UPDATE ON SECRETARIAT HR PLAN / CAPACITY

For Information

Please note: Board papers are deliberative in nature and, in accordance with the GPE Transparency Policy, are not public documents until the Board has considered them at the Board meeting.

1. STRATEGIC PURPOSE

1.1 The purpose of this paper is to update the Board on progress to address remaining capacity gaps in the Secretariat and to develop a comprehensive human resource plan as requested by the Board in December 2016.

2. UPDATE

2.1 At its December meeting, the Board approved a significant increase in resources for the Secretariat to address urgent capacity gaps. The Board also passed the following decision (BOD/2016/12-06): Investment in Secretariat Capacity: The Board of Directors:

1. Requests the Secretariat with support of an external firm to complete additional analysis to identify any remaining capacity gaps and needs of the Secretariat to successfully support implementation of GPE 2020 taking into consideration the following:
   a. Operational implications of the Financing and Funding Framework (FFF).
   c. Results reporting.
   d. Implementation of a strengthened governance structure including the impact of a decision framework which should delineate and clarify the role of the Secretariat, Committees, and Board with respect to decision making.
   e. Clarification of roles, responsibilities, and functions within the Secretariat with a view to realizing greater efficiencies.
2. Requests the Secretariat to develop a comprehensive human resources plan. This plan should include analysis of capacity implications of different scenarios for replenishment, and identify any additional capacity gaps for consideration by the Board in June 2017.

2.2 The Board considered the preliminary implications on capacity of the financing and funding framework (BOD/2017/03/DOC 03 Annex 2), and potential hosting of Education Cannot Wait (BOD/2017/03 DOC 03 Annex 4) at its March 2017 meeting. However given the work scheduled for the second half of 2017 to complete the operational details of the FFF, the conclusion of the hosting process for ECW (scheduled for September 2017), and the need for a better read on prospects for replenishment outcomes, the Secretariat determined that it would be better to take more time to complete development of the comprehensive human resources plan. As a result, the Secretariat is not requesting any additional headcount at this stage – but it expects to do so in December.

2.3 Over the past few weeks, the Secretariat with the support of Dalberg (focused on key business processes) and Boxer Advisers (focused on Management practices) have sought to identify opportunities to increase internal efficiency in business processes, clarify roles and responsibilities, identify capacity gaps, and improve planning, prioritization, and decision making in a Secretariat that has grown and undergone a major period of change, and will need to continue to evolve and improve to meet the increasing demands and expectations of the partnership.

2.4 In Annex 1, an interim update from Dalberg is provided which outlines some of the progress made since their capacity assessment in December 2016, and outlines key areas for improvement going forward. These include 1) strengthening the Office of the CEO within the Secretariat so as to better integrate strategy, planning, engagement by the Board and external engagement by the CEO into one cohesive unit. 2) Introducing a “partner management” approach to ensure clarity, focus and resource allocation to key partners (DCPs, Donors, and other key stakeholders) critical to deliver results against GPE’s common goals and ambitions and managing attendant risks. 3) Dalberg also recommends consideration of a more intentional focus on technical and policy thought leadership as a lever for realizing GPE2020 goals. 4) Finally, consolidation of all internal data and analytics work to better drive planning and resource allocation.

2.5 The recommendations from Boxer Advisers include greater formalization of our decision-making processes and procedures, continued improvements to meeting protocols and internal post-meeting communication, the need to better define the roles of the Management Team and
Leadership Team, the need to strengthen multiyear corporate work planning and processes and including formalizing processes for considering emerging tasks and workforce planning. The Secretariat will also need to develop a change management methodology for use with this process as well as on an ongoing basis.

2.6 While the Secretariat is encouraged to see recognition of the progress made since December, it is acutely aware that there is further room for improvement, which will need to be actioned over the coming weeks and months. Some of these changes are relatively straightforward and reflect that management and business practices need to evolve to adapt to the growth in size and complexity of Secretariat operations. While other recommendations such as the “partner management” approach will represent a shift in how the Secretariat currently functions and will need to be planned and executed in a well thought out and considered basis, and supported with an appropriate change management plan.

