

# INDEPENDENT TECHNICAL ADVISORY PANEL (ITAP) GUIDELINES AND REPORT TEMPLATE

August 2022

## Table of Contents

I.	GPE 2025 Strategic Framework and Operating Model.....	<a href="#">3</a>
II.	Independent Technical Advisory Panel.....	<a href="#">5</a>
III.	ITAP Country Panels.....	<a href="#">12</a>
IV.	HR and Conflict of Interest.....	<a href="#">14</a>
	Annex A – Methodology for Assessing Enabling Factors.....	<a href="#">15</a>
	Annex B – ITAP Report Template .....	<a href="#">32</a>

## I. GPE 2025 Strategic Framework and Operating Model

### 1.1 GPE Policy Priorities and Enabling Factors for System Transformation

The GPE 2025 Strategic Plan is oriented around the following goal: *To accelerate access, learning outcomes and gender equality through equitable, inclusive and resilient education systems fit for the 21st century.* To meet this goal the GPE Board has focused Partnership efforts on making progress in six policy areas:

- Learning/early learning
- Access (12 years plus at least 1 year of pre-primary education)
- Gender equality and inclusion
- Quality teaching
- Strong organizational capacity, and
- Equity, efficiency and volume of domestic financing.

To respond to the expectation of ‘acceleration,’ the GPE 2025 strategic framework adopts a **“system transformation”** approach which seeks to source, support, and sustain transformative education reforms in partner countries with the potential for impact at scale. System transformation is understood to be the result of a bold reform that accelerates progress beyond business as usual (incremental expansion), that is realized at scale (i.e., at the system level), and to be in one or more of GPE 2025 policy areas.

A systems approach helps to better apprehend and embrace complexity. It provides a way to understand challenges and adapt strategies accordingly. Instead of targeting symptoms through disconnected actions, interconnected root causes are to be addressed through a coherent reform focused on a critical objective (such as improved learning outcomes, the scaling of early childhood education, removing gender inequalities, etc.) and designed to tackle related changes to interconnected parts of the education system.

Supporting system transformation requires a shift in approach – from a predominant focus on sector-level entry points through a comprehensive sector plan or policy framework to a prioritized focus, adequately resourced for effective delivery within specific education systems. While education sector plans are important frameworks for planning, budgeting and monitoring, evidence shows that they often lack prioritization. In particular, they have not sufficiently led to the effective implementation of actions that unblock systemic challenges to support the transformative progress required to reach SDG4.

GPE 2025 aims to support countries in identifying their own critical pathway to system transformation. This includes support and incentives to address key system enabling factors, as well as supporting local education groups to identify and align behind a priority reform with potential to catalyze system-wide change. A key step is the

assessment of these enabling factors, designed to identify which factors pose opportunities or risks to accelerating progress in any given context.

The four enabling factors are:

- Use of data and evidence;
- Gender-responsive sector planning, policy, and monitoring;
- Sector coordination; and
- Equity, efficiency, and volume of domestic financing of education;

Country status vis-à-vis these factors can give an indication of potential bottlenecks to a country's successful implementation of a reform agenda. Identifying and seeking to address these challenges is seen as an important step along a system transformation pathway.

## **1.2 GPE 2025 Approach**

GPE 2025 operationalizes the system transformation approach in a three-stage grant process.

**Stage 1: Partnership compact development (7 months):** This stage starts when a country receives an indicative allocation and joins a specific cohort of countries with a shared timeline in terms of starting and completing the grant process.

Countries start the process by conducting a review of the enabling factors to identify bottlenecks to systems transformation and then developing a “partnership compact.”

