GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP
for **EDUCATION**
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How GPE Supports Teaching and Learning

Highlights

⊗ An estimated 274 million primary schoolchildren in low and middle income countries are not learning the basic foundational skills necessary to lead productive and healthy lives. The Global Partnership for Education (GPE) is committed to improved and more equitable student outcomes, and has framed this as goal 1 of its strategic plan for 2016–2020.

⊗ Through the GPE results framework, the partnership gives strategic attention to teaching and learning. Indicators include the improvement of learning outcomes, the quality of learning assessment systems, and the availability and distribution of trained teachers.

⊗ With support from GPE implementation grants, partner developing countries are making significant investments to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Of the 54 active grants in July 2016, 93 percent invested in teacher development, 76 percent in learning materials, 67 percent in learning assessment systems, 52 percent in teacher management, 50 percent in teaching in the early grades, and 28 percent in the increase of instructional time.

⊗ The lack of data and analyses on teaching and learning impedes the understanding of factors driving low learning levels, presenting a significant challenge for GPE partner developing countries to design effective learning strategies in their sector plans. The Assessment for Learning initiative seeks to increase the availability of quality learning data and support its use to improve learning.

1. Introduction

While significant progress has been made in increasing access to education, particularly for the poorest, the average level of student learning remains low in many developing countries. Millions of children attending school do not acquire the basic knowledge and skills needed to lead productive and healthy lives. In low and middle income countries, it is estimated that half of primary school children (274 million) are not learning basic foundational skills and three-quarters of secondary school students (468 million) are not learning basic secondary level skills.[1] If current trends continue, by 2030 the numbers will increase to 420 million primary school children and 825 million secondary school students not learning.[2]

1 ICFGEO (International Commission on Financing Global Education Opportunity), *The Learning Generation: Investing in Education for a Changing World* (New York: ICFGEO, 2016), 33.
2 Ibid., 30.

Education is a powerful agent of change that improves health and livelihoods, contributes to social stability, and drives long-term economic growth.[3] However, to reap these benefits children have to be learning in school. With the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) there is now an unprecedented global commitment to address low levels of learning. SDG 4 calls for inclusive and equitable quality education that leads to the achievement of a minimum threshold of learning outcomes.

The Global Partnership for Education is a multistakeholder partnership dedicated to dramatically increasing the number of children who are in school and learning, with particular attention to the most vulnerable. Having adopted SDG 4 as its vision, GPE seeks to realize its ambition by mobilizing global and national efforts, fostering inclusive partnerships, focusing on effective and efficient education systems, and increasing financing. Goal 1 of its strategic plan, GPE 2020, commits the partnership to improved and more equitable student learning outcomes through quality teaching and learning.[4] The partnership will monitor its performance through its results framework, whose first indicator will track improvements in learning achievement and set targets for intended progress.[5]

To achieve results, the partnership uses a unique operational model that fosters rigorous and inclusive policy processes. The partnership helps strengthen governments' capacity to develop and implement high quality education sector plans (ESPs) focused on learning. It supports inclusive, evidence-based policy dialogue to encourage nationally identified priorities and country ownership of sector plans. It also provides results-based financing, which incentivizes countries to set and achieve their own learning targets. Lastly, country-level work is reinforced through global action, which leverages the strengths of the partnership to support the exchange of knowledge and good practices.

2. GPE Supports Sector Planning for Stronger Learning Outcomes

2.1 EDUCATION SECTOR PLANNING

The Global Partnership for Education supports evidence-based sector plans that are developed with the commitment and engagement of national stakeholders and donor partners. Through the education sector plan development grant (ESPDG), the partnership provides governments with technical and financial support up to US$500,000 to conduct a sector analysis and develop the plan through a participatory and inclusive approach.[6] GPE is the largest international funder of education sector analysis and sector planning for countries in the developing world, providing US$8.9 million for 27 sector plans in 2016 alone.[7]

Improving the quality of education is a complex matter. The learning process is affected by multiple factors that vary significantly across contexts, including within countries. As such, there is no universal solution for raising learning outcomes. Analytical work on the quality of teaching and learning is thus instrumental in developing a sector plan, and it should serve as the information base that underpins reforms. In partnership with UNESCO, UNICEF, and the World Bank, the Global Partnership for Education developed the *Methodological Guidelines on Education Sector Analysis* to strengthen government knowledge for evidence-based planning and

3 UNESCO, *Global Education Monitoring Report 2016: Gender Review; Creating Sustainable Futures for All* (Paris: UNESCO, 2016), 12.

4 Global Partnership for Education, *GPE 2020 Strategic Plan* (Washington, DC: GPE, 2016).

5 Indicator 1 of the results framework is a trend-based indicator that tracks the number of developing country partners that are making progress in learning achievement in primary and lower secondary education.

6 Funding available under the ESPDG grant window was doubled from US$250,000 to US$500,000 following the launch of the GPE funding model adopted in 2014, which includes a sector analysis requirement as part of its data requirement.

7 GPE (Global Partnership for Education), *GPE Results Report 2015/2016* (Washington, DC: GPE, 2017).

to encourage ownership and use of results.[8] The guidelines present methodologies for the analysis of various policy issues and can help identify critical barriers to learning. They include the analysis of student learning, the conversion of inputs into learning outcomes, and the management of key resources such as teachers, learning materials, and instructional time. The approaches rely largely on the use of available data and surveys, and should be complemented by additional studies that are targeted to specific contexts. However, in many developing countries the lack of data on teachers and learning impedes the in-depth analysis of school-based factors that are driving low learning levels.

To investigate how developing country partners approach and address learning challenges, the Secretariat carried out a review of 59 sector plans endorsed between 2009 and 2015.[9] Nearly all the plans (90 percent) identified low learning levels as an issue at the primary and/or secondary level, but only a little more than half (59 percent) identified the underlying causes for low learning outcomes.[10] Although more progress remains to be made, the number of ESPs that communicated these factors improved in recent years. Of the 18 plans endorsed in 2014–2015, 67 percent identified the main causes for low learning levels compared to 56 percent of plans endorsed in or before 2013.

Figure 1 presents the most common causes of low learning outcomes as mentioned by education sector plans. Teacher competence was the most commonly reported cause. About half of the plans also specified insufficient instructional time, lack of learning materials, and poor learning environments with large class sizes. Nearly a third of the ESPs mentioned issues related to teacher management, school leadership or supervision, and poor school infrastructure. Challenges with the curriculum and the language of instruction were mentioned in fewer plans.

It is important to note that although many plans identified factors impacting learning, few plans determined these factors through the use of analytical evidence. In fact, only 24 percent of plans specified that some kind of evidence had been used to determine these factors and shaped their strategies accordingly. To be relevant and effective, policies need to tackle the root of the problem, not its symptoms, and must address key drivers of low learning levels particular to their context. The lack of evidence and use of evidence constitute major challenges in designing effective learning strategies in education sector plans, and thus present significant hurdles in improving learning outcomes in developing countries.

