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ACHIEVING GENDER EQUALITY IN AND THROUGH EDUCATION

A KNOWLEDGE AND INNOVATION EXCHANGE
(KIX) DISCUSSION PAPER

Acknowledgments

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A note on the KIX consultation process

The Global Partnership for Education's Knowledge and Innovation Exchange (KIX) thematic funding will support global and regional initiatives that use knowledge exchange, evidence and innovation to help developing countries solve critical educational challenges. It will support:

- **Capacity development and knowledge exchange among developing countries:** activities that strengthen national capacity through peer review and exchange, creation of learning modules and diagnostic tools, and face-to-face exchange
- **Evidence and evaluation:** activities that aim to consolidate and/or extend knowledge about how to improve educational outcomes and national education systems
- **Innovation pilots:** piloting of approaches, methods, tools or products that solve persistent educational challenges

Investments will be guided by the priorities of developing country partners and allocated through a competitive process managed by an independent grant agent. Knowledge products, innovation pilots, and related tools developed through KIX funding will be shared through the Learning Exchange to amplify their uptake.

The purpose of this paper is to describe the current landscape in gender equality in education and spark discussion and debate around potential areas for KIX investment. The paper is part of a series of discussion papers, drafted to support the engagement and consultation of developing country partners and technical experts in the initial design of the GPE Knowledge and Innovation Exchange.

Acronyms and Abbreviations

AU	African Union
CAMFED	Campaign for Female Education
CAMPE	Campaign for Popular Education
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CESA	Continental Education Strategy for Africa
CIEFFA	International Centre for Girls' and Women's Education in Africa
CSW	Commission on the Status of Women
DCP	Developing Country Partner
DFID	U.K. Department for International Development
DHS	Demographic and Health Surveys
ECW	education cannot wait
EMIS	education management information systems
ERIC	Education Resources Information Center
ESP	education sector plan
ESPIG	education sector program implementation grant
FAWE	Forum for African Women Educationalists
FCAC	fragile and conflict-affected countries
G-7	Group of Seven
GEC	Girls' Education Challenge
GEM	Global Education Monitoring
GEPS	Gender Equality Policy and Strategy 2016-2020
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
GPI	gender parity index
GRA	Global and Regional Activities
GRESP	Guidance for Developing Gender-Responsive Education Sector Plans
KIX	Knowledge and Innovation Exchange
LEG	local education group
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
NGO	non-governmental organization
SES	socioeconomic status
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SRGBV	school-related gender-based violence
TEP	transitional educational plan
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNGEI	United Nations Girls' Education Initiative
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development

Key Terms

Gender: The socially constructed roles, behaviors, activities and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for men and women.*

Gender Equality: The equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women, men, girls and boys, and equal power to shape their own lives and contribute to society.†

Gender Equity: Included in the broader idea of gender equality, fairness and justice regarding benefits and needs of women/girls and men/boys.†

Gender Equality In And Through Education: Gender equality is present in the education system in terms of access, learning and opportunities for girls and boys, and also in the content and delivery of the education, so that learners leave school and contribute to a more equitable society.

Gender-Responsive: Informed by an awareness of the effects of gender norms, roles, and relations as they impact education, and taking measures to actively reduce those effects that pose barriers to gender equality†

* UNESCO 2013.

† GPE, *Gender Equality Policy and Strategy 2016-2020*.

Executive Summary

The importance of gender equality in and through education

Achieving gender equality in and through education is at the heart of the human rights agenda, and the key to achieving the transformational 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Global trends are increasingly recognizing the intrinsic and extrinsic needs for investing in girls' education, especially for adolescent girls, including in situations affected by fragility and conflict. Educating girls delivers a ripple effect that not only benefits the girls themselves but also makes their families, communities and countries healthier, safer and more prosperous.

According to the Global Partnership for Education's Gender Equality Policy and Strategy 2016-2020 (GEPS), achieving gender equality refers to the "equal rights, responsibilities, and opportunities of women, men, girls, and boys, and equal power to shape their own lives and contribute to society."¹ Achieving gender equality in and through education requires systemwide institutional change in the way policies and plans are developed to ensure no one is left behind.

Gender equality is a key cross-cutting theme in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as articulated in the education goal (SDG 4), and central to the achievement of other SDGs, including ending poverty (SDG 1), enhancing health and well-being (SDG 3), supporting gender equality and women's rights (SDG 5), establishing decent work (SDG 8) and promoting peaceful and inclusive societies (SDG 16).

¹ GPE, *Gender Equality Policy and Strategy 2016-2020* (Washington, DC: GPE, 2016b), 5.

Achieving gender equality in and through education requires developing equitable institutions that generate policies, budgets and plans that enable all to succeed, regardless of whether they happen to have been born male or female. This requires paying attention to the institutional arrangements, management structures, social norms, relationship dynamics and political economy issues that shape education, and addressing gender-related disadvantages that deliver different outcomes for girls and boys, women and men.

Challenges to achieving gender equality in and through education

While globally the number of out-of-school girls and boys of primary and secondary school age is virtually the same (131.7 million girls and 131.3 million boys),² gender differences manifest differently in different regions. Girls are more likely than boys to be out of school in Sub-Saharan Africa, North Africa and South Asia, where many GPE developing country partners (DCPs) are located. Even if girls are enrolled in school, they face gender-based challenges with access, progression, participation and learning outcomes that originate both inside the school system and in the broader context in which the school is located. These challenges represent a key barrier to achieving gender equality in and through education.

Gender inequality is also a facet of the high dropout rates at primary and secondary levels, particularly of girls in many countries as well as boys in some countries. Gender intersects with other inequalities of race, ethnicity, class, disability and location to create education exclusion. Inequalities can also be embedded in aspects of the education system itself, even if these are less easily seen: Curriculum, learning materials teaching pedagogy, teacher education, management, administration, assessment, and monitoring and evaluation processes may all perpetuate hidden gender bias. Prejudice and discrimination can become taken-for-granted everyday approaches unless there are opportunities for critical evaluation and reflection. Targeted policies, practices and research are needed to change these processes and assure that the education system promotes gender-equitable experiences for all, both in and through schooling.

Three specific challenges for building education systems that are more gender-responsive are highlighted:

- Challenges faced by girls and boys in access, participation and learning, and the need for a holistic approach to achieve gender equality
- Challenges within education systems, including the need to connect interventions with systemwide reform, changing multiple levels of the system, and connecting across different ministries, implemented through gender-responsive education sector planning
- Challenges in addressing political and cultural structures, social and cultural norms, and how to conceptualize gender in a way that leads to institutional change

How the Global Partnership for Education supports gender equality in and through education

The Global Partnership for Education (GPE) invests heavily in education sector planning, providing developing country partners grants of up to US\$500,000 to prepare education sector plans (ESPs) based on evidence and data. Once these plans are endorsed, GPE offers countries large-scale education sector program implementation grants (ESPIGs) of up to a maximum of US\$100 million. At the country level, GPE supports the achievement of gender equality in education through its quality assurance process, which

² UIS, "One in Five Children, Adolescents and Youth Is Out of School," Fact sheet no. 48, February 2018

aims to ensure that ESPs and proposals for ESPIGs align with broader sector financing priorities and GPE’s vision and strategic objectives.

GPE recognizes that a transformative approach to gender equality in education is needed, one that goes beyond simply focusing on expanding girls’ education and takes in all aspects of the education system. Achieving gender equality is a core principle of GPE’s strategic plan, GPE 2020. The GEPS highlights the centrality of gender-responsiveness as a core priority throughout the work of GPE, to increase gender equality in access, participation and learning achievement for all girls and boys; improve gender equality in education systems; to strengthen gender equality in education sector legal frameworks, policy and planning processes; and to ensure robust execution of commitment to gender equality across the partnership. GPE’s results framework has two indicators specific to gender parity, and a third country-level objective assesses how ESPs address gender equality and equity more broadly.

In addition to its country-level grants supporting development and implementation of quality ESPs, GPE is further strengthening gender results through a strategic partnership with the United Nations Girls’ Education Initiative (UNGEI), which seeks to build Developing Country partner (DCP) awareness for gender-responsive education sector planning together with other technical partners. GPE has also worked with the World Bank to research a number of key gender-related issues, including child-marriage, economic benefits of investing in girls’ education and the connections between investments in school health and education and gender equality outcomes.

The gender equality thematic area of GPE’s new Knowledge and Innovation Exchange (KIX) mechanism will provide a vehicle for accelerating implementation of the GEPS and achievement of GPE 2020.

Global goods and innovations in gender equality in and through education

For the purposes of this paper, global goods are understood here to be “institutions, mechanisms and outcomes that provide near universal benefits, reach across borders and extend across generations”:³ that is, tools, products and approaches—including data, assessment tools, standards and research outcomes—that, once developed as the outcome of one particular intervention, can be adapted to create a tool or approach that is applicable, with appropriate customization, to other contexts.⁴

A range of global goods already exist for supporting gender equality in and through education:

- There is an extensive architecture of **global policy frameworks**, including the Sustainable Development Goals, Education 2030 and regional strategies in Africa, Asia, and among the Commonwealth and Group of Seven (G-7) countries.
- **Funding streams** have grown over the past 10 years, particularly with regard to girls’ education.
- There has been an expansion of **research** on interventions, and four rigorous reviews of literature.

³ UNESCO/Global Education Monitoring Report. “Fulfilling Our Collective Responsibilities: Financing Global Goods in Education.” Policy Paper 34, UNESCO/Global Education Monitoring Report, Paris, 2018.

⁴ The International Commission on Financing Global Education Opportunity. *The learning generation: Investing in education for a changing world*. Washington DC: Education Commission, 2016.

- Some extensive **data** sets exist, including those by UNESCO, national education management information system (EMIS) databases, household surveys, learning assessments and nongovernmental organization (NGO) studies.
- A wide selection of **tools** has been generated, including GPE’s tools to help countries develop ESPs, tools for monitoring the SDGs, school-level gender scorecards, and various tools relating to gender and work in conflict or humanitarian disasters.
- There are some global and regional **networking, convening and coordinating mechanisms**, such as UNGEI, the Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE), the Gender & Inclusion in Education (GENIE) regional coordination group for West and Central Africa, the African Union International Centre for Girls and Women Education in Africa (AU/CIEFFA and the Africa Network Campaign on Education For All (ANCEFA).
- There have been some **innovations** in achieving gender equality addressing the disparity of access and quality of girls’ education worldwide. In GPE’s context, successful innovation is defined as the successful exploitation of a product, process, strategy or approach that alters the effectiveness of *education systems*.⁵

Gaps in available global goods

Two overarching gaps in available global goods stand out. First, the approach taken to date has mostly addressed the issues of girls’ schooling or gender inequality in education in a *piecemeal* way rather than strategically and holistically. There are evidence gaps in understanding how *education systems* need to adapt to support interventions targeted at improving girls’ education and gender equality most effectively. Second, there is little research on how such targeted interventions for improving gender equality results may in turn be either facilitated or constrained by features of an education system *in a given context*. This knowledge gap applies to all areas of education system reform: in demand and supply side investments, including curriculum change, teacher education and support, and styles of management, or community engagement. Institutional and individual capacity limitations, political economy aspects and other contextual factors all play a part in whether gender-targeted activities will deliver sustainable results at scale or fail to achieve their potential impact.

Key gaps in global goods are identified in five areas:

1. **Knowledge/Evidence**

There is limited evidence-based analysis looking into the results of packages of interventions and “what works” in particular contexts, including those affected by fragility and conflict. There is a lack of research on many GPE countries, and a need for analysis on how gender intersects with other dimensions of marginalization. Understanding of the formation of masculinities and its links with interventions around girls’ education is needed, and the development of indicators for measuring gender equality rather than gender parity more narrowly is necessary. Case studies of what different countries have done to address common themes, including cases of working across sectors to leverage results would be useful.

⁵ GPE, “Knowledge and Innovation Exchange,” Board paper BOD/2017/12 DOC 09, December 2017b.

2. Tools

Existing tools are useful, but they need to be understood in relation to system-building, not as discrete tools. Similarly, existing tools for education sector analysis, planning, budgeting, scenario modeling and management need to be enhanced to better reflect gender equality concerns.

3. Networks

There are limited convening opportunities for policymakers, practitioners and research communities to come together within and between countries to share their experiences of how gender equality in education may be hampered or facilitated in their own contexts, and to reflect on links between gender interventions and broader education reform.

4. Innovations

While a number of valuable innovations are noted, a deeper understanding of how these have or have not been institutionalized into the education system to bring about sustainable change would be beneficial.

5. Capacity and peer learning

At both the international and national levels, there is a limited number of staff with gender expertise, with limited opportunities for peer learning and experience sharing in regional/multicountry forums and workshops.

Potential investment areas

GPE investments in achieving gender equality in and through education through the KIX mechanism need to prioritize efforts to address the challenges identified, leverage the existing global goods and consider the most strategic and practical ways of filling some of these key gaps in global goods.

Through the consultation process, opportunities emerged for which global goods funded by KIX could be critical. These opportunities also align with the aims of GPE 2020 and the GEPS. These investments can accelerate implementation of the GEPS's six output areas and help meet the demands of developing country partners seeking to deliver tangible gender equality results at the country level.

Four areas for global goods investment emerge as key for addressing the challenges and gaps, in line with GPE's focus on system-level change, unique comparative advantage linking global, regional and national actors, and advancing GPE's implementation of its Gender Equality Policy and Strategy through KIX going forward:

- On topics where there is **potential for a geographic focus**, there is a need to open opportunities for peer learning exchange, development of tools and capacity building for gender-responsive sector analysis, planning, budgeting and implementation.
- On topics where there is a sufficient evidence base, there is a need to **build capacity through systematic knowledge exchange, capacity development and learning exchange**.
- On topics where there are some examples of solutions but more synthesis is needed to develop a solid evidence base, it is necessary to **build evidence and evaluation of what works**.
- On topics where there is a need for new thinking and solutions, investigation into **innovations** and their links to system-level reform are needed.

Based on the broad directions proposed above, some specific areas link to this comparative advantage and respond to the feedback received during the consultation process:

- **Consideration of a geographic lens to support peer learning and exchange, development of tools and capacity building for gender-responsive education sector analysis, planning, budgeting, implementation and monitoring for results, with a particular focus on Sub-Saharan Africa,**⁶ where GPE's 2018 results report shows that achieving gender parity in completion rates at primary and secondary school remains challenging.
- **Annual global conference to support development of a community of practice and knowledge sharing around gender equality in education system reform, centered on the global south.**⁷ Noting the tendency for gender equality issues to be marginalized at academic conferences, where the focus tends to be on identities rather than on policy and practice, and lack of opportunities for networking on gender, an annual global conference to support development of a community of practice and knowledge sharing on gender equality in and through education would be helpful.
- **Analytical work on gender-responsiveness of education systems.**⁸ As noted above, much work to date has focused on what works for girls' education, but less on how different **specific interventions are linked to/lead to system-level reform** for sustainable results. Analytical work is needed to ask the critical questions on why countries should invest in one area and not another, whether targeted or mainstreamed activities are more effective, and what packages of investments generate the most powerful results on gender equality. How does change happen, and what are the success factors and relevant contextual elements? What generalizable conclusions can be drawn? Research undertaken in health system reform and in the organizational change domain can provide useful models to suggest avenues for enquiry.
- **Development of metrics for measuring gender equality in and through education.**⁹ As noted in the paper, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) General Comment 36 provides the normative framework for focusing beyond parity in numbers to a broader focus on gender equality, not only *in* education but also *through* education. However, while the indexes for measuring gender parity are well established and sex-disaggregated data are increasingly collected in most EMIS as a matter of routine, much work remains to be done to develop a common metric for measuring gender equality.
- **Cross-sectoral work to strengthen gender equality results.**¹⁰ Recognizing the challenge referenced above that many barriers to gender equality in education lie outside the education system, this investment stream would build on GPE work with the health sector and provide opportunities for reflection on successful examples of working across sectors to tackle multifaceted gender-related issues such as child marriage, school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV), early pregnancy, HIV/AIDS and empowerment.
- **Identification of innovations with potential for scale-up linked to system-level reform.**¹¹ As noted in the text, often innovations may be useful and produce benefits for specific beneficiaries in niche contexts, but they may remain as stand-alone interventions that are not scaled up or institutionalized into the system. This investment stream would seek (a) to identify promising

⁶ Links to Gender Equality Policy and Strategy (GEPS) aim 3, output 3.

⁷ Links to GEPS aim 4.

⁸ Links to GEPS aim 2.

⁹ Links to GEPS aims 2 and 3.

¹⁰ Links to GEPS aims 1, 2 and 3; output 4.

¹¹ Links to GEPS aims 1 and 2.

innovations in high-impact thematic areas, such as shifting gender dynamics in relations between boys and girls, promoting girls' empowerment and leadership, and school-related gender-based violence; (b) examine their suitability for scale-up and institutionalization; and (c) identify cases where such innovations have been scaled up and incorporated into national and provincial policy/planning/budgeting, and what affected the success of such reforms.

Building inter-linkages and synergies between the funding streams, other KIX thematic areas and GPE's country-facing work will be essential for optimal impact. Investments can be prioritized and sequenced, based on availability of funding and partner interest/capacity to implement.

1. The importance of gender equality in and through education

According to the Gender Equality Policy and Strategy 2016-2020, achieving gender equality refers to the "equal rights, responsibilities, and opportunities of women, men, girls, and boys, and equal power to shape their own lives and contribute to society."¹² Gender equality benefits women and men, girls and boys, and should be of concern to all. Achieving gender equality in and through education requires systemwide institutional change in the way policies and plans are developed to ensure no one is left behind. These processes require attention to the structures, norms and relationships that shape education disadvantage for the people in the system. These disadvantages may manifest differently for girls, boys, women and men. Gender equality requires processes for building and sustaining equalities between girls and boys, women and men, within and beyond schooling.

Gender equality also refers to the *outcome* of equal rights and equal power between women and men in line with the human rights agenda, which requires transformational political commitment to bring about. Gender equality means that the interests, needs and priorities of females and males are taken into consideration; as such, it has the potential to benefit everyone—women and men, girls and boys.