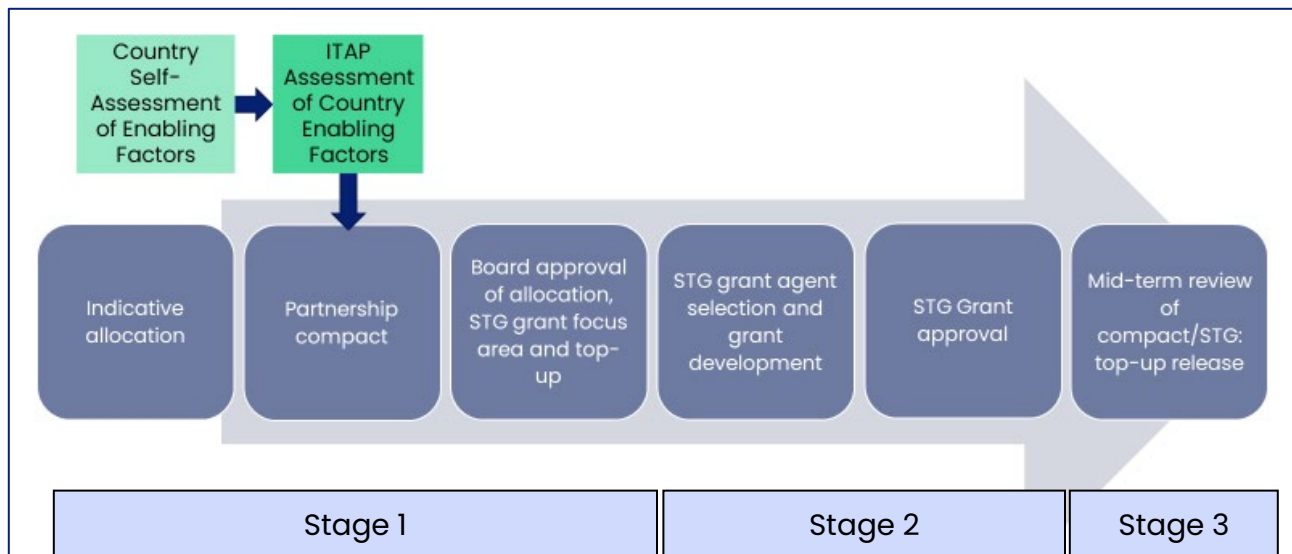
In the compact process, the government works with partners to articulate education system transformation goals and align partner resources and capacities behind government transformation priorities. The compact addresses bottlenecks identified in the enabling factor areas and prioritizes action around one priority reform. The ITAP assessment of the enabling factor areas takes place in Stage 1 and is shared with the country as an input into the finalization of the compact.

Stage 1 is completed with submission of the partnership compact to the GPE Board, where the Board is asked to approve the focus area for GPE system transformation grant funding identified in the compact and determine the share of the indicative system transformation grant allocation that the country can apply for immediately versus later. The ITAP assessment serves as an input into the Board decision: any enabling factors rated by ITAP as “high priority” may lead to using up to 40 percent of the indicative system transformation grant allocation to incentivize progress in the enabling factors until a mid-term review of the compact/grant has verified that agreed indicators and targets to address the challenges in the high priority enabling factors have been reached (top-up allocation).

**Stage 2: Program design (7 months):** This stage follows the Board approval of the allocation. It includes selection of a grant agent, after which the government and grant agent develop the system transformation grant program. The resulting grant proposal is submitted to the Board for approval, which completes stage 2. The country may also access a system capacity grant, to respond to challenges identified in the enabling factors assessment, and, in some cases, a Multiplier Grant and Girls Education Accelerator (additional sources of GPE system transformation grant financing).

**Stage 3: Implementation and mid-term review (2-3 years after Stage 1 approval):** This is the mid-term review stage of the compact and the system transformation grant where the verification of agreed indicators and targets linked to any top-up allocation takes place. If satisfactory, the Board will approve access to the top-up allocation, after which the country submits a grant proposal for the top-up funds.

The illustration below summarizes Stage 1, 2 and 3 (simplified)



## II. Independent Technical Advisory Panel

**Mandate.** The GPE Board approved the establishment of the ITAP in December 2020 to ensure its decisions on allocations are based on an expert independent review of country adherence to the operating model. In establishing the ITAP, GPE follows other large global funds with independent review panels.

The ITAP mandate is to provide an independent assessment of country status against the enabling factors. The ITAP does not have a decision-making role in the GPE governance structure, but serves in an advisory capacity to the local education group and GPE Board.

