

**Terms of Reference *for*
GPE Grant Agents for the Advocacy
and Social Accountability
Mechanism**

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USEFUL DOCUMENTS

Documents referenced in
these terms of reference

- [GPE Charter](#)
- [Policy and Communications Protocol on Misuse of GPE Trust Funds](#)
- [GPE Fund Governance](#)
- [Finance and Funding Framework](#)
- [Decision Framework](#)
- [Policy on Education Sector Program Implementation Grants](#)
- [ASA Board paper December 2017](#)

1. Introduction

The Global Partnership for Education (GPE) provides financial and technical support to developing country partners to facilitate the development, implementation and monitoring of Education Sector Plans (ESPs) and Transitional Education Plans (TEPs) with the aim of strengthening national education systems so that these systems deliver stronger outcomes in the areas of learning and early childhood development, equity, gender equality and inclusion. GPE works through three different country level grants¹ that have specific purposes at different stages of the education sector plan and policy cycle, and which are transferred to the country level through grant agents. In 2017, GPE adopted its new Financing and Funding Framework which authorizes GPE to provide financial and technical support to global activities through the Advocacy and Social Accountability (ASA) mechanism and the Knowledge and Innovation Exchange (KIX) mechanism. These two new funding mechanisms replace the Global and Regional Activities (GRA) program and the Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF) as of end 2018. Any interested bilateral or multilateral agency as well as international organizations that meet GPE's minimum standards for grant agents (see Annex 2) and have the capacities described in Annex 3, can be selected to act as a grant agent for ASA.

This document:

- a) Lays out the grant agent or agents' roles and responsibilities for ASA.**
- b) Describes the selection process of grant agents, minimum requirements needed, and the criteria that will be used to assess and select from among potential applicants.**
- c) Provides a formal Term of Reference for Grant agents that can be used to solicit expressions of interest.**

The role of grant agents

Grant agents are key in ensuring that the GPE grants are appropriately managed and fully aligned with broader education sector developments in line with SDGs and GPE 2020.

Their operational role is to support the design of grant programs; disburse the GPE transferred funds to the implementing partners, and provide monitoring, quality assurance, fiduciary oversight and technical support as appropriate to the context and in line with the specific purpose of the grant.

Grant agents for ASA will manage funding and a portfolio of grants for eligible civil society recipients. The grant agent(s) for ASA will generally use the operational and fiduciary mechanisms with which it normally operates in the given context. The grant agent should therefore be selected on the basis of how well these arrangements and capacities meet GPE objectives around systems building and capacity strengthening relative to the context.

These terms of reference set out the objectives and responsibilities of grant agents for part or all

¹ The three grants are: 1) Education Sector Plan Development Grant (ESPDG); 2) Program Development Grant (PDG); and 3) Education Sector Program Implementation Grant (ESPIG).

of the ASA portfolio with the purpose of developing a common understanding of their expected role in relation to the grant recipients, the GPE Fund and the Secretariat. The document also briefly summarizes the selection process (Annex 1), criteria and minimum standards for all grant agents (Annex 2) and the specific selection criteria for ASA grant agents, summarizing additional capabilities that would be beneficial for the successful implementation of ASA funding (Annex 3).

2. Grant Agent Roles and Responsibilities

In particular, the Grant Agent manages the portfolio of grants, provides fiduciary oversight, monitoring, quality assurance and reporting on grants, and provides technical support, as appropriate, to the contextual needs and purpose of the specific grant or portfolio of grants to ensure that:

- Grant and program designs are relevant and technically strong and are built on realistic assessments of what is achievable in the timeframe proposed and on a solid understanding of the capacity of partners involved and any fiduciary risks.
- Grant objectives and expected results are supported by a budget that will maximize impact of available funds, and transferred funds are disbursed and/or managed in a timely manner to support the grant recipient towards achieving its objectives both technically and financially.
- Grant activities occurring at the country level are aligned with broader sector dialogue, priorities, and contextual circumstances as appropriate.
- Grant implementation complies with: (i) the approved proposal; (ii) the applicable GPE policies and guidelines for the specific grant; (iii) the grant agent organization's or agency's own policies and procedures, and (iv) the Financial Procedures Agreement with the GPE Trustee.
- Grant monitoring detects and resolves problems early, and results are reported in a way that demonstrate that the grant is meeting its objectives.