Gender equality includes, though is broader than, the concept of gender *equity*, which means that responsibilities and benefits are fairly distributed between women and men,¹³ and institutional arrangements and consultative processes are in place to secure this. Achieving equity may require temporary special measures to compensate for the disadvantages for girls that have built up over time.¹⁴ One way in which gender equality is supported is through focusing on girls' education. While the current reality is that globally on aggregate similar numbers of girls and boys are enrolled in school, in many countries, girls continue to lag behind boys in education access, learning and outcomes. Thus, a high priority remains for programs and policies to address disadvantages faced by girls. This is especially true in the majority of partner developing countries.¹⁵

For sustainable and transformational change, however, specific interventions concerned with girls' education must be connected to a systemwide reform that is centrally concerned with gender and

¹² GPE 2016b, 5.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ GPE/UNGEI, Guidance for Developing Gender-Responsive Education Sector Plans (Washington, DC: GPE, 2017).

¹⁵ See GPE, *Results Report 2018* (Washington, DC: GPE, 2018b).

connected equalities. Efforts focusing on girls' education should also focus on changing gendered structures, institutions, relationships and norms so that the underlying causes of girls' disadvantage and intersecting inequalities can be addressed.¹⁶ "An emphasis on *gender*, rather than *girls*, will permit a broader discussion around how gender inequality limits the potential of both girls and boys to fully develop their capabilities."¹⁷ Gender equality *in and through education* means that gender equality is present in the education system in terms of access, learning and opportunities for girls and boys, and also in the content and delivery of the education, so that learners leave school and contribute to a more equitable society.

Achieving gender equality in and through education is at the heart of the human rights agenda, a pathway to social justice and the key to achieving the transformational 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The "pivotal, transformative and empowering role" of education in promoting human rights values and as the pathway to gender equality and the empowerment of women is elaborated in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women General Recommendation 36. As a critical step, girls' education, and particularly the schooling of adolescent girls, is gaining an increasingly high profile in international policy frameworks.¹⁸ Global trends are recognizing the intrinsic and extrinsic needs for investing in girls' education, especially for adolescent girls, including in crisis and conflict-affected situations. In 2018, both the G-7 Summit in Canada and the Commonwealth Summit in the United Kingdom made ambitious commitments to break barriers preventing adolescent and highly marginalized girls from completing a full cycle of free, safe and quality education. Global policy and some substantial donor funding are increasingly recognizing the centrality of girls' education to expanding social, economic and political development, and as a result, there is a deepening engagement with gender equality in education. However, sometimes programs are not well enough coordinated or may have outcomes that do not fully address the sources of prejudice and discrimination, limiting their sustainable impact. GPE also recognizes that a transformative approach is needed, one that goes beyond simply focusing on expanding girls' education and addresses the multidimensionality of discrimination. Such an approach entails securing girls' rights to articulate their insights into the problems they face, to be heard without jeopardy in proclaiming these, and supporting and sustaining their capabilities to participate in the formulation of solutions within a safe and protective environment.

Two key GPE documents emphasize that to effect sustainable change, a broader focus on achieving gender equality in and through education is critical:

- Achieving gender equality is a core principle of GPE's strategic plan, GPE 2020.
- The Gender Equality Policy and Strategy 2016-2020, fully aligned to GPE 2020, highlights that "gender-responsiveness must be a core priority throughout the work of the Global Partnership for Education, given the vast mutual importance of gender equality and education."¹⁹

¹⁶Unterhalter, Elaine et al., *Interventions to Enhance Girls' Education and Gender Equality: A Rigorous Review of Literature* (London: DFID, 2014).

¹⁷ Murphy-Graham, Erin and Cynthia Lloyd, "Empowering Adolescent Girls in Developing Countries: The Potential Role of Education," *Sage Journals*, November 7, 2015.

¹⁸ See, for example, "Simplified Reporting Procedure," CEDAW, OHCHR, 2018, <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CEDAW/Pages/ReportingProcedures.aspx>; G-7, "G7 Development Ministers' Meeting Focus on Empowering Women and Girls," news release, June 2, 2018, <https://g7.gc.ca/en/g7-development-ministers-meeting-focus-empowering-women-girls>; and the African Union's 2013 *Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want*.

¹⁹ As further detailed in section 3.

In line with these frameworks, GPE’s specific gender equality goals are to:

- Increase gender equality in access, participation and learning;
- Improve gender equality in education systems;
- Strengthen gender equality in education sector policy and planning processes; and
- Ensure robust commitment to gender equality across the partnership.

The KIX mechanism will complement other GPE investments to support the achievement of these aims.

The KIX work on gender recognizes that while the benefits—the *why*—of investing in gender equality have been clearly demonstrated in numerous studies,²⁰ *what* countries need to do to effect this transformation and *how* they need to do it are less clear. Making sure that specific interventions concerned with girls’ education, together with activities addressing forms of boys’ educational disadvantage, are linked to holistic, systemwide reform remains a key challenge.

Consistent with GPE’s policy goals, the aim of the KIX pillar on gender equality is therefore to provide partner developing countries with the most strategic global and regional goods they need to effect transformational change and deliver the benefits of gender equality in and through education in their countries—for girls and boys, and their families. These global goods will enhance understanding of why intersecting inequalities persist within and outside education, what experience has to teach about how to bring about and support change, and how communities of practice can deepen their knowledge and skills.

For the purposes of this paper, global goods are understood here to be “institutions, mechanisms and outcomes that provide near universal benefits, reach across borders and extend across generations”:²¹ that is, tools, products and approaches—including data, assessment tools, standards and research outcomes—that, once developed as the outcome of one particular intervention, can be adapted to create a tool or approach that is applicable, with appropriate customization, to other contexts.²²

This discussion paper therefore considers the following:

- What are the key challenges to achieving gender equality in and through education? (Section 2)
- What GPE investments in gender equality in education have *already* been made that address these challenges? (Section 3)
- What *other* global and regional goods are already available to address these challenges and support DCPs to make systemic education sector policy, planning and programming changes to deliver stronger gender equality results essential for achievement of SDG 4? (Section 4)
- What are the *gaps* (the remaining challenges) in global goods that need to be addressed to catalyze, support and accelerate change and build more gender-responsive education systems? (Section 5)
- What strategic investments in global goods should GPE make to *address these gaps* and help DCPs deliver this transformational change? (Section 6)

²⁰ For example, Wodon, Quentin T. et al., *Missed Opportunities: The High Cost of Not Educating Girls*, The Cost of Not Educating Girls Series (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2018).

²¹ UNESCO/Global Education Monitoring Report 2018.

²² Education Commission 2016.

The key criteria for the recommendations herein include potential for leveraging impact, scalability, practicality, affordability, sustainability and consistency with GPE's capacity, mandate and comparative advantage.

The anticipated outcomes are that, based on commitment to and understanding of *why* to invest in gender equality in and through education, DCPs have the knowledge, capacity and tools they need to support *what* to do to tackle gender inequality challenges in their education systems, and *how* to do it to deliver better, more equal gender results for all girls, boys, women and men in the education system and beyond.

2. Paper development and consultation process

GPE commissioned a senior author to: review GPE documents and analytical work from other sources related to achieving gender equality in and through education; conduct a desk review, consult with DCPs and experts; and write this paper. Working with GPE's senior education specialist on gender equality and other members of the GPE Secretariat, the author drafted an initial discussion paper in October 2018.

This draft included a summary of key challenges, existing global goods in this thematic area, gaps that emerged from the desk review, and suggestions for potential areas GPE may invest in to accelerate gender equality results through KIX. The draft was reviewed by the GPE Secretariat and an external reviewer, and in November and December a revised discussion paper was sent to DCP representatives and international experts representing academia, civil society, donors, and multilateral institutions. In-person consultations were held during a GRESP regional workshop in Nairobi, Kenya. In total, the Secretariat received in-person feedback from five DCPs and written feedback from 7 DCPs and 14 international experts. The results from these consultations were thoroughly analysed and comments incorporated into this version of the discussion paper. A webinar for all those involved in the consultation process was conducted in March 2019 to bring partners up to date on the KIX design process and outline the content of the final version of the paper, particularly the proposed areas for investment in global goods. The overall KIX design was approved by the Board by affirmative vote in April 2019, with a global call for proposals scheduled for September 2019.

3. Challenges to achieving gender equality in and through education

Despite progress among DCPs in increased girls' enrollment and completion of primary school, as detailed in the 2018 GPE results report, significant gender gaps remain. The challenges to achieving gender equality in and through education are discussed below through the lens of the GEPS goals.

Challenges faced by girls and boys in access, participation and learning²³

The need for a holistic approach

Globally, the number of out-of-school girls and boys of primary and secondary school age is virtually the same (131.7 million girls and 131.3 million boys).²⁴ The total of boys out of school is higher than girls in

²³ Links to GEPS aim 1: increase gender equality in access, participation, and learning achievement for all girls and boys.

²⁴ UIS 2018.

primary and lower secondary phases, and the total of girls out of school is higher than boys at senior secondary level, though there are country variations to this pattern. Some of the countries with the largest concentrations of out-of-school girls and boys are GPE partner developing countries.

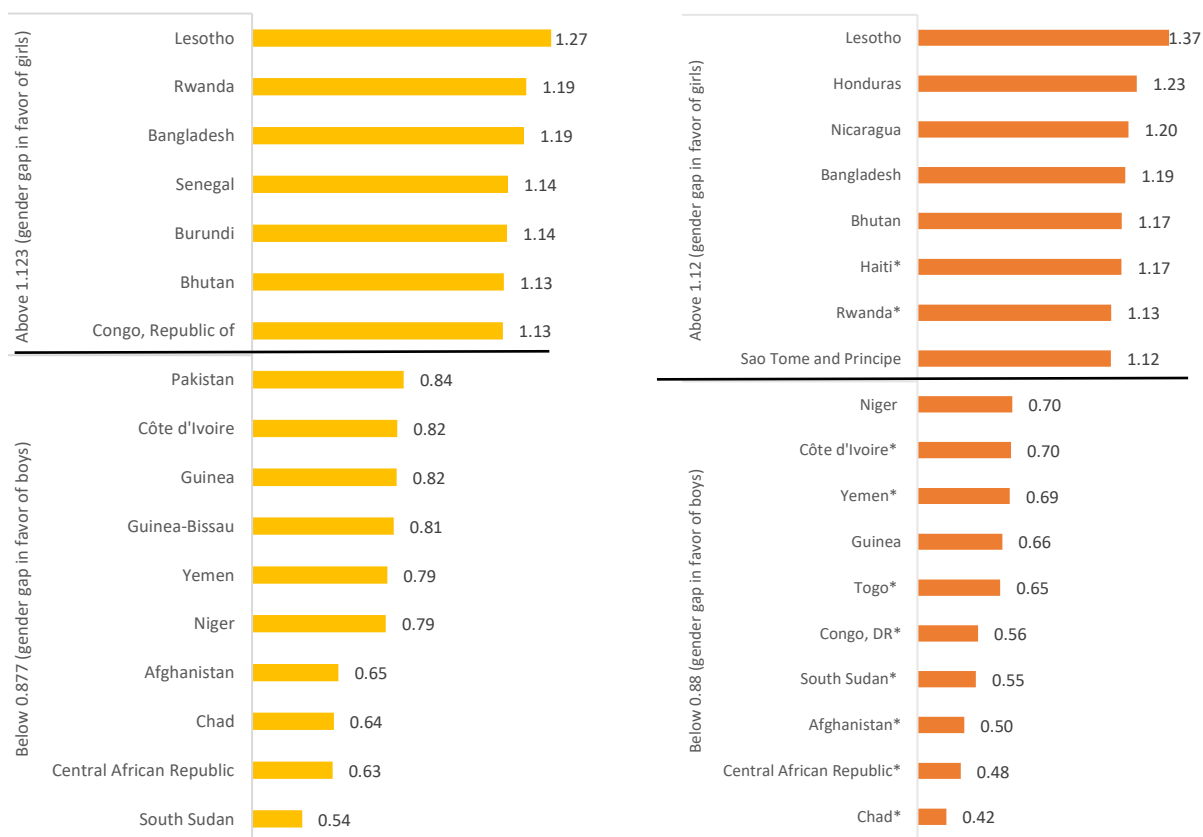
According to the UNESCO Global Education Monitoring Report, only 66 percent of countries worldwide have achieved gender parity (equal enrollment between girls and boys) in primary education. Furthermore, only 45 percent of countries have achieved gender parity in lower secondary, and only 25 percent have achieved gender parity for upper secondary.²⁵ These include many DCPs, where girls of primary age are 1.3 times more likely to be out of school than boys, and only half have met the threshold gender parity target for completion at lower secondary level.²⁶ Figure 1 shows the DCPs with the highest levels of gender inequality in primary and secondary education.

The GEPS notes that school dropout rates for girls are particularly pronounced in rural areas and urban slums where there is inadequate or no formal school. It also notes that the transition from primary to secondary education marks a particular peak of dropout by girls. Inadequate school infrastructure, particularly water and sanitation, may be implicated in this, as limited support for girls to manage menstruation may compound financial difficulties in pushing girls out of school. In many countries, partly because of financial need, when girls reach puberty they are required to turn attention away from school and take on roles that focus on marriage, motherhood, income generation and responsibilities for providing resources such as water and firewood. Poor boys may also be kept out of school because the money they can earn is essential for family survival. When schooling is not free, poor families in many cultures often choose to enroll boys rather than girls. Building parents' understanding of social and cultural norms and support for gender equality are critical steps to ending discriminatory practices, patriarchal society norms and harmful traditional practices.

²⁵ UNESCO, *Global Education Monitoring Report Gender Review: Meeting Our Commitments to Gender Equality in Education* (Paris: UNESCO, 2018).

²⁶ GPE 2018b.

Figure 1. GPE countries with the highest levels of gender inequality in primary (left) and lower secondary (right) completion rates, 2015



Source: GPE, *Results Report 2018* (Washington, DC: GPE, 2018).

* Fragile and/or conflict affected context

Dropout and low learning outcomes are not caused only by these difficult trade-offs poor families have to make. They are also caused by factors within both the school and the educational system as a whole. School-related gender-based violence can cause physical and psychological harm to girls and boys, and lead to their dropping out. Other aspects of the school environment can also entrench gender inequalities. These include lack of gender-sensitive curricula and pedagogies, the prevalence of stereotypes in learning materials and inadequate attention to developing school cultures around equalities, as well as lack of concern with the educational opportunities and outcomes of girls and boys beyond school. The lack of reproductive health rights education and services together with policies that bar girls who become pregnant from returning to school acts as further barriers to girls' completing their education and achieving high learning outcomes.

Boys' growing disengagement from education and high dropout rates in many Latin American, Caribbean and Southeast Asian countries, as well as variations in disparities between boys and girls within

countries,²⁷ underline that sector analysis and planning need to look beyond girls' education and consider the broader gender dynamics within their particular context.

Challenges within education systems²⁸

The need to connect girls' education interventions to education sector planning and systemwide reform that promotes gender equality

Building gender-responsive education systems entails expanding financial resources for education and developing political will to support an equalities orientation and sustainable change.

Within the education system, the curriculum, teachers' and administrators' attitudes and practices, relationships between pupils and teachers, and inadequate infrastructure can all contribute to a situation where schools unintentionally deepen gender inequalities or fail to critically examine the sources of prejudice and discrimination. For example, a detailed study in Nigeria of views on gender and girls' education that surveyed the attitudes of teacher educators, teachers, girls and boys in schools in five states from northern and southern geopolitical zones showed how widespread the perception was that gender equality in political, social and economic affairs was not appropriate, and that schools should not address sexual harassment and gender-based violence. Under these conditions it is not surprising to see girls, particularly from lower income quintiles, perform more poorly than boys in school examinations, drop out in greater proportions, and fail to proceed in large numbers to further or higher education, limiting their employment options in the formal sector.²⁹ Research in Kenya shows how a culture of high-stakes testing where schools are publicly shamed for low pupil performance leads to forms of gender-based violence, including harsh corporal punishment meted out to children, often girls, who fail to perform well in exams.³⁰

Work for gender equality in and through education has sometimes been seen simply as working on girls' education, with less consideration of the need to *connect specific interventions concerned with girls' education to systemwide reform*. While addressing the exclusions and discrimination many girls experience is a part of the task of working toward gender equality, it does not automatically lead to gender equality outcomes or address forms of prejudice and discrimination.

Focusing on a *part* of the system—girls' education—rather than on the inequalities of the system as a whole can have perverse consequences. For example, establishing free primary education for all girls and boys without having enough trained teachers, learning resources or professional development in place can seriously undermine quality and unintentionally exacerbate gender inequalities. Similarly, using girls' clubs to encourage girls to speak out about the sexual harassment and violence they encounter at or around school as a stand-alone intervention can have unintended drawbacks. If this kind of intervention is not accompanied by training for teachers, school leaders and boys about treating girls with respect, establishment of systems for safe reporting and safeguarding, and building cultures of gender equality in

²⁷ UNESCO 2018.

²⁸ Links to GEPS aims 3, improve gender equality in education systems; and 4, strengthen gender equality in education sector legal frameworks, policy and planning processes.

²⁹ Unterhalter, Elaine et al. , *Teacher Education, Teacher Practice, Approaches to Gender and Girls' Schooling Outcomes: A Study in Five Nigerian States* (Abuja: British Council, 2017).

³⁰ Vanner, Catherine, "'This Is a Competition': The Relationship Between Examination Pressure and Gender Violence in Primary Schools in Kenya," *International Journal of Educational Development* 62 (2018): 35-46.

school (including considerate treatment and readmission of girls who became pregnant), the girls may find themselves speaking out with no one listening. More dangerously, this could also put them at greater risk of harm because what they have to say can elicit harsh punishment, stigma or shame.

We do not yet know if, how or in what ways interventions around girls' education help generate system-level changes. Additionally, we do not have adequate information on what works in different contexts and how a focus on girls' education at the primary and secondary levels can best develop financial literacy, employability skills and economic empowerment of women. This adds to the challenge of designing holistic gender equality interventions that target the needs of each girl or boy in specific contexts.