**Country panels.** The ITAP consists of a pool of experts. For every country that requires an ITAP assessment, the Chair with the support of the Secretariat draws on the pool to select a panel of four experts (including the Chair) to conduct the assessment. Typically each panelist is assigned to assess one of the four enabling factor areas in accordance with their area(s) of expertise. The panel collectively discusses each of the four assessments to ensure coherency across and a lens of system transformation. While the level of effort allocated per panelist is five days, the full process takes about three weeks. See Section III for the detailed panel process.

**Assessment approach and tools.** The ITAP assessment is a desk-review whereby an ITAP country panel reviews a packet of required country documents that support an assessment of the status of a country against each of the enabling factors (Enabling Factors Package). The country documents are supplemented with some documents provided by the Secretariat. The ITAP may also consult other document/data sources.

The ITAP assessment is guided by the methodology set out in the [Guide on Enabling Factors Analysis](#). It is used by countries to conduct a self-assessment, as well as by the ITAP to conduct an independent assessment. The methodology is reproduced in these guidelines in Annex A. It includes for each enabling factor area 3-5 components that need to be covered in the assessment along with various guiding considerations, some of which are expected to be covered by the panel in the assessment. See Table 1 for an overview of the enabling factors and Table 2 for areas for special attention.

ITAP assessments are expected to be consistent while at the same time reflecting a contextualized and multi-dimensional approach to meet countries where they are. Specifically, ITAP assesses each country consistently in terms of the initial screening and required supporting documents in the enabling factors package but then contextualizes based on the contextualized enabling factor analysis (country self-assessment) and the country policy priority identified in the country self-assessment. As such, GPE meets countries where they are and where they want to go, with the assessment based on country conditions and goals instead of a global standards approach. Multidimensionality refers to a more comprehensive analysis using existing data on each country in each enabling factor area.

Based on its assessment, the ITAP country panel rates each enabling factor area as low, medium, or high priority for system transformation. See Table 3 for illustrations.

## Inputs for the ITAP assessment

- From the country: Enabling Factors Package
  - Initial Screening of basic elements of a functional education system
  - Country's contextualized enabling factors analysis (self-assessment)
  - App. 40 supporting documents, organized by enabling factor area
- From the Secretariat: grant evaluations, grant completion reports
- Other sources consulted by ITAP (e.g., UIS, IMF)



## Guidance for the ITAP assessment

- Guide for Enabling Factors Analysis
  - Components and guiding considerations per enabling factor area
- ITAP Guidance Note
- ITAP Report Template



## Enabling factors and areas for special attention

The ITAP will apply the enabling factors methodology in assessing the country package. This section outlines the scope of the enabling factors and notes areas for special attention.

**Table 1. Enabling Factor Areas: Definitions and Scope**

Area	Definitions
<b>Data and Evidence</b>	<p>ITAP assesses capacity, functioning and utilization of country data and evidence systems, inclusive of learning assessment.</p> <p>This area examines the capacity of a country to produce and make use of data and evidence for formulating policies and plans, monitoring implementation progress and, more broadly, the overall management of the education system. It includes three components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Education Management and Information System (EMIS)</li> <li>➤ Learning Assessment System (LAS)</li> <li>➤ Evidence Production and Use</li> </ul>
<b>Gender-responsive Sector Planning, Policy and Monitoring</b>	<p>ITAP assesses the state and functioning of country education sector planning, policy and monitoring structures and systems, inclusive of attention to gender-responsiveness and to planning and monitoring progressive realization of education rights.</p> <p>This area examines the quality, use and ownership of existing national policy frameworks and underlying inclusive processes, including gender responsiveness across the policy continuum. The focus of the assessment is not to evaluate a particular policy or strategy (e.g., agreeing/disagreeing with a strategy to improve learning outcomes, or improve access to</p>

