



GLOBAL CAMPAIGN FOR  
**EDUCATION**  
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**Building the Technical Capacity  
of Civil Society Organisations to  
Leverage GPE Opportunities at  
the National and Global Levels.**

## The Learning Handbook

The Global Campaign for Education (GCE) is a civil society movement that calls on governments to realise the right to inclusive-equitable education in accordance with SDG-4. With members in more than 100 countries, our movement network brings together grassroots organisations, teachers' unions, child rights groups, NGOs, parents' associations, and community groups. GCE's collective work as a network encompasses collaboration at the global level to influence international frameworks and policy debates, as well as networking and communication between members for shared learning.

This learning handbook aims to strengthen strategic opportunities for engagement in GPE amongst civil society organisations through coordination supported by GCE and to identify mechanisms that coalitions can engage at national, regional, and global levels to influence key decision-making processes. By providing coalitions with key leverage points regarding the new GPE operational model 2025 while identifying a common understanding in fostering 'meta governance' that will lead to an inclusive partnership amongst civil society movements.

This learning handbook is produced by the Global Campaign for Education (GCE) to support greater shared learning, understanding, and capacity development of CSOs on the new GPE2025 strategy. The learning handbook serves as a guide for civil society engagement in national education sector planning in countries that are partners of the Global Partnership for Education (GPE).



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## BACKGROUND

The [Global Campaign for Education \(GCE\)](#) promotes education as a fundamental human right. It mobilises the civil society sector through advocacy, policy positions, and campaigns to pressure governments and the international community to fulfil their commitments to provide free, high-quality public education for all. The Global Campaign for Education (GCE) aims to influence the policies and practices of governments and other decision-makers across the education sector. GCE seeks to be the centre of advocacy work in the education sector by providing technical assistance and coordination guidelines between government and civil society agents. It achieves this through evidence-based work to bring about the desired impact, particularly in developing country partner states regarding SDG-4.

[Global Partnership for Education](#) is the largest global fund for education whose primary purpose is transforming education in developing and lower-income countries by providing the necessary financial support and capacity building. GPE established frameworks to provide resources for capacity building at the country level to advance the education sector. GPE operates at two levels: national level and global level, GPE's national-level process is supported by global-level processes, directed by a constituency-based board of directors ([the Board](#)).

Civil Society Organisations hold a significant constituency base in GPE at the global level, which consists of CSO1 representing civil society of the northern partner countries, CSO2 representing the civil society from southern developing partner countries, and CSO3 is composed of the teacher profession representatives. Well-coordinated and effective communication between civil society groups is paramount to effectively contribute to GPE's policymaking, institutional direction, and decision-making processes at global and national level education priorities.

By instrumenting meaningful civil society engagements at the country level within GPE as the biggest education global fund at the national level, Civil Society engagements with Local Education Groups are essential for effective impact in GPE processes.

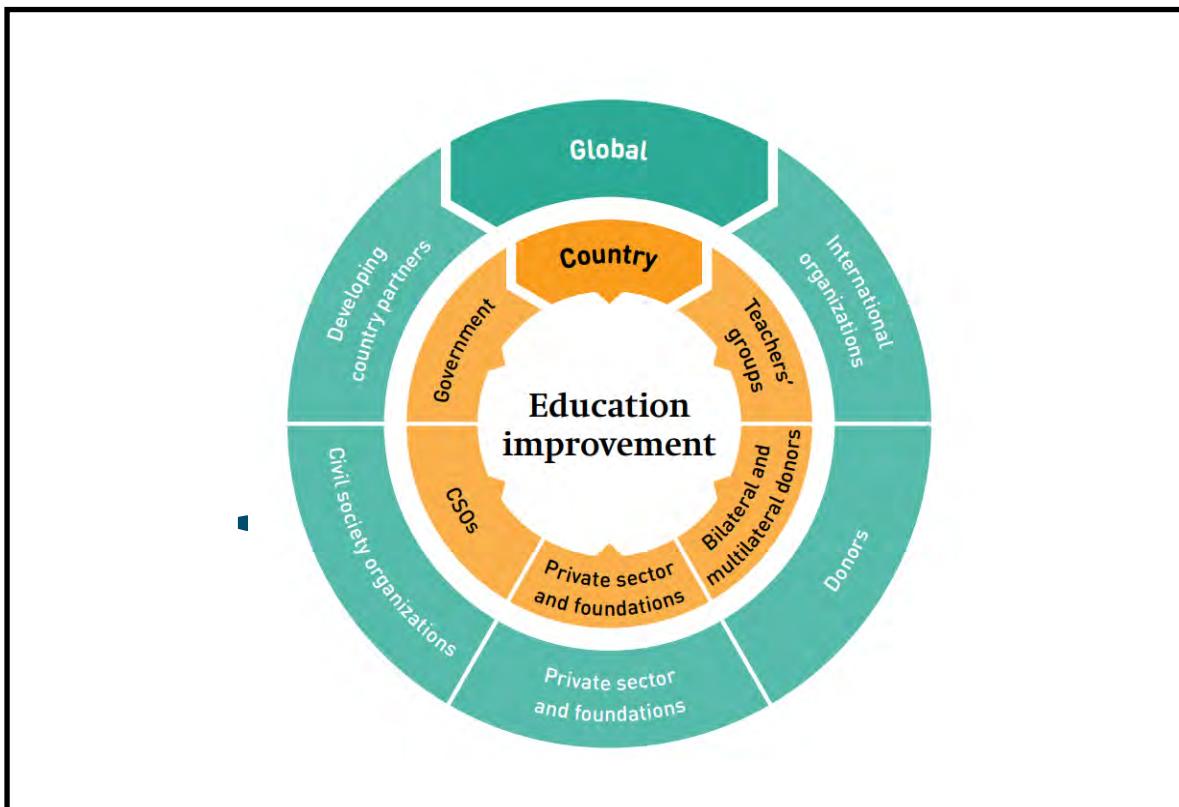
Education Out Loud is GPE's social accountability and advocacy programme, approved by the GPE Board in April 2019, whose primary goal is to support civil society advocacy capacity and engagement with the education sector to further SDG-4 objectives.

EOL has three overall objectives with corresponding Operational Components (OCs). To strengthen national civil society engagement in gender-responsive education planning, policy dialogue, and monitoring (OC1 with national education coalitions); to enhance civil society roles in promoting the transparency and accountability of national education sector policy and implementation (OC2, with national civil society organisations); and to create a stronger global, regional, and transnational enabling environment for civil society advocacy and transparency efforts in education (OC3 with transnational and regional civil society organisations and coalitions).

The key stakeholders that are considered to play a crucial role in the successful decentralised approach within the education sector in GPE are National Education Coalitions, Local Education Groups, Developing Country Partners, and other vital partners outlined in the GPE Charter.