FIGURE 1. FACTORS REPORTED TO CONTRIBUTE TO LOW LEARNING LEVELS IN 35 SECTOR PLANS

Number of ESPs/TEPs
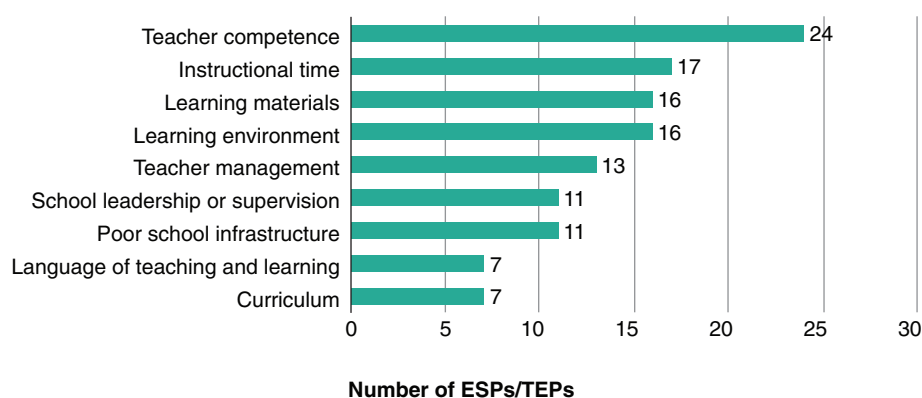
Source: GPE Secretariat.

8 UNESCO, World Bank, Global Partnership for Education, and UNICEF, *Education Sector Analysis Methodological Guidelines: Sector-Wide Analysis, with Emphasis on Primary and Secondary Education,* vol. 1 (Paris: UNESCO, 2014).

9 Plans were endorsed between 2009 and 2015, with most (78 percent) endorsed between 2012 and 2014. About a quarter of the plans are transitional education plans (24 percent) and three-quarters are ESPs (76 percent).

10 Four of the six plans that did not identify low learning levels as an issue come from areas of high fragility: Guinea-Bissau, Afghanistan, Somalia Puntland and Somalia South Central.

BOX 1. IMPROVING EARLY GRADE READING PERFORMANCE IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

The **Democratic Republic of Congo** (DRC) is one of the latest examples of a stronger focus placed on improving learning outcomes under the Global Partnership for Education's funding model. In June 2016 the Board of Directors approved a US$100 million program implementation grant for the DRC for the period 2016–2020, with the variable tranche for learning amounting to US$10 million.

Low student learning outcomes is one of the most pressing problems facing primary education in the DRC. The 2012 early grade reading assessments showed that 47 percent of fourth-grade students and 23 percent of sixth-grade students could not read a single word.

To address this challenge, the DRC developed a new Education and Training Sector Strategy (*Stratégie Sectorielle de l'Education et de la Formation, 2016–2025*—SSEF), with three main strategies to improve learning outcomes: the promotion of innovative teaching methods, the introduction of a plan for teaching reading in early grades, and the

establishment of an independent agency in charge of national assessments (CIEAS)* to guide policy-making in the education sector. The GPE-funded program was designed to support these objectives and enhance teacher effectiveness. It will do so by improving pre-service and in-service teacher training, developing new models of teacher support mechanisms and a transparent teacher recruitment mechanism, and distributing textbooks in national languages for the early grades.

To disburse the grant's variable part, the DRC is committed to achieving a 10 percent improvement in reading performance in grades 2 and 4, in a sample of 500 schools, over a four-year period. CIEAS will play a key role in meeting this target. Once established, it will administer standardized assessments and disseminate results to local levels, including parents, to inform remedial actions for least performing schools. In this way, the program will promote stronger accountability at the local level and a stronger culture of monitoring and evaluation.

*CIEAS: Cellule Indépendante d'Évaluation des Acquis Scolaires.

2.2 HOW GPE'S FUNDING MODEL SUPPORTS BETTER LEARNING OUTCOMES

The results-based funding model, adopted in 2014, is one of the partnership's main levers to achieve its strategic priorities and realize impact at the country level. To receive the first 70 percent of GPE funding, each developing country partner must meet several key requirements. One of these requirements focuses on the availability of learning data critical to monitor sector outcomes and progress. Countries must either have a system in place to monitor learning outcomes or a costed plan to develop one.

Disbursement of the remaining 30 percent of GPE funding is linked to demonstrated progress toward sector results, including gains in learning. Governments, in consultation with their partners in the local education

group, must identify a transformational strategy to improve learning outcomes that outlines clear actions to remedy issues driving low learning levels in their context. The strategy is accompanied by stretch indicators set by the government, with specific targets to measure results that are part of the broader ESP framework. Funds are linked to results in the form of improvements in student learning or to proxy outputs linked with an evidence-based theory of change to improve learning.

Countries that have applied for grants under the results-based funding model have chosen a range of indicators.[11] The Democratic Republic of Congo has linked funding to improved reading performance in the primary grades. Rwanda is administering large-scale learning assessments for the first time and uses results to improve learning, while Nepal conducts early grade

11 GPE (Global Partnership for Education), *Portfolio Review 2016* (Washington, DC: GPE, 2017), 10.

reading assessments (EGRAs) with parental involvement to improve reading. Malawi and Mozambique focus on teacher issues, with Malawi aiming to reduce the pupil to trained teacher ratio in its most disadvantaged districts and Mozambique increasing the number of teachers participating in comprehensive training.

3. GPE Support to Measuring Learning Outcomes

Measuring learning is key to improving learning. At the classroom level, measuring learning is central to the learning process, helping teachers understand what students know and to adapt instruction accordingly. At the system level, measuring learning is needed to inform policymaking, gage the impact of education reform, and target resources accordingly to ensure equity of learning among schools, regions, and populations. The availability of learning data can also leverage social accountability by providing citizens with evidence about learning outcomes.

All in all, the ability to collect and use learning data is critical to a well functioning education system. The partnership has thus made it a strategic priority to strengthen the capacity of learning assessment systems and has recently buttressed its support to countries.

3.1 AVAILABILITY OF LEARNING DATA

Although the past 15 years have seen a rapid increase in the number of countries implementing national learning assessments and/or taking part in regional or international learning assessments, many challenges remain in the collection and use of high-quality learning data.[12] Nearly one-third of GPE developing country

partners (29 percent) had no large-scale learning assessment to monitor learning achievement between 2010 and 2015.[13] Many developing country partners conducting learning assessments are currently struggling to sustain these efforts. Because of limited capacity and finances, less than a third of GPE developing country partners (20 out of 65, or 28 percent) have conducted more than one large-scale learning assessment between 2000 and 2015.[14] Thus, it is not surprising that only 22 countries were able to report on GPE's learning outcome indicator for the baseline period 2000–2015.[15]

3.2 GPE SUPPORT TO MEASURING LEARNING

GPE works with partners to support global efforts to monitor progress on SDG 4 and ensure improvements in national learning assessment systems. Past investments in this area have been carried out at the global, regional, and country levels through the Global and Regional Activities (GRA) program and program implementation grants.