	<p>secondary education), but rather to assess the functioning and capacity of the policy and planning system. It also examines the realization of education-related rights, acknowledging international human rights frameworks to which the country is a signatory. Components include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Strategic Planning Frameworks and Practices</li> <li>➤ Operational Planning Instruments and Practices</li> <li>➤ Budget Programming and Monitoring</li> <li>➤ Sector Monitoring Mechanisms and Practices</li> <li>➤ Gender Mainstreaming Across the Policy Continuum</li> </ul>
<b>Sector Coordination</b>	<p>ITAP assesses the state and functioning of sector dialogue mechanisms (inclusive of actors within, and beyond government) and action that is inclusive and coordinated and shows progress toward use of coordinated sector financing mechanisms.</p> <p>Effective sector coordination and alignment increases transparency and mutual accountability between governments, education sector partners and stakeholders, and supports better education service delivery. <i>Two differentiated areas</i> cover this enabling factor area and relevant components include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Inclusive sector dialogue and coordinated action <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Coordination functions and practices</li> <li>➤ Capacities for coordination</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Coordinated financing and funding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Availability of aid alignment and joint financing mechanisms</li> <li>➤ Accountability and dialogue around aid effectivenessCommitment towards greater aid effectiveness practices</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
<b>Volume, Equity and Efficiency of Domestic public expenditure on education</b>	<p>ITAP assesses the state of public expenditure on education, covering volume, equity and efficiency, including review of demonstrated government commitment to spending at least 20% of the public budget (excluding debt service) on education.</p> <p>Public expenditure on education refers to allocations to the education sector from the public budget, and accounts for the largest share of education financing. Components include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Volume</li> <li>➤ Equity</li> <li>➤ Efficiency</li> </ul>



**Table 2. Areas for Special Attention in the ITAP Assessment**

Area	Definitions
<b>Gender</b>	<p>Gender equality in and through education is about access to, experience within and opportunities through education in every country context and for every child, regardless of their gender. Gender based barriers intersect with socio-economic status, disability, ethnicity, location, and age in particular when children become adolescents. GPE 2025 commits to gender hardwiring across every step of the operating model, so the ITAP assessment should demonstrate that the country has robustly looked at evidence or identified evidence gaps across each of the Enabling Factors in addition to the Gender Sensitive Policy and Planning. For example, overreliance on GPI (parity) to make assumptions on the status of gender equality in the education system without additional evidence and data on regional differences, or evidence on school related gender-based violence (SRGBV).</p>
<b>Right to Education</b>	<p>GPE's mission is to transform education systems, <b>leaving no one behind</b>, and GPE is guided by <b>five key obligations on states to ensure the right to education</b><sup>1</sup>, and all GPE partners are bound by these commitments: (i) Providing 12 years of free, quality, public primary and secondary education – of which at least nine years are compulsory – and at least one year of free and compulsory quality pre-primary education;<sup>2</sup> (ii) Ensuring the right of access to public educational institutions and programs on a non-discriminatory basis; (iii) Ensuring that education conforms to the aims of education recognized in human rights treaties and is directed to the full development of human personality and sense of dignity; (iv) Respecting the liberty of parents to choose for their children schools, other than those established by public authorities, which conform to minimum educational standards; (v) Using maximum available resources, including both domestic and international resources, to facilitate the progressive realization of the right to education, and without retrogression.</p> <p>As part of the initial screening of enabling factors, the GPE Secretariat will assess whether the country has a legislative framework assuring <b>12 years of free, quality, public primary and secondary education—of which at least nine years are compulsory</b>, and whether it applies this in planning and policy documents. The ITAP assessment should comment on this, especially</p>

<sup>1</sup> CESCR, 1990, General Comment No. 3: The Nature of States Parties' Obligations, Doc. E/1991/23, para. 10. As expressed in the [International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights](#) and UN Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights [General Comment no. 13](#)

<sup>2</sup> Provision of primary education free to all children is an obligation under rights instruments, while states are required to progressively introduce free secondary education. Provision of 12 years of free primary and secondary education, and one year of pre-primary education, is also a political commitment made as part of the Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action.

where the legislative framework is not in line with the country's international commitments, as an area for further engagement. Consideration of the right to education also cuts across several components of the ITAP assessment including:

- **Evidence use:** Is the realization of education-related rights assessed through evidence, acknowledging international human rights frameworks to which the country is a signatory? Does analysis include describing status of, and barriers facing, groups for which realization of rights may be challenging?
- **Planning:** Are plans linked to, and sensitive to, human rights instruments that the country has agreed to? Are these used to identify challenges in the realization of education-related rights? Are they used to guide the prioritization of policies for the full range of marginalized groups?
- **Sector monitoring mechanisms and practices:** Do monitoring instruments capture realization of education-related rights? Is the distribution of benefits of policies and programs to marginalized groups – the extent to which no one is left behind – going to be monitored and reported on?
- **Domestic finance:** Is the government committed to resource education adequately, in line with its obligations? Is it mobilizing the maximum available resources towards realizing the right to education?