Given this GPE education sector platform, a multi-stakeholder decentralised approach with well-coordinated mobilisation efforts that include CSOs, NECs, LEGs, and DCPs needs to be fully considered in fostering 'meta governance' to bring a shared agenda for sustainable efforts in influencing and transforming education policies.

This learning Handbook aims to provide facilitation tools for the stakeholders outlined above on how to coordinate, engage and mobilise each other to bring a shared agenda to GPE.



This entails advocating for domestic and external funding and ensuring that GPE policy alignment is according to the desired action of the global debate on education SDG-4 objectives.

The Global Campaign for Education unites coalitions and their constituencies by capacity-building them with advocacy tools on mobilisation and providing support to participate in GPE governance structures in achieving sustainable results. CSOs representatives through National Education Coalitions can participate in local education groups and have an integral role to play in bringing local realities to the global level. How CSOs engage in policy discussions and decision-making processes at the national level requires enabling strategies with the active participation of context-sensitive local education groups.

## SECTION 1: HOW IS CIVIL SOCIETY PRESENTED AT THE GLOBAL LEVEL IN GPE.

At the global level, the Global Partnership for Education works with the GCE, which currently includes national and regional coalitions of civil society organisations that are active in the education sector across 96 countries.

### 1.1 Civil Society Organisations' key role in GPE's philosophy is;

- To strengthen the country level- global partnership and policy dialogue.
- Supporting the education sector planning processes
- Streamlining GPE education sector grants.
- Enhancing transparency and accountability of the grant agent, ministry of education, and other key education departments at the national level.
- Engaging constituencies on integral GPE activities, processes, and grant decisions.

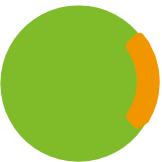
As mentioned above, coalitions vary in structure, size, strength, capacity, and locations from one country to another. Therefore, they operate in unique political and social dynamics. GCE civil society network is spread across the global north (commonly known as developed countries) that is composed of CSO1, CSO2 consists of the global south being the Middle East, Latin America and the Caribbean, Africa, and Asia. CSO3 consists of teacher professionals and representatives across the world. These civil society groupings have their own constituencies spread across the globe, including youth and groups living with disabilities at the local level.



One of the core functions of CSO representatives on the GPE board and committees is to reach out to constituency members to consult on proposed board decisions and policies and agree on inputs to GPE Governance structures. These engagements include engaging with regional and national coordinators and their constituencies on contributing to grant decisions and can raise concerns or request reassessment. Beyond grant decisions, all strategic framework GPE 2025 processes that include policy engagements, and GPE systems grants require board representatives to engage their constituencies for effective civil society response that captures local realities within GPE.

By fostering ‘meta governance’ (an approach that produces some degree of coordinated governance), within civil society organisations in GPE, a platform for collaborative efforts is established to provide innovative solutions and act as a critical accountability guard at the global level to ensure that SDG-4 goals on education financing and challenges are addressed and fulfilled in strategic advocacy spaces such as GPE governance structures. This global advocacy platform requires the active participation of all critical stakeholders across different levels of the education sector.

A successful meta governance approach in the education sector promotes policy-oriented advocacy by putting pressure on governments and international donors to derive inclusive, transformative education and financing support for developing country partners. This engagement process ensures accountability and transparency within the movement to effectively respond, integrate and monitor the countries’ performance while ensuring that decisions made by GPE are within the people’s interests for impact.



The GPE governance structure has worked in recent years to clarify roles, responsibilities, and accountabilities across the GPE partnership by seeking to strengthen partners' engagement in collaborative policy dialogue at the country level through influential, government-led local education groups. Consultations with national and regional coalitions before board decisions feed into the high-level discussions from a grounded-in perspective, providing critical context-relevant information ahead of and during pre-board negotiation.

CSOs should promote high-level engagements and hold the partnership accountable to GPE 2025 commitments on gender, inclusion, and equality. These high-level engagements include taking bold stances in advocating for Edutech to be accessible to all and 'no child has left behind. Resource mobilisation and Tax Justice in Education are based on human rights sensitivity, such as gender flexibility. CSOs need to move to a greater evidence-based policy engagement that is decentralised upward decision-makers stakeholders.

## **Section 2: CSO IN BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH DEVELOPING COUNTRY PARTNERS AT THE GLOBAL LEVEL.**

Developing Country Partners DCP constituencies are grouped into six constituencies represented on the Board. Like other constituencies, the DCPs consult internally and then come to a consensus on a decision to be made by the board. DCPs constituency meetings aim to coordinate and communicate within the DCP constituencies to strengthen their operations and enable them to express a representative DCP position in GPE meetings.

### **The GPE Compact outlines that Developing Country Partners commit to**

- Developing and implementing an evidence-based education sector plan (comprehensive or transitional), which includes a multi-year costed implementation plan embedded in the country's national development strategy through broad-based consultation.
- Assumes the provision of solid and increased domestic financial support for education.
- Demonstrate results on key performance indicators

To revitalize the relationship re-establishment between CSO2 board representatives and DCPs in pre- GPE board meetings, can be used as a strategic platform to lobby them to stand with CSO views, particularly on high political engagements that have an impact on developing and lower-income country's decisions regarding the education sector. Developing countries require support and shared objectives between their board representatives. They represent the geographical area of Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, Africa, Eastern Europe, and the Middle East. In all regions, political and economic contexts require adequate representation that is context-specific, such as considering issues such as fragile and conflicted states, rural countries, or countries that are not gender-inclusive in the education sector or, most importantly, overall transformative education discourse. DCPs and CSO2 consist of the global south and should conduct regular consultations that impact achieving SDG-4 through utilizing the resources of GPE and influencing decision-making processes that favor developing country partners.

## SECTION 3: THE ROLE OF LOCAL EDUCATION GROUPS IN GPE AT THE COUNTRY LEVEL.

GCE supports national civil society networks and carries out education advocacy on behalf of its members at the global level. GCE also includes within its membership regional civil society organisations networks focused on the right to education by working at the regional level to advocate for education, creating links between the global and national policy spaces.

### Box 1. What is a Local Education Group?

At the national level, the Global Partnership for Education brings together all education partners in a collaborative forum called the local education group (LEG), led by the ministry of education. The local education groups express the strong emphasis contained within the Global Partnership for Education model on fostering mutual accountability across the partnership. The LEG participates in developing, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating the education sector plans and programs. A coordinating agency is selected among its members to facilitate the work of the LEG. Additionally, a grant agent is selected by the government and endorsed by the LEG to oversee the implementation of GPE grants. The LEG is also a core building block of ensuring better-coordinated donor activities behind a country-owned national education sector planning, thus ensuring aid effectiveness principles. The LEGs are also often called different things in different countries. For example, Education Coordinating Group, Education Local Consultative Group, Education Sector Development Committee, Joint Education Sector Working Group, etc. GPE refers to all of these collectively as 'Local Education Groups' or 'LEGs' as a generic term at the global level. Regardless of the name, this group brings the government and partners together to discuss the education policies.

