion of the most marginalized, including those affected by fragility and conflict.
3. Promotion of gender equality.
4. Inclusive, evidence-based policy dialogue that engages civil society, teachers and the private sector.
5. Support linked to country ownership, nationally identified priorities, and country performance in achieving equity and learning.
6. Improved development effectiveness through harmonization and the use of modalities aligned to country systems.
7. Mutual accountability and increased transparency across the partnership.
8. Inclusive partnership as an effective means of achieving development results.

5. THREE STRATEGIC GOALS FOR THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP

Over the next five years, the Global Partnership will focus on the achievement of three high-level goals. The first two goals are equity and inclusion, and quality teaching and learning. The third goal is building stronger educational systems with the capacity to deliver equitable, quality educational services.

Strategic Goal #1: Increased Equity, Gender Equality and Inclusion for All

“Increased equity, gender equality, and inclusion for all in a full cycle of quality education, targeting the poorest and most marginalized, including by gender, disability, ethnicity, and conflict or fragility.”

Of the global educational challenges identified in the Sustainable Development Agenda, among the most urgent are the educational needs of 124 million children worldwide who are still denied quality primary and lower secondary education. Inequality and exclusion remain major barriers for children living in developing countries, where the intersection of gender, poverty, poor health, disability, ethnicity, geography, and other factors continues to exclude the most marginalized and vulnerable children from a full cycle of quality education of 12 years of primary and secondary school plus one year of pre-primary education.
The Global Partnership’s first goal addresses these challenges and recognizes that a continued focus on basic education will be needed to achieve stronger equity outcomes for all – girls and boys, young men and young women. While the primary focus of Global Partnership financing will remain basic education, the partnership will seek additional financing to support equity-focused investments in the progressive realization of the SDG vision of a world in which quality upper secondary education and early childhood development, care and pre-primary education are available for all.

The Global Partnership’s focus on equity for the poorest and most vulnerable also implies that its financing will remain primarily focused on LICs, lower middle-income countries with high numbers of out-of-school children in primary and lower secondary school and high levels of gender disparity, as well as on countries affected by conflict and crisis, where the right to a full cycle of quality basic education is still a distant dream. The Global Partnership’s support to children and youth 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.

To tackle issues of equity and inclusion, the Global Partnership will work with partners at the country level to ensure stronger attention to equity in national sector plans with appropriately targeted financing. Under the GPE Funding Model, the Global Partnership will disburse a results-based tranche of financing upon achievement of agreed equity targets, ensuring strong results in this area. The Global Partnership will also support inclusive and evidence-based policy dialogue on issues of equity and inclusion at the country and global levels, mobilizing knowledge and good practice from across the partnership to support improvements in equity and inclusion across the Global Partnership’s developing country partners. In particular, it will continue to work with the United Nations Girls Education Initiative and other partners to develop a robust approach to gender responsive education sector planning. The Global Partnership will also explore opportunities for further cross-sectoral collaboration to enhance equity and inclusion, especially with the health sector, recognizing that education is essential for the success of all the SDGs; and that in particular the education of girls and women promotes strong health outcomes, while school-based health initiatives support stronger learning outcomes.

**Strategic Goal #2: Quality Teaching and Learning**

“**Improved and more equitable student learning outcomes through quality teaching and learning.**”

The Global Partnership is committed to improving learning outcomes for all children. The best estimates are 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 early learning crisis in basic education has implications for access and success at all levels of education.

The Global Partnership 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. Furthermore, improved teacher training is argued to be not only an important stand-alone intervention, but also critical to the success of complementary interventions, such as

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provision of learning materials or the expansion of technology-based pedagogical tools. The Global Partnership also recognizes that, by helping teachers provide safe and supportive learning environments for girls and boys, investments can contribute to a range of other development outcomes, which are far more likely when girls and boys remain in school and learn.

There is a growing understanding that pre-primary education is among the best investments in learning, especially when provided for children from disadvantaged communities and when combined with health interventions. Yet across developing countries, only 1 in 4 children have access to pre-primary education, as compared to about 50 per cent worldwide.