### Other pointers:

- **The ITAP assessment is asked to focus on whether “systems” are functioning as opposed to commenting on the data and policy information systems produce.** The ITAP assesses the functioning of systems. I.e., is the learning assessment system functioning and of good quality? Is [MoE] sector and financial planning adequately linked to [MoF] budget planning and processes? Are sector monitoring systems functioning and producing in-time information, of good quality? Does public expenditure on education align with stated equity and efficiency priorities/are equity and efficiency-improving interventions operating as intended? Given limited space, reports need not include, for example, lengthy discussion on learning outcomes results, the pros and cons of pursuing specific policy initiatives, and/or reporting-back of data (or global/regional commitments) already shared by the country, unless of course critical to illustrating the system bottleneck identified in the ITAP report.
- **The report should be at a strategic level;** avoid more than 2-3 main messages per enabling factor area.

- The objective of the report is to provide an assessment (What are the gaps? What are the implications of these gaps?), **not recommendations or suggestions on how to fill them**. Based on gaps/challenges identified, country partners can identify ways forward.
- The local education group and the GPE Board are the main audiences: **practice clarity, brevity; avoid lengthy exposition** (i.e., repeating the SDGs, country ESP priorities, etc.) Unless necessary, **avoid citations** (unless relying on sources external of the enabling factors package) to keep the report readable. Please start an assessment with a positive comment about country status in the enabling factor.
- **Each enabling factor should be assessed on its own and not relative to other enabling factors.**
- In the Conclusion section of each enabling factor assessment, please **make reference to the country rating in its self-assessment** and whether ITAP has concurred with it or disagreed, along with the rationale for the diverging assessment.

**Purpose of the ITAP Report.** The ITAP assessment has two end users:

- **Government/local education group.** The ITAP report serves as an input to the development of the partnership compact and the proposed use of GPE grants (system capacity grant and system transformation grant primarily). While the compact is developed and endorsed at country level, it should include proposals to address the challenges in any enabling factor areas assessed by ITAP as high.
- **GPE Board.** The ITAP report informs GPE Board decision-making on the country allocation. For the system transformation grant, an eligible country can apply for an initial minimum allocation of 60% of the total allocation upon the Board's receipt of the partnership compact and approval of the focus areas for the grant. Access to the remaining 40% is linked to the ITAP assessment: any enabling factors rated as "high" may lead to a portion of the 40% being withheld until a mid-term review of the compact/grant has verified that agreed indicators and targets to address the challenges in the high priority enabling factors have been reached (top-up allocation).

Table 3: Illustrations of potential issues identified in ITAP assessment and priority rating	
Priority Level	Issue
<b>LOW:</b> The enabling factor area could benefit from minor tweaks to accelerate progress in one or more of the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data quality gaps, learning assessment mechanism requires strengthening</li> <li>• Sector coordination mechanisms outdated, lack relevance to operational environment</li> </ul>

