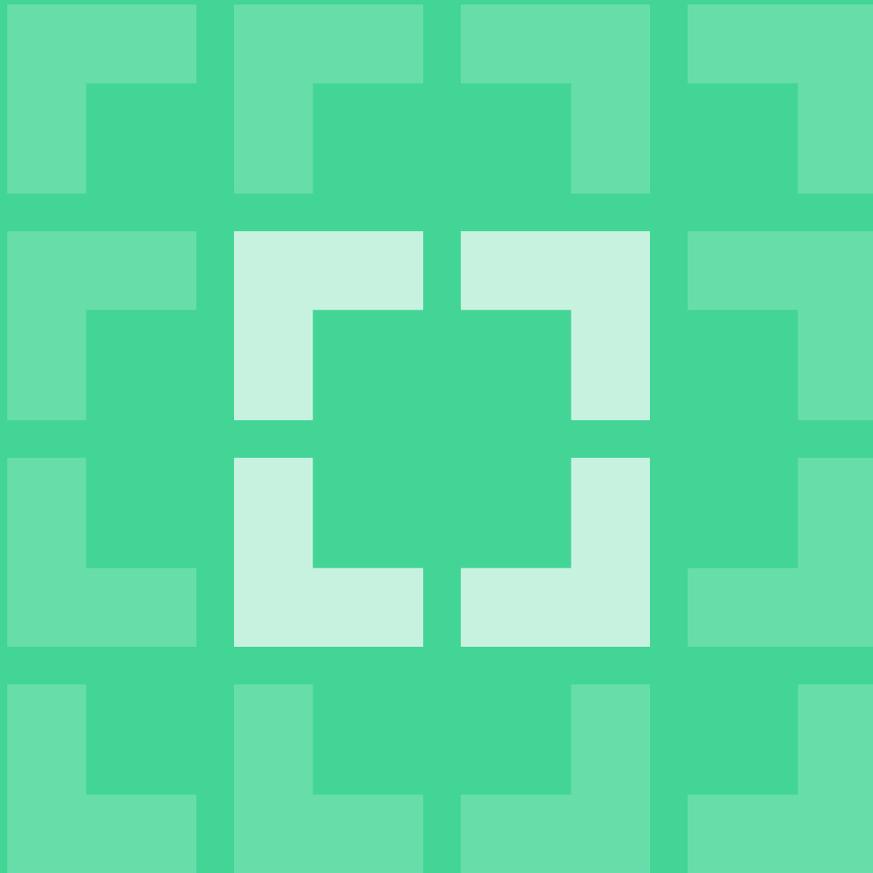


# GPE 2025

# STRATEGIC PLAN



FOREWORD BY OUR  
BOARD CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

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The Global Partnership for Education has made strong progress for children, with 160 million more boys and girls going to school and learning than before we began nearly two decades ago. And yet the COVID-19 pandemic threatens to undo many of these gains and worsen educational inequalities.

Even before the pandemic, more than a quarter of a billion children were not in school, and millions more were not learning enough. In low-income countries, as many as 4 of every 5 children cannot read or write a simple story by age 10. That is why the world's children are looking to their elders

to make transformational change. And that is exactly what GPE 2025 sets out to do.

GPE's strategic plan focuses on improving learning, equity, and inclusion for the most marginalized children, including girls, children affected by crises and displacement, and children with disabilities. It supports countries to make game-changing improvements to their education systems. The result will be that more boys and girls will go to school and develop the skills they need to thrive in a complex world, including social skills, problem-solving skills, and the ability to think critically.

Transformational change will not come easily, nor will it be inexpensive. That is why we urgently need more education financing from donor countries and development partners and why we must protect and increase the volume, efficiency, and equity of domestic financing. GPE seeks to raise \$5 billion to realize the ambitious plan spelled out in these pages. We hope you stand with us for the sake of all our children.

# INTRODUCTION

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***“GPE 2025 seeks transformational change to support GPE partner countries in protecting past gains and accelerating progress toward more resilient education systems.”***

GPE was born out of an unshakable belief that every child deserves the hope, opportunity and agency that a quality education brings, and out of a shared commitment to work in partnership to fulfill this right for the world’s most marginalized children. This spirit of collective dedication has helped GPE grow into a thriving multi-stakeholder partnership, and the world’s largest global fund solely dedicated to transforming education in lower-income countries. Our unique model has helped partner countries make major strides in improving access, learning and equity, and achieve better outcomes for hundreds of millions of girls and boys.

But huge challenges remain. Even before COVID-19, the world was off track to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 4. Millions of children

and young people were being left behind, and left without the skills they need to survive and thrive in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The economic and social disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic threaten to reverse progress, entrench inequalities and turn this crisis into a catastrophe for the most marginalized children and young people. The stakes have never been higher.

That is why GPE 2025 seeks transformational change. In GPE partner countries, education ministers have called for unprecedented collective efforts to transform learning and propel nations forward. Our new strategic framework will drive funding and partnerships to catalyze the kind of seismic shifts that they urge. Together, we can not only protect past gains but accelerate progress toward more resilient education

***“To realize our ambitions, we are making bold changes to our operating model as well as mainstreaming gender equality throughout everything we do.”***

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systems founded on equity, inclusion, quality and efficiency.

To realize our ambitions, we are making bold changes to our operating model. Our grant-making process will be more flexible and responsive to country contexts and needs, and we'll invest more in organizational capacity, monitoring and country-level learning to ensure partner countries can achieve ambitious reforms and drive lasting change.

Gender equality will be hardwired throughout everything we do, building on the gains many partner countries have made toward gender parity in education while recognizing that more needs to be done to tackle the pervasive—and different—barriers that stand in the way of girls and boys realizing their full potential through education, and in society. This will be complemented by additional grants to help close gender gaps, with a focus on countries

where girls' education is lagging most behind.

GPE 2025 promotes more equitable, efficient domestic education spending while offering innovative financing mechanisms sought by partner countries, including a matching fund and debt forgiveness mechanisms, as well as expanding the impact of the successful GPE Multiplier.

The world's children need action now, and we cannot fail them.

# GPE 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN 2021-2025

## PRINCIPLES

- ▶ Education as a public good, a human right and an enabler of other rights
- ▶ Focusing our resources on securing learning, equity and inclusion for the most marginalized children and youth, including those affected by fragility and conflict
- ▶ Achieving gender equality
- ▶ Enabling inclusive, evidence-based policy dialogue that engages national governments, donors, civil society, teachers, philanthropy and the private sector
- ▶ Providing support that promotes country ownership and nationally identified priorities and is linked to country performance in achieving improved equity and learning
- ▶ Improving development effectiveness by harmonizing and aligning aid to country systems
- ▶ Promoting mutual accountability and transparency across the partnership
- ▶ Acting on our belief that inclusive partnership is the most effective means of achieving development results

VISION

A QUALITY EDUCATION  
FOR EVERY CHILD.