The LEG consists of multilateral agencies, academia, non-governmental organisations, civil society representatives, and its operations. Discussion may occur through the medium of a local education group, which is defined in the GPE Charter as “a collaborative forum for education sector policy dialogue under government leadership, where the primary consultation on education sector development takes place between a government and its partners.” The GPE charter outlines LEG members’ (governments of developing country partners, development partners, civil society, private sector partners, coordinating agency, and grant agents) roles and responsibilities and their relationship in the GPE processes.

Civil society participation in national policy dialogue in local education groups includes several channels to shape their policy engagement through social mobilisation and policy analysis, evidence-based planning, and monitoring. A LEG is strategically effective when it leverages country-led, inclusive policy dialogue around shared priorities to accelerate progress towards education results. LEG members can advance towards agreed objectives when organisational and collaborative capacities are in place or fostered between a government and its partners.

Over the past five years, civil society – represented through national coalitions – has increased its influence on policy decisions in several GPE developing partner countries. The GCE, its regional networks, and international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) have also played an enabling factor in supporting national-level participation. Finally, the improvements made in the current phase of EOL are perceived positively as having led to more strategic and practical support for civil society at the national level, from a more transparent governance structure to more support from INGOs and an increased emphasis on cross-network learning.

**Figure 1: Criteria to measure the degree of quality of engagement with civil society.**

Weak Engagement	Minimum Engagement	Good Engagement	Excellent Engagement
<p><b>Weak Engagement</b></p> <p>The quality of civil society <i>engagement in the LEG is seen as weak</i> when there is just one person with undefined links to representing other CSOs or constituency.</p>	<p><b>Minimum Engagement</b></p> <p>The quality of civil society <i>engagement in the LEG is seen as at the minimum level of inclusion</i> where more than one person from civil society representing diverse views is present.</p>	<p><b>Good Engagement</b></p> <p>The quality of civil society <i>engagement in the LEG is seen as good</i> when there is a genuinely representative voice, through a coalition with multiple people invited and clear links to the broader constituency.</p>	<p><b>Excellent Engagement</b></p> <p>The quality of civil society <i>engagement in the LEG is seen as excellent</i> when there are active representatives of both a broad national coalition and teachers' unions, with clear links back to their respective constituencies.</p>

## 2.1 Strategic effectiveness of the LEGs

LEGs undertake several recurring policy dialogue functions that, when the right conditions are in place, have positive impacts on the sector's development. Stakeholders come together to discuss and support the core work of sector plan development, implementation, and monitoring. The value of stakeholder dialogue lies in the opportunity to consider diverse perspectives at crucial junctures of the policy cycle, gather a broader set of inputs and monitoring information, and respond to emergent needs. Civil society must be active, credible, and respected participants in LEGs and demonstrate their value to governments and donors. The effective engagement by civil society with local education groups builds the capacity of civil society to demand more collaborative and robust relationships.

For example, The Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE) in Bangladesh has a strong national presence, with sub-groups focusing on thematic areas and civil society platforms such as Education Watch, which helps to coordinate work at the local level while advocating for inclusion and equality in education through the LEG. They work with communities helping to empower them to understand their rights and channel concerns up to the Education Ministry and the LEG. The strength of citizens' voice and action to hold governments accountable includes civil society's political and advocacy skills. In Pakistan and Nigeria, where a federal model of government exists, the national coalitions focus on engagement with the decision-making structures of the LEGs at the state and provincial levels.

Nepal's National Campaign for Education (NCE) works closely with its 339 members and 23 district coalitions. NCE conducts evidence-based policy advocacy and grassroots, district, and national level consultations to inform and monitor education policy development, such as the recent School Sector Development Plan. NCE then builds civil society organisations' capacities to engage the government meaningfully on issues such as equity, quality, and inclusion in education.

Civil society participation in local education fora such as local education groups (LEGs) in the different stages of GPE country processes such as the partnership compact will be critical. The longstanding presence of many National Education Coalitions (NECs) in some LEGs may offer them an advantage in the new model; however, not all EOL grantees currently participate in LEGs.

## **CIVIL SOCIETY ENGAGEMENT IN INFLUENCING KEY DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES**

Coalitions have established a niche in the LEGs by being the mouthpiece of the marginalised or the excluded. This helps to build the credibility of civil society. The increased engagement of the LEGs requires two critical issues to be considered in assessing the effectiveness of influence coalitions have in education policy processes (a) the extent to which they are broad-based and able to represent different groups of society (gender and social inclusion of all marginalised groups), and (b) the extent to which they engage in the education policy process. In summary, national coalitions participate in LEGs by providing citizen-led evidence and driving forward broad-based civil society engagement to influence policy decisions. National coalitions make a measurable impact on, or contribution to, education policy reform, contributing to meaningful change. Civil society can demand more collaborative and robust relationships, the strength of the citizen's voice, actions to hold the government accountable, and civil society's technical and advocacy skills. The organisation has to meet and help the local activists regularly because they often lack the necessary expertise.

For example, the national education coalition in Vietnam VCEFA has consistently raised issues around discriminatory practices in the recruitment of deaf teachers, advocating for access to education in sign language, the lack of funding support for inclusive education, and the need to establish a specific department on inclusive education. In doing, VCEFA has gained a reputation as a credible and authoritative voice, which has helped to gradually raise the coalition's profile with the Ministry of Education and other stakeholders.

Furthermore, the power of influence that national education coalitions have in the LEGs can be attributed to persistent efforts in engaging stakeholders, including Ministries of Education. In some cases, strengthening cooperation with strategic partners within countries (UNESCO offices, lead agencies, or managing entities) and intensifying communication with GPE's Country Support Team have been key to unlocking official policy space.

## KEY CHALLENGES IN LEGs FOR CIVIL SOCIETY ENGAGEMENT

Factors limiting the effective participation of national coalitions in the LEG varied from one country to the next and included internal and external factors.

### EXTERNAL FACTORS

- Government willingness
- Responsiveness, or capacity to engage various stakeholders (including civil society).
- The receptivity of LEGs to include a broad range of stakeholders in the partnership.

### INTERNAL FACTORS:

- Local Education Groups do not always exist, and they are not always open to civil society.
- Local Education Groups are more inclusive when they follow GCE good practice guidelines and have strong national leadership.
- A policy focus or niche can build civil society credibility in LEGs 4. The voice of civil society must be broad but also strong in LEGs
- Engage with good evidence to build credibility in Local Education Groups
- Effective participation in LEGs can help create a virtuous cycle of civil society engagement
- Fragile states or those impacted by conflict and natural disasters, have struggled to set up and maintain LEGs. In some countries, substantive education sector decision-making is made outside of LEGs.

