

Steering the development of the 2020 strategic plan of the Global Partnership for Education (GPE)

8-12 December 2019, Nairobi, Kenya



A substantial part of the GPE Board of Directors meeting was devoted to agreeing the steer to start developing the next strategy for the succeeding five years.

The Global Partnership for Education (GPE) Board of Directors met in Nairobi as the Partnership enters the final year of its 2020 strategic plan. As such, a substantial part of the meeting was devoted to agreeing the steer to start developing the next strategy for the succeeding five years.

The civil society constituencies in GPE have been actively engaged in informing the steer of the strategic planning process and in participating in the consultative processes facilitated by the GPE Secretariat to inform the Board deliberations.

Southern CSO Constituency (CSO2) representatives to the GPE Board - Camilla Croso (main CSO2 representative) and Maria Khan (alternate CSO2 representative) - conducted online consultations within the constituency to shape the CSO2 positions and interventions during the Board meeting. They have also pro-actively engaged with the other constituencies within GPE, such as the Developing Country Partners (DCP), Donors, Foundations, and other CSOs, to try to steer the Board into a strategic plan that is fully aligned with the SDG 4 both in vision and in financing.

But despite these spirited efforts, the Board decision language only moved a little bit in terms of how the financing framework can go beyond schooling but clearly nowhere near full alignment with SDG 4.

The following were the key points on the Board decision steer on strategic plan -

- Re-affirms GPE's commitment to SDG 4.
- Re-affirms our commitment to equity, inclusion, and learning, including the central role of quality teachers and teaching, and the importance of gender equality;
- Recognising the majority of education financing comes from domestic resources, GPE will support national governments in the planning, sustainable financing, monitoring and reviewing of holistic education systems for system-wide impact based on the principle of leave no one behind.
- Recognising that the detailed use of GPE resources will be determined by country level data, evidence, inclusive dialogue, and country context, noting the importance of building strong foundations from the early years, GPE implementation financing focuses on the poor and the most marginalised, and prioritises at least one year of pre-primary education and 12 years of education and training.



The Global Partnership for Education (GPE) Board of Directors met in Nairobi as the Partnership enters the final year of its 2020 strategic plan.

Steering the development of the 2020 strategic plan of the Global Partnership for Education (GPE)

8-12 December 2019, Nairobi, Kenya



ASPBAE Secretary-General, Maria Khan (L), and Camilla Croso (R) of the Latin America education network (CLADE), with Alice Albright (centre), CEO of the Global Partnership for Education, at the GPE Board of Directors meeting in Kenya.

CSO2, UNESCO, Developing Country Partners (DCPs), and some donors argued for the financing to be aligned to the full SDG 4 agenda, prioritising the poor and marginalised, and based on the country context and needs as defined at the country level. The DCPs were particularly keen on skills and technical and vocational education and training (TVET) as priority for GPE funding - given unemployment of youth, technological development, and the impact of the climate crisis. Many argued for life skills or 21st century skills, including critical thinking, communication, problem solving, ability to work in groups, etc. They were also

keen that GPE funding priorities be defined at the country level, not ordained globally.

Despite the narrow financing focus in the final GPE decision language, the CSO2 constituency made a clear statement at the end of the Board discussions, registering a CSO2 concern that adult education and adult literacy targets of SDG 4 are being left out of funding in all global financing mechanisms to date. The CSO2 Board representatives requested that GPE consider in its strategic planning moving forward how to leverage its strength to address this huge gap.

The Board approved a strong set of Guidelines setting out the conditions and processes under which exemptions for exceptional circumstances of the Private Sector Engagement Strategy (PSES) may be considered. Many mentioned they hoped the exemptions would not have to be resorted to, and the guidelines strong enough to prevent any slide away from the strengthening of public education systems. CSO2 read out a statement sharing submissions from CSO coalitions in Haiti and Somaliland expressing concerns about the exemptions document. Both, especially Haiti, were set out as examples of countries where the public education is so weak that non-state actors dominate education provisioning. What Haiti CSOs have however noted is that by law, the non-state providers are not for profit so there was no reason to have an exemption allowing for-profit providers of education services in their country.



CSO2, UNESCO, Developing Country Partners (DCPs), and some donors argued for the financing to be aligned to the full SDG 4 agenda, prioritising the poor and marginalised, and based on country needs and contexts.

Another key Board decision relates to the operationalisation of an earlier Board decision to fund

Steering the development of the 2020 strategic plan of the Global Partnership for Education (GPE)

8-12 December 2019, Nairobi, Kenya



The Board approved a strong set of Guidelines setting out conditions and processes under which exemptions for exceptional circumstances of the Private Sector Engagement Strategy (PSES) may be considered.

Syria. A means of funding Syria through the UN mechanisms in the country was finally agreed, following a strong push from CSOs.

Under the agenda item '*Increasing Efficiency Through Delegation*,' the CEO of GPE has been given a delegated authority to approve ESPIG/Multiplier grants (including accelerated financing and additional financing) up to US\$10 million. Further the GPE Grants and Performance Committee (GPC) can now approve ESPIG/Multiplier grants (including accelerated financing and additional financing) up to US\$25 million.

The CSO constituencies have expressed concerns particularly on the delegated authority to the GPE Secretariat through the CEO as it may alter the dynamic of 'partnership' but the majority of GPE constituencies supported the delegation under the rationale of reducing transactions and increasing efficiencies. Nevertheless, there are mechanisms by which CSOs can still offer their comments on the proposals falling within the Secretariat's remit as stated in the Board decision under this –

“Requests the Secretariat to notify the GPC regularly of upcoming ESPIG/Multiplier applications not exceeding US\$10 million or its equivalent in Euros, to inform the GPC and Board of any such grant approvals it has made, and to make available the documentation of its assessment and decision meeting minutes of each application to facilitate oversight.”

Lastly, the Board approved additional funding for the Knowledge and Innovation Exchange (KIX), allowing twice the number of proposals to be supported. Also, the Board approved making the existing accelerated funding mechanism that gives countries swift access to additional funds in an emergency additional to a country's maximum country allocation.

Not directly related to the GPE meeting but in preparation for it, CSO2 representatives and delegates attended a meeting on December 8 (morning) of Kenyan CSOs hosted by the Kenyan Human Rights Commission. It offered a very important exposure to the issues of the education sector in Kenya.



CSO2 representatives and delegates attended a meeting of Kenyan CSOs. It offered an important exposure to the issues of the education sector in Kenya.

A CSO2 pre-GPE Board Meeting was also held on 8-9 December to gather the CSO2 delegation, finalise positions and analysis on various Board agenda and agree on strategic engagements during the main Board meeting.



Steering the development of the 2020 strategic plan of the Global Partnership for Education (GPE)

8-12 December 2019, Nairobi, Kenya

Apart from the CSO2 Board representatives, delegates to the Board meeting include Helen Dabu (ASPBAE) and Natalie Akstein (GCE) who served as CSO2 Board Technical Advisers, and four (4) Observers - Boaz Waruku (ANCEFA), William Thelusmond (Haiti coalition), Teresa Oteino (FAWE) and Linda Oduor Noah of the East African Centre for Human Right.

END