



PRIVATE SECTOR

Working Together for
Effective Partnership

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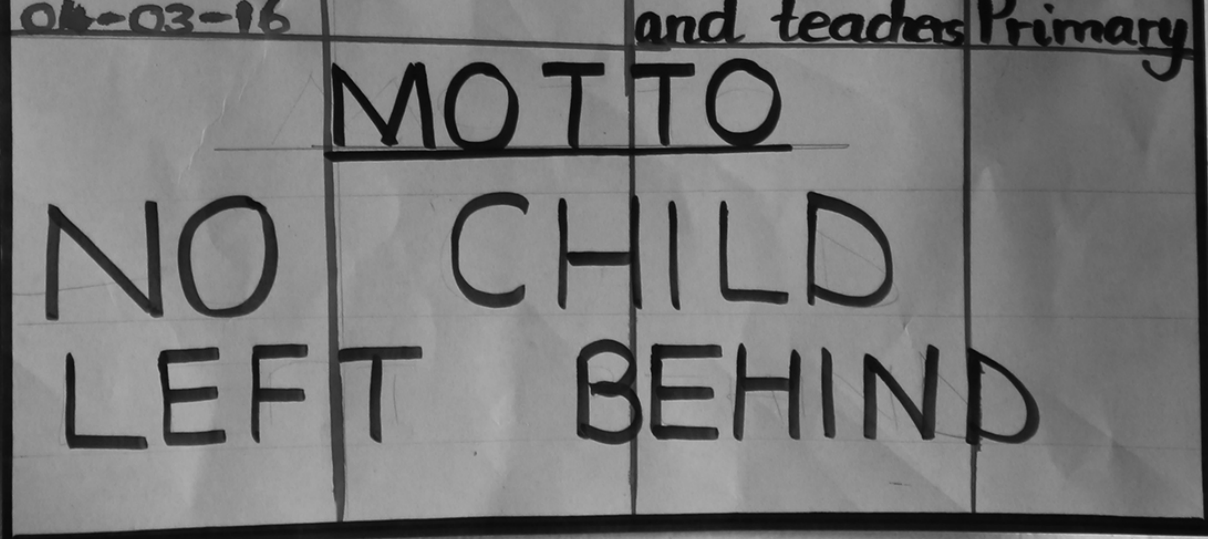
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WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A GPE PARTNER?



Credit: UNICEF Burundi/Nijimbere



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SUMMARY

The global learning crisis continues to threaten the future of millions of children and derail economic progress in low-income countries. While noteworthy progress has been made and significantly more children are in school and learning, the learning crisis is increasing due to population growth, education system challenges, natural disasters and pandemics. Partnership with the business community can make a pivotal difference in resolving education sector bottlenecks that prevent the delivery of quality education to every child.

The Global Partnership for Education is well positioned to leverage private sector expertise and give the sector a stronger voice in country policy and planning processes as well as through engagement in global forums and multi-stakeholder initiatives. Industry partnerships, business associations and individual businesses are encouraged to share their expertise and resources to help transform education systems for the 21st century and to identify innovative solutions to advance quality learning opportunities for all children.



Credit: GPE/Stephan Bachenheimer

How the Private Sector Contributes to an Effective Partnership

The private sector is uniquely positioned to help address the many challenges faced by the education sector. For example, through corporate social responsibility initiatives, solutions for the effective delivery of education content and services can be found and relevant links between education and job opportunities developed.

GPE seeks to mobilize partners to act on the belief that inclusive collaboration is the most effective means of achieving development results. Private sector partners can engage in the partnership both at global and country level.

GPE is governed by a constituency-based, multi-stakeholder Board of Directors, including a private sector constituency. Each constituency nominates a Board member and alternate Board member and can also nominate members to GPE's governance committees. Private sector representatives on GPE's Board and committees reach out to constituency members to consult on proposed decisions and policies and agree on input to GPE governance structures. You can find out here who the private sector Board and alternate Board members are. You can also find out more about private sector representation in GPE's Board committees.



Credit: GPE/Chor Sokunthea

Through representation on the GPE Board, the private sector constituency provides inputs and views on GPE's strategies, policies and practices; contributes to oversight of progress on GPE's strategic plan; and ensures that GPE is shaping and responding to the global debate on education.

The GPE Secretariat works closely with networks and associations such as the Global Business Coalition for Education and other national and international business coalitions and networks to support the business community's involvement in the education sector.

In GPE partner countries, the participation and engagement of private sector partners in local education groups can help strengthen education systems and enable effective delivery of equitable education services.

Broad and representative voices in discussions regarding the development, implementation and monitoring of education sector policies and plans can help create education systems that are more responsive to the needs and challenges of children, parents and teachers. This helps build broader consensus around policy priorities and reforms, which in turn can lead to effective system-level change and impact.

Engagement of private sector partners at country level can help maximize resources for achieving education system impact. The private sector brings unique perspectives to local education group and in-country policy and planning discussions. By sharing experiences, knowledge, expertise and resources, the business community can also play a critical role in contributing to domestic financing, improving efficiency, and closing policy and accountability gaps.