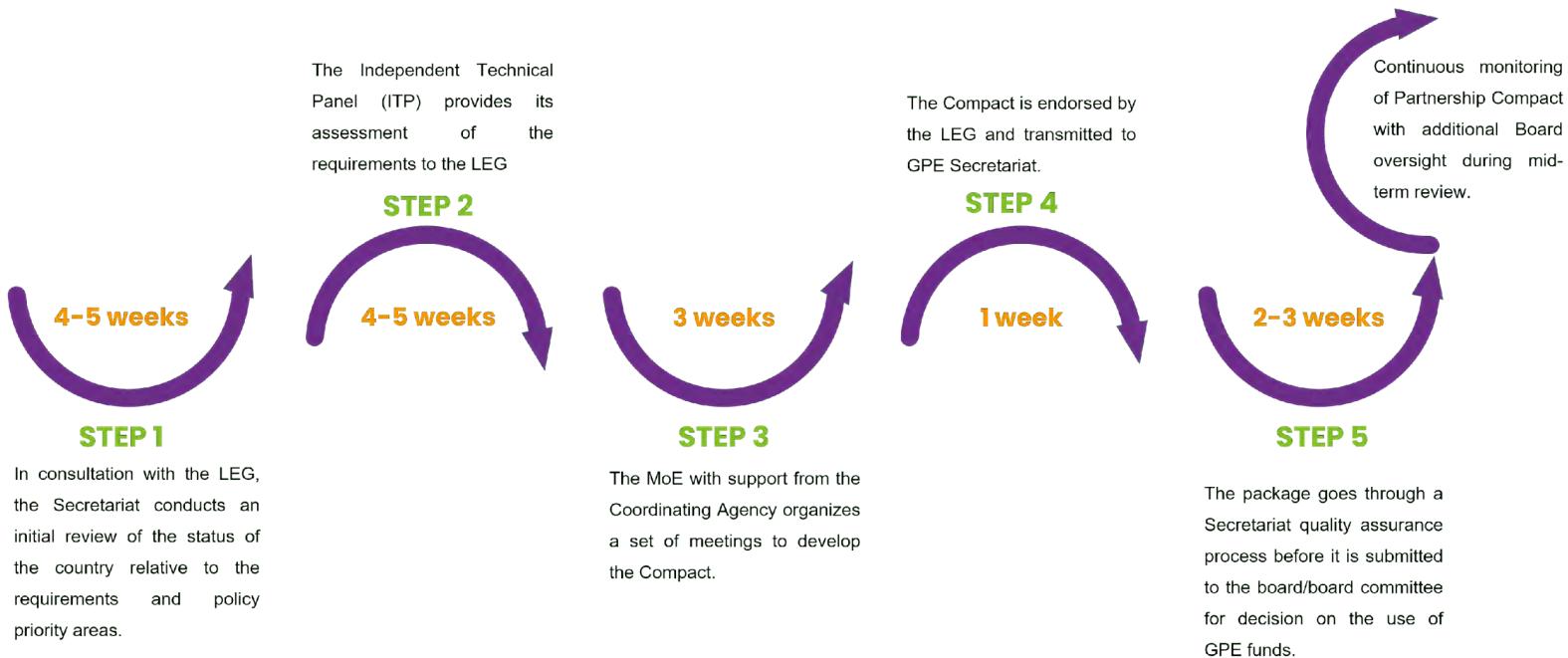
In some LEGs, civil society is represented, but participation has been limited and not influential. Barriers included the timely sharing of minutes, reports, and documents. Such constraints hindered national coalition representatives' ability to engage in processes fully. Access to information with enough time allowed for feedback and formalised agreed-on ways of working can make all the difference. This can be just as important as whether CSOs are given formal space in meetings

CSOs' involvement at the local education group level is best achieved by representing NEC's democratic structure. This enables CSO participants in the education group to draw on a wide range of knowledge and represent a broad base of realities and perspectives across the education sector. Since 2019 GPE has provided funding to CSOs through EOL (operational component 1), to support the national coalitions to strengthen national education coalition engagement in policy dialogue.

## GCE BEST PRACTICES IN LEGs.

- Building diverse coalitions, that are able to advocate on behalf of a coordinated civil society voice, is a crucial objective, including voices and perspectives not usually heard in policy-making.
- To ensure robust engagement there must be well-defined mechanisms for inputs from the civil society constituency and feedback, as well as clearly defined roles within LEGs.
- To ensure the representation of voices of the poorest and most marginalised, it is important that coalitions are connected to the communities in which they live. This means working with community-based organisations (CBOs) and in large and populous countries, building sub-national coordination structures, such as district, and federal state-level chapters
- Engaging with good governance practices, and having knowledge of the opportunities in the GPE 2025 operational model.
- Effective participation in LEGs that can help create a virtuous cycle of civil society engagement and influence can help national coalitions to be recognized by governments, and to gain access to key spaces of agenda-setting and decision-making.
- Have a set policy focus to inform the mandate of coalition representatives in the LEGs in order for inputs for affirmative voting GPE operational framework policy decisions related matters are in alignment with the overall cause of the movement. A policy focus is a key to building credibility in the LEGs.

## SECTION 4: MECHANISMS FOR AN EFFECTIVE ENGAGEMENT BY COALITIONS AT COUNTRY LEVEL in GPE.



### Country-level process for Developing the Partnership Compact

**The second strategic shift is to sharpen GPE funding for system transformation** through *system capacity grants* that provide flexible funding; *system transformation grants* that catalyze progress in the enabling factors for system transformation and *embedded monitoring, evaluation and learning* in country level processes and all GPE instruments to drive systematic learning on the delivery of impact at scale.

GPE enabling factors guide aims to promote meaningful contextualized dialogue around critical challenges across the enabling factors that would limit their effectiveness in supporting system transformation. For impactful engagement in achieving SDG-4 goals by effectively engaging GPE processes and country-level, CSOs and National Education Coalitions through the LEGs must identify opportunities to leverage and respond using the GPE operational model 2025.

### **3.1 The four core areas for coalitions interest in local education group**

- Strengthening the country-level partnership and policy dialogue
- Strengthening the education sector enabling factors at the country level within the 2025 operating model
- Streamlining the systems transformation grant.
- Strengthening transparency and accountability of the Grant Agent

The country-level policy dialogue should include a partnership compact that identifies the sectoral priorities and the strategies that the stakeholders in the education sector are committed to supporting or implementing to achieve such transformation. The partnership compact looks at the prioritised policy areas, the systematic impact of the prioritised policy, and international evidence of support for the prioritised policy. The compact also should identify opportunities to accelerate progress towards gender equality within the prioritised reform.