Additionally, interventions around aspects of girls' education are often evaluated on their own terms and rarely linked with some of the bigger issues around education system development. Ensuring adequate financing and institutional arrangements, building political support for gender equality through a coordinated ministry approach, attending to relevant teacher and administrator capacity needs, setting up safeguarding arrangements in schools underpinned with law enforcement, and parental/community sensitization to gender equality are important actions to bring about sustainable change on multiple levels of the education system. In order to increase gender equality in access, participation and learning for all girls and boys, significant investment in systems building, capacity development, cross-sectoral coordination and holistic interventions needs to take place.

The need for change at multiple levels of an education system, including aspects of governance and capacity development

A focus on gender equality entails setting up institutions and guiding actions toward supporting every person who is studying or working in an education system being treated with dignity so that their rights and opportunities can be realized. Education systems comprise long chains of relationships that encompass global, national and local structures and interactions, some of which are framed by institutions and others loose associations of people or practices. Key ideas about professionalism, value for money or the value of schooling often guide decisions in an education system and must be taken into account in work toward gender equality on *multiple levels of an education system*.

Education systems, formal and informal, in all their interconnected facets, are made by the people who work in them. Often these administrators, teachers, researchers and support workers have experienced—and taken for granted—many of the gender inequalities that have become hard-wired into their societies. Unless these ideas are consciously made visible and examined, they can be unconsciously carried over into the education systems through daily work practices, reinforcing inequalities and shaping their direction away from equality.

The need to connect across different ministries whose work supports gender equality in education directly and indirectly

An additional challenge in achieving gender equality throughout an education system is the need for adequately supporting the leadership capacity of all actors associated with an education system and national government to connect across different ministries whose work supports gender equality in education directly or indirectly. Institutionally, the design, financing, management and functioning of these structures steers them toward working in silos and militates against working in coordination with other ministries. An understanding of how mechanisms that support inter-ministerial collaboration can

be put in place is lacking. These key actors must be empowered to challenge intersecting inequalities and stereotypes in their interpretation of policy, to call for fair distribution of resources, to recognize and appreciate diverse social and cultural relationships and ways to work toward building participatory processes that support realizing women’s political, social and economic rights and establishing relationships of gender equality. Institutional and individual capacity to support this more joined-up way of working needs to be built.

Policies may be lacking, or not well enough coordinated across ministries or put into practice, to address broader challenges of girls leaving school because of child marriage, inequitable gender relations between girls and boys, early pregnancy, school-related gender-based violence and other forms of violence against women. Stereotyping of girls and women forms gender norms, which means that sexual harassment and exclusion are part of everyday practices, with consequences for not just girls but boys too. Boys may confront norms of masculinity that can encourage them to drop out of school, to be drawn in to practices harmful to themselves or others, or to participate in different forms of harassment.

Challenges in political, social and economic structures³¹

Addressing political and economic structures of inequality

Gender inequalities in access, progression and attainment in education intersect with other inequalities that hold girls and boys back. For example, the proportion of girls who do not enter or fail to complete education is highest among those from poor families, often living in areas with inadequate infrastructure (slums or poor rural areas) and coming from communities that have historically been discriminated against. While reasons for this vary according to context, the poorest families often have inadequate money for household expenses and have to rely on girls’ unpaid work in the household, involvement in farming, or hawking as a key component of household income, thus keeping girls out of school. For many poor families, boys also provide crucial labor. In rural pastoralist communities, boys have a large responsibility for livestock, and in urban areas they are often employed in the informal economy.

Table 1 highlights the intersection of gender and poverty in relation to primary, lower secondary and upper secondary completion. In Sub-Saharan Africa, in particular, gender parity and overall completion rates decrease as students move from primary to lower and upper secondary, with overall completion rates for upper secondary just 5 percent for the poorest females.

³¹ Links to GEPS aim 4: ensure robust execution of commitment to gender equality across the Global Partnership.

Table 1. Gender parity indexes of completion rate, and completion rate of poorest males and females, by level, region and country income group, 2010-2015

	Primary			Lower secondary			Upper secondary		
	Gender parity index, completion rate	Completion rate, poorest males	Completion rate, poorest females	Gender parity index, completion rate	Completion rate, poorest males	Completion rate, poorest females	Gender parity index, completion rate	Completion rate, poorest males	Completion rate, poorest females
World	1.01	72	71	1.01	54	54	0.99	32	33
Caucasus and Central Asia	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Eastern and South-eastern Asia	1.02	88	92	1.14	65	72	1.05	45	48
Europe and Northern America	—	99	98	1.00	95	96	1.05	77	81
Latin America and the Caribbean	1.04	80	86	1.07	56	63	1.13	31	34
Northern Africa and Western Asia	0.97	69	63	1.03	44	42	1.02	18	16
Pacific	—	—	—	1.01	97	96	1.09	80	69
Southern Asia	0.99	75	71	0.94	60	53	0.90	23	16
Sub-Saharan Africa	0.99	34	31	0.86	17	13	0.78	8	5
Low income	0.97	31	28	0.79	12	8	0.66	3	2
Lower middle income	1.00	70	68	0.97	53	47	0.93	21	15
Upper middle income	1.02	89	93	1.11	69	78	1.07	49	52
High income	—	—	—	1.01	89	92	1.07	73	79

Source: GEM Report team calculations for completion rates based on household survey data.

Source: UNESCO, *Global Education Monitoring Report Gender Review: Meeting Our Commitments to Gender Equality in Education* (Paris: UNESCO, 2018).

In addition to poverty, disability status also contributes to inequality. Girls and boys who live with disabilities are often kept out of school because schools cannot accommodate their needs or families feel shame, and stigma attaches to their presence in public places. Girls who live in regions affected by conflict are particularly vulnerable to receiving little or no schooling, partly because when safety is a major concern, girls are kept home more often than boys. Both boys and girls are affected by the lack of provision for education in conflict-affected areas, but as conflict amplifies and exacerbates existing structural inequalities in a society, those with the least assets, opportunities for income generation, limited legal protections and restricted access to powerful social networks find themselves most excluded from education resources. These are often the poorest women and girls.

To bring about gains in gender equality, it is necessary to build processes of institutional accountability that track gender inequalities at multiple levels in an education system in a more intentional way and drive changes in practices. Many factors affect an education system. The range of relationships, practices and ideas entailed makes gender equality work particularly complex because the work encompasses state and nonstate organizations, and government departments that work not only in education but also health, youth affairs, housing, water, sanitation, and roads among others. Change in these areas requires a rigorous review of *political and economic structures* and the relationships they keep in place.

Working with social and cultural norms within and outside schools

With regard to *social and cultural norms*, gender inequality is a deep structural issue in all societies, and education systems are likely to reflect long-established politico-economic and sociocultural divisions in

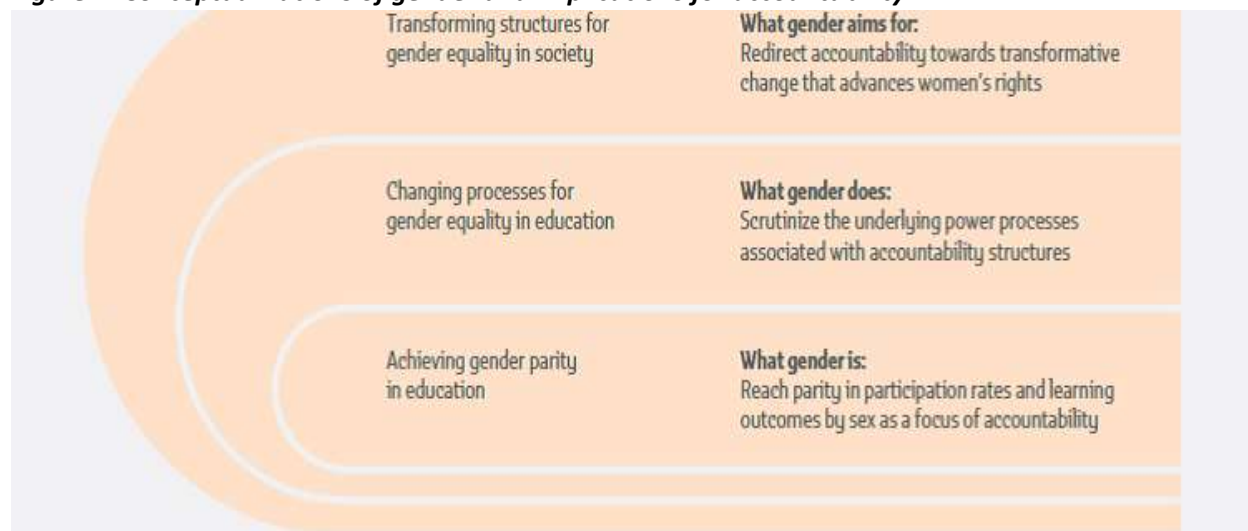
which gender inequalities are a feature of the way resources—such as land, wealth, employment, income, political and cultural power—are distributed. Although laws may guarantee education opportunities to all, delivering on these opportunities against a background of long histories of inequality, injustice and exclusion is immensely difficult. Working to establish an efficient and equitable education system in countries with limited fiscal resources and historical infrastructure to build on is hard enough. Ensuring that this system can contribute to transforming deeply entrenched social divisions in which gender inequality is often so widespread, multifaceted, and difficult to change presents an enormous undertaking. While campaigns to get girls into school have achieved a degree of success, these gains in access have not necessarily been matched by gains in system change that bring about gender equality. Ensuring gender equality in schools and education systems requires considerable investment of time, money, knowledge and skill, all of which may be in scarce supply. There are generally no short cuts to all members of communities with long-established experiences of inequalities and often harmful traditional practices that limit girls’ rights to engage in a process of needs assessment and supported change in order to take forward work to develop gender equalities in education.

SRGBV is a particular manifestation of inequitable gender norms. Sometimes teachers or learners’ childhood experiences of violent punishment or sexual violence influence their confidence in their capabilities to address violence and discrimination in schools or classrooms. The silences that surround these difficult issues require patient work. Working to change ideas and actions around gender to move more in a direction concerned with equality and rights, as reflected in policy, requires particular kinds of support and partnership in all facets of work of an education system, from curriculum development through teacher training and support, planning and budgeting, management, administration, assessment, monitoring and evaluation.

Conversely, sensitive understanding and leveraging of cultural practices that have potential to support gender equality are important areas that merit further examination.

Different understandings of what gender means, its complexity and how to lead institutional change

These difficulties of building and sustaining education systems in contexts of inequality are amplified by *different understandings of what “gender” means*, and its complexity. Gender inequality does include the exclusion and neglect of girls, but it also concerns the relationships between girls and boys, men and women. These may be collaborative, but they are also frequently marked by inequalities of power and resources, where violence is used as means to enforce exclusion and refusal of rights. Gender often intersects with other inequalities of class, race, location and ethnicity. This can be the case, for example, in societies marked by histories of racism or ethnic division, where one group holds political and economic power, excluding others from access to decent education, housing and work; gender inequalities are a feature of these unjust ideas and practices. Intersecting inequalities need to be addressed through processes for change that acknowledge the complexities and instabilities of context, and varied alignments. Work to support actions that are directed to substantive equalities requires sustaining over long periods and attention to many facets. Figure 2 shows different conceptualizations of gender and how they relate to accountability.

Figure 2. Conceptualizations of gender and implications for accountability

Source: Based on Unterhalter et al. (2018).

Source: Unterhalter et al. 2018, as cited in UNESCO, *Global Education Monitoring Report Gender Review: Meeting Our Commitments to Gender Equality in Education* (Paris: UNESCO, 2018).

Understanding “gender-responsiveness”

Beyond a focus on girls’ education, a shared understanding is needed of what is meant by a gender-responsive education system, the gender implications for education systems as a whole, and the role gender plays in shaping who has access to education, who progresses through its different phases, and what reasons account for differential outcomes. This means looking at what arrangements are in place for learning, teaching and assessment; what decisions around curriculum, materials and pedagogy are made at the level of policy; and how this is put into practice in schools. Gender also has significant implications for education sector planning, budgeting, management, monitoring and evaluation, and accountabilities for results. For example, addressing intersecting inequalities of gender, race, ethnicity and location might mean placing gender equality at the center of an education sector plan—seeing it not as a small initiative of one department but as the focus of all the work, requiring redirection of resources, critical scrutiny of how these are distributed in order to address some of the most underserved groups, and establishment of monitoring systems that seek to uncover disadvantage. Mainstreaming gender equality throughout an education system and tracking these changes will take significant investments of time, money, skill, research and reflection linked to evaluation.

As noted above, achieving gender equality in and through education is a highly complex task. The many interconnections in play, the wide range of information required, and the high-order skills for making institutional linkages and working across sectors that need to be deployed are extremely demanding. This challenge is frequently underestimated, with work on gender often located in a very small, under-resourced team, or a single project, rather than guided by strong leadership in a more powerful, strategic institutional position within an education system, and the links with other sectors and government departments fully recognized and supported.

4. How GPE supports gender equality in and through education

GPE invests heavily in education sector planning, providing partner developing countries grants of up to US\$500,000 to prepare education sector plans based on evidence and data. Once these plans are endorsed, GPE offers countries large-scale education sector program implementation grants up to a maximum of US\$100 million. A stocktake of 42 DCPs (ESPs and ESPIGs) and 10 countries (in-depth analysis, ESAs and Action Plans) on how DCPs are addressing gender issues in their education plans showed that nine countries/states had a specific educational strategy for girls' participation in education or a national gender strategy, eight countries/states planned to develop one, and 15 did not fund any specific strategy for girls' participation in education.³² Thirteen countries had not integrated gender-disaggregated indicators for primary education in ESP monitoring and evaluation frameworks, and a further four for secondary education.

GPE's *Portfolio Review 2018* notes that 31 out of 37 ESPIGs include activities geared toward gender equality in education, including 18 in countries affected by fragility and conflict, and gender equality in education is the most prominent equity theme in the ESPIGs coded (up from 30 out of 41 the previous year). These include targeted approaches (18) and approaches that mainstream gender equality throughout the program. Funded strategies are related to removing barriers in access as well as to improving supply and learning environment.

Targeted strategies include provision of learning materials to girls, increased investments in female teachers and administrators, strategic communication initiatives to raise awareness for girls' education, incentive schemes and provision of gender-sensitive school facilities. In Lesotho, where the gender parity index (GPI) is in favor of girls, the focus is on boys. Guinea, on the other hand, provides an example where gender is mainstreamed into the design of a gender-sensitive in-service training program supported by GPE funds, which was informed by lessons learned from the implementation of a girls' program financed by another donor.

Some countries use GPE funding for institutional strategies, such as the development of a national policy on gender or girls' participation in education, the establishment of gender focal points in ministries or the introduction of a gender-based approach in statistical data collection. An ongoing thematic review will further elaborate this analysis, take further stock of how gender equality concerns are currently being reflected in new ESPs and explore any changes/emerging trends.

Achieving gender equality is a core principle of GPE 2020 and thus central to GPE's work. Strategic goal 2 is "increased equity, gender equality and inclusion for all in a full cycle of quality education, targeting the poorest and most marginalized, including by gender, disability, ethnicity and conflict or fragility." In 2015, GPE developed its first results framework for 2016-2020. The framework has two indicators specific to gender equity and a third country-level objective that relates to equity more broadly.

³² GPE, *Girls' Education and Gender in Education Sector Plans and GPE-funded Programs* (Washington, DC: GPE, 2017a).

Indicator 5. Proportion of GPE DCPs within set thresholds for gender parity index of completion rates for: (a) primary education; (b) lower secondary education. The gender parity index is the ratio of the female completion rate for primary (or lower secondary) schooling to the male completion rate. A GPI of 1 indicates gender parity was achieved; a value less than 1 indicates a disparity in favor of boys; and a value greater than 1 indicates a disparity in favor of girls. The set thresholds for this indicator are 0.88-1.12.

Indicator 8. Gender parity index of out-of-school rate for: (a) primary education; (b) lower secondary education. This indicator combines a GPI and out-of-school rates. Out-of-school rates are defined as the number of children of official primary (or lower secondary) school age who are not enrolled in primary or secondary school, expressed as a percentage of the population of official primary (or lower secondary) school age.

Indicator 16.c. Proportion of ESPs/TEPs with a strategy to respond to marginalized groups that meets quality standards (including gender, disability, and other context-relevant dimensions). This indicator is defined as the number of endorsed education sector plans or transitional education plans (TEPs) that have a strategy for marginalized populations meeting at least four out of a possible total of five standards out of the total number of endorsed ESPs and TEPs included in the group sample. The five quality standards for this indicator: evidence-based, relevant, coherent, measurable and implementable.

Gender equality is further elaborated in GPE's Gender Equality Policy and Strategy 2016-2020, which is aligned with the goals and objectives of GPE 2020, SDG 4 and Education 2030. The policy marks a pivotal shift from a focus on *gender parity in numbers* to a focus on how the education system as a whole serves to advance *gender equality*—in learning and learning environments, teacher education and practice, curriculum and materials development, leadership and administration, and in the dynamics of male-female interaction. The vision is to achieve gender equality not only *within* the education system itself but also *through* education, so that all boys and girls, women and men are able to fulfill their full potential in life, regardless of whether they are born male or female. Key investments to date related to the policy are outlined below.

In line with output 3 of the strategy—gender-responsive education sector analysis, planning and implementation—GPE in strategic partnership with UNGEI has developed the *Guidance for Developing Gender-Responsive Education Sector Plans* (GRESPE), which supports developing country partners to build capacity for developing gender-responsive education sector plans, based on sound gender analysis of data. Four regional workshops, conducted with UNGEI, have contributed to strengthened awareness of gender-responsive sector planning of DCPs in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. The workshops have benefited from the technical support of other partners, including Plan International, UNICEF regional offices, UNESCO-IIEP (Paris and Pôle de Dakar), FAWE, and others, as well as financial support from AU/CIEFFA.

Through the Global and Regional Activities (GRA) program, GPE supported UNICEF to address school-related gender-based violence in Cote d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Togo and Zambia through the End Gender

Violence in Schools initiative, which produced a global review of policy and practice on SRGBV.³³ The GRA program also supported UNICEF and the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) through the Global Initiative on Out-of-School Children, which provides global data disaggregated by gender on out-of-school children.³⁴

The World Bank and GPE produced the publication *Optimizing Education Outcomes: High Return Investments in School Health for Increased Participation and Learning* to help shape continuing work to foster strengthened integration of strategic health investments in education sector plans for improved education and gender equality outcomes using the school as an effective platform.