MISSION

To mobilize partnerships and investments that transform education systems in developing countries, leaving no one behind.

GOAL

To accelerate access, learning outcomes and gender equality through equitable, inclusive and resilient education systems fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

PRIORITY AREAS

Access; Early learning; Equity, efficiency and volume of domestic financing; Gender equality; Inclusion; Learning; Quality teaching; Strong organizational capacity.

OBJECTIVES



# CONTEXT

## Education is a human right

We all deserve and should be guaranteed an education irrespective of who we are, what we call ourselves, where we live and whom we love. This fundamental truth was enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights more than 70 years ago. Since the founding of the United Nations, the international community has repeatedly recognized education as a right and an enabler that allows us to exercise our other human rights and fully participate in society.<sup>1</sup>

With the aim of translating these ideals into improvements in children's lives, in 2015 global education leaders and policymakers endorsed the Education 2030 Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action. They saw education as the bridge between the world as it is and the world we want it to be.

Education is key to human development and plays a foundational role for the more peaceful, prosperous, sustainable and resilient future envisioned by the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). SDG 4 captures the importance of 12 years of free, publicly funded education: "to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all." Investments in education strengthen the fight to end poverty

and curb climate change, save lives and create a better common future for all. In short, education is the embodiment of our greatest hopes and dreams.

## Progress on global education is now at risk

The unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic threatens to deny hundreds of millions of children their right to access an education and realize their potential. At its peak, the pandemic affected more than 800 million students in lower-income countries,<sup>2</sup> laying bare vast inequities in and between education systems across the world that threaten to undermine decades of progress.

Before the pandemic hit, more children had access to basic education and each new generation spent more time in school than the previous one:

- Since 2000, some 75 million more children have been enrolled in pre-primary education, 89 million more in primary education and 138 million more in secondary education.<sup>3</sup>
- The global primary school completion rate was estimated at 85 percent in 2019, up from 70 percent in 2000.<sup>4</sup>
- The proportion of children and youth not attending primary and secondary school declined from 26 percent in 2000 to 19

percent in 2010 and 17 percent in 2018.<sup>5</sup>

As countries look to build back from the devastating impacts of the pandemic, the pace of recovery between high- and lower-income economies is expected to be uneven. Within countries, the exacerbation of entrenched inequalities will further reduce opportunities for the most vulnerable children and youth. The progress the world has made in girls' education since the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in 1995 is at risk. Globally, female enrollment accounted for 55 percent of the total increase in primary and secondary enrollment between 1995 and 2018.<sup>6</sup> Between 1995 and 2018, the percentage of countries with gender parity in education rose from 56 percent to 65 percent in primary and from 45 percent to 51 percent in lower secondary.<sup>7</sup> Now, the heightened risk of teenage pregnancy, child marriage and gendered responses to family financial crises could see millions of secondary school-age girls drop out of school. Because of the COVID-19 crisis, 10.9 million primary and secondary school students are at risk of not returning to school, which is in addition to the 258 million students who were already out of school prior to the crisis.<sup>8</sup>

The world's collective efforts to support the most marginalized children are more important now than they have ever been.

**Persistent challenges continue**

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, the world was falling well short of delivering quality learning to all children. More than a quarter of a billion children were excluded from education, and COVID has increased the number significantly. The children at greatest risk live in the poorest households, in rural areas and in countries affected by fragility and conflict. Children with disabilities are disproportionately excluded from education in many countries.

➤ **Gender has a significant impact on access to education**

Only 29 percent of low-income countries and 63 percent of lower-middle-income countries have achieved gender parity in primary enrollment.<sup>9</sup> The situation in lower secondary is less encouraging with only 16 percent of low-income countries and 33 percent of lower-middle-income countries achieving parity in enrollment.<sup>10</sup> Fewer than two-thirds of girls in low-income countries complete their primary education and only one in three complete secondary school.<sup>11</sup> Beyond gender parity, girls and boys face specific gendered barriers that stand in the way of progress toward gender equality in and through education.

➤ **Children with disabilities are much more likely to be excluded than those without**

Children with disabilities are

less likely to start school, with access often limited by a lack of understanding about their needs, and those who do get to school face too few trained teachers and insufficient classroom support, learning resources and facilities.

➤ **Displacement can seriously jeopardize a child's education**

There are 4.5 million refugee children and millions of internally displaced children out of school. Almost half of school-age refugee children are out of school.<sup>12</sup> Further, of those who do start primary school, less than half make it to secondary school.<sup>13</sup> Refugee girls are less than half as likely as boys to go to secondary school.<sup>14</sup>

➤ **Children suffer where schools struggle to provide safe, healthy environments**

Educational inequalities widen in schools with violent and unsafe environments and where children are at risk just getting to and from school. According to UNESCO in 2019, around one in three students had been physically attacked in the past year.<sup>15</sup>

➤ **Too few children have access to pre-primary education**

Enrollment in pre-primary education increased globally over the past decade, but half the world's children (175 million girls and boys) still lack access to these crucial years of education.<sup>16</sup> In low-income

countries, only one in five children has access to pre-primary education.

Even children in school do not often learn what they need to thrive in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

➤ **Children struggle to learn basic skills**

Fifty-three percent of all children in school in low- and middle-income countries cannot read and understand a simple story by age 10.<sup>17</sup>

➤ **There is a disconnect between what education systems are teaching and the needs of rapidly changing economies**

In many countries, curricula are not relevant to students' lives. Rote memorization of factual knowledge is still expected, and pedagogy is outdated. To succeed, children require 21<sup>st</sup> century skills such as the ability to think critically, communicate effectively, collaborate with diverse peers, solve complex problems, adopt a global mindset and engage with information and communications technologies.

Education systems often lack the capacity to prioritize and drive action needed to meaningfully improve holistic learning outcomes and instigate larger societal change.

➤ **Evidence-based policy dialogue and prioritization of reforms remain weak in many contexts**

Data systems, the basis for policy and priority development, still require extensive strengthening in most countries. The capacity to implement reforms at the central and decentralized levels needs strengthening.

➤ **Gender norms, values, attitudes and practices remain entrenched**

Discriminatory laws and social norms are pervasive in too many countries, institutions are not gender-responsive and sexual violence continues at high levels.