***Strengthening the education sector enabling factors at the country level within the 2025 operating model.***

Highlights the importance of improving the enabling conditions at the country level. Enabling factors are four key factors that can strengthen or block a policy and its implementation, even if it has the potential to transform the education system. Participation of the Local Education Group in this space has been fundamental because of different local experiences that can be captured during engagements at the country level. The LEG's analysis of these enabling conditions is fundamental, as it is an essential part of the critical routes that allow the expected results to be obtained from the proposed programs and interventions. This analysis of the enabling conditions identifies the status of these conditions and the gaps in each so that they can become catalysts for the system's transformation following the ITAP. One of the enabling factors is to what extent a country has in place gender-responsive education sector planning systems and the review of the other three EFs also picks up barriers to achieving gender equality within education systems such as lack of data, lack of voice on gender issues in sector dialogues and inequitable financing choices.

***Streamlining the Systems Transformation Grant.***

Government with LEG members determines the best strategic focus of GPE funds within the overall financing of the plan, including the variable tranche; this would also include attention to the use of government systems through appropriate alignment of GPE support and the selection of the grant agent. The country produces a self-assessment of the enabling factors, which is used as an input to the ITAP's assessment. The ITAP report goes to the board eventually as an input to the decision on grant funding allocation and whether or not a top-up is needed (according to enabling factors status/performance)

## Strengthening transparency and accountability of the Grant Agent.



In terms of implementation, the importance of the partnership is the overall systems transformation grant. National governments are accountable for both. As outlined in the partnership compact the Grant agent will be responsible for supporting the government and the Coordinating agency in LEGs in holding annual Joint Sector Reviews (JSRs); which also include a review of the systems transformation grant through the implementation progress. This is to strengthen transparency and accountability. Based on clear KPIs on grant implementation, support needs to be established, and reporting to the LEG is made compulsory.

### **The Partnership Compact (monitoring education financing and government performance in the sector)**

Outlines the sectoral priority and the strategies that the education sector stakeholders are committed to supporting or implementing to achieve such transformation. Political influence and other external factors such as international donor influence with Developing Country Partners representatives at the country level continue to impact the capacity for NECs to engage and coordinate at the LEGs effectively. Stakeholders need to collaboratively clarify roles regarding learning and seek synergy at regional and global levels to ensure that the GPE operating model 2025 emphasising evidence-based policy planning processes is put into practice.

A partnership compact should build on existing policy frameworks, sector plans, evidence, and dialogue mechanisms in each country. It should not be a substitute for an education sector plan but rather a commitment to describing how partners work together to achieve systems reform that moves from planning processes to impact in implementation. The compact should identify the different roles, resources, and capabilities the various stakeholders align behind a priority reform with potential for system transformation, including addressing specific challenges that are experienced at the country level and ensuring that opportunities to accelerate gender equality have been identified.

System transformation through a priority reform is, therefore, GPE 2025's response to partner countries' ambition to achieve quality education for every child and youth. However, systems transformation requires a paradigm shift in approach that moves away from focusing sector level entry points to a prioritized focus on an adequately financed education system that unblocks the systematic challenges to support the transformative progress required to reach SDG-4.

The partnership compact should also identify how in-country expertise can be deployed or reinforced and describe potential gaps where regional or global capacity might be needed. The partnership compact is meant to be contextualized, and this is why the application of enabling factors is country-context specific. Government leadership is critical to the process and its outcomes, and ownership of the compact amongst partners at the country level is essential.

The new GPE operational model puts emphasis on local education groups as the space where key decision-making takes place in terms of planning and approving the priorities that will be funded. This calls for all education actors, especially civil society and those sitting in the local education groups in their respective countries to build their capacity and be better equipped to take the necessary steps in order to meet their commitments and fulfil the important role of defending the basic right to education. What is clear is that there is a quantum leap that civil society needs to take with regard to its capacity to engage with GPE processes and most especially within the LEG.

A clear compliance model for LEGs with regards to civil society involvement can contribute to shared responsibility and accountability in the education sector. It is of vital importance that local education groups are representative of the beneficiaries it seeks to serve.

**3.2 Below table 1: is the outline of critical challenges faced by CSOs coupled with particular solutions.**

Key Challenges in CSOs	Potential Solutions for effective policy engagement & institutional decision making in GPE
<b>Working in isolation and a lack of effective communication between the CSO1, CSO2 and CSO3</b>	<p>Quarterly engagements between CSO1, CSO2, CSO3.</p> <p>Apply networks for engagement between CSOs that focus on coordination and shared advocacy stances, mobilise resources to ensure consensus between CSOs is reached.</p> <p>A shared GPE advocacy mandate.</p> <p>Rotation in Exco Meetings within the board reps of CSO1, 2, and 3 between board representatives to ensure effective representation of constituencies.</p>
<b>Adverse political contexts constraint CSO1,2,3 policy work especially at country level through NEC's.</b>	<p>Opportunities for civil society participation in the operating model are not yet systematically well-defined nor broadly understood.</p>
<b>CSO2 internal:</b>  <b>Within coalitions there is a limited understanding on GPE processes, institutions, and key actors.</b>	<p>Conduct a rigorous context assessment by engaging coalition members through national and regional coordinators by identifying opportunities within regional meetings or policy forums to engage in CSO2 work and capacitate members on GPE processes. These enable a better understanding of how policy processes work, the politics affecting them, and the opportunities for policy influence.</p>
<b>Weak strategies for coalitions', LEG's and DCP's engagements</b>	<p>Agenda setting, formulate engagement mechanisms, that are most appropriate for each engagement stage. Establish opportunities to engage LEGs through NECs and DCPs to influence policy formulation in GPE.</p>
<b>Weak communication approaches in policy influence work and affirmative voting responses.</b>	<p>Engage in two-way communication and use existing tools for planning, packaging, targeting, and monitoring communication efforts.</p> <p>Doing so will help CSOs make their interventions more accessible and timelier for policy discussions and grant engagements.</p>

**Limited capacity for CSO influence in decision-making bodies in GPE.**

Engage in systemic capacity building. CSOs need a wide range of technical capabilities to maximise their chances of being key role players in decision-making processes in GPE. The learning handbook outlines some key areas where CSOs could build their own capacity or access it from developing country partners.

The high political level of engagement requires CSO to have their own policy priority areas to ensure that the policy directives issued by GPE align with their constituencies and local realities' policy stance. By establishing consensus among stakeholders on no more than three policy outcomes that, if achieved, could result in transformation at a system level.

Therefore, communication is crucial in CSO to influence policy in different platforms of GPE **through the power of networks**. Greater networking would help with policy influence by developing effective links and trust-based relationships with policymakers, DCPs, and other stakeholders in the decision-making process. Coalitions should fully engage in the context of gender equality in education. National Education Coalitions should work more with gender rights-based decision-making. CSOs can do this by making the most of the existing links, getting to know other actors, and working through existing networks and constituencies. They must also identify critical personalities who can help generate new linkages and partnerships with like-minded individuals and organisations.