Under the GRA program, there have been two main investments in the area of learning assessments. The first is managed by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) and supports the availability of high quality global assessment data. The UIS compiled a catalog and database of learning assessments featuring standardized information on assessments for up to 68 countries.[16] The second investment, managed by the UNESCO Asia-Pacific Regional Bureau for Education, has supported the establishment of the Network on Education Quality Monitoring in the Asia-Pacific (NEQMAP). Currently composed of 35 member institutions from 21 countries, NEQMAP aims to enhance the quality and use of assessments through a focus on research, knowledge sharing, and capacity development. Over the past three years, NEQMAP has held seven regional capacity development workshops, produced various knowledge products on assessments, and developed a knowledge portal with over 200 key resources and documents for

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12 The number of countries participating in the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) grew from 43 in 2000 to 72 in 2015, while the number of countries participating in the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study grew from 45 in 1995 to 58 in 2015.
13 UNESCO Institute for Statistics, Learning Assessment Capacity Index (LACI).
14 GPE, *GPE Results Report 2015/2016*.
15 Ibid.
16 See: http://nada.uis.unesco.org/nada/en/index.php/catalogue/learning_assessments.

BOX 2. IMPROVING ASSESSMENT SYSTEMS IN GPE GRANTS

In **Bangladesh**, the Global Partnership for Education, government and development partners support the development and implementation of classroom-based assessments nationwide, as well as national learning assessments at systems level.

In **Cambodia,** the partnership supports the nationwide application of the early grade reading assessment (EGRA) and the early grade mathematics assessment (EGMA), the results of which will inform pedagogical and curricular improvements in the system. The GPE-funded program includes EGRA/EGMA training for school administrators and teachers as well as technical support to the national agency conducting the assessments.

the region.[17] At the country level, the Global Partnership for Education invests in improving assessment systems through its education sector program implementation grants (ESPIGs), enabling countries to use learning data to drive improvements in the sector. As of June 2016, two-thirds of the partnership's current grants (67 percent), which award up to US$100 million to eligible developing country partners, had a component focused on learning assessments.[18]
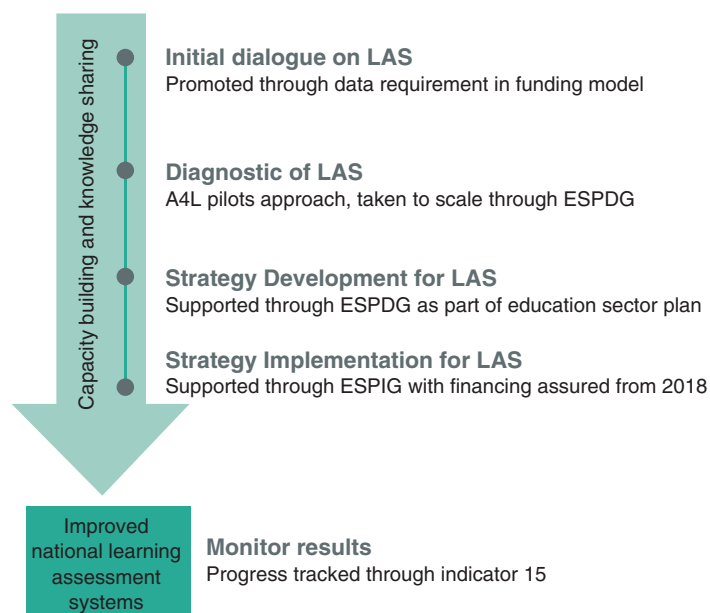
To leverage these investments, GPE is adopting a more systematic and strategic approach to strengthen learning assessment systems. In August 2017, the partnership is launching the Assessment for Learning (A4L) initiative, which works in tandem with GPE's funding model and grants to build capacity to measure and improve learning.[19] The initiative provides technical and financial assistance to support sector planning and analysis, ensuring sustainability through integration

with ESPs. A4L will strengthen the capability of regional assessment networks in Africa and Asia-Pacific to build capacity and exchange knowledge and good practice at the regional level.

The A4L initiative is being implemented in close collaboration with the Global Alliance to Monitor Learning (GAML), which brings together key stakeholders with the goal of coordinating efforts and harmonizing standards to measure learning, particularly progress toward SDG 4. GPE is a key partner in the GAML, and the Secretariat serves in the GAML Strategic Planning Committee as well as its various task forces. GPE supports GAML's plans to develop assessment modules that can be adapted to meet the specific priorities, contexts, and resources of individual countries while still benefiting from best practices and international standards.[20]

Figure 2 shows how GPE's funding model, grants, and the A4L initiative work together across the policy process to strengthen learning assessment systems in GPE

FIGURE 2. GPE'S APPROACH TO BUILD CAPACITY FOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT SYSTEMS (LAS)

Capacity building and knowledge sharing

Initial dialogue on LAS
Promoted through data requirement in funding model

Diagnostic of LAS
A4L pilots approach, taken to scale through ESPDG

Strategy Development for LAS
Supported through ESPDG as part of education sector plan

Strategy Implementation for LAS
Supported through ESPIG with financing assured from 2018

Improved national learning assessment systems

Monitor results
Progress tracked through indicator 15

17 http://www.unescobkk.org/education/quality-of-education/neqmap/activities-and-events/?utm_medium=title%25252525252525253Dgo.
18 GPE, *Portfolio Review 2016,* 54.
19 The A4L initiative is based on a concept developed through the Learning Metrics Task Force (2014–2015), which was widely consulted across 80 organizations and 71 countries.
20 Silvia Montoya and Karen Mundy, "Helping Countries Measure Learning: Deeds, Not Words," *Data for Sustainable Development* (blog), UNESCO Institute for Statistics, November 17, 2016.

developing country partners. First, the data requirement in GPE's funding model focuses national attention on the learning assessment system and promotes an initial dialogue on its efficacy to monitor learning outcomes. Second, a diagnostic of the learning assessment system can provide an in-depth understanding of the specific needs, challenges, and constraints in a country. The A4L initiative is piloting a diagnostic approach in three countries that can then be used to develop an evidence-based strategy to strengthen the learning assessment system. Education sector plan development grants will make it possible to scale this approach to all other countries in the partnership. Funds to implement the strategy can be provided through the program implementation grant. From 2018, developing country partners without a system to monitor learning outcomes will be requested to use GPE funds to fill any gaps for the implementation of their learning assessment system strategy.[21] The A4L initiative will also play a key role in supporting capacity building of national actors and knowledge exchange between countries throughout the process, via the regional assessment networks. Lastly, GPE's results framework tracks the quality of learning assessment systems to ensure progress is made in this critical area.[22]

4. GPE Support to Teachers

Teachers are central to the learning process and play a critical role in improving learning outcomes. Beyond any other school-based factor, teacher effectiveness has been found to be the most important predictor of student learning.[23] Teachers form the backbone of the education system and are a core resource for delivering quality education. They constitute the largest single expenditure in education budgets, accounting for up to 90 percent of recurrent costs in the sector.[24] To achieve quality education, it is well recognized that teachers must be "empowered, adequately recruited, well-trained, professionally qualified, motivated, and supported."[25] Teachers must also have the means to participate in actions that affect their profession and working environment.