➤ **The learning crisis is a teaching crisis**

Almost 69 million more teachers are needed to achieve the targets set out by SDG 4 by 2030, 24.4 million for primary and 44.4 million for secondary education.<sup>18</sup> Quality teaching necessitates a range of interventions that are often lacking: sound teacher preparation and professional development, recruitment and retention of good teachers, effective teacher management and deployment, and fair remuneration, incentives, career development and working conditions.

➤ **Education financing gaps are growing**

UNESCO estimated a staggering pre-COVID funding gap of \$148 billion annually to achieve SDG 4, and this is likely to increase by up to a third as the impact of the pandemic further strains domestic and international

resources.<sup>19</sup>

**Transformative change is needed**

***“We see an opportunity to accelerate impact so that all children and youth can receive a quality education...In the face of a very real crisis, we envision a shift from business as usual so that our collective efforts transform the teaching and learning experience.”***

GPE Partner Country Education Ministers’ Aide-Memoire, October 2020

Education systems need to be transformed, not tweaked. The world needs bold actions to create strong, resilient education systems that achieve education outcomes at scale and address systemic inequities. Dynamic and robust education systems are built on data and evidence, seek constant improvement through innovation and learning, and secure and support coherence by many actors in order to deliver results. To foster this kind of transformative change, education systems need unwavering commitment and leadership at all levels, from national government through to local schools.

Governments must lead the push for sustainable change, aided by local and international partners. Governments are the only actors with the capacity and scope to truly transform education systems, but to do so, they need to identify obstacles to change at scale, obtain knowledge and evidence to identify potential solutions, align actors behind transformative solutions,

and gather timely evidence to drive implementation, highlight important lessons and enable course corrections. To support governments and other partners, GPE fosters inclusive policy dialogue and catalyzes transformation at scale in education systems by:

- Supporting the coordination and alignment of national and international efforts;
- Ensuring that priorities are evidence based and transparently decided; and
- Funding programs that drive transformation.

**GPE 2025: An urgent and ambitious response**

GPE supports national governments to lead transformative, large-scale education reform by drawing on the breadth and strength of the partnership to identify key bottlenecks to progress, and potential solutions or innovations. GPE 2025 will support shifts toward inclusion, quality and efficiency in education and present the global community with a unique opportunity to propel this transformation. This strategy provides a platform to bring together GPE’s unique assets and ways of working—its alliances, technical expertise and finance—in support of ambitious education transformation in the most vulnerable parts of the world. As a partnership, GPE will bring together donors, multilateral institutions, civil society, teacher representatives and the private sector behind partner country governments’ reform plans. As a fund, GPE will provide the finance to catalyze reforms and

# WHO WE ARE

GPE is the largest global fund solely dedicated to transforming education in lower-income countries and is a unique, multi-stakeholder partnership. We work to deliver quality education so that every girl and boy can have hope, opportunity and agency. GPE is fully committed to the achievement of SDG 4. We coordinate closely with other actors in the education sphere at the global, regional and country levels and bring our substantial resources to bear in pursuit of that goal. Our results-driven approach includes:

## **Supporting the countries with the greatest need.**

GPE supports countries with high numbers of out-of-school children and weak school completion rates. We focus on reaching the children who are most marginalized and vulnerable, including girls, children with disabilities and those who live in countries characterized by extreme poverty and/or conflict. Almost half of GPE partner countries are affected by fragility and conflict.

## **Strengthening mutual accountability and increasing alignment behind systemic reform.**

GPE is rooted in mutual accountability, the principle that within the partnership we hold each other accountable for implementing our goals and

objectives. GPE supports mutual accountability at the country level in part by strengthening formal stakeholder collaborative forums (local education groups); these exist in most countries and should include participation of teachers' organizations, civil society and the private sector. GPE's emphasis on strengthening mutual accountability serves to reinforce government leadership and reduce fragmentation by incentivizing alignment behind government reform priorities.

## **Driving capacity development and prioritized implementation.**

GPE works with partner countries to strengthen their planning, policy development and monitoring capacity on a demand-driven basis by providing access to GPE finance, technical guidance and expertise. Partner countries have access to results-based financing to support implementation, accelerated funding for crisis situations and opportunities to leverage additional resources through Multiplier grants. They also benefit from knowledge sharing and financing for innovation through the GPE Knowledge and Innovation Exchange. GPE's fund for advocacy and social accountability, Education Out Loud, enhances civil society's capacity to engage in education sector planning,

policy dialogue and monitoring and to promote transparency and accountability in national education policy.

## **Raising more and better financing for education.**

GPE focuses on leveraging more and better domestic financing as the most significant and sustainable form of funding for education. A series of incentives and requirements aimed at improving the volume, equity and efficiency of domestic financing for education are built into the GPE model.

Most GPE implementation grants use results-based financing to drive the delivery of transformative programs. At the global level, GPE serves as a platform for raising international financing for education. GPE works with the full spectrum of actors—donors, partner countries, the private sector, philanthropic organizations and key multilateral institutions—to raise increased international financing for education that is aligned to country systems and sector policies and plans.