Other recent analytical studies produced in collaboration with the World Bank, with funding from GPE's GRA program, include documenting global trends in legal protection for women against domestic violence and sexual harassment, which can act as a key barrier to girls' participation in education and safety in and on the way to and from school. In addition, GPE has worked with the World Bank on a number of studies on child marriage, including in West and Central Africa.³⁵ This work informed evidence-based advocacy ahead of the 2017 high-level meeting on ending child marriage in West and Central Africa, where child marriage rates reach as high as 68 percent in the Central African Republic,³⁶ and are a strong contributing factor to girls missing out on school.³⁷ The implications of these studies, which highlight the significance of collaborations beyond education departments and the many relationships that bear on an education system working toward gender equality, provide resources that can be mined for recommendations for policy and investment.

At the country level, GPE supports the achievement of gender equality in and through education through its quality assurance process, which aims to ensure that ESPs and proposals for ESPIGs align with broader sector financing priorities and GPE's vision and strategic objectives, including increased equity, gender equality and inclusion. GPE's role in in-country dialogue with the ministry of education–led local education groups (LEGs) also has the potential for advocacy on advancing a gender equality agenda.

Through its new KIX program, GPE will make an initial investment in this thematic area, seeking to match this support with contributions from others in order to make catalytic investments that can build on successes to date and further address the remaining challenges of achieving gender equality in and through education across the partnership.

This discussion paper for the gender equality thematic area of KIX takes particular note of the finding in the GEPS report for 2018 that the GPE partner countries where gender disparities in education remain most acute are among the poorest and most conflict-affected in the world. This suggests that a more intersectional approach, including a focus on disability, and concentrated level of effort is required to

³³ GPE, *A Rigorous Review of Global Research Evidence on Policy and Practice on School-Related Gender-Based Violence* (Washington, DC: GPE, 2016a).

³⁴ UIS-UNICEF, *Fixing the Broken Promise of Education for All: Findings from the Global Initiative on Out-of-School Children* (Montreal: UIS, 2015).

³⁵ Wodon et al. 2018.

³⁶ UNICEF, "Child Marriage," UNICEF Data, March 2018.

³⁷ Related GPE–World Bank collaborative publications can be found in the References, Wodon et al. 2018

support these countries to accelerate progress and ensure no girl or boy is left behind and that socioeconomic and political rights for all are realized.³⁸ The same report also notes several countries where fewer boys than girls are completing basic education, highlighting an emerging issue that will require context-specific solutions and tailored strategies to address gender-based barriers and needs.

5. Global public goods for gender and girls' education: frameworks, research, data, tools, capacity and innovation

Over the past 30 years, investment in gender and girls' education has generated a range of policy frameworks, a cadre of experts, a body of research and data, and some networks that have provided spaces for critical review. However, these global public goods are concentrated and used in only a handful of countries and are virtually unknown in others. Some key global goods are associated with donor agendas, driven from the global north or elite research institutes in the global south, and this limits the depth of the insights generated and approaches to uptake and sustainability. Although there are examples of well-contextualized studies linked to national communities of practice, a knowledge shaped by these relationships has been generated about only a select range of countries. Regardless of the knowledge communities involved, the evidence has yet to be developed into what constitutes the essential ingredients linking interventions and education systems working to enhance gender equality, and advance rights for women and girls. This section reviews a range of global public goods.

As detailed below, there is no shortage of policy commitments for girls' education and gender equality in education. However, work needs to be done to link these policy texts with appropriate indicators and monitoring mechanisms to fully capture some of the many meanings of gender equality in education and to appreciate some of the diversity of sites in which policy is realized.

Frameworks

Since the adoption of CEDAW by the UN General Assembly in 1979, governments have affirmed a range of other statements setting out commitments to gender equality in education. Some have formal processes for review (for example, CEDAW); others build accountability through indicators and pledging commitments. The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action from the World Conference on Women in 1995 reaffirmed the centrality of women's rights and the rights of girls as an integral part of human rights. It acknowledges significant diversities of contexts, conditions and identification around the world, but it also notes the unifying importance of collaboration to achieve gender equality.

The Sustainable Development Goals, adopted by UN member states in 2015, provide a global framework of goals and targets for sustainable development. SDG 4, with which GPE 2020's vision is fully aligned, comprises seven targets that deal with quality and equality for different phases of education. These include target 4.5, which specifically supports gender equality linked with the distribution of educational access, and noting the needs of people with disabilities, indigenous peoples and vulnerable groups. Target

³⁸ GPE, *Annual Report on Implementation of GPE Gender Equality Strategy* (Washington, DC: GPE, 2018a).

4.7.1 ambitiously seeks to measure the extent to which global citizenship education and education for sustainable development, including gender equality and human rights, are mainstreamed at all levels in national education policies, curricula, teacher education and student assessment.

Adopted by the Education for All (EFA) community in October 2015, Education 2030 aligns with SDG 4 and comprises the Incheon Declaration and the Framework for Action for implementation of the SDGs with detailed statements about gender equality. It covers eliminating gender bias, discrimination and stereotyping in classrooms and throughout the education system; gender-sensitive policies and practices; and ensuring the personal safety of girls and women in education institutions.³⁹

Most recently, the 2018 G-7 meeting agreed to put gender concerns and the empowerment of women at the center of development assistance. These global public goods play an important normative role, presenting obligations to states, global organizations and civil society.

At the regional level, Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want focuses on gender equality through its aspiration 6, “An Africa whose development is people driven, relying on the potential of the African people, particularly its women and youth and caring for children.”⁴⁰ FAWE developed the Gender Equality Strategy for the Continental Educational Strategy for Africa (CESA) 2016-2025, which was adopted at a meeting of Pan-African ministers of education in Nairobi in April 2018 and has subsequently been endorsed at the political level.⁴¹ Finally, the ASEAN Declaration on Strengthening Education for Out-of-School Children and Youth, adopted in 2016, gives strong emphasis to the right to education for all children in ASEAN countries in Southeast Asia, stressing equity and inclusivity as key principles.

Funding streams

There has been generous funding recently for some facets of developing global public goods around gender equality and girls’ education. Significantly, the United Kingdom’s Department for International Development (DFID) Girls’ Education Challenge (GEC) was launched in 2011 with £355 million allocated to assist 1 million very poor girls to “improve their lives through education.”⁴² This first phase supported 37 projects with NGOs and the private sector across 18 countries in Africa and Asia. A significant monitoring and evaluation component yielded data on a large cohort of girls involved in the projects, comparing their learning outcomes with a randomized sample of girls who had not received interventions. A second phase was launched in June 2018 to “help keep marginalized girls in lower-income countries in school.”⁴³ In this phase, £187 million has been committed with a significant monitoring and evaluation component and a stronger focus on work with governments.

The Education Cannot Wait (ECW) fund, launched in 2016 as a dedicated fund to address education in emergencies and protracted crises, has a concern with gender, linked with a perspective on leave no one

³⁹ UNESCO, *Education 2030: Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action for the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 4* (Paris: UNESCO, 2015).

⁴⁰ African Union, *Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want. Framework Document* (Addis Ababa: African Union, 2014).

⁴¹ FAWE (Forum for African Women Educationalists). *Gender Equality Strategy for the Continental Education Strategy for Africa 2016-2025*. Nairobi: FAWE, 2018.

⁴² “Girls’ Education Challenge” (webpage), DFID 2014.

⁴³ Edwards, Sophie, “DFID Boosts Education Programme for Marginalised Girls,” Devex, June 11, 2018.

behind. A core function focuses on developing and sharing knowledge, including more robust data to make better-informed decisions.⁴⁴ ECW has a gender equality strategy that highlights the need to build capacity for work on gender equality in all partnerships, consider gender issues in all proposals and data collected, and consider how to connect gender-responsive and transformative initiatives.⁴⁵

The German BACKUP Initiative—Education in Africa is a government-funded initiative that has been supporting African countries in applying for or implementing GPE grants since 2011. BACKUP Education—BACKUP stands for Building Alliances, Creating Knowledge and Updating Partners—aims to provide flexible, rapid and targeted financial and technical support to countries to help them access international funding. Education ministries and civil society organizations in Africa are eligible to apply. BACKUP Education assistance can help local education partners with drafting and implementing their national education plans so that they can apply for GPE funding, or otherwise leverage GPE support.

The Sahel Women’s Empowerment and Demographic Dividend (SWEDD) project was initiated in 2015 by the World Bank and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) for Sahel countries. Nine countries, including Senegal, Guinea and Benin, will be part of the program by 2019. Interventions aim to slow population growth, develop primary and secondary education opportunities for women and girls, and support decent employment and good governance.

Research

There has been an increasing volume of qualitative and quantitative research studies on gender and education in recent years, taking forward earlier overviews by King and Hill (1992), Lewis and Lockheed (2007), and others. Four rigorous reviews of literature have been conducted.⁴⁶ All four attest to gaps in the coverage, although they deal with somewhat different areas.

A feature of the growing literature and research in this field is the increase in investigation into forms of gender inequalities that impact on *access* and *participation* in schooling; less scholarly attention has been given to work on interventions that work toward *gender equality* in education.⁴⁷ A rapid review in the ERIC database⁴⁸ of peer-reviewed published research on gender issues and education in GPE countries was conducted for this paper to provide a snapshot of work published in English over the past 10 years (2007-2018), with 315 studies identified. The majority of the studies (254) deal with how gender is a feature of inequalities and barriers to access, participation and attainment in schooling; a minority (61) deal with interventions to address these inequalities.

⁴⁴ Nicolai, Susan, et al., “Education Cannot Wait: Proposing a Fund for Education in Emergencies,” ODI, London, 2016.

⁴⁵ ECW, *ECW Gender Strategy 2018-2021: Advancing Gender in Education in Emergencies* (New York: ECW, 2018).

⁴⁶ Unterhalter et al. 2014; Sperling, Gene B. and Rebecca Winthrop, *What Works in Girls’ Education* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2015); Parkes, Jenny, et al., *A Rigorous Review of Global Research Evidence on Policy and Practice on School-Related Gender-Based Violence* (New York: UNICEF, 2016); Perezniето, Paola, Arran Magee, and Nora Fyles, *Evidence Review: Mitigating Threats to Girls’ Education in Conflict Affected Contexts. Current Practice* (New York: UNGEI and London: ODI, 2017).

⁴⁷ Unterhalter et al. 2014, 47.

⁴⁸ The Education Resources Information Center (ERIC) is an online digital library of education research and information sponsored by the Institute of Education Sciences of the U.S. Department of Education. It is the largest education database in the world, containing over 1.5 million records of journal articles, research reports, curriculum and teaching guides, conference papers, dissertations and theses, and books.

In 2015, Sperling and Winthrop identified a range of interventions that work in relation to enhancing education quality for girls.⁴⁹ The work indicates that for each of these selected interventions, fewer than 10 studies have been published in peer-reviewed literature in English between 2007 and 2018. On some interventions—notably female teacher recruitment and the provision of water and sanitation—there have been no studies included in this database. Actions identified for attention in ESPs for GPE countries rest on very few studies that provide evidence to support delivering on the targeted action, and virtually none deal with cost, efficiency and value for money.

No studies have been identified on how this targeted approach to particular interventions might link with system building and sustaining these changes both for the groups involved and for wider communities of practice. The World Bank's *World Development Report 2018*⁵⁰ noted a lack of gender analysis in a large number of education-related randomized controlled trials.

Data

The investment in research has expanded the range of data sets that can be mined. Key data sets comprise the information held by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, gathered from education management information systems and UNICEF's Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS), the comprehensive data on poverty and gender held by the World Bank and the work associated with a number of research programs. Of note is the Young Lives program, with waves of data following cohorts of children from birth through schooling in Ethiopia, India, Peru and Vietnam. Plan International has been running the Real Choices, Real Lives study, which follows the lives of 142 girls living in nine countries over their first 18 years.⁵¹ The study records the voices of girls describing their everyday lives and hopes. DFID's investment through the Raising Learning Outcomes research program and the range of research to be generated through the Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF) are supporting the emergence of large data sets to support further investigation and analysis in this area. Equal Measures 2030 is an independent partnership bringing together the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and Women Deliver with civil society actors, including Plan International, and the private sector, including KPMG. It seeks to connect data and evidence for advocacy and action, measuring progress for girls and women across all the SDGs, not only education; priority countries include two GPE countries, Kenya and Senegal, as well as Colombia, El Salvador, India and Indonesia.

Every year UNESCO publishes a Global Education Monitoring (GEM) Report that gathers and discusses a wide range of education data. A special annual Gender Review accompanies this. Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS), country reports and MICS data show the proportion of children out of school or not completing a full cycle by gender, socioeconomic status (SES), rural and urban location, or by district. At the level of country reporting, these data cannot be cross-tabulated, and it is difficult to find out the proportion of girls and boys from low SES bands or particular districts who do not complete school. However, in seven GPE countries (Albania, Djibouti, Eritrea, Georgia, Grenada, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and Uzbekistan) there has been no DHS or MICS study in the past 10 years.

⁴⁹ Sperling and Winthrop 2015.

⁵⁰ World Bank. *World Development Report 2018: Learning to Realize Education's Promise*. Washington, DC: World Bank, 2018.

⁵¹ The longitudinal study follows the lives of girls living in Benin, Brazil, Cambodia, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, the Philippines, Togo, Uganda and Vietnam.

Learning assessment surveys such as the Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA), Uwezo in East Africa, Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) in India and Pakistan, Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (SACMEQ) and Programme d'analyse des systèmes éducatifs de la CONFEMEN (PASEC) allow for an analysis of gender and some learning outcomes, although the reasons for the gender patterns have not been much investigated. The Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE) in Bangladesh produces an annual Education Watch Report. The 2017 report focused on ethics and values in education and contained survey questions on gender justice, norms and values.⁵²

The Population Council's portal Adolescent Data Hub provides data sets on adolescents in low- and middle-income countries drawing on cross-sectional and longitudinal data with 86 studies of girls and 250 of girls and boys, many relating to children in schools.⁵³

Tools

This section highlights a selection of recent tools. Tools that evaluate compliance with CEDAW, particularly with regard to education and violence, include a checklist that governments can use to determine whether they have legislation in place that delivers on CEDAW recommendations. Indicators were developed to review compliance with the text of CEDAW, Optional Protocol cases, and CEDAW Committee General Recommendations.⁵⁴ This is the most comprehensive toolkit for reviewing national legislation.

To review obligations by states to deliver on human rights in education, UN Special Rapporteur Katarina Tomasevski developed the "4-A" framework; it evaluates whether states are delivering on education that is "available, accessible, acceptable and adaptable." While attending to these nuances was intended to refine delivery on the right to education, there have been some critiques that the focus on rights-based approaches places states in a central position and is not able to consider gender and the 4 A's in conditions where there is no legitimate state or where gender is a highly contested category.⁵⁵

Gender audits have been developed as a form of social audit to assess the extent to which gender equality is effectively institutionalized mainly with regard to national governments, looking at the policies, programs, organizational structures and proceedings (including decision-making processes), and budgets. The European Institute for Gender Equality gives guidance on how to set up participatory gender audits, consider baseline information and review progress.⁵⁶ However, there appear to be very few reports on gender audits in schooling apart from initial assessments using these methods in Lao PDR and Nepal.⁵⁷ The Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL) guide on measuring women's and girls' empowerment

⁵² CAMPE, *Education Watch Report: Ethics and Values in School* (Dhaka, Bangladesh: CAMPE, 2017),

⁵³ "Adolescent Data Hub" (webpage), GIRL Center, Population Council,

⁵⁴ CEDAW, "Checklist: Indicators to Assess Legislative Compliance with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)," working draft, undated.

⁵⁵ See, for example, Kardam, Nuket, *Turkey's Engagement with Global Women's Human Rights* (London: Routledge, 2017); Ron-Balsera, Maria and Akanksha A. Marphatia, "Do Public Private Partnerships Fulfil the Right to Education? An Examination of the Role of Non-state Actors in Advancing Equity, Equality and Justice," in Robertson et al., eds., *Public Private Partnerships in Education* (Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elger Publishing, 2012).

⁵⁶ "Gender Audit" (webpage), European Institute for Gender Equality.

⁵⁷ Terry, Geraldine and Netta Thapa, *Gender Audit of Nepal's School Sector Reform Programme* (Cambridge, UK: DFID Human Development Resource Centre, 2012); Edwards, Jan and Mona Girgis, "Practical Lessons from Gender Audit of an Education Sector Plan in Lao PDR," *Development in Practice* 25, no. 5 (2015): 747-753.

in impact evaluations is a very useful compendium of insights, but it does not focus on the education sector.⁵⁸

GPE has generated a number of key tools to help countries develop education sector plans. In particular, working in partnership with UNGEI, it produced the *Guidance for Developing Gender-Responsive Education Sector Plans*, with in-depth training materials written in 2016-2017,⁵⁹ and a training manual under development. Three regional workshops were held in 2017 in Nepal, Tanzania and Togo, with further workshops planned for 2018-2019. There is considerable scope within KIX for building on the GRESP work, including cross-country learning, new modules on conflict-affected contexts, drawing on insights from within and beyond education ministries, and institutionalizing the approach.⁶⁰

A number of groups are working to support the development of the gender indicators for SDG 4.7, SDG 4a and a wider range of gender equality in education indicators. This includes UNGEI's work to develop a gender equality indicator for SDG 4, which was further developed by the UNESCO Global Education Monitoring Report and others.⁶¹ Additional work on this is currently ongoing and through a project supported under the DFID/ESRC raising learning outcomes research program. A number of other innovative measurement resources have been developed, with potential for adaptation in education.

The UN Statistics Division (UNSD) Minimum Set of Gender Indicators and World Bank Gender Data Portal provide data on gender inequality. The European Institute of Gender Equality (EIGE) launched a Gender Equality Index in 2013, which includes a knowledge domain, with two subdomains: one on attainment and one on participation. There is potential to expand this index to countries outside Europe. The Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI) has considerable implications for developing similarly robust measures in education. The Individual Deprivation Measure (IDM), based on surveys conducted in Fiji and the Philippines, aims to capture how poverty affects not just households but the individuals within them, and in this way is also able to measure the differences in how men and women experience poverty. It includes an educational component and has potential for use in investigating in education, and indicators about gender and broader social and economic contexts.