country's top policy outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sector monitoring requires further capacity strengthening /inclusion</li> </ul>
<b>MEDIUM:</b> Achieving progress in one or more of the country's policy outcomes will be significantly delayed unless issues in the enabling factor area are addressed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of timely/accurate data in key areas: marginalized populations/refugees; para-teachers; population data; PETS</li> <li>• Gap in capacity to produce/use evidence and diagnostics</li> <li>• Progressive realization of child rights to education has stalled</li> <li>• Sector dialogue forum is not sufficiently inclusive /limited participation of civil society</li> <li>• Link between sector planning and decentralized operations (implementation, monitoring, course correction) is weak</li> <li>• Moderately inequitable distribution of government education expenditures</li> </ul>
<b>HIGH:</b> Achieving progress in one or more of the country's policy outcomes is deemed impossible or extremely unlikely unless significant reforms are undertaken in the enabling factor area. The ministry(ies) of education and/or development partners are either not actively working in this enabling factor area, or engagement is insufficient to make meaningful improvements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of credibility of data/evidence due to political interference</li> <li>• Significant mismatch between sector diagnostic and policy priorities; No ESP</li> <li>• Sector policy and budget reinforce existing gender inequalities</li> <li>• Severe aid fragmentation, with poor alignment to government priorities and otherwise inefficient use of external resources</li> <li>• Domestic financing far below that needed for basic system inputs (e.g., teachers) without credible approach to increasing</li> <li>• Multiple inefficiencies in use of domestic financing to meeting system objectives</li> </ul>
<b>Fragile and conflict-affected/contextual consideration:</b> Given the diversity of GPE partner countries, assessment should consider country status (and issue prioritization) relative to its context. <sup>3</sup>	

### III. ITAP Country Panels

The ITAP Chair is responsible for composing country panels. A panel typically includes four experts, including the Chair. Each country panel has the following characteristics:

- Coverage of the following areas of expertise: (i) education policy and planning, (ii) education finance, (iii) gender equality and education, (iv) sector coordination and alignment, and (v) data and evidence; (vi) human rights
- Diverse professional experiences and backgrounds, gender/geographic/Global

<sup>3</sup> FCAC: The Board also reflected on the importance of triggers for top-up allocations to be contextualized to ensure that low-capacity countries are not precluded from accessing top-ups. Such risk would be higher for domestic financing commitments, as they are linked to many variables which especially in more fragile environment are more difficult to predict.

South origin diversities

- Regional experience, with country-specific experience desired
- Familiarity with state-of-the-art thinking across enabling factor areas
- Experience in delivering strategic assessments based on in-depth technical analysis
- Experience in effectively communicating strategic assessment to diverse stakeholders at country and global levels
- Relevant language proficiency in line with the country assessment (desired)
- Expertise in fragile and conflict-affected contexts for panels assessing a fragile/conflict-affected country
- Completed conflict of interest screening

The **panel process** is as follows:

1. *Compose a country panel*: The country-driven model creates uncertainty about the timing of the country submission of the enabling factors package for ITAP assessment. To minimize the impact on ITAP operations, panels are composed once the final submission is received and deemed ready for ITAP review. At this time the Chair, or Acting Panel Chair if one is designated to lead the panel, identifies and invites Members to staff the panel and clarifies the expected contributions of each Member to the assessment.
2. *Submission of country enabling factors package*: Panel receives documents required to make an assessment of country status in the enabling factor areas.
3. *Kick-off meeting*: A few days after the panel receives the package, it meets virtually to receive a briefing from the Secretariat and identify queries/information gaps. Follow-up with the country should only be required if critical information is missing.
4. *Preliminary assessments*: Approximately one week after the kick-off meeting, panelists share draft assessments in line with agreed format and level of detail.
5. *Internal consultation*: The Chair may call a virtual meeting for the panel to discuss their assessment and arrive at a consensus and key messages. Subsequently, Members collaborate on the joint report virtually under the leadership of the Chair.
6. *Secretariat Review*: The Secretariat reviews the report to ensure assessment guidelines are adequately followed.
7. *Complete and clear report*: The Chair finalizes and clears the report and shares with the local education group, via the Secretariat.
8. *The local education group reviews the report for any major factual errors or significant disagreements*. Any comments must be submitted within two weeks.
9. *Report finalization and clearance*: The Chair completes the report, taking into consideration any comments from the local education group, and consulting with panelists as needed, and sends the cleared report to the Secretariat for sharing with

the country and for inclusion in the country's partnership compact package for Board decision.

### **Ways of working**

- The Secretariat hosts platforms for panel synchronous and asynchronous deliberations, using Microsoft Teams for file storage.
- The country enabling factors package and ITAP report are archived on GPE platforms.
- The panel completes its report within two weeks of the kick-off meeting.