Within the framework of the minimum standards for grant agents, and the partnership's general compact of mutual accountability, the grant agent carries out its overall roles and responsibilities as follows:

2.1 The grant agent in relation to the grant recipients

The grant agent:

- Supports the solicitation of proposals for grants provided through the ASA mechanism. It advertises the call for proposals, provides appropriate guidance to potential applicants and prepares submitted proposals for review and selection by the appropriate body, which shall be an

independent technical panel, on an agreed timeline.

- Enters into grant agreements with the selected recipients. Implementation arrangements should be agreed upon and detailed already in the specific grant application. If agreed and appropriate to the context, the grant agent can sub-contract non-state actors, UN agencies, or both to support implementation in line with its own policies and procedures.
- Offers technical resources and expertise as agreed during the grant proposal development and as relevant to the specific grant context for effective implementation of the relevant grant. It is expected that the grant agent will be responsive to evolving situations and ready to adapt its role according to emerging needs, if for instance a situation calls for more flexibility in terms of time and/or technical assistance. Adjusts planned activities and budget when unforeseen circumstances, capacity gaps, or other situations arise that affect implementation.
- Ensures that all grantees report on a routine basis and share information about their activities, products and publications with the GPE Secretariat and the Partnership.
- Reports at least twice per year to the GPE Secretariat on outputs, outcomes, impact of GPE investments and financial performance of the grant, following agreed standards and timeline for monitoring and evaluation.
- Ensures that all contracts entered into with grantees include clauses that outline that if the Grant Agent determines that Trust Fund funds are used in a manner inconsistent with the agreement, the grantee shall promptly refund the funds to the Grant Agent and the Grant Agent shall promptly return such funds to the GPE Fund.
- Develops and implements an operational manual for the ASA program which details specific directions for this portfolio of grants with respect to approval and notification processes, implementation period, reporting requirements, revisions, and amendments.

2.2 The grant agent in relation to the GPE Trustee

A 'zero tolerance' policy

The '*Policy and Communications Protocol on Misuse of GPE Trust Funds*' establishes a Zero Tolerance of misuse of GPE Trust Fund resources. Grant agents have special fiduciary responsibilities with respect to GPE Trust Funds, and only grant agents that have policies and procedures in place to mitigate risks and address misuse, should it occur, are accepted by the Board.

More Information:

Policy and Communications Protocol on Misuse of GPE Trust Funds, see link, page iii

The grant agent:

- Enters into a Financial Procedures Agreement with the GPE Trustee | World Bank, which defines the terms and conditions between the grant agent and the Trustee, including fiduciary and reporting responsibilities.
- Ensures disbursements for implementation of the grants within the ASA portfolio in accordance with the purpose for which the specific allocation was approved and any specific provisions communicated by the Board or its delegated authority (SIC / GPC) to the grant agent upon grant approval.
- Provides fiduciary oversight of the specific grants within the ASA portfolio, including corrective action to ensure effective implementation in accordance with the grant agent's own oversight policies and procedures including those related to audit, eligible expenditures, employment and supervision of consultants and the procurement of goods and works, and in accordance with GPE policies. In the event of suspected or identified misuse of funds, the grant agent implements its own internal procedures on misuse of funds and the GPE policy in this regard. In case of inconsistencies between the two, the GPE policy supersedes.
- Maintains books, records, documents and other evidence in accordance with its usual accounting procedures to sufficiently substantiate the use of the cash transfers, and provides periodic financial reports as agreed with the Trustee in the Financial Procedures Agreement.

2.3 The grant agent in relation to the Secretariat

The grant agent:

- Is cognizant of GPE policies and processes and uses the ASA grant guidelines and templates to ensure that the proposals meet the expected criteria, while also carrying out quality assurance in line with the agency's own procedures.
- Indicates its own value-add in the grant application in terms of financial, technical and/or other aspects and uses its comparative advantages for effective implementation of the specific grant.
- Maintains regular contact with the Secretariat's assigned ASA lead during the whole grant cycle, from application to programmatic and financial closing of the grant, and particularly in cases where risk action plans are agreed.
- Reviews the overall progress of the grant portfolio and individual grants within it at least once every six months with the Secretariat and proactively shares evidence and lessons learned from

administering and managing the grant in question.