**By Building relationships and Lobbying, CSOs** are encouraged to actively engage in coalitions and other constituency policy forums and meetings to build relationships and understand the dynamics of their constituency constantly to respond with an informed approach.

Establishing a dynamic communication and collaborative action environment requires support and political representation. CSOs need to set clear governance agreements that set objectives at the country level to influence and make decisions. Informal links can also be critical to achieving goals while complementing official structures rather than duplicating them makes networks more valuable.

The core mechanisms of the GPE Operating Model consist of the Partnership Compact; System Capacity Grant; System Transformation Grant; Embedded Monitoring, Learning & Evaluation, and Strategic Capabilities. These mechanisms have been organised into a framework of three strategic shifts. **The first strategic shift is to strengthen mutual accountability for system transformation through the partnership compact** which will serve as the strategic framework for GPE engagement in each country and facilitate the adaptation of the operating model to each country's context. The second strategic shift is the GPE funding for system transformation through system capacity grants that provide flexible funding, system transformation grants that catalyze progress in the enabling factors for system transformation, and embedded monitoring and evaluation in country-level processes.

<p><b>Country-level objective 1:</b> Strengthen gender-responsive planning, and policy development for system-wide impact</p>	<p><b>Country-level objective 2:</b> Mobilise coordinated action and financing to enable transformative change</p>	<p><b>Country-level objective 3:</b> Strengthen capacity, adapt and learn to implement and drive results at scale.</p>
<p><b>Eligible activities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gender-responsive sector planning, including operational planning and budgeting.</li> <li>• System diagnostics and education sector analyses, including gender.</li> <li>• Planning for system resilience and inclusion of refugees.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Eligible activities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthening sector coordination, including LEGs and joint sector reviews.</li> <li>• Establishing and operating pooled funding mechanisms.</li> <li>• Strengthening budget processes and Ministry of Finance engagement.</li> <li>• Analyzing the efficiency of education expenditure.</li> <li>• Cross-sectoral convening.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Eligible activities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthening data systems.</li> <li>• Training and support for government staff and central and decentralized levels.</li> <li>• Technical assistance to support implementation capacity.</li> </ul>
<p><b>MEL component:</b> System diagnostics and analyses for design policies and programs</p>	<p><b>MEL component:</b> Monitoring the effectiveness of the country-level partnership</p>	<p><b>MEL component:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sector plan implementation monitoring</li> <li>• Evaluation of specific policies and programs in priority areas</li> </ul>

#### 4.1 GPE 2025 policy priority areas:

GPE sets out a framework of policy actions to analyze the enabling factors. It is recommended that the government appoints a task team to undertake the enabling factors analysis. This includes broader participation of local education groups like steps related to the partnership compact. It is proposed that the task team should reflect on the discussion and inputs of the local education groups' constituencies. These are one of the opportunities that civil society organisations can engage LEGs and their constituencies based on analysing GPE enabling factors in-country context through the [effective Partnership Rollout](#) principle of decentralised mutual accountability. By engaging the partnership at the country level in strategic decision-making rebalances the country-level model to focus on sector policy dialogue (beyond GPE grants).

LEGs will develop the compact under the leadership of the government. The system capacity grant will provide the funding necessary for this process, including, where applicable, for strengthening the coordination capacity of Ministries of Education and for services provided to the LEG by the Coordinating Agency. The priorities identified in the Compact will be within existing plans or policy frameworks. Compacts will be living documents, and they will be updated by LEGs as needed to ensure Compact priorities are fully aligned to national strategies and policies. A mid-term review will assess progress in key areas of the Compact, including the [System Transformation Grant](#). ***Table 3: outlines practical tools to respond to crucial GPE policy Processes.***

What CSOs need to know	What CSOs & LEGs need to do at the country level.	How to do it
Political Context		
What are GPE Policymaking processes	<b>Identify the enabling factors which are context-specific for the respective country.</b>	<b>How can CSOs influence policy and practice of GPE systems transformation at the country level?</b>
<p>Strengthen mutual accountability for GPE systems transformation grant:</p> <p>Partnership Compacts serve as strategic frameworks for the Partnership engagement in each country, which will facilitate the adaptation of the operating model to each country's context and streamline operational decision-making.</p> <p>Compacts will describe transformation priorities within sector policies and plans, that will be supported through GPE engagement.</p> <p>Sharpen GPE funding for systems transformation grants.</p> <p>System capacity grants will provide flexible financing that will be available to countries throughout their policy cycles and can be drawn down flexibly to fund capacity development needs.</p> <p>Catalyze progress in the enabling factors for system transformation—equity, efficiency, and the volume of domestic finance; gender-responsive sector planning, policy, and monitoring; data and evidence; and sector coordination through context-driven requirements and incentives and investments driven by a results-based approach.</p> <p>Embedded monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) in country-level processes and all GPE instruments to guide a systematic understanding of</p>	<p>The updated approach to the enabling factors analysis for system transformation under GPE 2025 embodies the Effective Partnership Principle that calls for rebalancing the GPE operating model to <b>focus more strongly on sector policy dialogue and implementation</b></p> <p><b>For Partner country's conduct high-level screening:</b></p> <p><b>Partner countries conduct a high-level screening across four enabling factors which are:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Data and evidence</li> <li>-Gender-responsive, sector planning, policy, and monitoring</li> <li>- Sector coordination</li> <li>- Volume, equity, and efficiency of domestic public expenditure on education.</li> </ul> <p><b>Government with Local education groups</b> should lead the country sector analysis to ensure broader participation at the local level</p> <p><b>Based on the collaborative partnership between CSOs (national level coalitions) and Local Education groups, there needs to be a consensus established of no more than three policy outcomes of that specific country that could result in systems transformation while identifying policy challenges that are specific to that country that needs to be addressed.</b></p> <p>With the assistance of coalitions at regional and national levels, LEGs produce a nuanced and context-</p>	<p>Who are the key stakeholders in the policy discourse that CSO's need to influence and partner with?</p> <p>What links and networks exist between them to establish (influencing?) intended policy outcomes that will direct (determine?) the systems transformation grant?</p> <p>Build coalitions and leverage regional and national coalitions utilize CSOs with gender expertise within the education sector.</p> <p>Guard against international influence on policy processes by conducting constant independent monitoring and review processes and advocating for aid transparency.</p> <p>What are their aid priorities and their policy positionality to have clearly defined understanding of the level of partnership CSOs enter by understanding the political dynamics?</p>