Equal Measures 2030 is a team of specialists working in collaboration with a number of international NGOs and foundations to evaluate "the progress being made (or lack thereof) to support calls for action to address data gaps and ensure that girls' and women's rights become and remain a priority on the development and policy agenda," with a particular focus on the SDGs.⁶² Equal Measures 2030 has surveyed views on the transparency and adequacy of the SDG gender indicators and aims to work to supplement official data with material from a range of sources. A key tool is the Equal Measures 2030 SDG Gender Index, which provides an up-to-date index on gender equality across all the SDGs.

⁵⁸ Glennerster, Rachel, Claire Walsh, and Lucia Diaz-Martin, *A Practical Guide to Measuring Women's and Girls' Empowerment in Impact Evaluations* (Cambridge, MA: J-PAL, 2018).

⁵⁹ GPE/UNGEI 2017.

⁶⁰ Fyles, Nora, "Gender-Responsive Education Sector Planning to Promote Inclusive and Quality Education for All." conference paper delivered at UKFIET conference, Oxford, September 2017.

⁶¹ Unterhalter, Elaine, "Measuring Gender Inequality and Equality in Education," concept paper for workshop "Beyond Parity: Measuring Gender Equality in Education," London, September 18-19, 2015; UNESCO, *Global Education Monitoring Report Gender Review: Creating Sustainable Futures for All* (Paris: UNESCO, 2016b); UNESCO, *Global Education Monitoring Report Gender Review: Meeting Our Commitments to Gender Equality in Education*.

⁶² "EM2030 SDG Gender Index," Equal Measures 2030, accessed February 22, 2018.

Plan International and CARE have both developed gender scorecards, the former's for use at the school level by practitioners and the latter's for use at the community level to enhance accountability. Experiences with using these have not yet been evaluated.

A training toolkit developed by Girls Not Brides with 100 young activists around the world was developed in 2018 to support young people campaigning to end child marriage. The organization developed a brief for policymakers with suggestions of how to integrate child marriage prevention and response interventions into education strategies. The toolkit gives examples of how and when these initiatives worked (for example, Ishraq program in Egypt, USAID's Let Girls Learn program) and some illustrative indicators that can be used in an ESP to measure progress on addressing child marriage, but links to wider work on gender and ESPs has not been conducted.

A number of other toolkits have been developed relating to gender and work in conflict or humanitarian disasters:

- *Minimum Standards for Mainstreaming Gender Equality*, produced by the Gender Practitioners Collaborative/Mercy Corps, and endorsed by 29 NGOs, including CARE⁶³
- *IASC Gender Handbook for Humanitarian Action and Guidelines for Integrating Gender-based Violence in Humanitarian Action/Education*, both produced by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee⁶⁴
- *Gender Equality In and Through Education: INEE Pocket Guide to Gender*, produced by the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE)⁶⁵ (currently being updated by the INEE Gender Task Team, co-convened by UNICEF and Care USA)

Gender budgeting toolkits⁶⁶ have been developed for a range of social sectors and EIGE gives details on how they have been used at different levels of government and the training and various institutional resources needed. They have been used in assessing budgets in nearly 60 countries, but they are not yet used much in education. Initial work on doing gender-sensitive budgets and looking at expenditures on women and men raised high expectations that this work would support more engaged equality policy implementation, but experience on this has been uneven, highlighting the importance of appreciating the conditions under which gender budgeting initiatives are attempted.⁶⁷

⁶³ Gender Practitioners Collaborative. *Minimum Standards for Mainstreaming Gender Equality*. Mercy Corps, 2014.

⁶⁴ IASC (Inter-Agency Standing Committee). *Gender Handbook for Humanitarian Action*. New York: ISAC, 2017; IASC. *Guidelines for Integrating Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action: Reducing Risk, Promoting Resilience, and Aiding Recovery*. New York: IASC, 2015.

⁶⁵ INEE (Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies). *Gender Equality In and Through Education: INEE Pocket Guide to Gender*. Geneva: INEE, 2010.

⁶⁶ "Methods and Tools," EIGE; Downes, Ronnie, Lisa. Von Trapp, and Scherie. Nicol, "Gender Budgeting in OECD Countries," *OECD Journal on Budgeting* 16, no. 3 (2017): 71-107; Budlender, Debbie, Rhonda Sharp, and Kerri Allen, *How to Do a Gender-Sensitive Budget Analysis: Contemporary Research and Practice* (Commonwealth Secretariat, 1998).

⁶⁷ Budlender, Debbie, "Expectations versus Realities in Gender-Responsive Budget Initiatives," in *Gender and Social Policy in a Global Context*, ed. Shahra Razavi, 322-39 (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006); O'Hagan, Angela "Favourable Conditions for the Adoption and Implementation of Gender Budgeting: Insights from Comparative Analysis," *Politica Economica* 31, no. 2 (2015): 233-52.

Guiding principles with regard to obligations on the right to education were adopted at a conference in Abidjan in March 2019, organized by the Right to Education Initiative. These guiding principles, adopted in consultations with human rights lawyers and civil society activists, set out substantial conditions that private schools, or governments allowing private schools, would have to meet with regard to nondiscrimination around gender and other inequalities in the public education system as a whole.⁶⁸

Networks, convening and coordination mechanisms

The key bodies that convene reflective discussion, primarily among practitioners and activists, are the Global Campaign for Education (GCE), which networks national education for all coalitions; FAWE; UNGEI; and the regional coordination group for West and Central Africa and its gender equality and inclusive education task team (GENIE). They draw on research, evidence and operational experience. AU/CIEFFA has been a specialized institution of the African Union since 2004, focusing on girls' and women's education. Its three focal areas are supporting rights of girls and women in schools and universities, gender-responsive curricula in schools and universities, and working for the retention of girls in schools. ANCEFA aims to promote, enable and strengthen the capacity of African civil society to advocate and campaign for Free Education For All. UNGEI has many projects working with partner governments and NGOs and trade unions on interventions around preventing SRGBV, enhancing local level projects for change and safeguarding, addressing problems such as exchanging sex for grades, supporting school transitions for adolescent girls and working on ESPs. Some opportunities for rigorous dialogue with communities of practice engaged with research, policy, practice and advocacy exist through a number of large international conferences, although this is limited. Networks for peer learning have been linked with SRGBV and gender-responsive education sector plans but are rudimentary in other areas.

The Global Working Group to End School-Related Gender-Based Violence, co-chaired by UNGEI and UNESCO in 2018, developed an action plan to raise awareness around the issue of SRGBV; encourage and promote national governments, donors and partners to provide the resources and leadership to end violence in schools; and develop a range of country-level interventions to support initiatives in this area. The focus is on implementing policy and legislation, strengthening prevention and response at the school level, and shifting social norms to encourage behavior change, as well as making investments to end violence in schools, generating and using evidence on how to effectively end violence in schools.⁶⁹

The Brookings Institution's annual Girls' Education Research and Policy Symposium highlights new research (both evidence and locally driven policy solutions) on girls' education, and provides space for dialogue among experts and practitioners in girls' education from around the world. Since 2012, the symposium has showcased the work of 27 Echidna Global Scholars who each spent six months in residency at Brookings and published papers on a girls' education policy issue and proposed solution.

CAMA, the alumnae association for girls who have graduated from CAMFED programs, is a network of young women from rural communities across Africa who use their education to benefit others. They are organized into national and local committees and use mobile technology to cascade knowledge.⁷⁰

⁶⁸ "FAQs on the 'Human Rights Guiding Principles on State Obligations Regarding Private Schools,'" 2018.

⁶⁹ "Global Working Group to End School-Related Gender-based Violence (SRGBV)," UNGEI.

⁷⁰ "Cama Alumnae: Young Women Leading Change," CAMFED.

The Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack was established in 2010 by organizations from the fields of education in emergencies, higher education, protection, and international human rights and international humanitarian law. Participating organizations are concerned about ongoing attacks on educational institutions, students and staff in countries affected by conflict and insecurity. The coalition has a gender working group and, as of 2018, is in the process of hiring staff and developing publications looking at gender aspects of education and conflict.

Global Girls' Alliance (GGA) was launched in 2018 with funding from the Obama Foundation. The network aims to link grassroots girls' education leaders/champions with the global girls' education community, ensuring local actors have access to resources such as knowledge, capacity building, connections and funding.

In April 2018, at the Commonwealth Summit, the U.K. government launched the Platform for Girls' Education to generate political will for providing education to girls. Toward this end, the United Kingdom committed £212 million in aid, aiming to support 1 million vulnerable girls in Commonwealth countries and ensuring they receive 12 years of quality education by 2030. The Platform for Girls' Education is made up of 12 influential figures from the Commonwealth, co-chaired by Amina Mohamed, the Kenyan cabinet secretary, with an aim "to drive forward the political momentum on girls' education [and] ... hold countries to account and champion best practice across the Commonwealth."⁷¹

Other ongoing campaigns relevant to gender equality and education include the global Safe to Learn campaign, initially conceived by members of the Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children (UNESCO, UNICEF, DFID and UNICEF), which seeks to work with governments, civil society organizations, communities, teachers and children to end violence in schools by 2024. UNESCO also recently launched a global comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) campaign, "A Foundation for Life and Love," which seeks to demystify and communicate the benefits of CSE for young people, with an emphasis on broader issues of relationships, gender, puberty, consent, and sexual and reproductive health.

In addition to these networks with a specific focus on gender or girls' and women's education, a number of networks in health and women's empowerment have considerable importance for helping to develop gender equality in education systems, but connections could be strengthened. These networks include Women Deliver, the Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID) and the Organisation of African First Ladies against HIV/AIDS (OAFLA).

The ways in which networks, expert groupings, and campaign alliances work and how effective they can be is always contingent on a range of processes. Plan International's work and research on gender in Lao PDR in 2014-2015 concluded that the ministry of education's structures and the siloed nature of gender expertise within the ministry was a key hindrance to greater uptake of gender equality. Engaging with institutions that may be difficult or resistant to change has been a key insight of the experience with gender mainstreaming within and beyond education.⁷² The potential of groupings sometimes termed

⁷¹ FCO, "Foreign Secretary Launches Platform for Girls' Education," April 20, 2018.

⁷² Unterhalter, Elaine and Amy North, "Assessing Gender Mainstreaming in the Education Sector: Depoliticised Technique or a Step Towards Women's Rights and Gender Equality?" *Compare* 40, no. 4 (July 2010): 389-404; Sweetman, Caroline, "Gender

“velvet triangles”—networks of feminist activists, gender-sensitive politicians and civil servants—have been shown to leverage change in some contexts, although work on this in education is still preliminary.⁷³

Innovations

As noted above, for the purpose of this report the term “innovation” is used to capture “the successful exploitation of new ideas that create value at scale and can apply to products, processes, strategies and approaches.” In GPE’s context, successful innovation is defined as the successful exploitation of a product, process, strategy or approach that alters the effectiveness of education systems.

The Population Council, with Echidna Giving, is currently analyzing the ecosystem for girls’ education, mapping policymakers, practitioners, researchers and advocates working in global girls’ education, and will provide a synthesis of what works and identify opportunities to scale up successful interventions and investments.

FAWE developed Gender Responsive Pedagogy (GRP) as an innovation to give teachers in African schools insight into gender issues, and to enable them to address the different learning needs of girls and boys. Introduced in 13 countries,⁷⁴ GRP gives attention to teacher education, supporting teachers in classrooms, learning materials, and school management. No published peer-reviewed studies are yet available on teachers’ experiences with these methods.

Some innovative projects are linked to advocacy and awareness-building campaigning, like the work of the ONE campaign, which frequently publishes blogs and videos to raise awareness of the SDGs, gender equality and girls’ education. Some highlight the potential to use mobile phone technology for the training of key professionals and supporting children’s learning,⁷⁵ or responding to reports of violence. For example, Childline Kenya was established in 2006 to help children to voice their concerns around child abuse, be listened to and be linked with services through a coordinated referral system. It was founded by Plan International, SOS Children’s Villages and the Kenya Alliance for the Advancement of Children (KAACR).⁷⁶

Other larger scale initiatives, like the Girls Education Challenge, a global funding window through DFID, sought to support interventions targeted at keeping girls in school and improving their educational outcomes. After collecting data on projects since 2012, GEC found that those focusing on a combination of factors were most successful in improving learning outcomes for girls and in catalyzing sustainable change. Projects that applied strategies such as engaging at all education sector levels from school

Mainstreaming: Changing the Course of Development?” in *The Routledge Handbook of Gender and Development*, ed. Amy Coles, Leslie Gray, and Janet Momsen, 48-58 (Abingdon-on-Thames, UK: Routledge, 2015).

⁷³Woodward, Alison. (2004). Building Velvet Triangles: Gender and Informal Governance; Unterhalter, Elaine, Amy North, and Orlanda Ward, “Accountability for Gender Equality,” UNESCO Gender Review background paper, UNESCO, Paris, 2018; Elaine Unterhalter and Amy. North, “Assessing Gender Mainstreaming in the Education Sector: Depoliticised Technique or a Step Towards Women’s Rights and Gender Equality?” *Compare* 40, no. 4 (July 2010): 389-404.

⁷⁴ Burkina Faso, Chad, Ethiopia, The Gambia, Guinea, Kenya, Malawi, Namibia, Rwanda, Senegal, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia.

⁷⁵ Winters, Niall, Martin, Oliver, and Laurenz Langer, “Can Mobile Health Training Meet the Challenge of ‘Measuring Better?’” *Comparative Education* 53, no. 1 (2017); Dorothea Kleine, *Technologies of Choice? ICTs, Development, and Capabilities Approach* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2013).

⁷⁶ Childline Kenya, <http://childlinekenya.co.ke/>.

governance to national policymakers created change across the system, including capacity building for teachers and leaders, implementing strong data collection strategies and recognizing the importance of including boys and men led to sustainable change.⁷⁷ The GEC analysis of 37 projects in 18 countries is one example of a synthesis of innovations in gender equality in and through education.

For specific innovations focusing on the intersection between gender equality in education through technology, DFID followed four projects within the GEC phase 1 that used technology to improve learning outcomes, attendance and leverage/sustainability. One such project from the GEC innovation window, MGCubed, implemented by Varkey Foundation in Ghana, provided maths and literacy lessons using an interactive distance learning platform, as well as life skills clubs targeting out-of-school girls. The lessons and after-school clubs are examples of how technology can support awareness raising and attitudinal change toward the importance of girls' education. Through giving access to girls' spaces and boys' spaces, as well as joint coed learning spaces where boys and girls talk about issues and interact with male and female role models, the technology accelerated their interactions and access to new ideas and skills for girls and boys in rural areas. Another example is the Tiphunzire Malawi project that organized Community Listening Clubs to promote gender equality and sexual and reproductive health, as well as the benefit for families to pursue and invest in their girls' education.

CAMFED, an NGO that supports girls' education, is one of the organizations implementing innovative approaches toward improving gender equality in education across various countries, providing long-term support to individual disadvantaged girls to enable them to enter and complete their schooling. CAMFED's Learner Guides program trains recent female graduates from its secondary school programs to return to their rural communities and teach using innovative curricula. The Learner Guide curriculum uses a student-centered pedagogy, teaching life skills such as resilience and goal-setting and future career planning. The classes are taught to over 120,000 secondary students in Ghana, Malawi, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.⁷⁸

These examples demonstrate strong solutions toward improving quality education through innovation. However, there has been little synthesis of innovations in gender equality in and through education other than that accomplished by GEC.

One of the goals of the consultation on this paper is to identify additional innovations in this area that have strong potential for scale-up, institutionalization and sustainability. More systematic analysis is needed of how these innovations are being—or could be—institutionalized at scale. Often programs and innovations are not aligned to systems or educational planning and are therefore not translated into country-led change.

⁷⁷ Girls' Education Challenge, *Steps to Success: Learning from the Girls' Education Challenge 2012-2017* (London: DFID, 2018a).

⁷⁸ Winthrop, Rebecca, "How Can We 'Leapfrog' Educational Outcomes?" *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, November 7, 2016.

6. Gaps in global goods

As highlighted earlier, the GEPS articulates the Global Partnership for Education’s commitment to increasing gender equality in access, participation and learning; improving gender equality in education systems; strengthening gender equality in education sector policy and planning processes; and ensuring robust commitment to gender equality across the partnership.

Despite the investment in policy architecture, intervention projects, research, data, tools and networking that promote achievement of these goals as described in section 4, many key gaps in relation to work on gender equality and education remain. These are reviewed in more detail below, but two key features stand out.

Project vs systems approaches

First, work on gender and education in the form of projects, research, tools and network building has proceeded largely so that issues relating to *access, participation and learning* are addressed piecemeal rather than strategically and holistically. As mentioned in section 2, girls’ education interventions in one particular area tend to be disconnected from others around gender and do not necessarily incorporate a methodology to resolve gender inequality throughout the system. Thus, a particular area of work—for example, girls dropping out of school, the prevalence of SRGBV, poor nutrition—is approached on its own through dedicated research or practice. Consequently, the vision of gender equality in education evident in global and national policy and advocacy is generally not mirrored in the research, data sets, tools or approach to convening. With the patchwork of research studies, it is difficult to see the interconnections between particular interventions, education system building and learning outcomes.

Research studies have tended to be written by scholars from the global north and sometimes exclusively for an academic rather than policy audience. Challenges also persist in accessing research—both peer-reviewed and “gray” literature—in a way that enables the global community and various national and local communities of practice to learn across countries and regions. The barriers to accessing and using research are particularly concerning for those whose work and lives center on the issue these studies address. They very often lack opportunities to consider and comment on which interventions succeeded, which did not, the reasons for this and what changes a professional, social or practice community could put into place to move forward systematically in response to these insights.

In the rapid review of ERIC database works published in English over the past 10 years (2007-2018) conducted for this study, there are 26 GPE countries for which there is no peer-reviewed research on gender inequalities in education and interventions to address them.⁷⁹ For 40 GPE countries, there is no peer-reviewed research on programmatic interventions around gender and education, though some studies do explore gender inequalities in education. Studies may be found in languages other than English on aspects of gender and education in these countries, possibly in gray literature, including project reports, but the lack of easy access to this material indicates a gap in global public goods.