- Prepares a progress and/or grant completion report(s) as required for the grant portfolio and its specific grants, using agreed standard templates and submits it in a timely manner to the Secretariat. Grant agents should also provide to the Secretariat, mission and monitoring reports that relate to the ASA grant portfolio and grants.
- Maintains open dialogue with the assigned Secretariat focal point on matters related to grant implementation, ensuring in particular that any credible allegations of misuse of funds are promptly communicated.

2.4 The grant agent in relation to other ASA grant agents

The grant agent:

- Participates in and contributes to the discussions of periodic grant agent meetings.
- Shares its operational processes, procedures and systems and coordinates with other grant agents to maximize alignment and complementarity of ASA grant portfolios including at national and regional levels.
- Works with other grant agents and the Secretariat to establish an arms-length technical selection committee for ASA proposal evaluation.
- Works with other ASA grant agents and the Secretariat to co-construct a common monitoring and evaluation framework to align indicators and reporting on ASA activities.
- Participates in the development of learning opportunities for all grantees within ASA and contributes to the development of shared guidelines, lessons learned and good practice in the field of ASA.
- Participates in GPE's Learning Exchange and makes the intellectual and technical products produced through the ASA grant programs available to GPE.
- Ensures that GPE funding is acknowledged in all published reports, digital materials, events and activities.

3. Selection of grant agent(s)

3.1 Selection process overview

The selection process for the ASA grant agent(s) should follow the specific guidance provided (see Annex 1), outlining the basic steps to ensure a transparent process. The selection of the ASA grant agent(s) should follow a transparent process and be kept as simple as possible to avoid high transaction costs. There can be up to three different grant agents for the ASA to cover the three operational components of ASA.

Grant agent(s) will be selected through a criteria-based process, in which grant agents are formally reviewed and ranked, and subsequently presented for endorsement by the Strategy and Impact Committee (SIC). The SIC will nominate up to three grant agents. If the selected organization is not already a Grant Agent, the GPE Secretariat will conduct an institutional capacity assessment of the nominated Grant Agent and make a recommendation to the Finance and Risk Committee (FRC) which has final authority to accredit grant agent candidate as per the [Board's decision](#) in June 2017.

The grant agent selection will be made from a list of potential grant agents who meet minimum requirements and have formally expressed their interest in the grant agent role, and will be based on a rigorous assessment of each interested agency/organization. Applicants will be asked to provide documentation related to the minimum standards and selection criteria for ASA grant agents provided in Annexes 2 and 3. Follow-up interviews and requests for information may be arranged to complement this information and answer any applicant questions as needed.

Criteria for grant agent selection will take into account the capability of interested agencies or organizations to meet the minimum standards (see Annex 1) required for administering for GPE Trust Fund resources. The anticipated direct management, administrative, and overhead costs to perform the role along with expected indirect cost recovery rates (a maximum of 7% permitted) will factor into final considerations.

Criteria for grant agent selection will also address the most appropriate implementation modality for the grants in the given context, as well as the added value that each interested agency can provide, such as sectoral knowledge, experienced personnel, and ability to offer technical, fiduciary, monitoring resources. The ability of grant agents able to offer additional support in terms of resources and in-kind contributions, will be considered. Additional selection criteria related to the requirements of ASA grants and which will inform the evaluation and ranking of grant agents can be found in Annex 3.

Every effort must be made to reach a consensus. In cases where a consensual decision cannot be reached, recourse can be made to GPE's *Conflict Resolution Procedures*. As soon as the grant agent has been selected, the selected agency or organization needs to take appropriate steps with its

Headquarters to establish a Financial Procedures Agreement with the GPE Trustee/World Bank, unless such an agreement is already in place.