4.1 TEACHER DEVELOPMENT

Increasing the quality and supply of teachers has become a key priority for most developing countries.[26] The UIS estimates that 69 million primary and secondary school teachers need to be recruited by 2030 in order to achieve SDG 4, with teacher shortages being most acute in Sub-Saharan Africa.[27] Furthermore, teachers need to meet minimum national qualification and training standards. In 2014 less than 80 percent of primary school teachers in 17 Sub-Saharan African countries were trained to national standards.[28]

Despite potential adverse effects on student learning, the pupil to trained teacher ratio (PTTR) in primary education remains high in many GPE developing country partners. Baseline data collected for the results framework shows that only 16 out of 55 GPE developing country partners (29 percent) were below the average threshold of 40 students per teacher in 2014.[29] Despite showing improvement from the previous

21 This change to the GPE operational model was introduced through the funding and financing framework, which was approved by the Board in February 2017.

22 Indicator 15 in the GPE results framework tracks the number of developing country partners with a learning assessment system within the basic education cycle that meets quality standards. The approach used to define quality standards builds on the learning assessment framework of the World Bank's Systems Approach for Better Education Results (SABER), which measures enabling context, assessment quality, and system alignment.

23 Hanushek & Rivkin 2010 "Generalizations about Using Value-Added Measures of Teacher Quality"; Hanushek, Kain, O'Brien & Rivkin 2005 "The Market for Teacher Quality"; Rockoff 2004 "The Impact of Individual Teachers on Student Achievement: Evidence from Panel Data"; Sanders & Rivers 1996 "Cumulative and residual effects of teachers on future student academic achievement."

24 UNESCO Institute for Statistics, "Spending on Salaries as a Percent of Recurrent Expenditures Data."

25 World Education Forum, *Education 2030: Towards inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning for all,* Incheon Declaration (May 2015).

26 United Nations, "Goal 4," Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform.

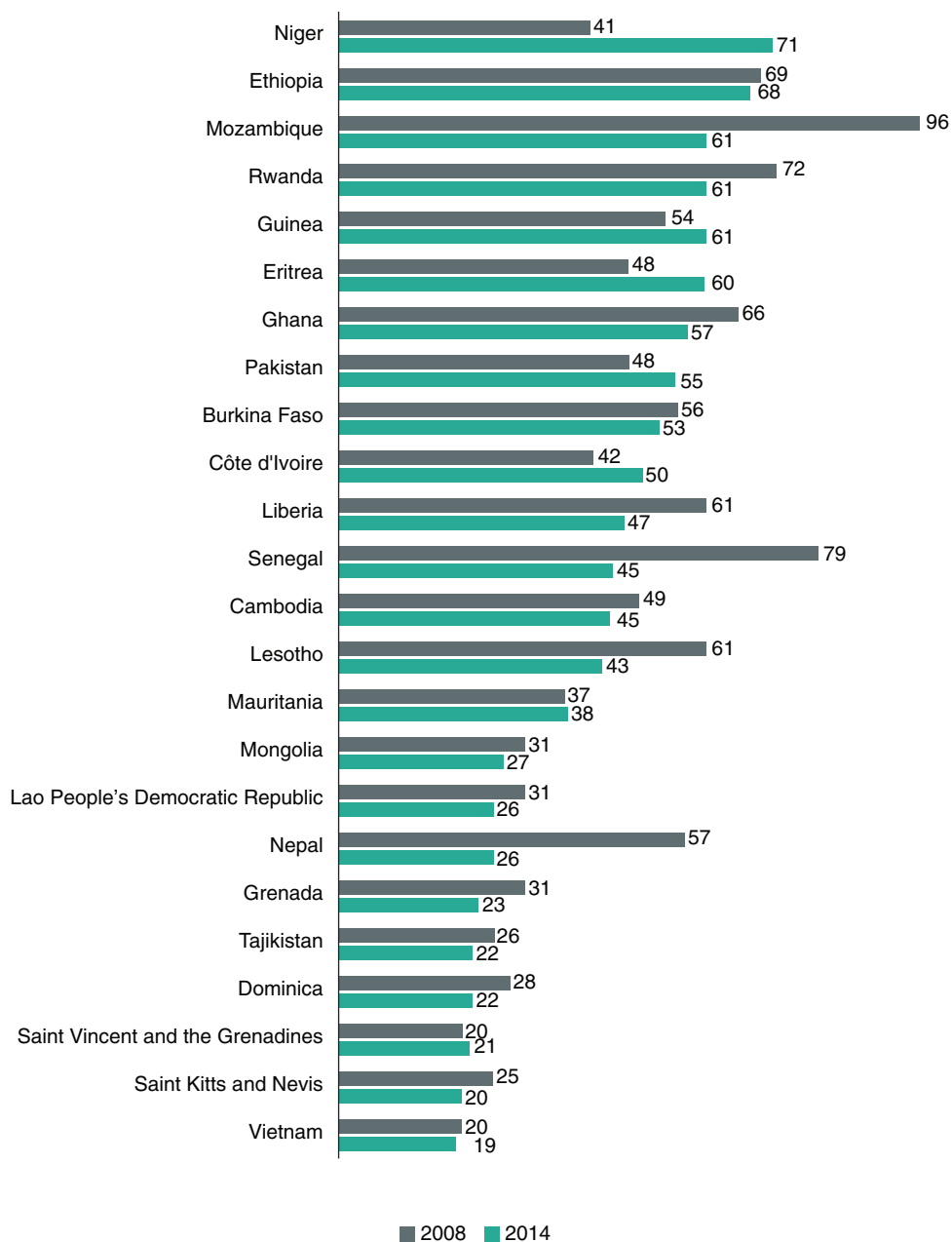27 UNESCO Institute for Statistics, "Fact sheet No. 39," October 2016.