2.7 Managing a heavy pipeline of grants, completing the detailed design elements of the financing and funding framework, accelerating replenishment efforts, and instituting the necessary changes to improve the efficiency of how the Secretariat functions will not be an easy task. However the Secretariat is committed to making these adjustments to ensure it’s operating as efficiently and effectively as possible, and is well positioned to meet the needs of the partnership through the end of our current strategic plan, including the smooth integration of Education Cannot Wait should a decision be taken later this year to host it with GPE.

3. **NEXT STEPS**

3.1 A core design team in the Secretariat lead by the Chief Finance and Operations Officer is charged with turning the concepts listed above into specific proposals that can be implemented. The team with external support as needed will involve staff and other stakeholders to ensure proposed changes resonate at all levels and are informed by those who will be doing the work.

3.2 The Management Team will meet regularly to oversee this work and to take the necessary decisions to enact these changes

3.3 A change management specialist will be brought in to ensure that staff are involved in developing solutions, fully informed about outcomes beforehand, and trained when necessitated by changes in roles and responsibilities.

3.4 Two critical milestones for this work will be September 2017, when results agreements must be finalized for all Secretariat staff outlining clearly their roles, responsibilities, and
objectives for the year ahead, and November 2017, when submission of the comprehensive human resource plan to the Board which outlines the 3-year staffing needs of the secretariat under various growth scenarios will be submitted.

4. **PLEASE CONTACT:** Padraig Power ([ppower@globalpartnership.org](mailto:ppower@globalpartnership.org)) for further information.

5. **ANNEXES**

Annex 1: Operationalizing GPE Capacity - Interim update from Dalberg
OPERATIONALIZING GPE CAPACITY

INTERIM UPDATE TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MAY 18, 2017
STRATEGIC PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to (i) provide the GPE Board with an update of the Secretariat’s progress in implementing Capacity Assessment recommendations approved by the GPE Board of Directors at the December 1-2, 2016 Board meeting in Cambodia and (ii) report on additional opportunities for greater efficiency and effectiveness.

There are no decisions required of the Board of Directors at this time. The update and recommendations presented in this paper will inform the development of a full Strategic Human Resources plan which will be submitted to the Board in November 2017. Additional detail on these recommendations is included in a longer report that has been provided by Dalberg Global Development Advisors to the Secretariat’s Management Team for their internal use.

RECENT PROGRESS

The Secretariat has made significant progress implementing the recommendations put forward in the initial Capacity Assessment. The assessment revealed shortcomings in the Secretariat’s ability to (i) support country-level processes and cultivate country-level political support, (ii) wield sufficient convening power for thought leadership and advocacy, and (iii) operate efficiently and effectively. Since December, progress has been made in all three areas. Specifically:

- **To support country-level processes and cultivate country-level political support**, the Secretariat has (i) developed new and adequately-resourced review panels to provide technical, coordinated feedback on plans and grant applications and (ii) hired additional expertise in innovative finance. It has also addressed gaps in resourcing for risk management and monitoring and evaluation through the recruitment of two risk specialists and senior evaluation capacity. Similarly, efforts are in place to improve quality assurance and grant compliance with clearer procedures. The development of the first Annual Results Report also constitutes a significant milestone, and is a necessary first step toward achieving the targets set out in the Results Framework.

- **To wield sufficient convening power for thought leadership and advocacy**, the Secretariat has made significant strides forward in deepening its technical expertise. It has moved aggressively forward to commission the design of the KIX and ASA mechanisms as called for in the FFF.