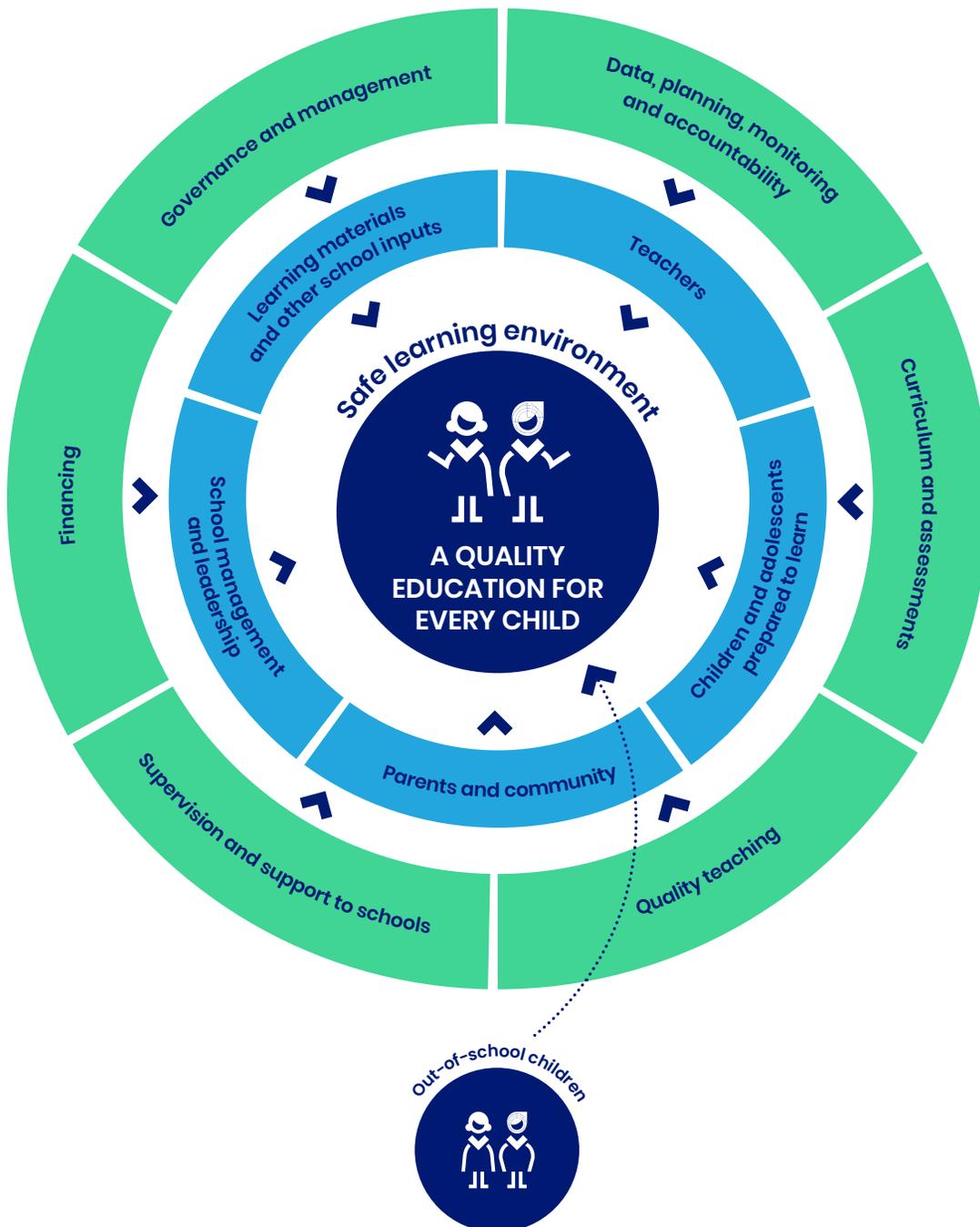
This includes innovative finance mechanisms such as the GPE Multiplier, which provides matching funds for education, including from non-sovereign donors.

**What is a strong education system?**

Education systems are composed of multiple actors and components that must work together to facilitate learning. Strong education systems are responsive and resilient, reaching all girls and boys with quality learning

opportunities. Teaching and learning are at the heart of the education endeavor. Prepared learners, teachers and quality teaching, safe learning environments, and leadership and local accountability all play an important part. GPE works

to strengthen and support education systems holistically to develop policies, prioritize and implement reforms, align external support with those priorities and jointly monitor and hold accountable all partners to achieve systemwide change.



# GPE 2025 OUR STRATEGY

## Introduction

Driving education system transformation is at the heart of how GPE works and GPE 2025 will help partner countries achieve change by leveraging global and national relationships in support of their priority reforms and activities. GPE 2025 is aligned with and directly addresses SDG 4.

## Our vision

GPE's vision is a quality education for every child. In pursuit of SDG 4, GPE is committed to accelerating progress on equity, inclusion and learning, including the central role of quality teachers and teaching and the importance of gender equality.

## Our mission

GPE's mission is to mobilize partnerships and investments that transform education systems in developing countries, leaving no one behind.

GPE will support the transformation of holistic education systems for systemwide impact based on the principle of "leave no one behind." We will focus GPE

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**The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by all United Nations member states in 2015, provides a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future. At its heart are the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, which are an urgent call for action by all countries. SDG 4 is the education goal. It aims to “ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.”**

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financing on the poor and the most marginalized, prioritizing at least one year of pre-primary education and 12 years of education and training.

A transformed education system is strong and resilient; it is capable of mitigating and responding to shocks. Transformed education systems drive prioritized implementation of reforms, engage national and international partners and mobilize financing. A transformed education system also innovates and learns. Education actors (teachers, students, administrators, parents and communities) and inputs (curricula, learning materials and schools) act coherently in pursuit of reform objectives, such as inclusive

and improved learning. An education system is complex and making meaningful change requires clarity of aim and purpose, sound problem analysis, use of evidence and research to develop solutions, the capacity to implement at all levels, and deliberate monitoring and course correction to optimize progress. GPE understands and appreciates this complexity and GPE 2025 maps how it will work in all these critical areas.

By providing financing and investing in data and evidence, capacity development, planning, monitoring and implementation—all aligned behind national priorities and leadership—GPE will support countries to transform their education systems to ensure

GPE PRIORITY AREA:

## Access



GPE will expand access to education for the most marginalized children, including refugees and displaced people, across all partner countries. Key barriers to access often include distance to school, official and unofficial costs of education and high-stakes examinations for entry to lower secondary.

quality and inclusive learning for all. GPE will mobilize inclusive partnerships and financial and technical investments in support of clear, nationally identified education reform priorities, sustained implementation, and monitoring and learning from evidence. We will foster and sustain effective country-level partnerships between national governments, donors, civil society, teachers, philanthropies, the private sector, technical agencies and key multilateral institutions based on the principles of mutual accountability and transparency.

### Our goal

GPE's goal is to accelerate access, learning outcomes

and gender equality through equitable, inclusive and resilient education systems fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

While every country has different needs, challenges and capacity, many of GPE's partner countries share areas where increased support and investment would accelerate the achievement of SDG 4. GPE will support countries to prioritize those areas that, based on evidence, can have the most transformative impact, including on access, learning, gender equality, inclusion, early learning, teachers and teaching, finance and organizational capacity. In each area, we will seek to raise the profile and importance

## GPE PRIORITY AREA:

# Learning



GPE will help countries achieve improvements in learning along each stage of a child's education, including early learning, foundational skills such as literacy, numeracy, socio-emotional learning and the wider range of skills necessary to prepare students for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This may include supporting distance learning and strengthening capacity for inclusive data collection to monitor learning.

of equity and quality, incentivize increased domestic investment, get evidence and data into the hands of policymakers, facilitate opportunities to share best practice and support progress monitoring.

### Our objectives

GPE will pursue its vision, mission and goal through four objectives that support education transformation at scale; these comprise three country-level objectives and one enabling objective. Taken together, the three country-level objectives describe a system transformation approach that sources, supports and sustains transformative reforms with potential for impact at scale.