28 Ibid.

29 GPE, *GPE Results Report 2015/2016.*

year, PTTRs were above 90 in six countries with data available since 2011, and were as high as 250 primary school students per trained teacher in one country.[30]

Nevertheless, several GPE developing country partners have made great strides in reducing PTTRs. Figure 3 presents trends for PTTR in primary education between 2008 and 2014. Of the 24 countries with available data, 14 (58 percent) made significant progress in reducing their PTTRs over the six-year period. Most notably, Mozambique decreased the number of primary students per trained teacher from 96 to 61, Senegal decreased it from 79 to 45, and Nepal from 57 to 26. In a minority of countries, the PTTR either showed no improvement

FIGURE 3. CHANGE IN PUPIL TO TRAINED TEACHER RATIO IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS BETWEEN 2008 AND 2014

Source: GPE compilation based on data of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (database), Montreal.

30 Data collected from our indicator spans 2012–2015.

(five countries) or increased (five countries). To help close the teacher gap and sustain action, the partnership will continue to track progress in the pupil to trained teacher ratio through its results framework.[31]

To remedy the quality of teachers in the system, an effective sector strategy needs to consider the number of teachers that require training, the capacity of the system to meet those needs, as well as the quality of the training that is offered. A review of 41 ESPs endorsed between 2009 and 2013 found that all plans had a strategy to train teachers.

However, only 60 percent of the plans provided information on the level of training and or qualification of teachers in the system, 41 percent reported on the system's capacity to train the required number of teachers, and 27 percent investigated the quality of teacher training to determine whether student teachers acquired the required competencies to teach. Only one ESP in the sample had information on all three factors, whereas a little more than a quarter had no information on any. Data to inform the planning process and guide policy decisions on teacher training is still a challenge in many countries.[32]

As of June 2016, nearly all GPE-funded programs (93 percent) had components that focus on teacher training, with a larger number of grants covering in-service training (83 percent) than pre-service training (41 percent).[33] Programs include a wide range of activities that extend beyond the actual training, including the collection of data to inform program components.

The number of teachers trained with support of GPE has more than doubled in recent years, going from around 98,000 teachers in 2014 to 238,000 in 2016.[34]

4.2 TEACHER MANAGEMENT

Teacher management is a key concern for many GPE developing country partners, as the quantity, composition, and allocation of the teacher workforce has

> **BOX 3. TEACHER TRAINING IN GPE-FUNDED PROGRAMS**
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> In **São Tomé and Príncipe**, the Global Partnership for Education supports the establishment of a national system of in-service teacher training, which includes evaluating teacher competencies, defining a competency-based training framework, developing training plans, setting up a certification process, and training teachers.
>
> In **Togo**, the partnership supports teacher training on the new curriculum and use of textbooks, the development of a new teacher training policy informed by an assessment of teacher competencies, as well as resources and equipment for the teacher training department and teacher training institutes.
>
> In **Niger**, the partnership supports the construction of three teacher training institutes, the training of trainers, the development of new training modules on reading, as well as the training of contract teachers.

a large impact on the functioning of the education system. In a context of high teacher shortages, effective management is even more critical to the equitable delivery of education services.

There are many issues linked to teacher management. The rapid increase of enrollments has led many countries to recruit large numbers of untrained teachers, which can have implications on the quality of teaching. Large disparities in the allocation of teachers also affect equitable service delivery. The professional status of teachers and their remuneration also affects the size and composition of the workforce. When the teaching profession is of low status, it is difficult to recruit and retain good teachers contributing to higher teacher attrition. When the status of teaching improves,

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31 Indicator 12 in the results framework tracks the number of developing country partners with a pupil to trained teacher ratio below threshold (<40) at the primary level.
32 Only a third of the ESPs included the collection of additional data on teacher competencies/training as part of their sector strategies.
33 GPE, *Portfolio Review 2016,* 54.
34 Ibid., 49.

teachers are better motivated and have more job satis-faction, which increases their performance as well as student learning.[35]

One issue that is particularly strategic for the part-nership is the deployment and allocation of teachers. Teachers are the central resource within the education system, and the system's capacity to dispatch teach-ers across schools in an equitable manner reflects the degree of efficiency and equity within a system. In many partner developing countries, the number of teachers in a school is not proportional to the num-ber of students, with remote and disadvantaged areas receiving fewer teachers.[36] For example, the 2014 Country Status Report of Chad points out that schools with 600 students can have anywhere between 3 and 15 teachers, producing vastly different learning condi-tions for students and unequal opportunities to learn.[37] Moreover, given that teacher salaries make up the larg-est share of recurrent education expenditures, ratio-nalizing teachers' postings is necessary to limit further recruitment costs and make the most efficient use of existing resources. For this reason, the GPE results framework tracks the equitable distribution of teachers across education systems.[38]

The ESP analysis yielded interesting information regarding strategies addressing issues related to the management of teachers. Nearly all of the ESPs (85 per-cent) reviewed, that were endorsed between 2009 and 2013, have a strategy to recruit more teachers. Three-quarters (73 percent) have a strategy to address issues linked to teacher deployment and two-thirds (66 percent) have a strategy to address issues linked to teacher remuneration. However, not all countries presented data or analysis that informed these strate-gies. In the case of teacher deployment, only 42 percent of the ESPs contained an analysis on the issue, and of the 24 ESPs without information, only five planned to collect some in the future.

As of June 2016, about half (52 percent) of all GPE-funded programs had a component to improve teacher management.[39] These components cover the many facets of teacher management, including teacher recruitment (26 percent), teacher deployment (19 per-cent), teacher remuneration (22 percent), and teacher management systems (26 percent). Most GPE-funded programs (60 percent) cover more than one aspect, with a different focus depending on the context.

BOX 4. TEACHER MANAGEMENT IN GPE-FUNDED PROGRAMS

In **Sierra Leone**, the Global Partnership for Education is building the capacity of the newly established Teachers Services Commission to develop policies and procedures around the recruitment, placement, transfer, profes-sional development, and promotion of teachers working both at central and local levels. It also supports the development and maintenance of the teacher record management system and payroll system.

A GPE-funded program in **Afghanistan** includes social support systems and incentives for new female teachers working in challenging areas with low levels of girls' participation in education.

In the **Central African Republic**, the partner-ship supports a transitional plan that includes the recruitment, deployment, and financing of contract teachers, as well as the development of a database of community teachers that will inform procedures for awarding subsidies.

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35 UNESCO, *Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2015: Education for All 2000–2015; Achievements and Challenges* (Paris: UNESCO, 2015).

36 Of a sample of 21 GPE developing country partners with available data from 2010 to 2014, only six had a fair allocation of teachers ($R^2 \geq 0.80$), meaning 80 percent or more of the allocations depended on the number of students.

37 International Institute for Educational Planning Pôle de Dakar, *Teacher Allocation and Utilization in Africa* (Dakar: IIEP Pôle de Dakar, 2016).