⁷⁹ Thirteen countries in Africa, three in Asia, three in Central and Eastern Europe, five in South America and the Caribbean, and two in the Pacific Islands.

The rapid review of peer-reviewed research in ERIC showed that of the 61 GPE countries with published research on interventions, only five (Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Pakistan and Tanzania) have five or more studies on interventions published since 2007. More detailed assessments of these studies show that they cover a wide range of different kinds of intervention, as diverse as HIV prevention and improved learning in mathematics and reading. The corpus of published research on each country tends to cover many different regional contexts within each country, so there is no comprehensive view across the country or depth of knowledge within particular locations. Thus, even for the countries where the most research on interventions has been published in peer-reviewed literature, the picture is partial and incomplete.

There are also evidence gaps in how *systems* support interventions and how interventions may be facilitated or constrained by particular features of an education system, its institutions and their dynamic inter-relations across global, national and local contexts. One feature of this problem is, we still do not know what the packages of interventions and components of system building core to gender equality in education are, what features are optional, and whether particular ways of conducting interventions and system building are necessary and/or sufficient.

Enabling environment in context

A second problem is that we have an inadequate understanding of the *political, social, cultural and economic structures and norms* that impact “what works” in all areas. One feature of this is the lack of scholarship on particular GPE countries and what types of curriculum change, teacher education and support, particular styles of management and community engagement are most effective in different contexts. There are considerable gaps in understanding the capacity needs of these teachers, administrators and other key professionals. Another feature is sometimes delineated as the lack of political will to implement reform in this area, identified most sharply in critical reflections on difficulties with gender mainstreaming and how to effectively accomplish this.⁸⁰ There is no work to date on how different ideas about how political and economic structures, forms of governance, local social and cultural norms, system and capacity building, research utilization and perspectives on gender work together to affect differential education outcomes for girls and boys. Taking this forward may help us understand why some interventions may be better suited than others for scale-up and may help in working out how they can be sustained. To better understand how context affects gender equality in education interventions and their link with the education system, it will be necessary to analyze institutions, policies, financing, plans and budgets, monitoring indicators, roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of key institutional actors, and the relationships between them. This analysis regarding the role gender plays at every level in an education system still needs to be done.

Beyond the education system, deeper understanding of the success factors for enabling education ministries to work effectively across sectors with other government departments, such as ministries of gender, health and social welfare, is also needed.

The linkages between national policy dialogue on gender inequalities in the country and education system reform and how these could be strengthened also need further analysis.

⁸⁰ See, for example, Hannan, Carolyn, “Mainstreaming: Reflections on Implementation of the Strategy,” presentation at the seminar “Integrating Gender Equality into Development Co-operation,” Brussels, November 27-28, 2003..

Critical gaps in global goods

The critical gaps in global goods for gender equality in and through education fall into five categories: knowledge and evidence, tools, innovations, networking and learning exchange, and capacity building and peer learning.

Global goods gap 1: Knowledge and evidence

A strong knowledge base of the packages and combinations of investments on what works for girls' education, including in situations affected by fragility and conflict, is needed. This can include but not be limited to peer-reviewed research and work on capacity building for different key participants within governments, schools, communities and implementing partner organizations in order to effect change throughout multiple levels of the education system. This research can help gauge whether interventions need sequencing or gearing in particular ways to yield the largest gains in learning outcomes and what we know about planning and risk in the context of short-term and protracted crises. More in-depth knowledge is needed about how education capabilities are understood and acted on—for example, which kind of education outcomes, other than literacy and numeracy, are especially important for girls and boys from particular demographics and are associated with developing gender and other equalities. Additionally, understanding needs to be built among teachers, teacher trainers and education communities of the formation of masculine stereotypes, the gender dynamics in and around schools, the gender dimensions of boys' underachievement and disengagement from schooling, and the engagement of men and boys for supporting achievement of gender equality in education. Combining these areas of scholarship and linking them with interventions around girls' education and system building needs development in order to increase participation and learning achievement equally for girls and boys.

Understanding the effective methodologies for girls' education will require not only evidence on capacity building and on the interventions themselves, but also an historical and comparative analysis of countries that have achieved substantive gender equality and the role played in this by education systems, cross-sector collaborations and key agents. Evidence to sustain claims about the relationship of interventions in different forms (associated with changes in costs or pedagogic relationships), agents and systems needs to be built looking at both cross-country and cross-sector work through research using a range of methods, and through opportunities for learning exchange between countries. Key considerations to look at might be what resources are mobilized and how processes of political, economic and cultural change play out in relation to changing the education system.

Gender analysis is needed as part of national studies on gender inequalities in education and intersections with other dimensions of marginalization (for example, poverty, disability, rurality). These studies would investigate how particular political, economic, social and cultural structures work to reproduce inequalities and exclusion where gender intersects with injustices of poverty, racism and violence. Investigation is needed into the ways in which global processes, such as macro-economic strategies, migrations, geopolitical changes and technologies, impact on changing forms of power associated with gender inequalities in the countries within GPE. There are considerable gaps with regard to scholarship on many countries in GPE, in regard to global pressures, their regional and demographic diversities and how inequalities intersect. Building on the work of GRESP, case studies are needed of what countries in different regions have done to address common themes—including supporting adolescent girls in transition to secondary school; SRGBV; child marriage; and menstrual hygiene management—and of ways

to engage in cross-sectoral work within and beyond the education sector, involving areas such as health, criminal justice and nutrition. Comparative investigation of cases of working across sectors is needed to build understanding of systems, institutional and structural constraints, and success factors for enhancing interministerial coordination mechanisms to leverage results. Studies are also needed of how the existing frameworks build and sustain accountability (for example, SDGs, AU, ASEAN) and work, and what supports cross-country learning.

Monitoring of global and regional commitments on gender equality in education, including SDGs and the Gender Equality Strategy for CESA, requires conceptual work on indicators, and work to make better use of existing data sets. Much of the data used in ESPs have a stress on gender parity, which is still a major feature of work in the GEM Report, and monitoring frameworks under SDG 4. A dashboard with a wider range of indicators to measure gender equality needs to be developed. Similarly, more work is needed to support countries to integrate gender more comprehensively into their education sector analyses and ESPs, and to make use of existing data collection/analysis tools from outside the education sector, which go beyond GPI. The link between gender audits and gender evaluations needs further consideration in relation to the education sector, as do the ways in which gender budgeting and assessments of financial resources can support gender equality initiatives, currently the focus of a study led by UNGEI and the Malala Fund.

Global goods gap 2: Tools

While a large number of tools have been developed by different development actors, a challenge lies in national ownership and systematic uptake by partner developing countries. The existing tools—indicators, scorecards, gender budgeting—are useful, but they need to be understood in relation to system building, not as discrete tools.

GRESA has developed important tools, networks and spaces for critical reflection, but for optimal impact, gaps need to be assessed in terms of country participation, sustaining and supporting the learning to strengthen the impact for systems development at national and cross-national levels to institutionalize the approach.

At the same time, ways should be explored to enhance existing education sector analysis, planning, budgeting and management tools to better acknowledge and reflect gender issues. This would include standard tools central to system-level planning, such as simulation models.

Global goods gap 3: Innovations

When framing innovations in the context of products or approaches that have the potential for scalability, sustainability and leverage for change at the system level, few have had the power to transform gender roles and improve equitable education for large portions of underserved populations. Yet many smaller, promising innovations have had impact at a project level and demonstrate the important role that NGOs play in testing innovative ideas and contextualizing interventions to meet the needs of girls within specific communities. Notably, these include in-depth participatory reflection on innovations such as time-use

diaries,⁸¹ and approaches to apply guiding principles on human rights to assessing privatization of education⁸² and evaluating countries' performance with regard to equality⁸³ A number of innovations using ICT appear promising—for example, using mobile phone technologies for reporting the incidence of teacher absence or violence, initiatives in training and supporting community health workers using ICT—and the GEC ed-tech interventions may have potential for work with gender advocates and for changing gender equality in education at the system level. However, as stated in the GEC 2018 *Thematic Review: Education Technology*, “This work sits beyond the expertise of the education sector, and requires more joined up work within development agencies and across government departments.”⁸⁴ The acknowledgment of high levels of gender inequality associated with the ICT sector, however, needs consideration. There is a need to engage more holistically within the education sector, and invest in projects that have the ability to work across sectors and scale their models to make global impact.

The GEC 2018 review on technology in education studied successes and challenges of ed-tech interventions within its girls' education funding program. The review reports that technology alone does not impact positive outcomes in education, that it is most effective when a holistic approach is applied toward addressing challenges of marginalized girls.⁸⁵ Technology innovations can be the conduit for realizing change when combined with supportive features such as ensuring community buy-in, engaging stakeholders in data collection, ensuring ed-tech projects are context appropriate and the ability of innovations to develop systems and capacity.⁸⁶

Better access to data through the innovation of a comprehensive online repository/library of research (both peer reviewed and gray) on girls' education, gender equality in education, and gender and education would make a significant impact, particularly if it was designed to enable researchers to access material that sits behind journal pay walls.

Various smaller scale innovative projects demonstrate that important work is being done applying innovative solutions to gender equality challenges within education, especially for the most marginalized communities. However, significant challenges exist for scaling ed-tech girls' education projects. Challenges such as communities lacking necessary infrastructure and the lack of long-term integration for government ownership continue to stagnate progress. Additionally, many projects have been initiated to improve quality of learning, yet summaries of these projects have only focused on technological innovations in education, not specifically innovations for gender in education. The GEC seems to be one of the few studies that analyzes gender and education innovations, but only on smaller scale projects. There is a need for more comprehensive meta-analysis of what works in gender equality innovations to change social and behavioral norms at the local, national, and international system levels.

⁸¹ Marphatia, Akanksha A. and Rachel Moussié, “A Question of Gender Justice: Exploring the Linkages Between Women's Unpaid Care Work, Education, and Gender Equality,” *International Journal of Educational Development* 33, no. 6 (2013): 585-94.

⁸² For example, GI-ESCR, “Human Rights Guiding Principles on the Role of States and Non-state Actors in the Provision of Education,” concept and planning note, GI-ESCR, 2016.

⁸³ *Evaluation of UNESCO's Programme Interventions on Girls' and Women's Education*. IOS Evaluation Office. 2017

⁸⁴ GEC, *Thematic Review: Educational Technology* (GEC, 2018), 25.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 5.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 4.

Innovations that promote the participation of parents and communities, especially men and youth as change agents for gender equality in education, and seek to rebalance gender relations between men and women while disrupting harmful gender stereotypes can build buy-in and sustainability. Approaches that engage government, build on positive cultural values and promote awareness of positive discrimination should also be encouraged.

Global goods gap 4: Networking and learning exchange

Limited opportunities exist for developing country ministries of education and other relevant government agencies for convening and critical reflection on research, information and analysis relating to gender and girls' education. Although the large international and regional conferences have panels or streams on this, time is very limited. The biannual conference of the Gender and Education Association has a focus largely on G-7 countries and minimal engagement with developing countries. While periodic regional meetings of ministers of education and thematic conferences to review achievements take place and the networks listed above have projects and programs in this area, there is not one in-depth annual or biannual convening space that brings all the engagements in this area working at different levels together and works collectively on a specific theme related to system development. Arguments can be made for the pros and cons of a gender and education-focused gathering as opposed to mainstreaming gender in existing annual meetings. The experience to date suggests that while the latter continues to be important, it cannot substitute for the depth and insight generated by the former.

There is thus a need for building communities of practice among researchers, policymakers and practitioners, and LEG actors. A regional/global conference focused on gender equality and education, with working groups, for example, on girls' education interventions, or work with girls and boys modeled on the Global Working Group to end SRGBV, linked with key areas to look critically at research findings and gaps, operational constraints and technical challenges in specific policy areas, to share lessons and practices and formulate policy recommendations. Convening meetings where relationships of trust and dialogue enable probing deeply into problems that take different forms but are widely shared would also help build and share knowledge and practice across countries and across sectors, as well as stimulate local demand for more research.

Global goods gap 5: Capacity building and peer learning

At the international level, there is a small cadre of experts, but they are thinly spread and there are important knowledge and capacity gaps around the processes of institutionalization and their associated funding processes. For example, while the GPE Secretariat has a relatively large staff of 102, including staff with gender expertise, its dedicated gender staffing currently consists of one senior education specialist. Other key global agencies with a focus on gender equality in education that work with GPE on the sector analysis, planning and implementation, and the coordination work, are small. UNGEI, for example, has a small staff of four and a relatively limited budget. The UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) has only one gender expert. The GEM team has no specialist gender member; the work on the gender review is largely supported by short-term consultants. FAWE has a small staff. DFID has invested significantly in work in girls' education through the GEC; the program has helped create a community or practice linked to project delivery, but in the first phase, the work focused on the delivery of a range of interventions only through NGOs and other nonstate actors.

At the country level, there are similar limitations. Currently, there is no audit of the range of units and institutional structures responsible for gender mainstreaming, gender focal work or targeting in education ministries in GPE countries. There is limited knowledge of these structures/units and their level of budget, range of influence and decision-making, and the communities of practice that support them.

There are thus limited resources at the national and international levels for this work and limited opportunities for regional and issue-based workshops to share knowledge and experience.

7. Potential investment areas

GPE investments in achieving gender equality in and through education through the KIX mechanism need to prioritize efforts to address the challenges identified and consider the most strategic and practical ways of filling some of the key gaps in global goods outlined above. Critically, the investments need to align to the aims of GPE 2020 and GPE 2025 going forward as well as the GEPS, accelerate implementation of the six GEPS output areas and help DCPs deliver tangible gender equality results at the country level.

Using findings from the latest GPE results report to identify countries facing particularly acute gender challenges, including in areas affected by fragility and conflict, will provide a strong evidence base for geographical prioritization of more focused support, along with consideration of other key factors such as political economy, local champions, human and financial resources, and opportunities for working cross-sectorally. Given that nearly half of GPE DCPs are classified as countries affected by fragility and conflict, and many of these do not yet meet threshold levels of gender parity for completion at primary and lower secondary levels, these countries should be a key focus. Countries where boys are increasingly disengaging from education should also be considered for prioritized action and support.

Based on the gap analysis above, three areas for global goods investment emerge as key for addressing the challenges and gaps, in line with GPE's focus on education systems strengthening, unique comparative advantage linking global, regional and national actors, and advancing GPE's implementation of its Gender Equality Policy and Strategy through KIX going forward:

- On topics where there is **potential for a geographic focus**, there is a need to open opportunities for peer learning exchange, development of tools and capacity building for gender-responsive sector analysis, planning, budgeting and implementation.
- On topics where there are some examples of solutions, but more synthesis is needed to develop a solid evidence base, it is necessary to **build evidence and evaluation of what works**.
- On topics where there is a sufficient evidence base, there is a need to **build capacity through knowledge exchange, capacity development and learning exchange**.
- On topics where there is a need for new thinking and solutions, **innovations** are needed.

As outlined above, the paper has detailed what gender equality outcomes GPE is seeking to achieve, what the challenges are to achieving these outcomes, which global goods already exist that seek to address these challenges, and where gaps exist that GPE might invest in to help fill. While a number of global goods consider particular interventions on girls' education, GPE's model and comparative advantage lies in its focus on education *system* and supporting the "glue" that binds disparate elements of the system

together systematically into an organic whole. Directions for investment below are predicated on the GPE systems-driven model.

Broad thematic areas for investment

Potential broad thematic investments in each area are described below to spark discussion. As outlined above, prioritization, potentially geographical as well as thematic, will be essential. The consultation process has helped support this prioritization process.

Building evidence and evaluation of what works

As discussed in section 4, building the knowledge and evidence base for what works in girls' education and expanding the access to this data is an acknowledged gap in achieving gender equality in and through education. Therefore, the evidence base for policy at the national level can be strengthened through global and regional investments in understanding which packages of interventions for gender equality in education most effectively support the development of gender-responsive education systems. Potential activities in this area include a curated range of multi-country studies with comparative data allowing for investigation of the relationship of interventions and systems across a range of different regional contexts, including a focus on settings affected by fragility and conflict.

Holistic gender analysis, which looks at the gender equality picture of the whole country, with an emphasis on adolescent girls, including those with disabilities, should be encouraged. This should include analysis within the education sector itself and across other sectors, as well as the ways in which social/cultural norms and other dimensions of exclusion intersect with gender to create barriers that hold girls back, and negatively affect boys where relevant. An area to consider for KIX funding would be to support accessible research on gender equality in education in selected, prioritized partner developing countries.

More needs to be known about the ways in which identities of masculinity are formed, how these impact gender equality outcomes in education, and how these can be addressed through curriculum and other school-based interventions. Approaches that aim to effect shifts in gender dynamics and promote more positive gender-equal relations based on mutual respect between boys and girls could be further explored.

More evidence is needed on how global and regional gender commitments are being fulfilled, including through monitoring of specific SDG targets and monitoring of implementation of the Gender Equality Strategy for the Continental Education Strategy for Africa.

Multicountry case studies on how different countries in different contexts have addressed common gender themes, particularly those that impact adolescent girls—such as child marriage, early pregnancy, school-related gender-based violence, out-of-school children, conflict; which results could be developed and the lessons learned have been shared in policy-friendly formats to inform policy and practice at the country level.

Building capacity through knowledge exchange, capacity development and learning exchange

Knowledge exchange about experience of the GPE/UNGEI regional workshops to date and building on this work would be fruitful. Potential areas for investigation include documenting experience with GRESP and

in-country follow-up, its potential role in helping countries link interventions and systems, which key national gender issues can be addressed through ESPs and which are difficult to address using these arrangements, what supports and what limits work on GRESP, and what concrete steps are needed for taking the GRESP learning forward, including how it might further support intersectional approaches and cross-sectoral linkages to leverage impact. Capacity development of government stakeholders to investigate these issues is key. GPE partners have a key role to play in supporting in-country follow-up at the national level, linked into LEG dialogue and supporting institution building to lead on gender.

Avenues could be explored for developing global and regional platforms that promote leadership on gender, provide opportunities for critical reflection on gender-related research and evidence, and build demand for further analysis. Potential areas to investigate are national, regional and international gender and education conferences and workshops bringing together researchers, policymakers, practitioners and campaigns, private sector and civil society organizations, and new partners from other sectors. Online platforms should also be introduced as alternative, cost-effective, learning exchange spaces.

