

ANNEX III: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ON THE GPE 2025 OPERATING MODEL PROPOSALS

This annex provides responses to frequently asked questions in constituency and committee consultations. These responses are provided to clarify key concepts to the Board. Many details are still under development and will be developed through further consultations with constituencies and committees.

I. Country-level partnership framework

1. What is the purpose of the country-level partnership framework? How does it relate to sector analyses and sector plans?

The purpose of the country-level partnership framework (CLPF) is to elevate the partnership at the country-level to (i) strengthen the alignment of all partners behind specific, transformative national education policies and (ii) focus GPE funding and assets on specific transformative national policies. By capturing agreement on the actions each partner will take to support transformative national policies, it will form the basis for mutual accountability at the country-level. Seen from the perspective of GPE funding, it will facilitate a more integrated and aligned package of support to specific national policies that spans all forms of GPE funding, including KIX and EOL. It will also provide clarity on the parameters of GPE funding in each country, such as the policy reforms to which additional allocations will be linked and indicative funding and focus areas for each GPE grant. The CLPF is not intended as a substitute for sector analyses/diagnostics, sector plans or policies—the priorities identified in the CLPF will draw on existing evidence and lie within existing plans or policy frameworks. GPE will continue to support sector analyses, plans and policy development.

2. How does the country-level partnership framework differ from partnership/engagement frameworks of development partners? Will it duplicate these frameworks?

The partnership/engagement frameworks of individual development partners describe how their agency or organization will support countries (financial and technical support) in different social and economic sectors. GPE's proposed CLPF captures agreement on the actions *all* partners will take to support transformative national education policies. The CLPF will not duplicate the individual frameworks of development partners. Partners may draw on their individual framework when agreeing the actions they will take to support specific priorities.

3. What are the implications of the CLPF on transaction costs?

An aim of the CLPF is to reduce transactions costs for partner countries.

A critical element of reducing transaction costs at the country-level, particularly for governments, is to strengthen partner alignment behind national priorities. Poorly coordinated planning, financing, and action can result in high transactions costs and reduce the effectiveness of all partners' investments. The CLPF can address this challenge by fostering mutual accountability for aligning behind specific priorities.

The CLPF can also reduce transaction costs linked to GPE grants. The dialogue captured in the CLPF will include the identification of specific areas on which GPE grants will focus, and the mix of grant instruments to be used in each country. Once these strategic parameters of GPE grants

are agreed at the country-level and approved by the GPE Board, grant development, quality assurance, and approval processes can be streamlined within approved parameters.

There will be transaction costs associated with convening partners and reaching agreement on priorities and actions in support of those priorities. These can be minimized by aligning to the country policy cycle and utilizing existing evidence, plans, and policy frameworks and building on ongoing country-level dialogue.

4. Who will develop the CLPF? How will the development of the CLPF be resourced?

The development of the CLPF, and the associated country-level dialogue, will be government-led. The government will lead a participatory and transparent policy dialogue to develop the CLPF and will be supported by the coordinating agency and the GPE Secretariat in this process. It is proposed that the costs associated with the development of the CLPF, including the support provided by the coordinating agency, can be financed through the system capacity grant.

II. Flexible requirements and allocations

1. How will GPE ensure that commitment to domestic financing for education is maintained as a core principle in a flexible requirements and allocations approach?

GPE's country-level and independent summative evaluations show that GPE domestic financing requirements played an important role in improving policy dialogue on domestic financing but had limited impact on domestic financing decisions. Domestic financing is maintained as a core principle in the new operating model and further levers are considered. The proposed flexible requirements and allocation approach will strengthen GPE's levers for more and better domestic financing. The use of allocations linked to demonstrated progress in requirement areas, including domestic financing, can incentivize countries to take the policy actions needed to improve the equity, efficiency, and volume of domestic financing. In addition, the allocation level could be impacted when a government's commitment to domestic financing is insufficient. The Board could decide to reduce the indicative allocation, or even withhold GPE funding in certain cases when the lack of commitment is compromising progress towards SDG4. The Secretariat is developing the technical details of this approach, which will be refined through further consultation.

2. A flexible requirements and allocation approach may leave room for divergent interpretations of requirements by partners. How will clarity of roles and responsibilities for decision making be ensured?

It is critical to manage the risk of divergent interpretations of requirements posed by the shift from a common, global standards approach applied to all countries to a multidimensional, context-based approach to assessing requirements. Several elements are being explored to address this. First, a rigorous analytical approach that provides consistency across contexts. This are several well-known approaches in this area and we could build on existing methodologies including the [Education Sector Analysis](#) methodology. Second, the use of an independent panel of experts working in an advisory capacity to the Board, as discussed during the Effective Partnership Rollout process. Dispute resolution mechanisms and operational processes for Board decision making will also be developed.

3. How will the flexible allocation model, linked to progress in requirement areas, ensure that fragile countries and those with lowest capacity are not penalized because contextual challenges make progress difficult?

Each country's indicative allocation will be determined using a needs-based formula. The majority of the GPE Fund will continue to be allocated to low-income countries with a premium for fragile and conflict affected contexts.

The flexible allocation model will be based on context-specific requirements rather than global standards that cannot adjust properly to the diversity of contexts in which GPE operates. When requirements are assessed as not met, additional allocations will be linked to the achievement of a sequence of results that are calibrated to each country's initial conditions. This approach is expected to fit the needs of fragile and low capacity countries better than a "global standards approach".

4. What policies and mechanisms will be put in place to ensure predictability of funding under the flexible requirements and allocations approach?

An initial and indicative allocation, determined using a needs-based allocation formula, will be used to inform the country dialogue. Countries will have clarity about the requirements considered for the decision on the final allocation and they will be discussed at country-level and inform the CLPF. Each country's final allocation will be approved by the Board in its decision on the use of GPE funding, within the CLPF. A portion of the final allocation will be linked to the achievement of results in requirement areas. These results, and the allocation amounts linked to each result, will also be clearly described and approved in this Board decision. This will precede the programming of country grants.

III. System capacity grant and approach to capacity development

1. Is the System Capacity Grant an additional implementation grant?

No. The system capacity grant would replace the existing education sector plan development grant (ESPDG) and expand its activities to implementation monitoring and capacity development, as already initiated by the Effective Partnership Rollout (for example the on-going pilot for joint-sector reviews). Therefore, it continues the evolution of the ESPDG and answers the strong demand from country partners for expanded and more flexible capacity development support. It also addresses key country-level and independent summative evaluation findings on GPE support for capacity development.

It will be a small, highly flexible grant with simple application and approval procedures, and include the options for countries to access funding on an ongoing basis, as needed throughout their policy cycles. The system capacity grant will run alongside the implementation grant and its activities do not need to be completed prior to accessing the implementation grant.

2. Would capacity development support be limited to the System Capacity Grant?

No. Implementation grants will also focus on capacity development but will be more sharply focused on specific priorities (e.g. learning in underserved areas). Specific attention to capacity development will be paid during the quality assurance process. With implementation grants more focused on specific system and policy reforms, the need for a flexible grant to strengthen capacity and build reform readiness in areas such as domestic financing, sector planning and monitoring, sector coordination and capacity, and data and evidence is critical.