Step	Responsibility	Trigger	Comments
Selection of grant agent(s)	SIC	Completion of expressions of interest process	The recruitment and evaluation of grants agents will be done by GPE Secretariat and external firm, in consultation with the Trustee, in an open and transparent process. The SIC will nominate up to 3 grant agents for ASA for accreditation by the FRC.
Accreditation of new grant agent(s)	FRC	Institutional capacity assessment	The GPE Secretariat, in consultation with the Trustee, will arrange for an institutional capacity assessment of new grants agents nominated by the SIC. Per the " Decision Framework " approved by the Board in June 2017, accreditation of new grant agents is delegated to the FRC.
Signing of FPA for new grant agent	Trustee/Secretariat	FRC accreditation of new grant agents	The Trustee will sign an FPA with each new grant agent after accreditation by the FRC.
Provision of program development grant for grant agent(s)	Grant agent(s)	Secretariat approval of proposal for program development grant of up to \$200,000 ²	The Secretariat may approve a program development grant for each grant agent to cover the costs of developing the operational plan for the ASA portfolio and grant agent ASA portfolio application
Approval of grant agent ASA portfolio application for financing	Board	Quality assurance review (QAR) by Secretariat and recommendation by	The Secretariat will do a quality assurance review of ASA portfolio application presented by the Grant Agent, which will include the proposed structure for selecting, financing, funding and monitoring

² Subject to GPE Board approval in June 2018

		Board delegated committee. Final approval from the Board.	grantees as part of an ASA grant portfolio. A delegated committee of the Board will review the Grant Agent application and make a recommendation to the Board about the overall financing of this grant portfolio.
Funding transferred to the Grant Agent	Trustee	Recommendation by Board or its delegated committee.	

3.2 Minimum standards

Certain minimum standards are required for all grant agents, ensuring that each agency or organization selected as grant agent for GPE Trust Fund resources has all the required capabilities with respect to 1) financial management; 2) institutional capacity and 3) self-investigative powers, to perform its role as intended (see **Annex 2**).

In cases where an assessment against the minimum standards for grant agents has not already taken place, the Secretariat proceeds with a vetting process of the grant agent upon its selection to systematically assess whether the organization or agency meets the minimum standards. Per the “Decision Framework” approved by the Board in June 2017, accreditation of new grant agents has been delegated to the Finance and Risk Committee. In vetting the selected grant agent, the Secretariat makes sure that it can be entrusted the responsibility of providing due fiduciary oversight of GPE Trust Fund resources, using its own existing policies and procedures.

While managing the ASA grant portfolio, grant agents are expected to use and meet the minimum standards in the agency’s daily practices and procedures relating to all related GPE grant matters. The standards should therefore be well understood by the agency’s or the organization’s own staff.

4. Financial and budgetary arrangements

4.1 Cost Recovery

Grant agent office costs: The administrative costs of grant agents should always be based on the principle of fair and needs based costs. The costs of the grant agent to perform its expected role must be specified within the proposed budget of the grant agent ASA portfolio application and financed from within the grant allocation ceiling. Any requests for revisions to the grant agent costs after approval will be subject to reprogramming provisions in line with agreed rules and procedures.

Agency fees: often known as indirect cost recovery are permitted to help defray the costs of performing the Grant Agent role that can't be directly attributable to the grant budget. They are considered to be additional to the grant allocation ceiling and should be indicated in the application form. Agency fees are agreed at the time of signing the Financial Procedures Agreement in line with the organizations own policy. The maximum rate of Agency fees is 7 percent.

An estimate of cost recovery will be requested in the expression of interest applications by potential candidates.

4.2 Financial Procedures Agreement

An agency or organization selected as the grant agent must have a Financial Procedures Agreement in place with the GPE Trustee/World Bank to be able to receive any transferred funds and before any commitments can be made towards the selected agency or organization.

A Financial Procedures Agreement is any agreement or arrangement established between the GPE Trustee/World Bank and the organization or agency that has been selected as grant agent. It sets out the regulatory framework for the GPE Trust Fund resources, including detailed roles and responsibilities of the grant agent in relation to transfer, use and disbursement of funds, standard of care, record keeping and reporting.

If a Financial Procedures Agreement does not already exist, the legal representative(s) of the grant agent will negotiate the details of the Financial Procedures Agreement with the Trustee. This process should begin as soon as the grant agent has been selected by the SIC.