Furthermore, opportunities are needed for countries facing common gender-related challenges in specific complex thematic areas—such as child marriage, early pregnancy, SRGBV, HIV transmission, and menstrual hygiene management—to come together and share experiences, deepen their understanding, and inform policy and program reform. Ideally, these should support dialogue between technical units as well as finance, planning, policy and monitoring and evaluation departments, linking with civil society representatives and other LEG members as well as stakeholders from other sectors, to ensure multiple perspectives are reflected and the comparative advantage of the different constituencies is leveraged in an integrated approach.

Investigating the institutional linkages and connections that make for gender-responsive education sector planning would also deepen understanding of the social, cultural, political and economic connections between education administrators and local communities, civil society organizations, professional bodies, researchers and campaigners, nationally and regionally; the range of interventions and scale of work undertaken; and success factors for work across education and other sectors, particularly health, but also planning/finance, social protection/welfare, and infrastructure development.

In addition to capacity development for gender-responsive education sector planning, opportunities for supporting developing country partners to monitor implementation of their plans and strengthen accountability to deliver on their gender equality commitments could also be explored. Development of capacity to improve and implement a regional framework for monitoring implementation of the Gender Equality Strategy for CESA could be an example to consider.

Innovations

Options should be investigated for incentivizing innovation in gender equality interventions, including use of ICT, documenting good practices and showcasing successful results. A comprehensive online repository/library of research (both peer reviewed and gray) on girls' education, gender equality in education, and gender and education would make a significant impact, particularly if it was designed to enable researchers to access material that sits behind journal pay walls.

Community-led innovations that solve issues at the household level as well as in school would merit consideration. Identifying promising innovations and bringing countries that have piloted different approaches together to share their experiences and document lessons learned and potential for scale-up would be valuable. Building on existing tools to produce a practical methodology and criteria for assessing the potential for scale-up and linking to system change and sector planning would also help support countries move toward more holistic, joined-up approaches, and embed innovation into institutional reform.

Specific examples of investment areas

Based on the broad directions proposed above, some specific areas that link to GPE's comparative advantage and respond to the feedback received during the consultation process include the following:

1. ***Consideration of a geographic lens for supporting peer learning and exchange, development of tools, and capacity building for gender-responsive education sector analysis, planning, budgeting, implementation and monitoring for results, with a particular focus on Sub-Saharan Africa,***⁸⁷ where the GPE results report shows that achieving gender parity in completion rates at primary and secondary school remains challenging. Ten of the 14 countries below the threshold where girls are disadvantaged in primary level completion and 18 of the 22 countries where girls are disadvantaged in lower secondary level completion are in Sub-Saharan Africa. For boys, five of the seven countries where they are disadvantaged at primary level completion are in Sub-Saharan Africa; the picture is slightly different in lower secondary, with only three of the eight countries with boys' disadvantage at this level in Sub-Saharan Africa (see Figure A.1, annex A).

In addition to these evidence-driven criteria, the region has a strong normative framework that articulates gender equality commitments, including Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want as well as the Gender Equality Strategy for CESA 2016-2025, for which African Union countries will be held accountable, a potential game-changer for the continent. Importantly, the Nairobi Declaration commits member states to achieving gender equality through (a) rendering all aspects of the education system gender-sensitive, responsive and transformative; and (b) implementing the Gender Equality Strategy for CESA 2016-2025. No other region has such a powerful accountability mechanism at this point, and the Sub-Saharan Africa region will need considerable capacity development support to deliver on these commitments.

GPE support might include but not necessarily be limited to the following:

- Building on the GPE-UNGEI Guidance on Developing Gender-Responsive Education Sector Plans, the development of tools and guidelines for operationalizing the Gender Equality Strategy for CESA 2016-2025, such as conducting gender-responsive education sector analysis and gender audits of institutional gender capacity; gender budgeting and analysis; measuring and monitoring gender equality results; tools for settings affected by fragility and conflict
- Annual meetings, potentially piggybacking on the African Union Summits, for sharing experiences, peer learning and exchange on progress at the technical level

⁸⁷ Links to GEPS aim 3, output 3.

- High-level political dialogue forums, where recommendations/calls to action from the technical level are presented and commitments for tackling bottlenecks and accelerating progress are made

While these tools and forms of support would have a principally regional focus, their potential relevance and lessons learned would also be of value to a global audience.

2. ***Annual global conference to support development of a community of practice and knowledge sharing around gender equality in education system reform, centered on the global south.***⁸⁸ Noting the tendency for gender equality issues to be marginalized at academic conferences, where the focus tends to be on identities rather than on policy and practice, and the lack of opportunities for networking on gender, an annual global conference to support development of a community of practice and knowledge sharing on gender equality in and through education would be helpful.

It should be centered on the global south and provide opportunities for sharing locally generated research, review of new tools/guidelines/approaches and documentation of lessons learned on specific themes such as menstrual hygiene management, SRGBV, SRHR/CSE, early pregnancy, working across sectors and so on. Capacity development for regional researchers and institutions could also be included to strengthen the evidence base of “what works” for gender equality interventions in specific contexts—including those affected by fragility and conflict—in a cost-effective way that links to systemwide reform. This investment would be supported by knowledge management tools, including a website and documents repository, and linked/twinned with appropriate institutions for credibility and sustainability, with a view to expanding a cadre of local gender expertise. Linkages with work focused on Sub-Saharan Africa would be critical.

3. ***Analytical work on gender-responsiveness of education systems.***⁸⁹ As noted above, much work to date has focused on what works for girls’ education, but less on how different **specific interventions are linked to/lead to system level reform** for sustainable results. Analytical work is needed to ask why countries should invest in one area and not another, whether targeted or mainstreamed activities are more effective, which packages of investments generate the most powerful results on gender equality, how change happens, what are the success factors and relevant contextual elements, and what generalizable conclusions can be drawn. Research undertaken in health system reform and in the organizational change domain can provide useful models to suggest avenues for enquiry.

This analytical work could be usefully linked to the work of RISE (Research on Improving Systems of Education) and SABER (Systems Approach for Better Education Results), and inform the **development of a tool for measuring the gender-responsiveness of an education system**. The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) Gender Equality Index methodologies could also provide useful models. The analytical work could also consider how existing tools for analyzing the education sector could be made more gender-responsive. Linkages with related work on systems diagnostics under the equity and inclusion investment stream would leverage impact.

⁸⁸ Links to GEPS aim 4.

⁸⁹ Links to GEPS aim 2.

- 4. Development of metrics for measuring gender equality in and through education.**⁹⁰ CEDAW General Comment 36 provides the normative framework for focusing beyond parity in numbers to a broader focus on gender equality, not only *in* education but also *through* education. However, while the indexes for measuring gender parity are well established and sex-disaggregated data are increasingly collected in most EMIS systems as a matter of routine, much work remains to be done to develop a common metric for measuring gender equality. Gender equality is included under SDG 4.7.1,⁹¹ but this is currently ruled a tier 3 indicator. To move forward would involve building a community of practice to develop the conceptual framework, methodology and piloting of data gathering and analysis. Building consensus around one framework rather than a proliferation of options would also be an important value-add.
- 5. Cross-sectoral work to strengthen gender equality results.**⁹² Recognizing the challenge referenced above that many barriers to gender equality in education lie outside the education system, this investment stream would build on GPE work with the health sector and provide opportunities for reflection on successful examples of working across sectors to tackle such multifaceted gender-related such as child marriage, SRGBV, early pregnancy, HIV/AIDS and empowerment. These could lead to case studies of success factors for working across sectors, political economy and institutional arrangements factors, capacities, and financing, resulting in a set of guidelines for working across sectors, including with ministries of health, gender, protection, finance and planning and others. Additionally, the investment stream might support a longitudinal study following selected countries that have included multisectoral work for gender in their ESPs and documenting how this is implemented in practice, including challenges and how these were overcome.
- 6. Identification of innovations with potential for scale-up linked to system-level reform.**⁹³ As noted earlier, often innovations may be useful and produce benefits for specific beneficiaries in niche contexts, but they may remain as stand-alone interventions that are not scaled up or institutionalized into the system. This investment stream would seek (a) to identify promising innovations in high-impact thematic areas, such as shifting gender dynamics in relations between boys and girls, promoting girls' empowerment and leadership, and school-related gender-based violence; (b) to examine their suitability for scale-up and institutionalization; and (c) to identify cases where such innovations have been scaled up and incorporated into national and provincial policy/planning/budgeting, and what affected the success of such reforms. Conclusions could be drawn and documented in case studies on how the potential of innovations can be assessed, and factors that enable/hinder their take up into the broader system. Again, in addition to reflective reviews, longitudinal action research studies might be considered, which would document progress going forward, challenges and lessons learned.

⁹⁰ Links to GEPS aims 2 and 3.

⁹¹ "Extent to which (i) global citizenship education and (ii) education for sustainable development, including gender equality and human rights, are mainstreamed at all levels in: (a) national education policies, (b) curricula, (c) teacher education and (d) student assessments."

⁹² Links to GEPS aims 1, 2, 3; output 4.

⁹³ Links to GEPS aims 1 and 2.

Building inter-linkages and synergies between the funding streams with other KIX thematic areas and with GPE's country-facing work will be essential for optimal impact. Investments can be prioritized and sequenced, based on availability of funding and partner interest/capacity to implement.

The KIX initiative seeks to support holistic, systemic approaches to address the key barriers that hold girls and boys back from fulfilling their potential, and tackle some of the cross-sectoral issues that need to be addressed, such as child marriage, SRGBV, comprehensive sexuality education, nutrition and contraception. Success will be when each girl and boy is able to get into school, stay in school, stay healthy and safe, and learn the skills to claim their rights and participate fully in social, economic and political life, benefiting not only themselves and their families but the whole of society.

Critical is the inclusion of the empowerment dimension, which moves the discourse beyond girls and women as recipients of services and beneficiaries of protection to the framing of girls and women as equal agents of change and drivers of development in their own right.

Examples of activities that could be supported through KIX

Table 2 shows exemplar activities that could be funded by KIX thematic funding for achieving gender equality in and through education in the potential investments just discussed. The dotted lines between the exemplar activities indicate that a recipient of KIX funding could potentially propose a project that covers multiple investments or opportunities.

Table 2: Areas of KIX Investment and Exemplar Activities

Areas of Investment	Opportunities/Exemplar Activities			
	Increase gender equality in access, participation, and learning achievement for all girls and boys	Improve gender equality in education systems	Strengthen gender equality in education sector legal frameworks, policy, and planning processes	Ensure robust execution of commitment to gender equality across the Global Partnership
Geographic Focus	<p>-Annual meetings, potentially piggy-backing on the African Union Summits, for sharing experiences, peer learning and exchange on progress at technical level</p>	<p>-High-level political dialogue forums, where recommendations/calls to action from the technical level are presented and commitments for tackling bottlenecks and accelerating progress are made</p> <p>-Development of tools and guidelines for conducting gender-responsive education sector analysis and gender audits; gender budgeting and analysis; measuring and monitoring gender equality results, building on the GPE-UNGEI GRESP Guidelines</p>	<p>- Consideration of a geographic lens for supporting peer learning and exchange, development of tools, and capacity building for gender-responsive education sector analysis, planning, budgeting, implementation, and monitoring for results, with a particular focus on sub-Saharan Africa</p> <p>-Building on GRESP, developing tools for operationalizing the gender equality strategy for CESA, conducting gender responsive education sector analysis, gender budgeting, measuring results, and tools for settings in conflict</p>	<p>-Annual global conference to support development of a community of practice and knowledge sharing centered on the global south.</p> <p>- Provide opportunities for sharing locally-generated research, documentation of lessons learned on specific themes such as MHM, SRGBV, SRHR/CSE, early pregnancy, working across sectors etc.</p> <p>- Supporting investment in sharing research by knowledge management tools including a website, documents repository, and linked/twinned with appropriate institutions for credibility and sustainability.</p>

<p>Build capacity through knowledge exchange and learning exchange</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Capacity development for regional researchers and institutions to strengthen the evidence base for 'what works' for gender equality interventions in specific contexts - including those affected by fragility and conflict - in a cost-effective way that links to system-wide reform - Opportunities for countries to share knowledge on common themes such as child marriage, early pregnancy, and SRGBV 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Documenting experience with GRESP and potentially helping countries link interventions and systems, where gender issues can be addressed through ESPs -National, regional and international gender and education conferences/workshops as well as online platforms for learning exchange (bringing all partners together) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Taking the GRESP regional workshops forward through investigating what supports or limits GRESP and investigating how GRESP can support cross-sectoral linkages - Further knowledge exchange on gender-responsive education sector planning and monitoring of these plans - Investigating the institutional linkages to make gender-responsive education sector planning possible with other sectors; i.e. health, planning/finance, social protection/welfare, and infrastructure development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - GPE partners have a key role to play in supporting in-country follow-up at the national level, linked into LEG dialogue and supporting institution building to lead on gender -Capacity development of government stakeholders (making cross-sectoral linkages to leverage impact) - Developing global and regional platforms on gender that promote leadership and provide opportunity for reflection on gender-related research and evidence - Opportunities for supporting developing country partners to monitor implementation of their plans and strengthen accountability to deliver on their gender equality commitments
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<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Building evidence and evaluation of what works</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Need for building evidence on how identities of masculinity are formed and how they can be addressed through education (curriculum and school-based interventions) - Approaches that aim to effect shifts in gender dynamics and promote more positive gender-equal relations -Case studies of success factors for working across sectors, political economy and institutional arrangements factors, capacities, and financing, resulting in a set of guidelines for working across sectors, including with ministries of health, gender, protection, finance and planning and others (successful examples of working across sectors to tackle such multifaceted gender-related such as child marriage, SRGBV, early pregnancy, HIV/AIDS and empowerment) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Investment in understanding which packages of interventions effectively support development of gender-responsive education systems -Analytical work on gender-responsiveness of education systems (specific interventions are linked to/lead to system level reform, which packages of investments generate the most powerful results) - Development of a tool for measuring the gender-responsiveness of an education system (building on work of RISE and SABER) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Holistic gender analysis of gender equality in a country (emphasizing adolescent girls, including those with disabilities), analysis within the education sector, and across other sectors - Accessible research on gender equality in education in prioritized developing countries - Cross-sectoral work to strengthen gender equality results (supporting a longitudinal study following selected countries that have included multisectoral work for gender in their ESPs and documenting how this is implemented in practice, including challenges and how these were overcome) -Development of common metrics for measuring gender equality in and through education. (building a community of practice to develop the conceptual framework, methodology and piloting of data gathering and analysis) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Evidence on global and regional gender commitments; monitoring of SDG targets and implementation of Gender Equality Strategy for CESA - Multi-country studies on how countries have addressed common gender themes (particular attention to themes impacting adolescent girls, i.e. child marriage, early pregnancy, SRGBV, out of school children, and conflict) to inform policy and practice at country level -Annual meetings, potentially piggy-backing on the African Union Summits, for sharing experiences, peer learning and exchange on progress at technical level, with recommendations/calls to action presented at a high-level political dialogue forum. - Building inter-linkages and synergies between the funding streams with other KIX thematic areas and with GPE’s country-facing work
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Innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Incentivize gender inequality innovations, including around the use of ICT, documenting good practices, and showcasing successful results -Community-led innovations that solve issues at the household level as well as in school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identification of innovations with potential for scale up linked to system-level reform and institutionalization; innovations have been scaled up or incorporated into national or provincial policy, and what affected the success of such reforms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Investment in gender mainstreaming - Building on existing tools to produce a practical methodology and criteria for assessing the potential for scale-up and linking to system change and sector planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bringing together countries that have piloted innovations to share experiences and scale up interventions is a potential way to encourage innovation in this area
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Annex A. GPE fact sheet on gender equality

GPE invests heavily in education sector planning, providing partner developing countries grants of up to US\$500,000 to prepare ESPs based on evidence and data. Once these plans are endorsed, GPE offers countries large-scale implementation grants (ESPIGs) up to a maximum of US\$100 million. A stocktake of 42 GPE DCPs (ESPs and ESPIGs) and 10 countries (in-depth analysis, ESAs and Action Plans) on how GPE partner countries are addressing gender issues in their education plans shows that nine countries/states had a specific educational strategy for girls' participation in education or a national gender strategy, eight countries/states planned to develop one, and 15 did not fund any specific strategy for girls' participation in education.⁹⁴ Thirteen countries had not integrated gender-disaggregated indicators for primary education in ESP monitoring and evaluation frameworks, and a further four for secondary education. Funded strategies are related as much to removing barriers in access as to improving supply, including environment. Some countries use GPE funding for institutional strategies, such as the development of a national policy on gender or girls' participation in education, the establishment of gender focal points in ministries or the introduction of a gender-based approach in statistical data collection.

GPE's Gender Equality Policy and Strategy

GPE's gender equality goals are elaborated in GPE's *Gender Equality Policy and Strategy 2016-2020*, which is fully aligned with the goals and objectives of GPE 2020, SDG 4 and Education 2030. The policy aims to: (1) Increase gender equality in access, participation and learning for all girls and boys, (2) improve gender equality in education systems, (3) strengthen gender equality in education sector policy and planning processes, and (4) ensure robust execution of commitment to gender equality across the Partnership.

The policy is predicated on mutually reinforcing approaches: (1) both mainstreaming and targeted approaches, (2) attention to multiple inequalities to reach the most disadvantaged girls and boys, (3) responsiveness to varying country contexts, (4) use of strong evidence and country-level data, (5) allocation of sufficient human and financial resources, and (6) appropriate competencies and capacity.

To achieve the policy goals, six output areas are prioritized: (1) mainstreaming gender equality into GPE operations and frameworks; (2) strengthening capacity of Secretariat, Board, and Committees to lead on gender equality; (3) building south-south capacity in gender-responsive sector analysis, planning and implementation; (4) coordinating across sectors to advance gender equality in education; (5) monitoring and reporting on gender equality results; (6) supporting knowledge production, exchange and management on gender equality.

The gender equality pillar of KIX will particularly address the more outward facing output areas of the strategy, namely outputs 3, 4 and 6 on sector planning, cross-sectoral coordination, and knowledge generation, curation and mobilization respectively.

⁹⁴ GPE 2017a.