The Global Partnership will tackle issues of teaching and learning by supporting sector plans that address the need for improvements in teaching and learning and that include a commitment to monitoring progress in learning outcomes and school readiness for girls and boys. The GPE Funding Model, with a variable tranche that is disbursed based on the achievement nationally selected targets for improved learning outcomes, will also be used to significantly enhance the partnership’s impact on quality learning and teaching. The Global Partnership will support evidence-based sector policy dialogue at the national and global levels to support joint problem solving and stronger implementation of planned improvements in teaching and learning within national education systems, including in the area of early childhood development, care and pre-primary education.

**Strategic Goal #3: Efficient and Effective Educational Systems**

“Efficient and effective educational systems delivering equitable, quality educational services for all.”

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, increased capacity, and mutual accountability will continue to be central to the Global Partnership’s Theory of Change over the next five-year period.

A partnership-based approach to building stronger national systems begins with the Global Partnership’s unique support for nationally owned, sector-wide educational analysis and planning, around which the Global Partnership leverages the participation of stakeholders and the exchange of knowledge, innovation, and good practice.

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, gender equality, learning, and efficiency in basic education. Countries receiving Global Partnership financing are further required to invest in stronger data and monitoring systems while maintaining adequate levels of domestic financing for education and progressively also in upper secondary education and early childhood development.

At all phases of the policy cycle, the Global Partnership will continue to work with national governments and other country-level partners to build capacity and strengthen 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.

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6. IMPROVING PLANNING, SECTOR DIALOGUE AND GRANT FINANCING: THE PARTNERSHIP'S THREE COUNTRY-LEVEL STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

At the core of GPE Strategy 2020 is the Global Partnership’s unique ability to lock together improved sector planning, a partnership-based approach to government-led sector dialogue and monitoring, and the financing needed to improve education systems and outcomes. Planning, partnership and financing lie at the center of the Global Partnership’s powerful country-focused operational model and its Theory of Change.

The Global Partnership recognizes that, to be effective, its operational model must deliver robust sector analysis and national data strategies; evidence-based sector plans focused on equity, efficiency and learning; increased domestic financing and the alignment of donor financing; and support around sector plans and their implementation. It must deliver these outputs through strong coordination mechanisms led by government, supported by development partners, and inclusive of civil society, teachers and other education sector stakeholders.

Over the coming five years, the Global Partnership will strengthen each of these elements of its work to ensure that it can deliver results and support the expanded vision and ambitious goals set out in GPE Strategy 2020. As part of its commitment to strengthen and lock together these primary elements of the GPE operational model, the Global Partnership will establish minimum standards around education sector plans and sector coordination mechanisms; it will promote mutual accountability among partners for meeting these standards, and it will develop conflict resolution mechanisms and a monitoring and evaluation strategy that ensures mutual accountability and continuous learning across the partnership.

**Strategic Objective 1: Strengthen Sector Planning and Policy Implementation**

a) Support evidence-based, nationally owned sector plans focused on equity, efficiency and learning.

b) Enhance sector plan implementation through knowledge and good practice exchange, capacity development, and improved monitoring and evaluation, particularly in the areas of teaching and learning and equity and inclusion.

Through GPE Education Sector Planning Grants, technical assistance and exchange of knowledge and good practice, the Global Partnership will support countries to deliver robust sector analysis, national data strategies; and evidence-based sector plans focused on equity, efficiency and learning.

As the largest provider of external support for education sector analysis and planning, the Global Partnership has a special responsibility to ensure improvements in their quality and implementation. The Global Partnership will develop minimum standards to benchmark and monitor the quality of sector planning. It will utilize independent technical assessment of sector plans to guide its investments and support countries as they strive to improve the quality and implementation of sector plans. The partnership will also invest in knowledge and good practice exchange, capacity development and improved monitoring and evaluation to further support sector plans and their implementation.

**Strategic Objective 2: Support Mutual Accountability Through Efficient, Effective and Inclusive Sector Policy Dialogue and Monitoring**

a) Promote inclusive and evidence-based sector policy dialogue and sector monitoring, through government-led local education groups and the joint sector review process, with participation from civil society, teachers’ organizations, the private sector and all development partners.

b) Strengthen the capacity of civil society and teachers’ organizations to engage in evidence-based policy dialogue and sector monitoring on equity and learning, leveraging social accountability to enhance the delivery of results.
The Global Partnership supports strong sector coordination mechanisms led by government, supported by development partners, and inclusive of civil society, teachers and the private sector. It recognizes the unique value that comes from the alignment of primary stakeholders around policy processes and outcomes that are government owned.