Once the grant allocation has been announced by GPE, and once the Financial Procedures Agreement has been signed at Headquarter level, the grant agent is ready to negotiate and enter a grant agreement with the grant recipients. Ideally, the Financial Procedures Agreement should be in place and signed by the Trustee and the grant agent by the time the allocation decision is made by the Board.

The grant agreement with the grant recipients follows the grant agent's own format, policies and procedures and specifies the basis on which funds will be transferred.

ANNEXES

- Annex 1: Standard Selection Process for ASA Grant Agents
- Annex 2: Minimum Standards for all GPE Grant Agents
- Annex 3: Selection Criteria for the Evaluation and Ranking of ASA Grant Agent Candidates

Selection Process for ASA Grant Agents

1. Roles and responsibilities

The Strategy and Impact Committee (SIC): has overall oversight of the design of the ASA funding mechanism. It will approve the selection process and criteria for the ASA grant agent(s), in its delegated authority from the Board. These criteria will be used for formal evaluation and ranking of grant agents to inform the final selection of up to three grant agent(s) by the SIC. The SIC will nominate up to three ASA grant agent(s). The SIC will also approve the call for proposals process and criteria, and procedures for reporting, monitoring and grant restructuring or extensions. If delegated authority from the Board, the SIC will review and recommend the final ASA portfolio application submitted by the grant agent(s) for financing for approval by the Board. The processes and sequencing are summarized below.

The Finance and Risk Committee (FRC): will accredit any new grant agent(s) nominated by the SIC.

The Board of Directors: approves the final grant agent(s) ASA portfolio application, upon recommendation from the relevant Committee.

The Secretariat: acts as a facilitator, making sure that the SIC are informed on the minimum required processes, GPE principles, guidelines and good practices. The Secretariat will facilitate the open call for expressions of interest, ensure that clear criteria based review of grant agent expressions of interest is completed by an independent consultant or firm, and ensure that a ranking of grant agents is completed by a consultant or firm in a fair and transparent manner. The Secretariat will prepare a final recommendation with options for presentation to the SIC. The Secretariat will also undertake an institutional capacity assessment, if required, of any new international organizations which have been selected to act as grant agent, subsequent to nomination by the SIC. The Secretariat will also undertake a quality assurance review of the grant agent(s) final ASA portfolio application. Through its advisory and quality assurance role the Secretariat will flag early on in the process any risks related to minimum process and standards.

The ASA Technical Advisory Panel (TAP): will advise the Secretariat on the development of selection criteria for ASA grant agents, effective evaluation methodologies and considerations in the selection of grant agent.

The Trustee: will enter into contractual agreements with the final grant agent(s) through the Financial Procedures Agreement.

2. Key steps and sequencing for the selection of a grant agent

These steps provide a sequential process by which the selection of grant agent(s) can take place efficiently and transparently.

Step		Responsibility	Others involved
1	Development of roadmap for grant agent selection that includes all key steps and sequences	GPE Secretariat	SIC, TAP
2	Development of criteria and deliberative process for the selection of grant agent(s)	GPE Secretariat	SIC, TAP
3	Input to and approve final selection criteria and process for ASA grant agent(s)	SIC	Secretariat
4	Public call for expressions of interest	GPE Secretariat	Firm
5	Outreach to potential candidates	GPE Secretariat	Firm
6	Candidate(s) present(s) their expression(s) of interest	Grant agent candidate(s)	Secretariat, Firm
7	Solicitation of additional information as needed	Secretariat	Firm
8	Formal Assessment of grant agent candidate(s) against minimum standards and selection criteria with recommendations and options	Firm	Secretariat, TAP
9	SIC deliberations based on formal assessment of potential grant agents and recommended options, expression(s) of interest, on the basis of agreed process and criteria, towards consensus	SIC	Secretariat
10	SIC nominates up to three grant agent(s) and if new, forwards to the FRC	SIC	Secretariat
11	Institutional assessment of new grant agent(s) (if required)	Secretariat	FRC
12	Formal accreditation of the grant agent if required	FRC	Secretariat, Trustee
13	Financial Procedures Agreement (FPA) agreed between trustee and grant agent(s), if required	Trustee	Grant agent(s)