The enabling objective aims to reinforce country capacity for system transformation by leveraging GPE's strategic capabilities. GPE's country-level objectives are to:

- Strengthen gender-responsive planning and policy development for systemwide impact;
- Mobilize coordinated action and financing to enable transformative change; and
- Strengthen capacity, adapt and learn, to implement and drive results at scale.

Our enabling objective is to mobilize global and national partners and resources for sustainable results.

#### GPE PRIORITY AREA:

## Gender equality



GPE will support countries to systematically identify and address the barriers to education that affect boys and girls differently, putting gender equality at the heart of planning and implementation of education systems. GPE will support gender-responsive planning and disaggregated data systems, recognizing that gender barriers to

## At the country level

### **Objective 1: Strengthen gender-responsive planning and policy development for systemwide impact**

Coherent, evidence-based and prioritized plans and policies are essential for building effective systems that reach even the most vulnerable with a quality education. We will support governments to develop gender-responsive education sector plans and policies. Specifically, this will include:

- Providing access to advice, expertise and finance in support of planning, policy development, prioritization and monitoring for results;

- Assessing whether policies and plans identify and address gendered barriers to education and identifying actions to improve gender equality;
- Determining whether policies and plans identify and address multiple forms of exclusion, many of which intersect (for example, children with disabilities, refugees, internally displaced children or other excluded groups);
- Strengthening evidence-based diagnosis of critical implementation bottlenecks and identifying potentially scalable, transformative solutions;

education intersect with other forms of exclusion. To further incentivize progress on girls' education and the hardwiring of gender equality into GPE's support for strengthening education systems, additional financing will be available to those countries where girls are the furthest behind.

- Facilitating knowledge sharing and the collection of data and evidence to enhance solution design, planning and monitoring; and
- Enhancing inclusive policy dialogue and joint sector monitoring, including through local education groups or similar inclusive, government-led forums.

Gender-responsive sector planning, policy and monitoring is a requirement for GPE support, and we will offer financial incentives for progress in this area in countries where gender-responsive planning and policy is a major challenge. Governments can access GPE capacity-building support, in line with country policy

and planning cycles, to drive improvements.

**Objective 2: Mobilize coordinated action and financing to enable transformative change**

GPE, as a fund and partnership, is built on the principle of decentralized mutual accountability and the idea that coordinated action and financing, aligned behind government priorities, is essential for sustained transformation. Under this objective, we will support increased efficiency, effectiveness and alignment of education programs and financing by:

- Catalyzing progress in the enabling factors for system

GPE PRIORITY AREA:

**Inclusion**



GPE will support countries to transform their schools so that all children can learn in a safe and healthy environment free of discrimination. This will include support to strengthen education data systems to include children with disabilities as well as advocacy for including refugees and internally displaced persons in national education systems.

transformation through capacity strengthening, requirements and incentives: the volume, equity and efficiency of domestic finance for education; gender-responsive sector planning, policy and monitoring; data and evidence; and sector coordination;

- Enabling countries to deliver system transformation by making focused, evidence-based investments in programs that unlock system bottlenecks to achieve results;
- Supporting governments to secure joint action and financing by all partners,

aligned to country systems and national priorities; and

- Facilitating policy dialogue and coordination with relevant actors in humanitarian crisis contexts.

GPE will assess domestic financing and inclusive sector coordination as requirements for GPE support and will offer financial incentives for progress where challenges in these areas impede system transformation. Partnership compacts will define how GPE's engagement—as a fund and a partnership—will align behind countries' system transformation priorities. Roles, responsibilities and actions agreed in these compacts will be the basis for decentralized

GPE PRIORITY AREA:

## Early learning



GPE will incentivize countries to ensure all children have access to at least one year of quality pre-primary education. This will include raising the profile of playful early childhood education, and the early opportunity it provides to identify children with physical or learning difficulties. GPE will support countries to integrate pre-primary into education sector plans and ensure it is adequately financed.

mutual accountability through country-level coordination mechanisms. Governments can access GPE capacity building support to strengthen sector coordination if needed.

**Objective 3: Strengthen capacity, adapt and learn, to implement and drive results at scale**

GPE is built on the principle of country ownership and leadership: national governments must lead education system transformations. To achieve this, governments need access to reliable and timely data and evidence, capacity to act upon the best available data and evidence, and the capacity to generate and use learning to adaptively

manage education systems. GPE will assist by:

- Providing expanded financial support for capacity building to strengthen and support resilient systems, including through enhanced data systems;
- Promoting and supporting adaptive management through jointly monitoring sector performance, gathering implementation data and making course corrections as needed; and
- Supporting evidence-informed policy and program implementation, and capacity development for the uptake and use of evidence.

GPE PRIORITY AREA:

**Quality teaching**



GPE will invest in quality teachers and teaching in all partner countries, acknowledging that—beyond any other school-based factor—teacher effectiveness is the most important predictor of student learning. This will include support for the professional development of teachers and the inclusion of teacher organizations in education policy dialogue.

GPE will assess data and evidence as a requirement for GPE support and offer financial incentives for progress where there are major challenges. Partner countries will be supported to strengthen their data systems where needed. Monitoring, evaluation and learning at the country level will be embedded in all aspects of GPE's instruments, to drive systematic, evidence-based action on the delivery of impact at scale. If evidence is lacking in rolling out a new approach or innovation, GPE will aid countries in the design of appropriate evaluations to inform implementation, make course corrections and share new evidence across the partnership.

## At the global level

### **Enabling Objective: Mobilize global and national partners and resources for sustainable results**

Supporting and sustaining country-level transformation requires actions at both the global and local levels. As a partnership encompassing governments, donors, multilateral agencies, civil society, teachers' organizations, non-sovereign donors and the private sector, GPE can draw upon significant capabilities to back country-level education transformation. GPE will further leverage the power of this partnership by harmonizing efforts, strengthening alignment and purposefully

## GPE PRIORITY AREA:

# Volume, equity and efficiency of domestic financing



GPE recognizes that the most significant and sustainable source of funding for education is government and that increasing the volume of domestic financing for education must be accompanied by efforts to use resources more efficiently and reach the most marginalized. GPE will continue to assess national education financing against internationally agreed benchmarks and will help build capacity to track the use of domestic finance and improve the availability of data to support transparency and accountability.

engaging in strategic partnerships behind country-level objectives. We will seek to create opportunities and efficiencies in tackling education challenges that transcend national borders. These components are wide-ranging and include the following:

- Raising more and better finance that is responsive to national priorities and aligned with country systems, including through access to innovative financing mechanisms.
- Investing in the capabilities needed to deliver on country-level objectives through dedicated regional or global partnerships that respond to country demand (whether technical or programmatic), cross-cutting sector synergies and mechanisms and support for innovation.
- Strengthening the learning partnership by building on the Knowledge and Innovation Exchange, and existing knowledge-sharing platforms. GPE will also facilitate peer learning among partner countries, particularly when they confront new or unanticipated issues. GPE will rely more systematically on the capabilities of its global partners to monitor results, strengthen country capacity for evidence gathering and reduce duplication.