## **IV. HR, Ethics, Conflict of Interest**

The ITAP Chair and Members are subject to the *Conflict of Interest Procedures for the Independent Technical Advisory Panel* and sign an acknowledgement statement for the policy, as well as a confidentiality agreement. They agree to uphold the integrity and independence of the ITAP and disclose any affiliations that may affect their independence in assessing the enabling factor areas of a particular country.

They are appointed by the Performance, Impact and Learning Committee. The ITAP Chair coordinates closely with the Secretariat ITAP coordinator. Members report to the Chair on technical work on country panels and coordinate with the Secretariat for HR matters.

## Annex A – Methodology for Assessing Enabling Factors: Definition and Scoping

**INSTRUCTIONS** – The table below provides methodological considerations against which assessing each enabling factor. Each enabling factor is unpacked by components, guiding considerations and possible sources of evidence.

The **components** define the elements considered under each factor. A description of the components articulates the scope of the analysis that is expected in the report. The scope of the analysis should be consistent across countries.

The **guiding considerations** list the specific elements that the report should investigate. These are meant to be comprehensive and detail all the elements to possibly consider in the analysis, but it is not the expectation that all the guiding considerations will be systematically addressed in each country report. Rather, they offer a map toward which directing the assessment if a specific issue needs to be unpacked in detail. Certain guiding considerations are highlighted in **bold** in the text – these are “key information” to assess the factor and should consistently appear in the reports. Should that evidence not be available, the report is expected to flag it and consider that gap in the assessment, rather than producing the missing analysis.

The **sources of evidence** are typically provided in the ITAP package, but the panel can refer to additional resources to conduct the assessment if need be.

**NOTE ON THE UPDATE (JULY 2022)** – In response to the pilot phase and feedback collected by partner countries and the provisional ITAP, the Secretariat has clarified the scope of the Enabling Factors and guiding consideration. Revisions focused on the framing, language, and aimed at reducing fragmentation of the analysis across the enabling factors. The scope of the factors and the elements considered under each did not change. The updated version is provided below to better guide the work of the independent panel and facilitate the development of standards.

The Secretariat is also working on a more comprehensive revision of the guidance documents for partner countries, which will include the revised version of the Enabling Factors scope presented below. Partner countries up to cohort 4 will follow the version of November 2021 of the [Guide for Enabling Factors Analysis](#) for the completion of the contextualized enabling factor analysis (or self-assessment).

## 1. DATA AND EVIDENCE

This enabling factor examines the capacity of a country to produce and make use of data and evidence for formulating policies and plans, monitoring implementation progress and, more broadly, the overall management of the education system. The analysis of this factor looks at the quality of the following components.

Components	Guiding considerations
<p><b>Education Management and Information System (EMIS):</b> EMIS is defined as a <a href="#">multifaceted structure</a> comprising both the technological and institutional arrangements for collecting, processing and disseminating education administrative statistics and information about education inputs, processes and outcomes within an education system. A well-performing EMIS reflects the interplay of appropriate policies, budget, human resources, organizational structure and institutions to produce robust education data for policy planning and monitoring and for the management of the education system.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Existence of functional EMIS</b>, with a consistent master list of schools OR individual learner IDs that can be used to compare data longitudinally for the same units; structure of data collection (web- vs. paper-based); coverage of existing EMIS (including whether information for nongovernment schools is available)</li> <li>▪ <b>Existence of LAS</b> (focusing on presence and functioning of a nationally representative assessment of learning, but also considering other part of the system, i.e., classroom assessment, examinations), alignment of LAS to the system's learning goals and curriculum</li> <li>▪ Reliability, frequency, timeliness and level of <b>disaggregation (by sex, children with disabilities, and other relevant groups of students)</b> of data (LAS, EMIS, <b>household surveys</b>)</li> <li>▪ <b>Comprehensiveness of evidence:</b> A repository of available evidence (household surveys, studies, diagnostics, etc.) is adequate to provide a functional overview and analysis of key issues. Specific kind of data/diagnostics to consider include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Availability of an Education Sector Analysis</b> building on recent data or any equivalent performance assessments</li> <li>○ Availability of data on quality of teaching (teacher qualification/training and teacher pedagogical/content knowledge, quality of instructional delivery, classroom climate, teacher motivation, teacher behaviors)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Learning Assessment System (LAS):</b> An <a href="#">LAS</a> is broadly defined as a group of policies, practices, structures, organizations and tools for generating sound and high-quality data on learning and achievement that provide robust evidence for education policy and practice with the ultimate aim to improve education quality and learning outcomes.</p>	
<p><b>Evidence production and use:</b> Evidence is understood as any piece of information hailing from empirical research, evaluations, statistical data, education stakeholders' experiences that has the potential to understand the situation, deliberate options and make informed policy and operational decisions. This component looks at the capacity of the education stakeholders to regularly produce and consistently mobilize and make use of evidence throughout the policy formulation and</p>	