14	Program development grant proposals reviewed and funding provided to the grant agent(s)	Grant agent(s)	Secretariat
15	Grant level of assessment (of new grant agent) if required	Grant agent(s)	GPC
16	Operational manual, rules and guidelines for grant-making developed, including call for proposals process, monitoring and reporting	Grant agent(s)	Secretariat
17	Quality assurance review of grant agent(s) ASA portfolio application(s) and final readiness report	Secretariat	Grant agent(s)
18	Submission and review of grant agent(s) ASA portfolio application(s) for recommendation to the Board	Delegated committee	Secretariat, grant agent(s)
19	Board review and approval of grant agent ASA portfolio application	Board	Secretariat, Grant agent(s)
20	Transfer of ASA allocation to grant agent(s) by trustee	Trustee	Grant agent(s)
21	Launch of ASA call for proposals	Grant agent(s)	Secretariat

Minimum Standards for all GPE Grant Agents

Note to the reader

The provisions of the minimum standards were originally defined in Annex 10 BOD/2013/11/DOC 6A as guidelines for assessing newly eligible grant agents, and subsequently adopted by the Board in October 2015 as minimum standards for all GPE grant agents as part of the Board's efforts to create a more effective operational platform ([BOD/2015/10 DOC 06](#)).

The standards are used to screen newly selected grant agents prior to the Board's approval to systematically assess whether the organization or agency has all capacities, policies and procedures needed to provide due oversight of GPE Trust Fund resources.

MINIMUM STANDARDS	Illustrative means of verification
1. Financial Management	
1.1 Financial management and accounting systems	
<p>Robust financial management and accounting systems ensure accuracy of financial management and reporting. The entity has adequate systems, including systems for cash management and production of budgets, and for the production of reliable financial statements prepared in accordance with internationally-recognized accounting standards.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The entity produces reliable charts of accounts, which are prepared in accordance with recognized accounting standards, and provide the necessary level of detail to monitor expenditure. • Robust and reliable accounting systems are integrated with other Financial Management systems, in order to facilitate reconciliation with budget, and reporting requirements. • Budgeting procedures are robust, and provide donors with assurances related to expenditure. • Banking arrangements provide for effective cash management. • Based on available information, the entity's credit risk is acceptable.
1.2 External financial audit	
<p>The external financial audit function ensures an independent (if possible, as defined by the International Federation of Accountants (IFAC) review of financial statements and internal controls. An independent auditor audits the entity's financial statements according to internationally recognized auditing standards on an annual basis.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The entity has appointed an independent external audit firm or organization. • The work of the external audit firm or organization is consistent with recognized international auditing standards. • There is a transparent and competitive process for the selection of a suitable external auditor.

1.3 Control frameworks	
<p>An internal control framework (if possible, as defined by internationally recognized frameworks such as COSO, Cadbury and CoCo) is a risk-based process designed to provide reasonable assurance and feedback to management regarding the achievement of financial management objectives. The entity's control frameworks are in place, documented, and have clearly defined roles for management, internal auditors, the governing body and other personnel.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The entity's accounting and finance organizational structure is clearly defined, with documented roles and responsibilities and sufficient segregation of duties, including for implementing any Global Partnership for Education grants. • The entity has adequate policies and procedures in place for risk assessment and management. • There are adequate policies and procedures in place to guide activities and ensure staff accountability.
1.4 Internal audit	
<p>Internal auditing is an independent, objective activity designed to add value and improve an organization's operations. It helps an organization to accomplish its objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management, control, and governance processes. The entity demonstrates capability for functionally independent internal auditing in accordance with internationally recognized standards (such as International Standards on Auditing (ISA).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The entity has an internal audit mechanism in place and its activities are subject to review by an internal audit unit. • The internal audit function is independent and objective, has a risk based methodology for preparing its annual plan, and its findings are disseminated to management, who follow up on recommendations.
2. Institutional capacity	
2.1 Legal status	
<p>The entity must have the appropriate legal status and legal authority to enter into contractual arrangements with GPE and other third parties, and must have the legal authority to receive funds.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The entity is a legally registered organization. • The entity has the authority to enter into legal agreements and receive funds.
2.2 Project appraisal	
<p>The entity has the ability to identify, develop and appraise projects. Project appraisal functions include the establishment of standards and appropriate safeguards that are used to determine whether projects and activities will meet their development goals before funds are disbursed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The entity has a good track record for timely implementation of similar projects, and has a good track record of achieving appropriate programmatic results.
2.3 Management and organization	