GPE PRIORITY AREA:

## Strong organizational capacity



GPE investments will build and strengthen government capacity in areas critical to efficient, effective and resilient education systems. These include data and diagnostics, analysis, policy development, planning monitoring, public financial management, and sector coordination and alignment. It may also include supporting cross-sectoral partnerships to leverage synergies.

- Engaging in advocacy by building on Education Out Loud, coalescing the partnership around key strategic issues where combined global or regional advocacy will influence national outcomes.
- Emphasizing, incentivizing and monitoring decentralized mutual accountability. GPE will foster and encourage this accountability by deepening links between global partnership commitments and country-level action and supporting efforts for greater transparency and accountability between governments and their citizens.

# HOW WE WORK: THE GPE OPERATING MODEL

## Overview

GPE is both an enabler and a catalyst of education transformation. Building on evaluations of GPE 2020, the GPE 2025 operating model will assist partner countries in transforming their education systems by leveraging GPE’s global and national relationships in support of their priority reforms and activities. GPE 2025 is fully aligned to our effective partnership principles and will be implemented through the following key activities.

### GPE’s effective partnership principles:

- Increase decentralized mutual accountability.
- Drive national government ownership and strengthen its capacity.
- Rebalance the country-level model to focus on implementation and sector policy dialogue.
- Reduce GPE processes and transaction costs.

## Leveraging our partnership to strengthen mutual accountability at the country level and increase alignment

### COMPACT

The GPE 2025 operating model will emphasize incentivizing and monitoring mutual accountability and drive government ownership. It will ensure that each government is empowered in its leadership role and that partner programs are aligned behind them. GPE will support a country-level partnership compact developed by local education groups describing specific transformation priorities within sector policies and plans. Partners will align their efforts to these compacts and decide on specific

reform priorities to target through GPE financing. The use of allocation-linked incentives and results-based financing will encourage partners and governments to improve alignment, adopt modalities to reduce fragmentation (for example, pooled funds), support local education group inclusivity and drive improvements in domestic financing, among other actions.

### Strengthening capacity to support education systems transformation

#### SYSTEMS CAPACITY GRANT

GPE will expand support for national government capacity strengthening, including for the development of government-led education sector

plans. Country partner governments will be able to access flexible funding for systemwide capacity strengthening across all aspects of GPE’s country-level objectives through a systems capacity grant. Support will be demand-driven and available for a wide range of planning and capacity-building activities that span all aspects of creating and implementing transformative plans and policies.

### Sharpening GPE investments to support education systems transformation

#### SYSTEM TRANSFORMATION GRANT

GPE will be flexible to country contexts and respects—as a basic

principle—government ownership. As such, GPE will provide access to differentiated funding options, including a system transformation grant that is aligned to country needs and priorities. The bulk of GPE funding will be provided through a flexible approach to grant allocations based on context-specific requirements and incentives tied to key enabling factors for system transformation, specifically volume, equity and efficiency of domestic finance; gender-responsive sector planning, policy and monitoring; accumulation of data and evidence; and sector coordination. GPE financing will target specific, prioritized reforms identified in government-led partnership compacts between partner countries and local education groups. In crisis situations, countries may access funds through GPE's accelerated financing mechanism, which may be channeled through existing humanitarian pooled fund mechanisms.

### **Mobilizing strategic capabilities to reinforce country capacity for system transformation**

#### **STRATEGIC CAPABILITIES**

GPE will collaborate with global and regional partners to provide countries with capabilities critical to

education system transformation. Partner countries are often constrained in their ability to identify, access and integrate relevant innovation in sector reforms and to build capacity for their effective scaling. Owners of such strategic capabilities, in turn, often struggle to identify who needs their services, gain access to decision makers and find timely opportunities to contribute.

GPE will work to address specific constraints across multiple countries by offering access to regional and global solutions, including advisory services where partner expertise can strengthen capacity where most needed. GPE will forge partnerships with organizations that can deliver solutions to challenges faced by multiple countries and will seek to convene partners and donors around key, intractable issues hindering education progress.

The GPE Knowledge and Innovation Exchange (KIX) will provide partner countries access to innovations and expertise, while Education Out Loud will strengthen civil society advocacy and government accountability. During the implementation of GPE 2025, there will be opportunities to

strengthen the links between these mechanisms and GPE's operating model. For example, a country's system diagnostics may conclude that an improved strategy for the expansion of early childhood education is needed, and that the regional KIX hub offers knowledge that can be adapted to effectively scale up early childhood education. Or the diagnostics could indicate that greater transparency around resource utilization would help address system inefficiencies, and that an Education Out Loud grant to a civil society partner offers an opportunity to complement government monitoring systems.

GPE will also search for opportunities to invest across sectors to improve education outcomes, recognizing that development is not an isolated phenomenon; progress in one sector is intrinsically linked to gains in others. GPE actions will focus on areas in each country that impact children's access to education and ability to learn. This could include developing partnerships with key entities focused, for example, on water, sanitation and hygiene, nutrition, health, gender-based violence and climate.

### Knowledge and Innovation Exchange

The GPE Knowledge and Innovation Exchange (KIX) is GPE’s fund for meeting global public goods gaps in education. KIX connects the expertise, innovation and knowledge of GPE partners to help developing countries build stronger education systems. Through the sharing and funding of proven solutions and innovations, KIX ensures that evidence-based solutions get in the hands of national policymakers and directly feed policy dialogue and planning processes, and builds capacity to produce, integrate and scale knowledge and innovation in GPE partner countries. The International Development Research Centre is the grant agent for KIX.

### Education Out Loud

Education Out Loud is GPE’s fund for advocacy and social accountability. The fund supports civil society to be active and influential in shaping education policy to better meet the needs of communities, especially of vulnerable and marginalized populations. Education Out Loud aims to enhance civil society’s capacity to engage in education sector planning, policy dialogue and monitoring and to promote transparency and accountability of national education sector policy. It also seeks to create a stronger global and regional enabling environment for civil society advocacy and transparency efforts in education. Education Out Loud is managed by Oxfam IBIS.