38 Indicator 11 in the results framework will track the equitable allocation of teachers, as measured by the relationship between the number of teachers and the number of students per school (commonly referred to as the R^2) in each developing country partner.

39 GPE, *Portfolio Review 2016*.

4.3 ENGAGING TEACHERS AND CIVIL SOCIETY FOR EFFECTIVE POLICY DIALOGUE

Teachers are a critical voice in policy dialogue, and their engagement in policymaking is essential for successful education reforms. They are the closest to school-level realities and beneficiaries and can help ensure that policy dialogue is grounded in the local education context. The Global Partnership for Education promotes the participation of teacher organizations in all stages of the policy process, from the ESP's development to its implementation, through their involvement in the local education group (LEG). The partnership tracks progress toward the inclusion of these bodies in local policy tables and annual joint sector reviews through the results framework.[40] Baseline data from 2016 suggests that 48 percent (29 out of 61) of developing country partners had participation from teacher organizations in LEGs.[41] New GPE research on LEGs will support greater action in this area.

Through the GRA program, the partnership provided US$1.9 million to strengthen the technical and organizational capacity of teacher organizations to engage in policy dialogue. Partnering with UNESCO and Education International, national-level capacity development workshops for teacher organizations were conducted in the 10 participating countries.[42] Their aim was to encourage teachers to assess the current issues affecting teacher effectiveness in their respective education systems in conjunction with ministry officials and to support them to propose evidence-based policy interventions to the LEGs. Seven countries have since implemented actions plans to address identified weaknesses in teacher policies, and several policy papers have been produced to use in policy dialogue with the LEGs.

The Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF), which aims to improve the quality of the national policy dialogue and strengthen government accountability, enables national coalitions to play an invaluable role in advocating for quality education and improved teacher conditions. With financial support from the partnership

> ### BOX 5. HOW THE CSEF ACHIEVES RESULTS AT THE COUNTRY LEVEL IN GHANA
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> CSEF support enabled the Ghana National Education Campaign Coalition (GNECC) to conduct an analysis, which revealed large inequities in teacher deployment. A position paper highlighting the shortages of trained teachers in rural and marginalized areas was prepared and widely circulated. Consequently, the minister of education publicly mentioned the GNECC's research and the president of Ghana raised the issue in a national speech.

totaling US$66.1 million from 2009 through 2018, the CSEF provides grants to 62 coalitions comprising thousands of civil society organizations.[43] Under the coordination of the Global Campaign for Education (GCE), the CSEF supports coalitions to strengthen their impact through strategic engagement in international policy spaces such as the International Teacher Task Force, facilitated policy engagement to lobby for important topics, and monitoring programs and budgets, such as the budget execution on teacher policies.

5. GPE Support for Improved Instruction

Good teaching requires more than just a teacher. Certain elements are key to support the learning process and ensure all students can master basic foundational skills. This section focuses on three of these factors: the availability of quality learning materials, sufficient instructional time and effective pedagogies in the early grades.

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40 Indicator 19 in the GPE results framework tracks the number of LEGs with civil society and teacher representation.
41 GPE, *GPE Results Report 2015/2016.*
42 Benin, Democratic Republic of Congo, Côte D'Ivoire, The Gambia, Haiti, Liberia, Mali, Nepal, Senegal and Uganda.
43 These organizations include community-based organizations, national and local nongovernmental organizations, teacher organizations, parents associations, academic or research institutions, women's groups, youth groups and other grassroots organizations.

5.1 LEARNING MATERIALS

Studies show that quality textbooks are among the most important and cost-effective investments in improving student learning in developing countries, particularly in environments where students lack access to books at home.[44] However, the availability of learning materials in key subjects remains a challenge. Evidence from 10 francophone Sub-Saharan African countries shows that in most cases children must share textbooks. In Chad, more than 90 percent of second-grade students share one textbook with three or more students.[45] Current practices in the development, procurement and distribution of books do not ensure equal access to all students.[46] Furthermore, ensuring textbooks are of good quality, are in the appropriate language, and are used in the classroom is also a challenge. ESPs generally have a strategy to address the shortage of learning materials at the primary and secondary levels, but not all are based on analysis.[47]

The Global Partnership for Education supports its developing county partners to increase the supply and use of quality learning materials through its implementation grants. As of June 2016, the majority of GPE-funded programs (76 percent) had a component to finance the development and provision of learning materials.

To date, the partnership has contributed to the distribution of more than 1.6 billion textbooks in GPE partner developing countries.[48]

BOX 6. GPE AND LEARNING MATERIAL DEVELOPMENT

In **Togo**, the Global Partnership for Education supports the development of new curricula and the provision of textbooks and teacher guides in math and reading for the early grades across all primary schools. A training module on the effective use of books will be developed and the utilization of books in the classroom will be assessed. Finally, lessons learned with regard to publishing, printing, distribution and usage of textbooks will inform the development of a national policy for textbooks.

In **Niger**, GPE supports the provision of around 7 million textbooks and 125,000 teacher guides in core subjects for primary and lower secondary education, as well the revision of textbooks in primary education to align to the new curricula.

5.2 INSTRUCTIONAL TIME

Learning requires time for teachers and students to interact and engage in learning activities. However, various factors contribute to the loss of instructional time in many developing countries.[49] Data collected from seven Sub-Saharan African countries show that out of an average scheduled daily teaching time of 5 hours 31 minutes, teachers spend on average 2 hours

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44 M. Boissiere, 2004. "Determinants of Primary Education Outcomes in Developing Countries," background paper for the evaluation of the World Bank's support to primary education, World Bank, Washington, DC; M. Lockheed and A. Verspoor, *Improving Primary Education in Developing Countries. A World Bank Study* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 1990); Lant Pritchett and Deon Filmer, "What Education Production Functions Really Show: A Positive Theory of Education Expenditure," *Economics of Education Review* 18, no. 2 (April 1999): 223-39.

45 PASEC. *PASEC 2014: Education System Performance in Francophone Sub-Saharan Africa; Competencies and Learning Factors in Primary Education* (Dakar: CONFEMEN, 2015).

46 Global Book Fund—Feasibility study.

47 Out of 41 ESPs reviewed, all had a strategy to address the supply of textbooks, but only 60 percent presented information on the management or availability of textbooks to inform the strategy.

48 GPE, *Portfolio Review: 2016,* 13; Global Partnership for Education, *Portfolio Review: 2015* (Washington, DC: GPE, 2015), 34; Global Partnership for Education, *Grant Portfolio Review: 2014* (Washington, DC: GPE, 2014), 35; Global Partnership for Education, *GPE Portfolio Review: 2013* (Washington, DC: GPE, 2013), 40.

49 Helen Abadzi, "Instructional Time Loss in Developing Countries: Concepts, Measurement, and Implications," *World Bank Research Observer* 24, no. 2 (August 2009): 267–90.