- **To operate efficiently and effectively**, the Secretariat has elevated the importance of corporate planning and policy and recently developed an annual and multi-year plan. In addition, the Secretariat commissioned Dalberg Global Development Advisors to complete an additional engagement focused on identifying efficiency gains and refining business processes to drive organizational efficiency. The recommendations that follow will enable the Secretariat to make further progress on this goal.
OPPORTUNITIES FOR FURTHER PROGRESS AND EVOLUTION

This progress notwithstanding, there remain major opportunities for greater efficiency and effectiveness, and to evolve country and global facing activities to deliver on the theory of change. It is essential that GPE capitalize on these opportunities now given the recent Board approval of the Funding and Financing Framework which, as outlined in BOD/2017/03 DOC 03 – Annex 2, will require additional capacity, new business processes, and clarified roles and responsibilities. Following focus groups with Secretariat staff, individual consultations, and external benchmarking of other development organizations, Dalberg recommends that the GPE Secretariat evolve in the following four ways:

1. **Strengthen the link between GPE’s strategy, planning and implementation efforts.** Building on lessons learned from recent strategic planning and initiative, we recommend that the Secretariat introduce a function that can more effectively facilitate cross-cutting strategic planning and drive the implementation of major strategic initiatives that are essential for GPE2020. We would also recommend the strengthening the interface between the GPE Board Agendas and decision making with the Secretariat’s own planning efforts in a way to maximize efficiencies and alignment. We recommend that these functions reside in the Office of the CEO, so as to better integrate strategy, planning, engagement by the Board and external engagement by the CEO into one cohesive unit.

2. **Become a true learning organization through data and analytics.** GPE has a vision of becoming a learning organization, which it has begun to operationalize through the development of the Results Framework, Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy, and Knowledge Management Strategy, as well as the recent recruitment of additional staff and development of standard operating procedures for data collection. Becoming a true learning organization would be accelerated by consolidating data and analytics into a single function that oversees what data is collected, manages all collection efforts, and conducts analysis required for key uses of data. This unit will ensure that GPE is collecting data that is truly useful and that data collection procedures are efficient, including through leveraging data collection capabilities of other members of the Partnership. Most notably, the unit will operationalize a new vision for data use, in which the Secretariat uses data and analytics to target different audiences in different ways, with the ultimate goal of improved Partnership performance. This includes using data at the Secretariat-level to inform corporate policy, strategy, technical policies, and guide staff allocation; using data at the Board-level to enable evidence-based decision-making; using data in-country as part of country-level advocacy; and using data at the global level to make the case for investment in GPE and to advocate for global education.

3. **Develop a clear pathway for using thought leadership as a strategic level for change.** GPE has two assets that have not been well utilized in pursuit of GPE2020 – the rich depth of insights from its work thus far, and the vibrant network of high level decision makers from across all constituencies of the education sector. We see tremendous potential for GPE achieving even greater impact with relatively modest investments in efforts to better harness these two assets. These investments would include a more intentional focus on the development of clear, evidence-based common standards on education systems strengthening. These standards will build upon the Secretariat’s own country-level data, cross-country knowledge sharing, and results reporting and evaluations, as well as on global best practices and consultation with other members of the Partnership. These standards can then serve as the basis for more strategic country, regional and global policy dialogue.
4. **Evolve the country and global-level engagement model to deliver on the theory of change** GPE has recently experienced a significant expansion of the Partnership – with 65 existing developing country partners and membership to grow to over 70 in the coming months – as well as a growing number of global actors with which it interacts. Alongside the expansion of the Partnership has been the development of more opportunities for engagement – such as the new FFF funding mechanisms – and thus a greater need to deliver on results. In this context, we see an opportunity for the Secretariat to evolve its country-facing and external relations functions to serve as more effective stewards of delivering the full potential benefits of engagement to each partner in a more integrated and tailored manner. In doing so, we also see the potential for more efficient deployment of Secretariat staff and resources, in a manner that is more tightly linked with the realization of the GPE2020 results framework.

**CONSIDERATIONS**

The analysis completed by Dalberg to date does not include detailed capacity estimates. These estimates will be included in future Board Submissions, integrating other key design work underway around the ASA and KIX mechanisms in particular.

**NEXT STEPS**

Dalberg recommends the immediate implementation of activities for which Board approval is not required. In the case of activities that will require Board approval and will be further detailed in the Strategic Human Resources plan, Dalberg recommends that the Secretariat operationalize those activities by 2020 in advance of launching the new strategy. Key aspects of these recommendations will be implemented immediately. Others will inform the development of the Strategic Human Resources Roadmap, which will be submitted to the Board in November 2017.