<p>impact delivery at scale.</p> <p>Mobilize strategic capabilities to reinforce the country's capacity for system transformation.</p> <p>Strategic capabilities include the capacity to raise more and better finance and advocate for education; local, regional, and global expertise; and cross-sectoral collaboration that reinforces country capacity.</p> <p>The Knowledge and Innovation Exchange and Education Out Loud as core GPE programs to support strategic capabilities that reinforce country capacity.</p>	<p>sensitive analysis of the country's status in all four enabling factor areas vis-à-vis persistent challenges which negatively influence policy outcomes. This analysis is submitted for independent assessment (ITAP) to be provided by GCE.</p> <p>Submission to the Independent Technical Advisory Panel: Enabling Factors Analysis Templates, including supporting documents</p> <p>Domestic Financing Matrix</p> <p>Minutes or a summary of local education group discussions (where policy outcomes were agreed on and consensus reached on enabling factors analysis)</p>	
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## **4.2 The purpose of the partnership compact**

- Is to Shift the policy dialogue towards catalyzing system transformation and delivery
- Drive a focus on sector bottlenecks and one priority reform with the potential to catalyze transformation within complex education systems.
- Establish mutual accountability at the country level for accelerating system-wide progress towards the achievement of the priority reform ensuring opportunities to accelerate gender equality have been identified.
- Adapt critical actions and milestones to the specific country context.
- Define GPE support and frame partnership engagement to ensure education support is harmonized and appropriately aligned.

**4.5 Below is Table 4: Identifying the GPE enabling factors and how tools for CSOs to engage for impact:**

Table 4: Country Level Engagement: Identifying the GPE enabling factors and how tools for CSOs to engage for impact:

Country-level Engagement for Education Improvement at		
GPE Enabling Factors	GCE Response: Country-Context Specific	GCE Response: Effective Engagement of LEG's & Civil Society
<b>1. Data and Evidence.</b>		
<p>This enabling factor item examines the capacity of a country to produce and make use of data and evidence for formulating policies and plans, monitoring implementation progress, and, more broadly, the overall management of the education system.</p> <p>The analysis of this factor looks at the quality of the following components:</p> <p><b>Education Management and Information System (EMIS):</b> EMIS is defined as a <u>multifaceted structure</u> comprising both the technological and institutional arrangements for collecting, processing, and disseminating education administrative statistics and information about education inputs, processes, and outcomes within an education system.</p> <p><b>Learning Assessment System (LAS):</b> An <u>LAS</u> is broadly defined as a group of policies, practices, structures, organisations, and tools for generating sound and high-quality data on learning and achievement that provide robust evidence for education policy and practice.</p>	<p>Countries can undertake a completed, endorsed country analysis where a time-bound opportunity exists to leverage funding.</p> <p>Country partners and government have committed to further discuss the enabling factors during the compact development, including developing, for Board decision, a fuller response to the challenges in domestic financing identified by ITAP.</p> <p>ITAP to access in-country context whether domestic finance is low, medium, or high priority.</p> <p>Identify inefficiencies or capacity constraints using data and evidence of the analyzed country and suggest problem-solving approaches.</p>	<p>CSOs to play a part in generating knowledge and evidence to inform policy dialogue for more sector coordination and in strengthening monitoring, learning, and adaptation in the new model through LEGs.</p> <p>CSOs play a role in bringing qualitative evidence and research to strengthen national statistical evidence gaps. For example regionally specific on gender and inclusion – data on SRGBV.</p>

<p><b>Evidence production and use:</b></p> <p>Evidence is understood as any piece of information hailing from empirical research, evaluations, statistical data, and education stakeholders' experiences that has the potential to understand the situation, deliberate options, and make informed policy and operational decisions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• System performance reports like education sector analyses or public education expenditure reviews</li> <li>• Discreet diagnostic studies to better apprehend the causes of identified system bottlenecks (e.g., gender equality diagnostics)</li> <li>• Global-level evidence based on rigorous evaluations of what works, robust global and contextualized evidence on what works</li> <li>• Country-level evaluations of innovation/programs/plan implementation</li> </ul>		
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2. Gender Responsive Sector planning		
<p>This enabling factor examines the quality, use, and ownership of existing national policy instruments/frameworks and underlying inclusive processes. The policy framework, which in most cases would be an education sector plan, outlines a coherent set of medium- to long-term strategies, and it is further set out into costed actions to eventually support budget programming. In specific contexts of fragility, conflict, or crisis, countries prefer the development of transitional frameworks, more short-term and action-oriented, and adjusted to the context and available capacities for delivery. In addition to supporting greater accountability among education stakeholders, inclusive monitoring and evaluation mechanisms and practices contribute to effective policy/plan implementation</p>	<p>By analyzing the country's education sector strategic plan, ESSP consists of a participatory process involving multiple stakeholders.</p> <p>Analyse if activities in the ESSP of that country support the achievement of gender parity, including more teachers trained in gender-responsive pedagogy, and greater public awareness and implementation of gender policies in higher education institutions.</p> <p>The need to strengthen implementation mechanisms to remove gender-related barriers to access and achievement at all levels of education.</p> <p>Examine whether, based on the specific country, gender responsiveness is a low, medium, or high priority in the education sector</p>	<p>The CSOs supported by OC1 strengthen civil society engagement by urging gender-responsive education planning and gender-sensitive policy development.</p> <p>CSOs to promote gender mainstreaming with SDG-4 objectives in education sector budgeting and gender sensitivity.</p> <p>Ensure gender equality is addressed at the country level by influencing political challenges through the LEGs that exclude equitable education.</p> <p>Include CSOs with specific expertise and experience within the LEG to enhance the capacity and effectiveness of the LEG dialogue and decision-making.</p>

- **Strategic planning frameworks** and packages entailing linkages and sensitivity to human rights instruments that the country has agreed to, identify challenges in the realization of education-related rights and guide the prioritization of policies for the full range of marginalized groups.
- Strategic planning would help recognize and address significant gender inequalities and other disparities between groups of learners in participation and quality and sources of vulnerability. It would acknowledge human rights frameworks related to education, use these to guide analysis and prioritization, and describe groups for whom the realization of rights may be challenging, such as persons with disabilities, children living in rural areas or from low-income families, ethnic and linguistic minorities, and refugees and internally displaced person.
- **Operational planning instruments and practices:** Shorter-term operational planning instruments like multiyear implementation plans/annual action plans set out the policy framework into actionable and tractable elements for overcoming financial, technical, and political constraints to effective implementation.
- **Gender mainstreaming across the policy continuum:** Gender-sensitive policies, plans, and learning environments support transforming the way education systems function to pave the way for equitable societies. Applying a gender lens to the policy continuum ensures that sector analyses, policies, strategies, and interventions target specific groups of girls or boys and the challenges they face in a differentiated way.