53 minutes teaching, using only half of the available time for instruction.[50]

Of the 41 plans reviewed in the ESP analysis, 60 percent included a strategy to address the loss of instructional time in schools. However, few of these strategies were based on data and analysis. Only about a third of the ESPs (34 percent) had some information on the time students spend in school, roughly a quarter (24 percent) mentioned double shifts, less than 10 percent had information on teacher or student absenteeism, and only two plans had data on time on task.

As of June 2016, about a quarter of the partnership's implementation grants (28 percent) had components that directly support instructional time. Activities include providing teachers with training to make better use of time in the classroom, setting up school monitoring systems, training to monitor teacher absenteeism and instructional time, or undertaking studies to collect data. For example, in Mali GPE supports school management committees to monitor school activities, such as the attendance of teachers and students.

5.3 EARLY GRADES

In the first years of primary school, children are expected to acquire basic literacy and numeracy skills that will determine their ability to continue learning. Sufficient instructional time, appropriate pedagogy, and learning in the children's mother tongue are seen to play a critical role in the development of these skills.[51]

However, low learning levels in the early grades are leading to millions of children leaving the system before they acquire basic skills.[52] Students who struggle with basic literacy and numeracy are likely to struggle throughout their schooling and are more likely to drop out. A study in Senegal shows that controlling for all other factors, learning outcomes in grade 2 were the best predictor of completing primary education.[53] Moreover, in Sub-Saharan Africa more than 90 percent of students do not learn in their native language.[54]

The Global Partnership for Education supports the improvement of early grade achievement through its program implementation grants. As of June 2016, half of GPE-funded programs (50 percent) had an early grade component. Examples of activities include the training of teachers and trainers in effective pedagogies, the development of tools and strategies, the use of mother tongue languages, the provision of learning materials, the implementation or evaluation of comprehensive pilot programs, and early grade assessments in reading and math.

BOX 7. GPE EARLY GRADE SUPPORT IN THE GAMBIA AND KENYA

In **The Gambia**, the Global Partnership for Education supports the implementation and evaluation of early reading programs in national languages through teacher training, provision of supplementary readers and library books, regular monitoring using a classroom observation tool, and early grade reading and math assessments.

In **Kenya**, the partnership supports the scaling of an intervention to improve early grade math competency to over 17,000 primary schools in remote and disadvantaged areas. The program consists of teacher training, the provision of learning materials, enhancing teacher pedagogical supervision and support, and surveying student performance.

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50 Waly Wane and Gayle Martin, *Education Service Delivery in Tanzania* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2016).
51 UNESCO, *Education for All Global Monitoring Report: Education for All 2000–2015.*
52 Ibid.
53 L. Crouch, "Why Early Grade Reading: An Economist's Perspective," presentation given at All Children Reading Workshop, Kigali, Rwanda, February 28, 2012.
54 ICFGEO, *The Learning Generation, 62.*

The partnership's GRA program also provides regional grants to partner organizations to improve learning in the early grades. Examples include the following:

- A project to improve early grade reading in Burkina Faso, Niger and Senegal through capacity-building workshops focused on curriculum development, tool development, and alignment with classroom practice and assessments

- A project piloting bilingual literacy programs in the early grades in eight Sub-Saharan African countries

- A project that aims to improve school readiness and early grade reading in Papua New Guinea and Pacific island countries

6. GPE's Results in Partner Developing Countries

6.1 ETHIOPIA: ADDRESSING THE QUALITY GAP IN TEACHING AND LEARNING

With one of the lowest enrollment rates in the world in the early 1990s, the Ethiopian education system expanded from 10 million learners to more than 25 million today.[55] Increasing enrollments meant that the quality of education quickly became strained, with shortfalls in financing, insufficient supply of textbooks, and inadequate qualifications of teachers, among other challenges.

Since joining the Global Partnership for Education in 2004, Ethiopia has received four grants totaling US$337 million to support the country's General Education Quality Improvement Program (GEQIP).[56] The GEQIP is a nationwide reform to improve teaching and learning conditions in 40,000 primary and secondary schools and boost capacity of the entire education system. Through GPE funding and other donor support, more than 100,000 primary teachers and 17,000 secondary teachers are upgrading their qualifications from a one-year certificate level to a three-year diploma level in accordance with newly adopted regulations.[57] Between 2006 and 2013, the percentage of in-service teachers with appropriate qualifications (diploma or degree) increased from 3 percent to 44 percent in grades 1–4 and from 53 percent to 92 percent in grades 5–8.[58]

GPE funding helped the government of Ethiopia reach its ambitious target of a 1:1 student-textbook ratio by 2013, contributing to the delivery of 142 million textbooks to all primary and secondary school learners in core subjects.[59] The project also established quality standards of textbook content, developed 220 new textbook titles, and produced textbooks and teacher guides in seven mother tongues to reach as many ethnic groups as possible.

GEQIP and other programs addressing the quality of teaching and learning in Ethiopia have contributed to a significant improvement in student achievement. Between 2011 and 2015, the total number of grade 4 students achieving basic proficiency or higher in all subjects increased from 505,000 to 792,000.[60] At the grade 8 level, the increase is more dramatic. The total number of students achieving basic proficiency or higher in all subjects doubled from 143,000 to 314,000.[61] Although more remains to be done to ensure all children reach minimum levels of proficiency, these figures show a step in the right direction.

55 Enrollment in primary education data from the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (database), Montreal (accessed 2016).
56 The GEQIP is financed from several development partners through a pooled funding mechanism, with the World Bank as implementing partner.
57 World Bank, *Implementation Status and Results Report: Ethiopia General Education Quality Improvement Project II* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2016).
58 World Bank, *Ethiopia: General Education Quality Improvement Project—Apl 1 (geqip)* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2015).
59 Ibid.
60 World Bank, *Striving for Excellence: Analysis of Ethiopia National Learning Assessments 2011–2015* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2016).
61 Ibid.

6.2 ZIMBABWE: STRENGTHENING TEACHER MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS TO SUPPORT PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Over the past two decades, economic crisis and political instability in Zimbabwe have contributed to a severe decline of trained teaching staff. By 2008, about 20,000 teachers had left their positions and a large number of unqualified teachers were contracted to fill the gap, with rural and marginalized schools having significantly higher numbers of unqualified temporary teachers.

