

**LOCAL EDUCATION GROUP MINIMUM STANDARDS AND TOOLKIT PROCESS NOTE:
REPORT FROM THE STRATEGY AND POLICY COMMITTEE**

For Information

Please note: Board papers are deliberative in nature and, in accordance with the GPE Transparency Policy, are not public documents until the Board has considered them at the Board meeting.

1. STRATEGIC PURPOSE

1.1 This purpose of the document is to update the Board of Directors on the process for further developing the draft minimum standards for local education groups (LEGs) and related toolkit. The Strategy and Policy Committee (SPC) presented draft standards to the Board in June. The Board requested the Secretariat to revise the standards based on the Board deliberations and present these to the SPC for consideration and recommendation to the Board.

Summary of SPC Deliberations

The SPC met on October via audio call and discussed the process for developing the draft minimum standards for LEGs and related toolkit. A draft process was presented to the Committee (an adjusted version of which is presented under Update below), which was broadly well received. Key points raised by Committee members included:

- Agreement of the partnership will need to be sought on the terminology of “LEG minimum standards” which DCPs have flagged is problematic as it implies normative standards for something that may work differently according to context.
- The Board-approved GPE results framework includes indicators and quantitative targets on inclusion of civil society organizations and teacher organizations in the LEG. It is important that the *goal* of the standards or guidelines align with the Results Framework. At the same time, experience has shown that progress towards goals at country level is best achieved progressively through providing guidance to and gradual dialogue and collaboration with partners.
- There continues to be a need for greater clarity on the functions and roles of the LEG in the partnership, including in the operationalization of GPE processes.

In closing, the SPC Chair invited interested SPC members to work with the Secretariat in the process of further developing the guidelines or standards.

2. UPDATE AND NEXT STEPS

2.1 The Board discussion in Oslo revealed the need to clarify the objectives and expectations around LEG minimum standards. The following observations can be made:

- GPE's stakeholder groups have different expectations with regard to the LEG minimum standards, and different interpretations suit different purposes, which are not mutually exclusive: civil society organizations and teacher representatives have highlighted the need for minimum standards to drive more inclusive LEGs in alignment with the targets of the adopted Results Framework; governments have emphasized the specifics around organizing sector collaboration is a matter of sovereignty and would like guidance and support rather than normative standards; donors seem divided between a compliance-approach and a mutual accountability approach.
- A 'one size fits all' approach to standards for effective LEGs (1) risks failing to take contextual specificities into consideration, (2) could undermine existing arrangements that work, and (3) risks leading to distortions and parallel sector dialogue structures to suit GPE requirements.

2.2 All GPE partners have a joint responsibility in making LEGs effective, yet the discourse seems to have drifted into a dynamic where developing country partner governments carry most of the accountability and there is much less recognition of the responsibilities of other partners to share the responsibility for working effectively together in the best interest of children. LEGs and GPE processes are sometimes used by partners of all categories to drive a particular agenda, rather than a common, agreed, needs- and evidence-based one.

2.3 The Secretariat has gathered information on LEG effectiveness over the years through several mechanisms: The 2010/11 aid effectiveness survey; a LEG survey in 2012/13, the sector monitoring initiative in 2013-14, GPE Independent Evaluation and the compilation of information for the operational model review in 2015. The standards that were proposed at the June 2016 Board meeting built upon this information, which, when analyzed, hints at key factors that influence LEG effectiveness. However, the factors that drive effectiveness in one context will not necessarily work in another.

2.4 To address these challenges, the following is proposed:

- Moving from LEG minimum standards to LEG guidelines with facilitated questions to help LEGs self-assess, set an improvement agenda, and monitor progress. The Guidelines would need to be clear that inclusion of civil society and teacher representatives, in line with the GPE Results Framework, is the expressed objective of the GPE, and that GPE members have mutual accountability for attaining this objective.

- Accompany the LEG guidelines with a toolkit, including case studies of how LEG arrangements look in different contexts.
- At the global level, a monitoring tool or ‘LEG Effectiveness Index’ to measure progress in LEG effectiveness with due consideration to the diversity of arrangements and mechanisms that may constitute an inclusive, effective LEG, but also with due consideration to the targets of the Results Framework.

The process to develop the above will be as follows:

- A update (this paper) will be presented to the Board in December, describing the Objective and key pieces to be developed as well as the process to develop it.
- The Objective is for the Partnership to come to a Consensus on (1) the terminology (minimum standards, standards or guidelines); (2) agreed metrics and mechanisms to promote, monitor and measure progress towards inclusive, effective LEGs; (3) the guidance and tools needed to support this progress and (4) roles, responsibilities and mutual accountabilities for achieving it.
- From December-May, a process will be led by a consultant to compile knowledge and inputs to the above through compilation of LEG configurations and practices as well as views and experiences from across the partnership. Methodology will likely include focus group discussions, questionnaires, structured interviews and review of documents. The compilation of information will include attention to new challenges and opportunities related to the GPE’s revised funding model.
- Based on the inputs collected, the resulting metrics, guidance and tools may build upon the standards proposed in June but would be adjusted and/or cover additional elements. The toolkit will build out more detailed recommendations and examples of how to strengthen LEG effectiveness.
- The process will also include review of guidance from the Global Campaign for Education on LEG engagement.
- As part of the toolkit, specific guidance for LEG engagement may be tailored to different stakeholders, including development partners, governments, etc.
- Final LEG guidelines, metrics and supporting documents to be presented for Board approval in June 2017.

3. PLEASE CONTACT Margarita Focas Licht at mlicht@globalpartnership.org for more detailed information.

4. FURTHER INFORMATION

4.1 Additional information includes the following documents:

- [June 2016 Board Paper on Minimum Standards for Local Education Groups.](#)