### Serving as a platform to aggregate more and sustained financing for education from countries and donors

#### FINANCE

Increased domestic financing for education is essential for sustained improvement in outcomes and is the cornerstone of GPE’s financing strategy. GPE will continue to advocate at the country level for increased financing and support others seeking to do the same. Simultaneously, through key aspects

of our operating model—including an incentives-based approach and the use of results-based financing—we will aid governments in both increasing domestic spending and ensuring that it is equitably and efficiently allocated to provide a quality education to all children.

GPE will continue to work with donors and advocates globally to grow and aggregate international financing for education that is aligned to country systems and sector policies and plans. Under GPE 2025, we will provide

opportunities for countries to access innovative finance mechanisms, using novel approaches to attract funding for their education systems, in addition to the GPE Multiplier and through the same delivery mechanisms. The menu of options available to countries (based on demand and suitability) will include incentives for debt forgiveness operations that lead to increased education investment and offering matching funds to incentivize contributions from the business community and private foundations.

In addition, GPE will seek to expand its support to country-led efforts to convene partners to fundraise for education, offering substantial cofinancing up front to incentivize increased investment through the Multiplier, and facilitating country demand for impact bond modalities.

**Raising the profile and importance of investing in inclusive, quality education globally and nationally**

**ADVOCACY**

GPE will raise awareness of key issues and impediments that prevent all children from accessing

a quality education. We will continue to advocate with and influence global leaders and their citizenry to recognize the importance of developing quality education systems. Through continued support for Education Out Loud, we will reinforce civil society's capacity to engage in education sector planning and policy development at the national level and strengthen the enabling environment for civil society advocacy and transparency efforts in education globally and regionally.

**Embedding monitoring, evaluation and learning to drive systematic**

**learning on the delivery of impact at scale**

**MONITORING, EVALUATION AND LEARNING**

Countries must have access to the data and evidence needed to implement effective and efficient sector policies and programs. Under GPE 2025, we will support the development and use of data and evidence needed for decision-making, accountability and transparency. Data will be available to countries in real time to offer lessons learned and enable course correction.

# MONITORING, EVALUATION AND LEARNING

At its core, GPE's effectiveness as a partnership is grounded in our ability to learn from our shared experiences. Under GPE 2025, we will pursue a balanced approach between two aims: supporting learning and the use of evidence at the country level to enable adaptive management and strengthen the capacity to drive results, and strategic monitoring, evaluation and learning for accountability, transparency and aggregating results at the partnership level. This effort will include embedding evidence-based learning at the country level to drive timely decision-making and adaptive

management for improved performance across GPE. Our approach will include:

- A monitoring and annual reporting system, with a set of key indicators at the grant, sector and partnership levels for accountability and to inform ongoing implementation;
- A system of reviews and evaluations to provide a foundation for evidence-based learning, testing innovations and guiding a range of decisions and actions by partners;
- A GPE-wide results framework as well as reporting to integrate

- key information from both the monitoring and evaluation streams of work, complemented by nuanced annual reporting that can lead to clear decisions and actions; and
- A knowledge-management and learning program that draws on the monitoring and evaluation work streams to mainstream evidence-based decisions across the partnership.

We will share the data collected through these various streams across the partnership, enabling adaptive management and program course correction where needed.

# RESULTS FRAMEWORK

GPE Results Framework 2025 serves as a telegraph of GPE results. It supports transparency and decision-making by allowing the Partnership to monitor progress through a set

of indicators that are aligned with the priorities and objectives of GPE Strategic Framework 2025, presented in the second column of the table below.

The full Results Framework can be accessed here: <https://www.globalpartnership.org/content/gpe-2025-results-framework>.

	PRIORITY AREA/ OBJECTIVE	INDICATOR
<b>Goal – To accelerate access, learning outcomes and gender equality through equitable, inclusive and resilient education systems fit for the 21st century</b>		
1	ACCESS	Proportion of countries with at least one year of free and compulsory pre-primary education guaranteed in legal frameworks (based on SDG indicator 4.2.5)
	EARLY LEARNING	
2	ACCESS	Participation rate in organized learning one year before the official primary entry age (SDG indicator 4.2.2)
	EARLY LEARNING	
	GENDER EQUALITY	
3	ACCESS	(i) Gross intake ratio to the last grade of (a) primary education, (b) lower secondary education (SDG indicator 4.1.3) (ii) Out-of-school rate at (a) primary school age, (b) lower secondary school age, (c) upper secondary school age (SDG indicator 4.1.4)
	GENDER EQUALITY	

4	EQUITY, EFFICIENCY, AND VOLUME OF DOMESTIC FINANCE	<p>(i) Proportion of countries with government expenditure on education increasing or 20% or above as a percentage of total government expenditure (Volume of domestic finance)</p> <p>(ii) (a) Proportion of countries where equity, efficiency, and volume of domestic finance for education is assessed; (b) Proportion of countries making progress against identified challenges in equity, efficiency, and volume of domestic finance for education</p>
5	GENDER EQUALITY	(i) Proportion of women aged 20-24 years who were married or in a union before age 18 (SDG indicator 5.3.1)
	INCLUSION	(ii) (a) Proportion of countries where gender-responsive planning and monitoring is assessed; (b) Proportion of countries making progress against identified challenges in gender-responsive planning and monitoring; (c) Proportion of countries where gender-responsive planning and monitoring is assessed that have a legislative framework assuring the right to education for all children
	STRONG ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY	
6	LEARNING	Proportion of children and young people (a) in Grade 2 or 3, (b) at the end of primary education, and (c) at the end of lower secondary education achieving at least a minimum proficiency level in (i) reading and (ii) mathematics (SDG indicator 4.1.1)
	GENDER EQUALITY	
7	QUALITY TEACHING	<p>(i) Proportion of teachers in (a) pre-primary education, (b) primary education, (c) lower secondary education, and (d) upper secondary education with the minimum required qualifications (SDG indicator 4.c.1)</p> <p>(ii) Proportion of countries where teaching quality is assessed</p>
	GENDER EQUALITY	
8	STRONG ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY	<p>(i) Proportion of countries reporting at least 10 of 12 key international education indicators to UNESCO Institute for Statistics</p> <p>(ii)(a) Proportion of countries where the availability and use of data and evidence is assessed; (b) Proportion of countries making progress against identified challenges in the availability and use of data and evidence; (c) Proportion of countries where the availability and use of data and evidence is assessed that report key education statistics disaggregated by children with disabilities</p> <p>(iii)(a) Proportion of countries where sector coordination is assessed; (b) Proportion of countries making progress against identified challenges in sector coordination; (c) Proportion of local education groups that include civil society organizations and teacher associations</p>
	GENDER EQUALITY	
	INCLUSION	