Zimbabwe joined the Global Partnership for Education in 2013 and has received two grants totaling US$44.2 million. The first grant (2013–2016) focused on improving supervision and management of teacher performance and development.[62] The grant aimed to strengthen teacher performance through the establishment of teacher professional standards (TPS), which identify what teachers should know and be able to do in the classroom to better prepare children and improve learning. The TPS were developed through a highly participatory process, involving key stakeholders at central and local levels to ensure ownership.[63] The TPS, accompanying handbook, training manual and supervision instruments were nationally distributed to about 128,000 teachers. The TPS now form the basis of all supervision and mentoring of teachers across the country.[64]

Another component of the GPE-funded program was to establish a teacher development information system (TDIS) database. The TDIS was installed in every district and education office in 2014; it includes information on teacher age, experience, qualifications, performance and training received or recommended.[65] As a result, the ministry now has a complete and accurate picture on the skill gaps in the teaching force, which will help to target teacher professional development needs efficiently and effectively. TPS data will be entered into the TDIS system, and will help to ensure a fair allocation of qualified teachers in all schools.

The new data on teachers have strengthened the government's capacity for responsive and data-driven teacher development planning. The results have contributed to the education sector performance review in late July 2015 and the education sector analysis in June 2015, which have fed into the development of the 2016–2020 education sector strategic plan (ESSP) and the accompanying operational plans.[66]

6.3 SUDAN: BUILDING SYSTEMS TO COLLECT DATA ON TEACHING AND LEARNING

Sudan joined the Global Partnership for Education in 2012, following a political crisis that left more than 2 million people internally displaced. With no system to collect basic education data on service delivery and learning outcomes, the government was determined to build capacity to collect, analyze, and use data for educational planning and system-wide improvements.

Sudan received a GPE grant of US$76.5 million to assist in the implementation of the Basic Education Recovery Project, which focuses on improving the learning environment for basic education and strengthening education management and planning.[67] A GPE project supported the establishment of a national learning assessment (NLA), which rolled out in 2015 across 18 states, involving approximately 10,000 students in more than 450 schools.[68] The assessment helps gauge the literacy and numeracy skills of students at the end of grade 3.

A GPE grant also supported the development and operationalization of a rapid results education management information system (EMIS). Data were first collected

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62 UNICEF is implementing the GPE-funded program.

63 Key stakeholders included principal directors and provincial directors, MoHTE (including Department of Teacher Education, Teacher College Principals, Universities, Polytechnics), partner organizations that have been working in the field of teacher education, UNICEF, and UNESCO.

64 UNICEF Zimbabwe. *Annual Progress Report Prepared for GPE; April 2015–March 2016* (Zimbabwe: UNICEF, 2016).

65 Ibid.

66 Ibid.

67 The World Bank is the implementing partner for the program.

68 Global Partnership for Education. "Aide Memoire: Sudan Basic Education Recovery Project (P128644)," October 2015.

from all schools in 2014, and the system has been updated annually to ensure the availability of accurate educational data.[69] These surveys currently provide the most reliable and consistent information on basic and secondary education in Sudan. Exposure to the tool is helping to build the capacity of the education system as a whole and lays the foundation for a full EMIS in the future.

Despite the challenges related to collecting data in a fragile post-conflict context, strong government support and a consultative process have improved system-level information on learning inputs and outcomes in Sudan. The results will be used to develop proper evidence-based plans to address urgent needs and will help to ensure that public investments in basic education translate into the provision of quality education and learning for all students.

6.4 VIETNAM: ADAPTING AND SCALING SUCCESSFUL TEACHING AND LEARNING PRACTICES

Over the last two decades, Vietnam has achieved significant economic growth and reduction in poverty. Despite strong government commitment to education and important progress in the sector, improving the quality of teaching and learning remained a central challenge for Vietnam, particularly for disadvantaged and minority groups.[70]

In 2013 Vietnam received its first GPE grant of US$84.6 million, to implement the Vietnam Escuela Nueva (VNEN) project, an adaptation of the well-known Escuela Nueva program in Colombia. The Escuela Nueva model features participative and collaborative child-centered classroom practices, self-paced learning guides, teacher professional networks and community involvement.

The model brings together the development and provision of teaching-learning materials, training on the use of materials, and additional inputs and continued support for schools, constituting a comprehensive package for pedagogical and administrative reform. With the World Bank as implementing partner, the Vietnamese project scaled up a pilot from 24 schools with high ethnic minority populations to 1,447 schools also from some of the most disadvantaged districts in the country.

With GPE support, the VNEN program has trained 52,795 primary education teachers and administrators, and delivered learning materials to all 1,447 primary schools.[71] An impact evaluation of the VNEN program that tested students from 650 schools found that VNEN students performed as well or better in Vietnamese and mathematics than traditional school students.[72] Data from the evaluation also showed a positive impact on the socioemotional skills of children attending VNEN schools. Vietnam's 2015 PISA results are also noteworthy. Vietnamese students facing the greatest disadvantage were among the most resilient, outperforming the most advantaged students in about 20 other countries.[73]

By the close of the project in May 2016, the VNEN model had spread to an additional 2,671 primary schools and 1,214 lower secondary schools, and had influenced the approaches used by pre-service teacher training institutions.[74] The Ministry of Education and Training also committed to continuing many aspects of the VNEN project and to inform the overall curriculum reform under way.

69 Ibid.
70 World Bank, "Project Appraisal Document on a Proposed Global Partnership for Education Funded Grant: Vietnam Escuela Nueva Project," report no. 72285-VN, November 2012, World Bank, Washington, DC.
71 World Bank, "Implementation Completion and Results Report (TF-13048)," report no. ICR00003864, November 2016, World Bank, Washington, DC.
72 World Bank, *Enhancing School Quality in Vietnam through Participative and Collaborative Learning: Vietnam Escuela Nueva Impact Evaluation Study* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2017).
73 OECD, *Program for International Student Assessment 2015: Results in Focus* (Paris: OECD, 2016).
74 World Bank, "Implementation Completion and Results Report (TF-13048)."

7. Conclusions

Improved and more equitable learning outcomes for all are at the heart of the Global Partnership for Education's 2020 strategy. GPE's country-level operational model brings together diverse stakeholders in support of a nationally led education sector plan and its implementation, enabling countries to identify and address key challenges contributing to poor levels of learning in a participatory and inclusive way. The partnership's results-based funding model encourages countries to set transformative strategies to improve learning and achieve their own learning targets. At the global level, GPE leverages the strengths of the partnership to support the exchange of knowledge of good practice.

The partnership has also given strategic priority to key areas in teaching and learning, reflected in its results

framework. It will track the availability and equitable distribution of teachers, the quality of learning assessment systems, and improvements in learning outcomes.

A key challenge for the partnership is the lack of data around these critical issues, and a lack of understanding of the key drivers of low learning outcomes in specific country contexts. More needs to be done across the partnership to strengthen the availability of data, analysis, and its use in policy processes. GPE is up to the challenge and is committed to improving the learning outcomes of children and youth across GPE partner developing countries. Similar to its A4L initiative, GPE will continue to develop new initiatives to ensure global action supports the achievement of the goals and objectives of the countries and the partnership.

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