Strategic Objective 2 commits the partnership to supporting sector policy dialogue mechanisms that are inclusive and aligned – bringing stakeholders to the policy table to support sector planning and the monitoring of sector results. Research consistently shows that interventions that improve governance of education systems can have a large positive impact on learning outcomes in developing countries. Under GPE Strategy 2020, the partnership will develop minimum standards that monitor improvements in the quality of sector dialogue mechanisms – focusing in particular on the joint sector review process.

The Global Partnership will also continue to support civil society engagement in sector policy dialogue and sector monitoring. International research suggests that citizens can play an important role in raising attention to the quality of service delivery and the needs of those most marginalized, especially when their participation in policy dialogue is fostered alongside improvements in governmental abilities to engage with civil society stakeholders. Furthermore, programs that empower local communities by giving school committees more formal links to government and making them more representative have been shown to translate into significant improvements in learning quality. The Global Partnership’s support for inclusive sector dialogue and coordination offers a specific venue for these more strategic approaches to civil society engagement in policy dialogue. Moving forward, the partnership will also seek to better harness its investments in global and cross-national knowledge and good practice exchange to the meet the policy needs and priorities of developing country partners.

**Strategic Objective 3: GPE Grants Efficiently and Effectively Support the Implementation of Sector Plans focused on Improved Equity, Efficiency and Learning**

a) GPE grants are used to improve national monitoring of outcomes, including learning.

b) GPE grants are used to improve teaching and learning in national education systems.

c) GPE grants are used to improve equity and access in national education systems.

d) The GPE Funding Model is effectively implemented leading to the achievement of country-selected targets for equity, efficiency and learning.

e) GPE grants are assessed on track with implementation.

The GPE Strategy 2020 recognizes the important role that GPE grants play in supporting stronger educational systems and improved educational service delivery. The Global Partnership’s Education Sector Program Implementation Grants (“ESPIGs”) provide financial support for the implementation of education sector plans in at least two ways -- by filling financing gaps, and (under the GPE Funding Model) by creating incentives for better financing, better data, and better policies to support enhanced service delivery. It is principally through its ESPIGs that the Global Partnership has emerged as among the top five donors to basic education, playing an increasingly significant role in financing the education sector in low income countries and countries affected by conflict and fragility.

Strategic Objective 3 commits the Global Partnership to strengthening the design, delivery and management of its program implementation grants. Grant designs must meet minimum standards: they must be designed to deliver results and contribute to the achievement of GPE goals and objectives; and they must include relevant and technically strong programmatic activities, and be based on budgets that
maximize the impact of every dollar available. Grant management and implementation must also meet the partnership’s minimum standards, ensuring that problems are detected early and addressed, and that results are reported in a way that demonstrates that grants are meeting their objectives. To strengthen grant design and grant management, the Global Partnership will set minimum standards for grant design; enhance its quality assurance of grants at the time of investment; and establish standard monitoring, oversight and reporting mechanisms establishing clear expectations and minimum standards for grant agents.

7. THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP’S TWO GLOBAL-LEVEL STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The GPE Strategy 2020 identifies two global-level objectives that will enable achievement of the partnership’s country-level objectives and support strong contributions to the partnership’s three strategic goals. Over the coming five years, the partnership will use its convening and advocacy power to raise global commitment and mobilize international and domestic resources to meet the educational needs of the poorest and most marginalized. The Global Partnership will also build a stronger partnership platform, improving quality assurance and grant monitoring systems and strengthening the technical and oversight capacity of the GPE Secretariat; harnessing global and cross-national knowledge exchange; and developing a monitoring and evaluation strategy that is focused on results, and acts as a tool for mutual accountability and learning in the work of the partnership.