<p>The entity's organizational structure and quality of management enables it to competently manage or oversee the execution of funded projects, including through management of sub-recipients.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The entity has a board of directors that meets regularly and has statutes or terms of reference for its functions. • The entity has an independent Audit Committee, which reviews the integrity of the financial statements, has oversight of internal controls and reviews the effectiveness of internal audit. • The entity has a management structure that is suitable for undertaking funded projects. • The entity is well acquainted with the work of the GPE and the grant work involved • The entity's staff—at all levels--have the requisite skills and experience to undertake funded projects. • The entity's physical assets, including IT systems, are adequate to undertake funded projects.
<p>2.4 Oversight of sub-recipients</p>	
<p>The entity's organizational structure and quality of management enables it to competently manage or oversee the execution of funded projects through management of and program delivery and implementation support to sub-recipients.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are adequate procedures and criteria in place for a transparent selection of sub-recipients. • The entity has adequate plans and resources in place to ensure sub-recipients have the capacity to implement the proposed activities and safeguard grant funds. • The entity has had previous experiences with managing sub-recipients and disbursements of similar magnitude. • The entity has Operational Procedures and plans in place for managing sub-recipients, including for monitoring the program implementation at sub-recipient level, reviewing sub-recipients' financial and program reports for completeness and technical soundness and ensuring the safeguarding of assets held by sub-recipients.
<p>2.5 Procurement procedures</p>	
<p>The entity's procurement procedures, covering both internal/administrative procurement and procurement by recipients of funds, include written standards based on widely recognized processes and an internal control framework to protect against fraud, corruption and waste.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documented procurement processes include the following: (1) A code of conduct to avoid occurrence or perceptions of conflicts of interest; (2) Methods of procurement and when different methods should be applied; (3) Procedures for requests for tenders; (4) Procedures for bid evaluation; (5) Procedures that are transparent and competitive. • Procurement approval systems are in place, with certifying and approving officers; and there are appropriate segregation of duties and levels of delegation.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Procedures are in place to ensure that the goods / services delivered are of an acceptable quality.
2.6 Monitoring, evaluation and project-at-risk systems	
<p>The entity can demonstrate existing capacities for monitoring and independent evaluation of projects and evidence that a process or system, such as project-at-risk system, is in place to flag when a project has developed problems that may interfere with the achievement of its objectives, and to respond accordingly to redress the problems.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The entity has Operational Procedures and plans in place for monitoring the program implementation at both the entity and sub-recipient levels and reviewing entity and sub-recipients' financial and program reports for completeness and technical soundness. The entity has systems in place for early identification of problems/capacity gaps at the entity and sub-recipient levels and for initiating effective remedial actions.
3. Transparency, self-investigative powers and anti-corruption measures	
3.1 Misuse of Funds Procedures	
<p>In accordance with GPE's Policy on Misuse of Trust Funds, which requires that the Board only choose agencies with robust policies and procedures for addressing Misuse to act as Supervising Entities or Implementers, the entity can demonstrate competence to deal with financial mismanagement and other forms of malpractice.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The entity has clear written policies and procedures regarding issues of misuse of funds. There is a system of adequate safeguards to provide reasonable assurance as to the protection of assets, including the GPE grant, from loss, fraud, waste and abuse at every step of the grant life cycle. The entity has publicly available avenues to confidentially report suspected fraud or misuse of funds. The entity has the ability to ensure independent, objective investigation of allegations of misuse The entity has terms and conditions in its agreements with sub-recipients and contractors in relation to the ability to recover funds in cases of misuse.
3.2 Protection of whistle-blowers	
<p>The entity protects individuals from retaliation due to providing information in relation to misuse.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The entity has policies and procedures in place in relation to whistle-blowing and the protection of employees or contractors.