Aligning private sector investments with country systems offers unique opportunities to support domestic financing, policy, strategy, reforms, implementation and coordination.



Credit: GPE/Koli Banik

The Role Played by the Private Sector in GPE's Country-Level Work

Many GPE partner countries engage the business community alongside development partners to address systemic challenges, including through financing. Like other stakeholders within the partnership, the position of the private sector and its ability to perform, engage and influence varies across partner countries. The private sector can support system-level impact through:

- Actively leveraging sector-focused innovations, specialized expertise, resources and networks to tackle some of the most urgent problems facing education systems. Private sector inclusion in country-level dialogue can be instrumental in unblocking challenges.
- Funding frontier research and technology-focused diagnosis of sector challenges to support ministries of education in efforts to address systemic issues such as data challenges.
- Providing meaningful and effective support to education sector analysis and to the development, implementation and monitoring of government-owned education sector plans.



Credit: UNICEF Burundi/Colfs

- Supporting governments to increase private sector contributions and align these to national priorities.
- Supporting governments to strengthen policy and regulatory environments for private sector participation in education (core and ancillary services).
- Providing advocacy to advance the rights, needs and inclusion of vulnerable and marginalized populations, as well as advocacy for increased education budgets, predictability of financing and equitable distribution of resources to enable all children to access quality learning opportunities.
- Supporting education in conflict-affected contexts. Over 60 percent of GPE's funding is targeted towards fragile and conflict-affected contexts where conditions pose significant challenges to both public and private sector operations and investments. Partnering with the private sector can support new ways of leveraging and maximizing funding and resources, especially in the areas of workforce development and relief and reconstruction activities.
- Joining the private sector constituency managed by the Global Business Coalition for Education and increasing the engagement of the business community in education.



Credit: GPE/Kelley Lynch

Private Sector Accountability

In 2019, GPE's Board of Directors adopted an 'Accountability Matrix' to clarify what is expected from different GPE stakeholders to enable the partnership to achieve its vision and goals.

GPE's relationship with private sector partners is governed by the following:

- [The GPE Charter](#): Highlights the unique and complementary role that the private sector can play in advocacy, policy dialogue and the education planning process in partner countries.
- [Corporate Engagement Principles](#): Suggests possible roles for the business community at global and national level and supports transparency and accountability for all stakeholders engaged in partnerships with partner country governments.
- [Avoiding Conflicts of Interest](#): Guidelines for Business Engagement: Sets out additional clarifying notes on potential conflicts of interest in relation to business engagement within GPE.
- [GPE's Private Sector Engagement Strategy](#): Summarizes GPE's private sector engagement at global and country level as well as parameters for successful GPE collaboration with businesses that have a clear investment benefit for GPE, with a focus on strengthening national education systems



At the country level, private sector partners are expected to advance education sector outcomes through the following accountabilities:

- Adhering to and respecting the policies and approaches of sovereign national governments within the parameters agreed by the broader partnership
- Engaging on the basis of a shared bottom line for GPE and the private sector, anchored in concrete activities with particular attention to transparency to ensure no single company is gaining unique information or positioning
- Pursuing country-level engagement focused on securing systems-level impact and improved education outcomes
- Anchoring engagement and activities in specific GPE mechanisms such as local education groups
- Supporting efforts to achieve SDG 4 goals and objectives based on national needs and priorities



Credit: GPE/Kelley Lynch

Private Sector GPE Engagement in Practice

There are various ways to connect with GPE processes in a specific country:

- You can find information about GPE's engagement in a country by selecting the country on the '[Where we work](#)' section of the GPE website. You will be able to see the Secretariat contact person and which partner holds the coordinating agency role. You will also find a copy of the country's education sector plan, as well as documents for GPE grants and other key documents outlining national education priorities. These documents provide an opportunity to assess potential areas for alignment of corporate social responsibility priorities and social impact partnerships with the government and implementing partners at country level.
- If a private sector partner works with the ministry of education, the best approach may be to enquire with the ministry partner regarding local education group participation or representation, ensuring adherence to GPE's conflict of interest guidelines where direct references are made to GPE.
- You can also reach out to the Secretariat lead for a specific country to enquire whether private sector partners are represented in the local education group or engaged in GPE in any way, and to get advice on how to get involved engaged in GPE in any way, and to get advice on how to get involved.
- In case of multiple private sector partners being active in the education sector in a country, it may be advisable to coordinate local education group representation with these organizations.
- In countries where the private sector has limited access to policy dialogue and planning opportunities, GPE – including through the Secretariat's private sector team – can support enhanced access and help convene partners around priority areas within the national sector plan.

RESOURCES

[Country-Level Guide: Recommended Education Sector and GPE Grants Processes](#)

[Principles Toward Effective Local Education Groups](#)

[LEG Self-Assessment and Performance Feedback Tools](#)

[Terms of Reference for GPE Secretariat's Country-Level Role](#)

[Private Sector Strategy at a Glance](#)

[Education Data Solutions Roundtable](#)

[Corporate Engagement Principles](#)

[Avoiding Conflicts of Interest](#)

[GPE's Private Sector Engagement Strategy](#)

[Knowledge and Innovation Exchange \(KIX\)](#)

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