Strategic Objective 4: More and Better Financing

1) Encourage increased, sustainable and better coordinated international financing for education by diversifying and increasing the Global Partnership’s international donor base and sources of financing.

2) Advocate for improved alignment and harmonization of funding from the Global Partnership and its international partners around nationally owned education sector plans and country systems.

3) Support adequate, efficient, and equitable domestic financing for education through cross-national advocacy, mutual accountability, and support for transparent monitoring and reporting.

Financing of education remains a major factor affecting the achievement of inclusive, equitable, and good-quality education. According to the UNESCO Global Monitoring Report, the total annual financing gap between available domestic resources and the amount necessary to reach the new education targets in SDG4 is projected to average $US39 billion per annum between 2015 and 2030. The financing gap is particularly large in low-income countries where it constitutes 42% of total costs.16

Under Strategic Objective 4, the Global Partnership will continue to advocate for adequate and increased international financing for education that is aligned to country systems and national plans – taking a longer term, sector approach that is supported by international research.17 The Global Partnership will seek to catalyze international financing – both public and private – and further harmonize aid flows into the sector around nationally owned sector plans. Given the need to diversify and to expand the international pool of available resources to meet its goals, the partnership will also consider options for diversify its financing mechanisms no later than June 2016 (BOD/2015/10-06).

Strategic Objective 4 also recognizes the important role of the Global Partnership in leveraging domestic financing for education that is better targeted to meeting equity and learning goals. The Global Partnership supports the benchmarks set out in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (xivi) and the Education 2030 Framework for Action, which suggest that domestic spending on education should be at least 4%


to 6% of gross domestic product (GDP); and at least 15% to 20% of total public expenditure. The GPE Funding Model requires governments to commit to increasing domestic financing for education towards the goal of 20% of total public expenditure; and to move towards spending a significant share of this financing (normally 45%) at the primary level. Over the coming five years, the Global Partnership also will support improved levels of domestic financing through global and cross-national advocacy and by supporting transparent reporting and monitoring of domestic financing.

**Strategic Objective 5: Building a Stronger Partnership**

a) Promote consistent country-level roles, responsibilities, and accountabilities among governments, development partners, grant agents, civil society, teacher’s organization, and the private sector through local education groups and a strengthened operating model.

b) Effectively use global and cross-national knowledge and good practice exchange to bring about improved education policies and systems, especially in the areas of equity and learning.

c) Expand the partnership’s convening and advocacy role, working with partners to strengthen global commitment and financing for education.

d) Improve the Global Partnership’s organizational efficiency and effectiveness, creating stronger systems for quality assurance, risk management, country support, and fiduciary oversight.

e) Invest in monitoring and evaluation to establish evidence of GPE results, strengthen mutual accountability, and improve the work of the partnership.

Over the next five years, the Global Partnership will also build a stronger partnership platform. Strategic Objective 5 commits the Global Partnership to improve the breadth and reach of partnership, so that the Global Partnership can deliver on all of its goals and objectives and assume expanded responsibilities for delivering SDG 4. The Strategic Plan identifies five principal actions: promoting consistent and clear roles and responsibilities in Global Partnership’s country-level operations; investing strategically in global and cross-national knowledge and good practice exchange; expanding the partnership’s convening and advocacy role; improving the organizational effectiveness of the GPE Secretariat; and investing in monitoring and evaluation.

Under Strategic Goal 5, the Global Partnership will also support mutual accountability for results; and strengthen the capacity of the GPE Secretariat to support effective and technically sound sector plans and grants. The partnership will also strive to ensure that all partners understand and play their part in the achievement the common goals set out in GPE Strategy 2020, using monitoring, evaluation and a focus on results to inform its work.

**8. THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR EDUCATION’S THEORY OF CHANGE AND RESULTS FRAMEWORK**

The GPE Theory of Change below (Figure 1) visualizes how the Global Partnership will deliver value to all its partners. It shows (from the bottom of the diagram) that GPE will generate inputs from the global-level to support a stronger country-level operational model. In turn, three country-level outputs support its intermediate outcome (stronger and more efficient systems) and in turn the achievement of impact in the areas of equity and learning.