In addition, should any international organizations seek to become a grant agent for ASA (which are not yet accredited by GPE), they must meet the minimum standards as set out in Annex 2, as well as the following criteria specific to international organizations. They must:

1. Be a not for profit organization.
2. Have demonstrated experience operating in a fragile country context where applicable.

3. Have demonstrated experience in the education sector.
4. Have demonstrated experience managing bilateral or multilateral donor-funded projects in excess of US\$10 million in a country and across more than one country.
5. Have demonstrated experience working with national authorities to strengthen local capacity to implement basic social services.

Additional Selection Criteria for ASA Grant Agent(s)

Note to the reader

The selection criteria herein are subject to review by the Trustee and may be modified prior to the call for expressions of interest.

I. Criteria to be considered for the selection of ASA grant agent

Based on inputs from the Board Finance and Funding Working Group, discussions of the SIC to date, and consultations on ASA with GPE constituencies, the following criteria for ASA Grant Agents were agreed with the SIC and will be used to select among potential applicants.

Criteria	Description and example indicators
Experience in civil society grant-making and support	<p>Demonstrated relevance and good performance of the agency's education portfolio as related to ASA, including demonstrated capacity to manage multiple small grants for civil society organizations in the size of \$100k or below, within an overall portfolio size of between \$10million and \$60 million.</p> <p>Experience in developing manuals and accounting systems that reflect the size of the grant and are appropriate for small NGOs.</p> <p>Experience in managing grant processes that ensure that smaller civil society organizations (including those with limited capacity and resources) are supported in the application and delivery processes.</p> <p>Experience delivering multi-year, non-project support to grantees.</p> <p>Experience in working to cultivate diverse grant applications, for e.g. through pre-application identification of grantees, information sharing on proposal processes with potential grantees, or two step application processes where applicants have access to support for second stage grant development.</p> <p>Proven track record of supporting grantee activities that have strong local ownership and which respond to bottom up priorities.</p> <p>Experience in managing a portfolio of grants with diverse grantees.</p>
Independence	Autonomous from any national, regional or local government institutions and political parties, or otherwise able to ensure that the financial support is

	distributed according to the focus and quality of the CSO proposals and not on political considerations.
Geographic location	<p>Country presence or strong partnerships with country presence in at least 3 of the 4 regions where ASA will be active (Africa, Asia Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, the Middle East and Eastern Europe). The majority of GPE's partner countries are in Africa so preference will be given to those with extensive experience in this region.</p> <p>Understanding of national laws, rules and procedures that apply to the sector and to the management of public money in a significant number of GPE eligible countries.</p>
Management capacity	<p>Ability to manage a fair and transparent grant-selection process with experience in utilizing an independent technical selection panel.</p> <p>Experience in management, monitoring and reporting on a diverse portfolio of grants in terms of grant size, geography, type of civil society recipient, type of advocacy and social accountability activities, etc.</p> <p>Ability to provide strong reporting on grant portfolio to the GPE as funder and its Board.</p> <p>Experience, in country and internationally, with managing fiduciary and administrative risk, relative to the modality and scope of the grant.</p> <p>Experience in development of monitoring and reporting procedures that encourage self-evaluation, learning and continuous improvement in grantees.</p> <p>Demonstrated evidence of experience implementing feedback mechanisms and using grantee feedback to make changes in how programs are managed.</p> <p>Capacity to communicate routinely to the public and the partnership about the portfolio of activities, outputs and events funded under ASA.</p>
Cost effectiveness	<p>Economical approach to the percentage of direct management, administrative, and overhead costs requested as part of the overall program.</p> <p>Low or preferably no indirect cost recovery percentage requested.</p> <p>Ability to provide match or in-kind resources to the ASA programs.</p>
Capacity building	

	<p>Able to provide ongoing support to grantees throughout the project cycle, including training on application writing and submissions, implementation, reporting and opportunities for experience sharing between funded projects.</p> <p>Demonstrated ability to organize effective, participatory convenings, workshops, etc.</p> <p>Experience providing capacity building support in developing / thinking through / testing theories of change and other forms of planning, monitoring, evaluation and adaptive learning support.</p> <p>Experience providing support / training / convening around advocacy strategies and how to measure success of advocacy efforts.</p> <p>Ability to work in both French and English.</p>
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