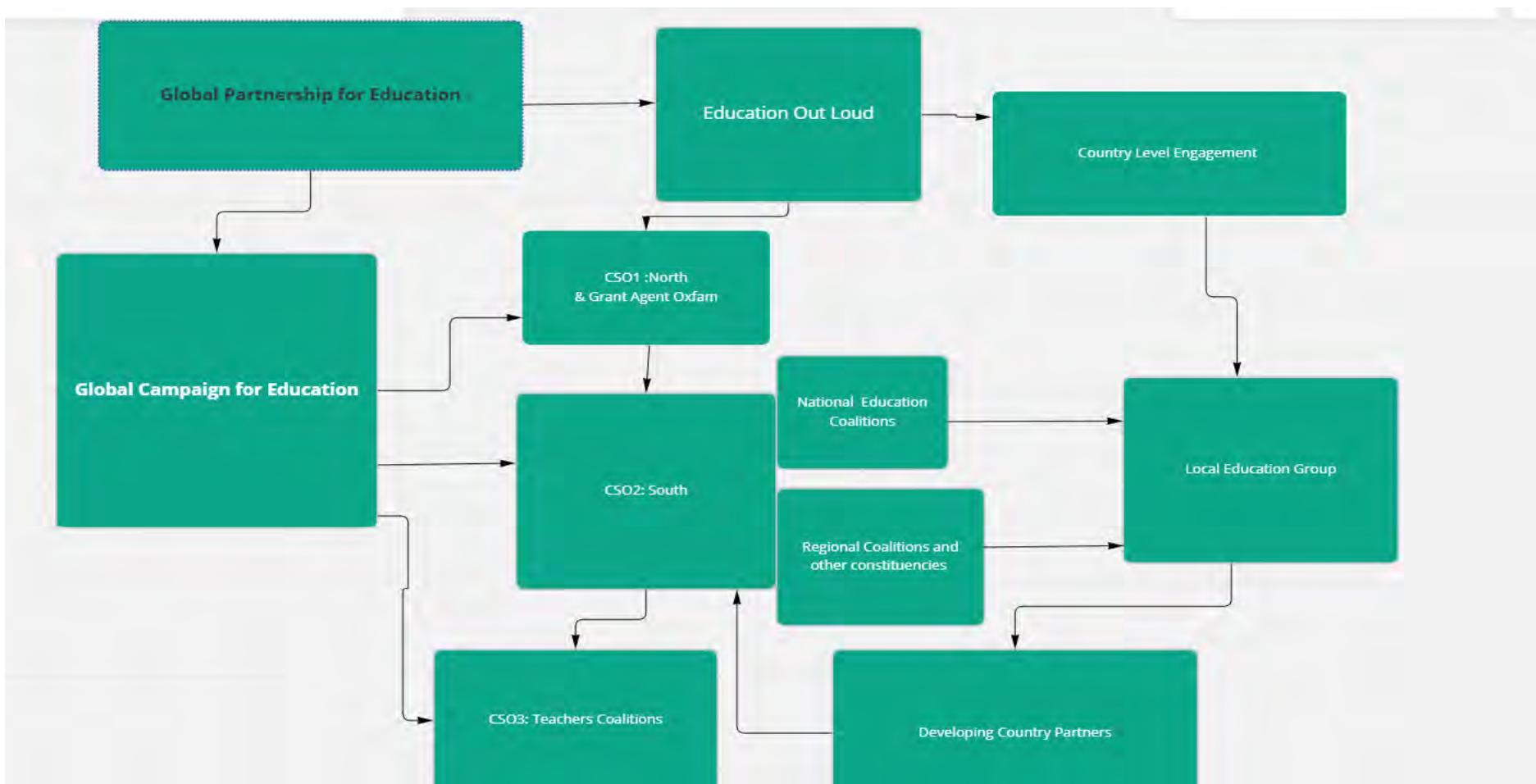
To what extent a country has in place, a gender-responsive education sector (sector planning systems and the review of the other three enabling factors which also pick up barriers to achieving gender equality within education systems such as lack of data, lack of voice on gender issues in sector dialogues and inequitable financing choices.

3. Sector Coordination		
<p><b>3.1 Multi-stakeholder policy dialogue mechanisms</b> are recognized as crucial for fostering partnership culture in-country development efforts and are essential for evidence-based policymaking and supporting national education systems, through the engagement of government, donors, civil society, teachers, philanthropy, and the private sector. effective coordination requires a mutual understanding of the type of outcomes that can be achieved according to where it can add the most value and setting up conditions to yield those outcomes.</p> <p><b>3.2 Alignment</b> is defined as “using a partner country’s <i>institutions, human resources, procedures, and tools</i> as the mainstays for implementing aid to education.” Aligning aid with national systems offers unique opportunities for stronger government responsibility and accountability, increased transparency of public resource allocation and expenditure, more relevant sector dialogue, supporting national financing at scale, leveraging critical cross-cutting national reforms, and strengthening systems for improved education service delivery. Aligning aid with national systems may not be possible in all contexts and is dependent on the willingness of governments and development partners with the capacity to support such aid modalities.</p>	<p>Sector coordination mechanisms where Local Education Groups can engage and other relevant technical sub-groups.</p> <p>How is the delivery of education in that specific country structured? Is it centralized or decentralized, and how effective is this coordination?</p> <p>Establish the link between the activities and actual implementation on the ground and whether it requires strengthening. What is the coordination with DCPs and LEGs and country level for effective education implementation?</p>	<p>Continued support between the NECs and LEGs by GPE and GCE is essential for sector coordination to participate effectively in the local policy fora.</p> <p>Creating strong regional networks with an enabling environment. That considered political and economic constraints, to ensure coordination of regional networks can engage national coalitions before going to LEGs policy forums.</p> <p>This will ensure that all constituencies in CSO have been Represented and committed to facilitating inclusive sector dialogue and greater presence through LEGs.</p> <p>Establishing a robust M&amp;E framework with effective Monitoring tools that maximize engagement with LEGs and ensure accountability.</p>

4. Volume, Equity, and Efficiency of Domestic Financing:		
<p>Public expenditure on education refers specifically to allocations to the education sector from the public budget. It accounts for the largest share of education financing. Sustainable improvements in domestic financing for education require a sharp focus on three core pillars: volume, equity, and efficiency.</p>	<p>What is the volume of public spending in that country, and is it in accordance with international benchmarks?</p> <p>By analysing the budget, what are the existing resources and capacity in the education sector?</p> <p>At What level is education funding administered, and are the interventions and policy frameworks improving domestic resource mobilization in the specific country context.</p>	<p>LEG members and NECs to agree on the resource allocation In the education sector in support or against their respective Governments.</p> <p>LEG members to access the effectiveness and efficiency of public spending.</p>

Kindly see figure 1: below the GPE-GCE stakeholder mapping.

The stakeholder mapping visualizes all the key stakeholders engaged in the GPE 2025 and the key players outlined above.



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