This Theory of Change establishes a pathway through which the partnership will achieve its goals, describing the outcomes and impacts expected from the partnership over the next five years. The highest or ultimate level of impact is captured in the statement:

“Improved learning outcomes for all - girls and boys, young women and young men - through inclusive and equitable quality education”
The Theory of Change describes the chain of Global Partnership input and outputs at global and country levels. Each of these inputs and outputs is aligned to a strategic objective within the GPE Strategy 2020.

The Theory of Change also highlights the five existing GPE grants, with each feeding into the three country-level outputs: (i) the Education Sector Plan Development Grant; (ii) the Civil Society Education Fund; (iii) the Global and Regional Activities Program, (iv) the Education Sector Program Development Grant, and (v) the Education Sector Plan Implementation Grant.

A surrounding feedback loop illustrates the strengthened approach to monitoring, evaluation and knowledge sharing adopted by the GPE Strategy 2020, to ensure mutual accountability and learning that supports improvements across the partnership.

Along the right side of the diagram, the Theory of Change also identifies primary assumptions and attendant risks (see Figure 2 below).

**Figure 1: The Global Partnership for Education’s Theory of Change**

9. **ASSUMPTIONS AND AN APPROACH TO RELATED RISKS**

The Global Partnership’s Theory of Change lays out a set of assumptions that reflect the Global Partnership’s best understanding of the conditions necessary for its success (Figure 2 below). Leading assumptions are also related to risks. For example, the Theory of Change assumes the successful implementation of GPE Strategy 2020 and the successful reporting of results – not doing so is a significant risk. The assumptions also identify the core risks associated with the Global Partnership’s partnership-based operational model – identifying areas where the partnership’s impact relies on the responsiveness and resources drawn from members within the partnership.
Risks associated with these assumptions require a corresponding plan for management and mitigation to increase the Global Partnership’s ability to deliver results. In January 2016, the Global Partnership will review mitigation actions necessary to manage these risks, which will be fully integrated into the Global Partnership’s risk management processes and documented in the risk management matrix. Risk related to the strategic plan will be reviewed and assessed by the Global Partnership’s Board on a semi-annual basis to ensure prompt redress and management of risks.\(^{18}\)

### Figure 2: Key Assumptions in the Global Partnership for Education’s Theory of Change

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome to Impact Assumptions</th>
<th>The Global Partnership’s partnership model is able to leverage continued support and corrective action from partners during implementation, leading to the achievement of identified results.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Output to Outcome Assumptions</td>
<td>Global Partnership support for planning, inclusive policy dialogue and GPE grant resources, will together lead to stronger education systems with the capacity to focus on equity and learning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global to Country Level Assumptions</td>
<td>The Global Partnership’s global and cross-national outputs contribute to increased capacity at the national level, which will in turn enable country-level partners to effectively and efficiently deliver their own inputs. GPE partners will work together effectively at the country level to deliver outputs. Developing country partner governments will create effective mechanisms for policy dialogue and monitoring that include civil society, teacher organizations, and the private sector. Developing country partner governments increase domestic financing for education. Developing country partner governments consistently create, use, and share reliable and disaggregated education-sector data for evidence-based planning and monitoring. The Global Partnership’s business model is adapted to meet the unique challenges within developing country partners, in particular countries and populations affected by fragility and conflict. GPE grants are implemented effectively to support key inputs into the achievement of equity and learning goals established in education sector plans.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global Level Assumptions</td>
<td>All partners commit to the GPE partnership model and participate in monitoring and reporting on areas of mutual accountability. Donor contributions to the Global Partnership and to the education sector in partner countries are sustained and will increase.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 10. Monitoring and Reporting on the Global Partnership’s Results

The GPE Theory of Change anchors the results and reporting framework that accompanies GPE Strategy 2020, identifying outputs, outcomes and impacts that will be monitored and reported through the Global Partnership’s monitoring and evaluation strategy. Under GPE Strategy 2020, all members of the Global Partnership will adopt this common results framework to monitor the achievements of the Global

\(^{18}\) [http://www.globalpartnership.org/content/risk-management-policy](http://www.globalpartnership.org/content/risk-management-policy)
Partnership and to ensure mutual accountability along the chain from global and country-level outputs, to outcomes, and to impacts for children.

