

BUSINESS & PRIVATE FOUNDATIONS: PARTNERING WITH GPE



6th grade classroom at Kisiwandui primary school in Zanzibar Tanzania.
GPE/Chantal Rigaud

The business and foundation communities are a vital part of the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), bringing in-kind strategic capabilities and philanthropic financial co-investment to the drive to transform education systems in lower-income countries.

MAKING TRANSFORMATION

GPE partner countries develop strategies and define priorities for producing much-needed education systems transformation—transformation to boost quality and improve access to ensure the most vulnerable girls and boys have opportunities to go to school and learn.

The business and private foundation communities play an important part in making those transformations happen. They provide both philanthropic financial co-investment and in-kind strategic capabilities that help partner countries shape and implement initiatives aimed at making fundamental change.

GPE provides support for up to 90 eligible lower-income countries and territories to make their vision of transformed education systems a reality. Partner countries' strategies are deep and far-reaching, encompassing entire national education systems.

Their work – and all of GPE's work – makes tangible progress toward achieving SDG 4.

HOW THE BUSINESS AND PRIVATE FOUNDATION COMMUNITIES WORK WITH GPE

Participating members of the business and private foundation communities are full development partners with GPE. Their work and financial support align with the priorities and needs of GPE partner countries' ministries of education. GPE coordinates the development of program pathways designed to bring strategic capabilities and financial support to bear in ways that directly advance countries' education transformation priorities.

Governance

Both the business and foundation communities play an important part in GPE governance and organizational strategy development. The private foundations community is represented on the GPE Board of Directors by the LEGO Foundation, with Kenya's Firelight Foundation as an alternate member. The business community is represented on the Board by the Global Business Coalition for Education.

Strategic capabilities

Strategic capabilities from the business and private foundation communities can create breakthroughs by bringing valuable and often game-changing expertise, new ideas and implementation know-how.

Tech-savvy partner companies, for example, bring strategic capabilities that can help education ministries strengthen their data systems. These systems are critical to providing insight, evidence and analysis for ministries of education to improve education quality and reach. Private foundations also bring expertise, experience, energy and innovation into the education space.

GPE provides matching funds for in-kind contributions of strategic capabilities for qualifying partner-country initiatives. This is through the [GPE Match](#) mechanism, new in 2021 and available only to private foundations and the business community.

Financial co-investment

GPE provides financial co-investment opportunities for companies and private foundations to support initiatives that help advance partner countries' strategies and priorities.

The [GPE Match](#) doubles qualifying financial investments from the business and private foundation communities. Qualifying investments include expanding or creating certain new initiatives on the ground, contributing to country-specific or thematic areas through the GPE Fund or helping to finance the [Girls' Education Accelerator](#), which supports initiatives in countries that lag furthest behind on girls' education.

Advocacy

As GPE builds more and deeper partnerships with the business and private foundation communities, more of those partners are bringing their voice to advocate for global education.

These voices can be highly influential with governments, ranging from donor countries to GPE partner countries in need of adequate education budgets to support the implementation of their strategic plans. During 2021, several companies and private foundations played a highly visible role in GPE's Raise your Hand replenishment campaign, for example.

Thought partnership

Private foundations and the business community are active and highly valued thought partners –informing strategy and action at both the local and global levels. In addition to sitting on the GPE Board of Directors, both constituencies are regularly involved in GPE strategy-development convenings, consultations with partner ministries of education and informal advising.

NEW PARTNERS, MORE HEADWAY

2021 has been a breakthrough year for GPE's engagement with private foundations and the business community. This is a manifestation of GPE's 2021-2025 strategy. It is also a reflection of partners' steadfast commitment to bringing access and opportunity to more girls and boys.

Record-setting financial support

In 2021, GPE has had the largest-ever strategic financing from private foundations, reflecting GPE's plan to build more and stronger connections to these critical actors, who also contribute their technical expertise. As of July 2021, pledges from private foundations reached more than \$100 million for GPE's replenishment, a combination of direct contributions to GPE and co-financing commitments alongside GPE investments.

High-impact public-private partnerships

Several companies are involved in new public-private partnerships coordinated by GPE in which participating members of the business community work together with ministries of education.

Those partners are working on two major initiatives. [The Girls' Education Awareness Program](#) leverages marketing-related, communications expertise and other assets from the business community to help change harmful social norms that keep girls from school in developing countries. [The Education Data Leadership Program](#) is currently focused on developing the data collection, analysis and communication capabilities of education ministries. These partnerships are the first of their kind for GPE.

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