**Country-level objective 1 – Strengthen gender-responsive planning, policy development for system-wide impact**

9	GENDER EQUALITY	(i) Proportion of countries that implement [GPE allocation-linked] policy reforms in the gender responsive sector planning and monitoring enabling factor as identified in their Partnership Compact (ii) Proportion of System Capacity Grants where activities under the gender responsive planning and monitoring window are on track
	STRONG ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY	

**Country-level objective 2 – Mobilize coordinated action and financing to enable transformative change**

10	STRONG ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY	(i) Proportion of countries that implement [GPE allocation-linked] policy reforms in the sector coordination enabling factor as identified in their Partnership Compact (ii) Proportion of System Capacity Grants where activities under the mobilize coordinated action and finance window are on track
11	EQUITY, EFFICIENCY, AND VOLUME OF DOMESTIC FINANCE	Proportion of countries that implement [GPE allocation-linked] policy reforms in the equity, efficiency, and volume of domestic finance enabling factor as identified in their Partnership Compacta
12	EQUITY, EFFICIENCY, AND VOLUME OF DOMESTIC FINANCE	(i) Proportion of GPE grant funding aligned to national systems (ii) Proportion of GPE grant funding using harmonized funding modalities
13	STRONG ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY	(i) Proportion of countries that implement [GPE allocation-linked] policy reforms in the data and evidence enabling factor as identified in their Partnership Compact (ii) Proportion of System Capacity Grants where activities under the adapt and learn for results at scale window are on track

**Country-level Objective 3 – Strengthen capacity, adapt and learn, to implement and drive results at scale**

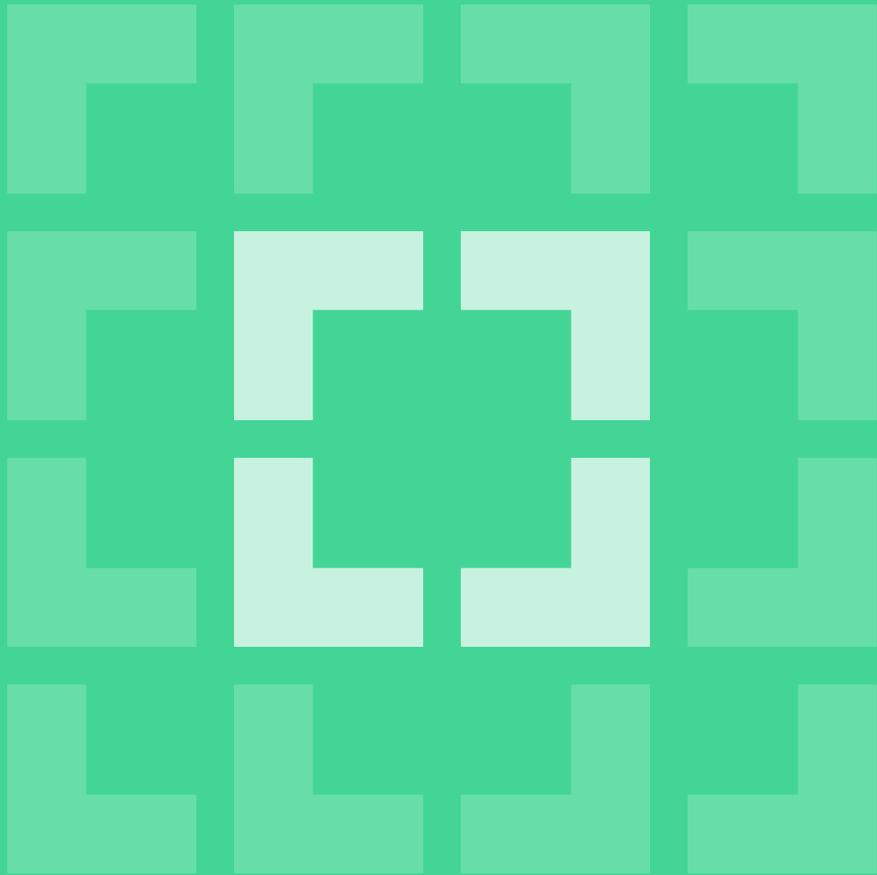
<b>14</b>	ALL PRIORITY AREAS	<p>(i) Proportion of System Transformation Grants (a) meeting specific objectives during implementation (methodology to account for utilization volume and progress towards objectives); (b) met objectives at completion (by priority area):</p> <p>Priority Area 1: Access;                      Priority Area 2: Early learning;                      Priority Area 3: Equity, efficiency, and volume of domestic finance;                      Priority Area 4: Gender Equality;                      Priority Area 5: Inclusion;                      Priority Area 6: Learning;                      Priority Area 7: Quality teaching;                      Priority Area 8: Strong organizational capacity</p> <p>(ii) Proportion of grants with a Girls’ Education Accelerator component where the Girls’ Education Accelerator-funded component met its objective at completion</p>
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**Enabling objective – Mobilize global and national partners and resources for sustainable results**

<b>15</b>	LEARNING PARTNERSHIP	Number of cases of uptake of KIX-supported research, knowledge, and innovation in country-level policy development or delivery
<b>16</b>	STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP	<p>(i) Number of GPE countries benefiting from newly mobilized strategic Partnerships</p> <p>(ii) Proportion of GPE-mobilized strategic capabilities that meet their objectives</p> <p>(iii) Additional co-financing leveraged through GPE innovative financing mechanisms</p>
<b>17</b>	ADVOCACY	Number of countries where civil society in Education Out Loud (EOL) funded projects has influenced education planning, policy dialogue and monitoring
<b>18</b>	FINANCING	(i) Percentage and (ii) cumulative amounts of donor commitments fulfilled

# ENDNOTES

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3. UNICEF, *Every Child Learns: UNICEF Education Strategy 2019–2030* (New York: UNICEF, 2019), <https://www.unicef.org/media/59921/file/UNICEF-education-strategy-2019-2030-data-analytics.pdf>.
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6. Manos Antoninis et al., *Global Education Monitoring Report 2020: Gender Report; A New Generation: 25 Years of Efforts for Gender Equality in Education* (Paris: UNESCO, 2020), <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000374514>.
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