Fourteen core indicators (Table 1 below) have been identified for reporting on progress in the implementation of GPE Strategy 2020 and the realization of its vision and ambitious goals. These 14 indicators will primarily be used for external communications.

In addition, a total suite of 43 indicators, fully aligned to each of the strategic goals and objectives in GPE Strategy 2020, will be routinely monitored in an annual GPE Results Report. New indicators can be added to this Results Framework as better quality and internationally comparable data becomes available. In particular the methodologies and baseline data for learning outcome and service delivery indicators proposed for SDG4, which will be developed over the next 1-3 years, will be incorporated as they become available. Furthermore, as the Global Partnership further defines its mandate and the scope and scale of its work, additional indicators can be added as requested to the Results Framework.

The Global Partnership is also committed to monitoring progress and impact through the use of periodic assessment and evaluation of its grants and support to country-level sector policy processes.

Five principles have informed the selection of indicators and will guide the operationalization of monitoring and reporting:

- First, the Global Partnership will utilize available international and country-level data whenever possible, in order to minimize the burden of data collection on developing country partners. It will also support improved national capacity to report on internationally recognized outcome, service delivery, and financing indicators.

- Second, the Partnership is committed to the collection of disaggregated data, to allow for greater monitoring of progress by gender, within fragile and conflict-affected countries, and other marginalized groups as data become available.

- Third, all data gathered by the Partnership will be shared publicly to promote transparency and wider understanding of progress achieved through the Global Partnership’s unique partnership model.

- Fourth, the Global Partnership is committed to utilizing global indicators from Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4) as these become available. Recognizing that many of the proposed indicators for SDG4 require development, the Global Partnership commits to working with its partners to support their development.

- Lastly, the Global Partnership remains committed to reporting on targets established during its 2014 Replenishment. Across the Results Framework, a number of indicators have been selected to meet this requirement, as identified in Section 4 below.

Beginning in December 2016, the Global Partnership will publish an annual Results Report (as described in more detail in the Global Partnership’s results and reporting framework).
Table 1: Core Indicators in the Global Partnership’s Results Framework

| Improved learning outcomes for all through inclusive and equitable quality education | • 1) Proportion of children who do not complete: (i) primary education; (ii) lower secondary education (disaggregated by sex and FCAS)  
• 2) Proportion of development country partners (DCPs) showing improvement on learning outcomes at the primary level. |
| Effective and Efficient Educational Systems | • 3) Proportion of DCPs that have (i) increased their public expenditure on education since joining the Partnership; or (ii) maintained sector spending at 20% or above.  
• 4) Equitable allocation of teachers, as measured through correlation coefficient between the number of teachers and number of pupils per school in each DCP.  
• 5) Proportion of DCPs reporting all of the key international education indicators to UIS (i.e. key outcomes, service delivery, and financing indicators).  
• 6) Proportion of DCPs with pupil/ trained teacher ratio below threshold (<40). |
| Strengthen Sector Planning and Implementation | • 7) Proportion of endorsed (i) Education Sector Plans; (ii) Transitional Education Plans meeting minimum standards. |
| Support Mutual Accountability /Inclusive Sector Dialogue | • 8) Proportion of Joint Sector Reviews meeting minimum standards. |
| GPE Grants Efficiently and Effectively Support Sector Plans | • 9) Proportion of grants supporting EMIS /Learning assessment systems, out of the total planned.  
• 10) Proportion of GPE program grant applications approved from 2015 onwards: (i) identifying targets in Funding Model performance indicators on equity, efficiency, and learning; (ii) achieving these targets. |
• 12) Alignment of GPE grants to national systems. |
| Build a Stronger Partnership | • 13) Proportion of (i) DCPs (ii) other partners reporting strengthened clarity of roles, responsibilities, and accountabilities in GPE country processes.  
• 14) Proportion of results reports, evaluations, and best practice reviews of investments and activities published against planned Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy. |

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19 Indicators at the impact level will be disaggregated by disaggregated by male/female, FCAS/non-FCAS, and other subgroups as available). Indicators using proportion of DCPs as a unit of measurement will be disaggregated by FCAS/non-FCAS.