Key results

Three GPE results framework indicators are related to gender equity:

- *Indicator 5.* Proportion of GPE DCPs within set thresholds for gender parity index of completion rates for: (a) primary education, (b) lower secondary education
- *Indicator 8.* Gender parity index of out-of-school rate for: (a) primary education, (b) lower secondary education
- *Indicator 16.c.* Proportion of ESPs/TEPs with a strategy to respond to marginalized groups who meet quality standards (including gender, disability, and other context-relevant dimensions)

Baseline data for indicator 5 indicates 62 percent of DCPs have gender parity levels within the defined thresholds for primary education, with 54 percent of countries affected by fragility and conflict (FCACs) meeting this indicator. The milestones for 2017 were 65 percent of DCPs overall and 55 percent of FCACs. The DCPs exceeded the milestones for 2017 for this indicator, with 66 percent of DCPs overall having gender parity levels within the thresholds (57 percent in FCACs).

For lower secondary education, the baseline for indicator 5 was 49 percent of DCPs overall and 36 percent of FCACs. The milestones for 2017 were 56 percent of DCPs overall and 38 percent of FCACs. The GPI for FCACs increased to 39 percent, exceeding the milestone; however, for DCPs overall the GPI fell short of the milestone at 51 percent.

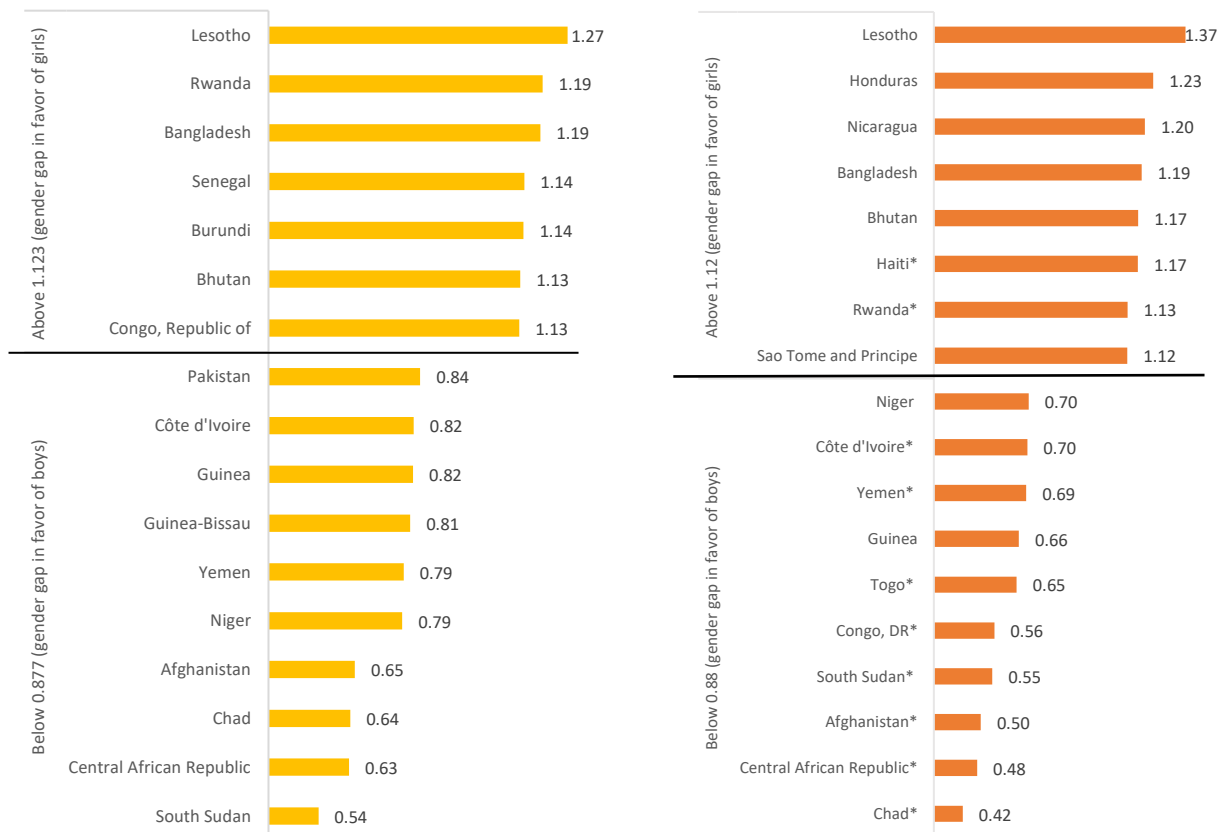
Figure A.1 shows the GPE countries with the highest levels of gender inequality in primary and lower secondary completion rates.

For indicator 8, the baseline GPI of out-of-school rate for primary education for all DCPs was 1.27, which increased to 1.30 by 2017, and so did not meet the target of 1.25. Similarly, for FCACs, the baseline GPI was 1.34; by 2017 the rate had increased to 1.40, not meeting the milestone of 1.32.

For lower secondary education, the baseline for all DCPs was 1.12 and the GPI decreased to 1.08 in 2017, meeting the milestone of 1.09. For FCACs, the baseline was 1.19 and the GPI in 2017 was 1.14, meeting the milestone of 1.15.

For indicator 16.c, 68 percent of ESPs and TEPs met at least four out of five quality standards at baseline, which includes 63 percent of ESPs and 100 percent of TEPs. The target is for all ESPs and TEPs to meet this indicator by 2020.

Figure A.1: GPE countries with the highest levels of gender inequality in primary (left) and lower secondary completion rates (right), 2015. In a majority of countries, gender inequality is in favor of boys.†



Source: GPE, *Results Report 2018* (Washington, DC: GPE, 2018).

* Fragile and conflict-affected context (FCAC)

† GPE, *Girls' Education and Gender in Education Sector Plans and GPE-funded Programs* (Washington, DC: GPE, 2017).

Annex B. Global and regional frameworks

Global frameworks

Sustainable Development Goals

The SDGs provide a global framework of goals and targets for sustainable development. SDG 4 comprises seven targets that deal with quality and equality for different phases of education. The first three targets aim to ensure all children and adults, irrespective of gender, access quality education from early years through primary and secondary school to technical and university levels. Target 4.4 is concerned with enhancing skills for youth and adults linked to work, stressing gender equality in this process. Target 4.5 aims to support gender equality linked with the distribution of educational access, and noting the needs of people with disabilities, indigenous peoples and vulnerable groups. Target 4.6 aims to ensure literacy and numeracy for all youth and substantially reduce adult illiteracy for men and women. Target 4.7 is the only target that deals with the content of education, aiming to develop knowledge and skills for sustainable development, human rights, gender equality and cultures of peace and nonviolence.

Three additional targets (4A, 4B, 4C) set out the means of implementation of the quality and equality targets. Target 4A aims to build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive, providing safe, inclusive and effective learning environments. There is no special mention of gender in target 4B, which aims to increase the number of higher education scholarships, nor in target 4C, which aims to increase the supply of qualified teachers.

Indicators for these targets have been classified as tier 1, 2 and 3, highlighting whether an accepted methodology and data in all or some countries are available.⁹⁵ Out of 25 indicators for SDG 4, only two are classified as tier 1, the participation rate in organized learning one year before entry into primary school and the amount of official development assistance spent on higher education scholarships. While the tier 2 indicators already have an accepted methodology, the challenge is how to increase the number of countries with available data. The large number of tier 3 indicators, many linked with facets of gender equality, open a terrain for discussion of how to link the process of developing indicators for the SDGs to the needs of establishing an information base for education system building linked to the needs of countries in GPE.

Important support for gender equality and girls' education is evident in other SDGs—notably SDG 5 on gender equality, SDG 3 on health and a number of SDGs that deal with women's economic activity.⁹⁶ Work still needs to be done among education policy actors on enhancing engagement with communities of practice for the other SDGs.

⁹⁵ UN Statistical Commission. "Tier Classification for Global SDG Indicators." UN Statistical Commission, New York, 2018.

⁹⁶ UN Women, *Turning Promises into Action: Gender Equality in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (New York: UN Women, 2018).

Education 2030

Adopted by the Education for All (EFA) community in October 2015, Education 2030 comprises the Incheon Declaration and the Framework for Action for implementation of the SDGs, with detailed statements about gender equality:

To ensure gender equality, education systems must act explicitly to eliminate gender bias and discrimination resulting from social and cultural attitudes and practices and economic status. Governments and partners need to put in place gender-sensitive policies, planning and learning environments; mainstream gender issues in teacher training and curricula monitoring processes, and eliminate gender-based discrimination and violence in education institutions to ensure that teaching and learning have an equal impact on girls and boys, women and men, and to eliminate gender stereotypes and advance gender equality. Special measures should be put in place to ensure the personal security of girls and women in education institutions and on the journey to and from them, in all situations but in particular during conflict and crises.⁹⁷

In 2015, governments attending a United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) meeting issued a strong statement against school-related gender-based violence. This has helped guide country actions in this area and supported the development of global guidance on indicator frameworks that connect with targets in SDG 4 and 5.⁹⁸

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women

Since the adoption of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women by the United Nations General Assembly in 1979, a range of statements have been affirmed by governments setting out commitments to gender equality in education. Some have formal processes for review (for example, CEDAW), while others build accountability through indicators and pledging commitments. Most recently, for example, the 2018 Group of Seven meeting agreed to put gender concerns and the empowerment of women at the center of development assistance. These global public goods play an important normative role, presenting obligations to states, global organizations and civil society. General Recommendation 36 highlights a human rights framework for education, which is focused on equal rights *to, within and through* education.

The CEDAW review process is linked to these policy frameworks and provides opportunities for states and civil society to review progress on an established cycle.⁹⁹ CEDAW reviews are subject to global scrutiny through discussions at the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in New York every year. However, CEDAW reviews and the review process, like those associated with the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), are currently resources that are largely untapped in relation to building an evidence base to support policy for countries in GPE.

⁹⁷ UNESCO, *Education 2030* 2015.

⁹⁸ UNESCO, *Global Guidance on Addressing School-Related Gender-Based Violence* (Paris: UNESCO, 2016).

⁹⁹ "Simplified Reporting Procedure," CEDAW, OHCHR, 2018.

Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action from the World Conference on Women, 1995

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action from the World Conference on Women in 1995 reaffirmed the centrality of women's rights and the rights of girls as an integral part of human rights. It acknowledges significant diversities of contexts, conditions, and identification around the world, but it also notes the unifying importance of collaboration to achieve gender equality. The Platform of Action sets out strategic objectives to address access of women and girls to education at all levels, the eradication of illiteracy and developing approaches to counter discrimination. It emphasizes the importance of allocating sufficient resources and monitoring these. A specific objective focuses on identifying the needs of girls, eliminating discrimination with regard to their education, and protecting them from violence. The Platform of Action gave policy attention to gender mainstreaming as a key strategy institutions could adopt to remedy lack of attention to girls' and women's rights, and seek to transform institutional practices to support forms of gender equality that were able to redistribute of goods, services and opportunities; recognize and protect women's rights; and enhance women's participation in decision making. In 2020, an appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action will take place at the CSW. It will also review the SDGs through national and regional processes.

Commonwealth, Platform for Girls' Education

In April 2018, at the Commonwealth Summit, the U.K. government launched the Platform for Girls' Education, providing £212 million in U.K. aid money aiming to support 1 million vulnerable girls in Commonwealth countries, and ensuring they receive 12 years of quality education by 2030. The Platform for Girls' Education is made up of 12 influential figures from the Commonwealth, co-chaired by Amina Mohamed, the Kenyan cabinet secretary, with an aim "to drive forward the political momentum on girls' education [and] ... hold countries to account and champion best practice across the Commonwealth."¹⁰⁰

G-7, Charlevoix Declaration

In the Charlevoix Declaration of June 2018, the G-7 governments committed to concrete actions to drive "positive change" in international assistance, including "making gender equality central to development cooperation." They placed central emphasis on "unlocking the power of adolescent girls for sustainable development" and "adopting integrated approaches to address the multiple barriers to their full empowerment and rights as human beings."¹⁰¹ Gender equality in humanitarian work was stressed, as was strengthening protection against aspects of gender-based violence. The declaration focuses on local solutions, inclusivity and engaging women and girls. Specific actions identified are:

- Supporting the development of "accessible, market-based skills training and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)" to increase opportunities for women beyond lower-skilled jobs, enhancing access into high-growth, higher-wage sectors where women are underrepresented, particularly in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).
- Supporting work on SDG 4, 5 and 8 statistical communities to improve "the collection, monitoring, analysis, publication and reporting of progress in girls' and women's education participation, completion and learning, training and youth employment."

¹⁰⁰ FCO, "Foreign Secretary Launches Platform for Girls' Education."

¹⁰¹ G-7, "G7 Development Ministers' Meeting Focus on Empowering Women and Girls."

- Encouraging specific measures for girls' education in the education sector plans of development partners, giving attention to work on anticipating crisis and conflict situations.
- Supporting innovative delivery of accredited, quality, nonformal and accelerated learning programs to vulnerable and hard to reach groups.
- Supporting developing countries in work to provide equal opportunities for girls and women to complete at least 12 years of quality education, including learning basic literacy and numeracy skills; supporting efforts to promote gender equality in education systems; and capacity building throughout the education sector, particularly in teacher training and the recruitment and retention of women and men as qualified teachers with decent pay.
- Supporting gender-sensitive curricula and learning materials "that meet quality education standards and promote learning," and health-care education that enables adolescents to avoid sexual risks and prevents early pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases.
- Supporting access and participation for vulnerable groups such as girls with disabilities.
- Working with teachers and communities to eliminate SRGBV, supporting investments to make schools and transport to school safe and secure.¹⁰²

From the above, it can be seen that there is no shortage of policy commitments for girls' education and gender equality in education. However, work needs to be done to link these policy texts with appropriate indicators and monitoring mechanisms to fully capture some of the many meanings of gender equality in education and appreciate some of the diversity of sites in which policy is realized.

Regional frameworks

Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want and Gender Equality Strategy for the Continental Strategy for Africa (CESA) 2016-2025

Agenda 2063, developed in 2013 through the African Union (AU), set out a strategic vision and framework for Africa's socioeconomic transformation over 50 years, to become "an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in international arena."¹⁰³ The first 10-year plan established seven aspirations for enhancing growth, political unity, good governance, peace and expanding Africa's influence in world affairs. Targets associated with these aim to build "a continent where the full potential of women and youth, boys and girls are realized, and with freedom from fear, disease and want." Aspiration 6 specifically focuses on gender equality, education, and youth; it aspires to achieve "an Africa whose development is people driven, relying on the potential of the African people, particularly its women and youth and caring for children."¹⁰⁴ Relevant targets focusing on gender equality in and through education addressing the employment crisis and the multidimensionality of poverty and inequalities include ensuring gender equality is embedded in all spheres of life, including public administration at management and other levels; eliminating all acts of violence against women and girls in all settings; and ending all harmful social norms and customary practices against women and girls, among others.

National policies and programs for gender equality and women's empowerment, regional harmonization, and expansion of education and skills training are outlined, together with domestication and full

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ African Union, *Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want*.

¹⁰⁴ African Union, *Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want. Framework Document*.

implementation of CEDAW, the African Charter of Human and Peoples' Rights, the AU Solemn Declaration on Gender, African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, African Youth Charter, and Plan of Action Toward an Africa Fit for Children.

Approaches to be used include gender budgeting, the development of a gender database on wealth and income distribution, directing funds to support the empowerment of Women and Youth Continental, a High-Level Panel on the Empowerment of Women, a Continental Gender Observatory, a Gender Centre of Excellence in the African Union Commission (AUC)/New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), an Africa Gender Parity Index for tracking progress, comparative research on countries that have elimination/reduction of all forms of violence against women and girls, and strategies to protect and assist women and girls in conflict situations.

The Nairobi Declaration of April 2018, endorsed by ministers of education of AU member countries attending the Pan-African Conference on Education in April 2018, affirmed a vision for "educational transformation" to meet the commitments of the Agenda 2063 and the SDGs. Commitments included implementation of the Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA 2016-2025), aimed at reorienting Africa's education and training systems, gender equality included, making "all aspects of the education system gender-sensitive, responsive, and transformative," and implementing the Gender Equality Strategy of CESA, which calls for harmonized indicators to measure progress. The Nairobi Declaration also calls for providing adolescents and young people with sexuality education in schools and tertiary institutions.

ASEAN Declaration on Strengthening Education for Out-of-School Children and Youth

Adopted in 2016, the ASEAN Declaration gives strong emphasis to the right to education for all children in ASEAN countries in Southeast Asia, stressing equity and inclusivity as key principles. The declaration committed to policies and programs that would support "the eradication of poverty, including social protection systems to help the poor," reduction of school fees and related costs for children and youth, incentives for girls and boys to complete free primary and secondary schooling, including flexible learning strategies, and capacity-building programs for teachers and administrators to equip them to meet the needs of out-of-school children.

Annex C. Countries in GPE for which there are peer-reviewed studies (2007-2018) in the ERIC database on effective interventions identified by Sperling & Winthrop (2015)

Country	No. of interventions	Awareness-raising campaigns	Female teacher recruitment	Incentives (cash/kind)	Gender-sensitive curriculum	Gender training for teachers	Work on violence	Water Sanitation	Other
Middle East									
Afghanistan	1					1			
Yemen	2			1					1
Africa									
Djibouti	1			1					
Ethiopia	1								1
Gambia, The	2			1			1		
Ghana	5								5
Kenya	6						1		5
Liberia	2			1			1		
Malawi	1								1
Mali	2								2
Nigeria	6				1	1			5
Senegal	1								1
Sierra Leone	1			1					
South Sudan	1						1		
Sudan	1						1		
Tanzania	5	1				1			4
Zambia	3				1				2

Asia									
Bangladesh	3			1					2
Cambodia	1								1
Nepal	2	1			1				1
Pakistan	9			1	1		1		8
Vietnam	2				1				2
South America & Caribbean									
Honduras	3				3	3			
Total	61	2		7	8	6	6		41

Focus of “other” initiatives captured: sexual and reproductive health, including menstrual health management, health education and promotion, literacy, reaching out-of-school girls, flexible delivery models, life skills, human rights education, listening to girls’ voices