Gender equality is one of GPE’s eight principles, and central to its work. In June 2016, the GPE Board of Directors approved the Gender Equality Policy and Strategy 2016–2020, which provides guidance throughout the period of GPE’s five-year strategic plan, GPE 2020.

Gender equality in education is critical for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goal on education (SDG 4) and has significant impact on all other SDGs, particularly economic growth, health, nutrition, agricultural productivity and reduced inequality.

We have much work still to do to achieve gender equality in education in developing countries. At the primary level, only 26 percent of low-income countries show gender parity in enrollment; 58 percent show disparity and 16 percent do not have data available. At the secondary level, only 10 percent of low-income countries show gender parity in enrollment; 68 percent show disparity and 22 percent do not have data available.¹

The Global Partnership for Education has been recognized as a key vehicle for delivering on the global education goal, with an important role to play in advancing gender equality in education by 2030.

**THE GENDER EQUALITY POLICY WILL HELP TO ACHIEVE GPE’S VISION OF INCLUSIVE AND EQUITABLE QUALITY EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING FOR ALL.**

There are four aims, which are aligned with the goals and objectives of GPE 2020:

**AIM 1**
Increase gender equality in access, participation and learning for all girls and boys

**AIM 2**
Improve gender equality in education systems

**AIM 3**
Strengthen gender equality in education sector policy and planning processes

**AIM 4**
Ensure robust execution of commitment to gender equality across the Global Partnership

**GPE 2020:**

**GOAL 1**
Improved and more equitable learning outcomes

**GOAL 2**
Increased equity, gender equality and inclusion

**GOAL 3**
Effective and efficient education systems

**OBJECTIVE 1**
Strengthen sector planning and policy implementation

**OBJECTIVE 2**
Support mutual accountability through inclusive policy dialogue and monitoring

**OBJECTIVE 3**
Ensure efficient and effective delivery of GPE support

**OBJECTIVE 4**
Mobilize more and better financing

**OBJECTIVE 5**
Build a stronger partnership
THE GENDER EQUALITY POLICY HIGHLIGHTS SIX KEY COMPONENTS THAT HELP ACHIEVE GENDER EQUALITY IN EDUCATION:

1. Mainstreaming and targeted approaches.
2. Attention to multiple inequalities to reach the most disadvantaged girls and boys.
3. Responsiveness to varying country contexts.
4. Strong evidence and country-level data.
5. Allocation of sufficient human and financial resources.
6. Appropriate competencies and capacity.

In the first year of the strategy, a joint publication by UNGEI and GPE Guidance for Developing Gender-Responsive Education Sector Plans was published and rolled out in a series of regional workshops. GPE is also developing knowledge products on gender equality in education and exploring intersecting disadvantage and the cross-sectoral interventions needed to improve adolescent girls’ access to educational opportunities.

The Gender Equality Policy and Strategy 2016–2020 demonstrates the importance that GPE places on gender equality in and through strong education systems in developing countries. In implementing this strategy, GPE looks forward to further advancing inclusive and equitable quality education for all girls and boys.

For more information, please contact Louise Banham at lbanham@globalpartnership.org.

---

KEY TERMS

- **Gender equality** refers to the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women, men, girls and boys, and equal power to shape their own lives and contribute to society. It encompasses gender equity, which primarily concerns fairness and justice regarding benefits and needs. Gender equality also refers to the transformational commitment needed to make equal rights and equal power a reality. Gender equality benefits women and men, girls and boys, and should be of concern to all.

- When an education policy, system or approach is **gender-responsive**, it means that it is informed by an awareness of the effects of gender norms, roles and relations as they impact education, and that it takes measures to actively reduce those effects that pose barriers to gender equality. It also assesses girls’ and boys’ specific needs and interests, and works toward equal educational outcomes for all. This includes equal access to education, participation in the classroom, learning achievement and completion.

---

1. GPE compilation based on the latest available data on gender parity indices of gross enrollment ratios between 2012 and 2014 from the UNESCO Institute for Statistics database for the 31 countries classified by the World Bank as low-income in the 2014 calendar year. According to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, a country with a gender parity index between .97 and 1.03 is considered to have achieved gender parity.

2. Mainstreaming refers to the integration of gender-responsiveness into all GPE core operations, while targeted approaches identify and respond to particular areas of marked inequality in specific contexts.