<p>implementation continuum. This would entail the capacity of producing and using the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>System performance reports like education sector analyses or public education expenditure reviews</li> <li>Discreet diagnostic studies to better apprehend the causes of identified system bottlenecks (e.g., gender equality diagnostics)</li> <li>Global-level evidence based on rigorous evaluations of what works, robust global and contextualized evidence on what works</li> <li>Country-level evaluations of innovation/programs/plan implementation</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>Availability of data and evidence on gender considerations impacting access to education (including gender-based violence, safety, WASH, poverty)</i></li> <li>○ <i>Diagnostics at either macro or sector level that analyze external/contextual risks to the education sector (e.g., climate change, disasters, public health emergencies, conflict)</i></li> <li>○ <i>Assessment of the realization of education-related rights, acknowledging international human rights frameworks to which the country is a signatory</i></li> <li>▪ <b><i>Use of data for policy planning, monitoring, system management</i></b>, determination of budget allocations, and mutual accountability, including accessibility/transparency of data</li> <li>▪ <i>Enabling environment for data production and use, including institutional, legal and organizational framework; existence of a data policy (either at macro or sector level); sustainable financing of data systems (source of funding: domestic vs. international aid)</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Existing capacities (human, administrative, IT) and capacity development strategies for data producers and users; abilities to undertake complex and multidimensional data analysis, including interacting elements like gender, income, geography, disability status</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Possible sources of evidence:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ EMIS – LAS diagnostics/audits: EMIS–SABER, ADEA EMIS peer review; Ed-DQAF; ANLAS</li> <li>▪ Education sector analysis, system diagnoses</li> <li>▪ Joint sector reviews</li> <li>▪ Statistical reports collected through EMIS</li> <li>▪ Ministry of education organizational structure and description of roles and responsibilities within the ministry/ministries</li> <li>▪ Questionnaires for annual school census</li> </ul>	

## 2. GENDER-RESPONSIVE SECTOR PLANNING, POLICY AND MONITORING

This enabling factor examines the quality, use and ownership of existing national policy instruments/frameworks and underlying inclusive processes. The policy framework, which in most cases would be an education sector plan, outlines a coherent set of medium- to long-term strategies and is further set out into costed actions to eventually support budget programming. In certain contexts of fragility, conflict or crisis, countries prefer the development of [transitional frameworks](#), more short term and action oriented, and adjusted to the context and available capacities for delivery.

In addition to supporting greater accountability among education stakeholders, inclusive monitoring and evaluation mechanisms and practices contribute to effective policy/plan implementation by ensuring monitoring of progress and results achieved, as well as the identification of bottlenecks and challenges that need course correction along the implementation phase.

The analysis of this factor looks at different components of the policy formulation and implementation continuum outlined below.

Components	Guiding considerations
<p><b>Strategic planning frameworks and practices:</b> <a href="#">Strategic planning</a> guides educational development by setting a common vision and shared priorities in a medium to longer time frame. It identifies the strategies for achieving the vision, including the human, technical and financial capacities required. Strategic planning would help recognize and address significant gender inequalities and other disparities between groups of students in participation and quality, and sources of vulnerability. It would acknowledge human rights frameworks related to education, use these to guide analysis and prioritization, and describe groups for which realization of rights may be challenging.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Functioning of government education policy and planning system/apparatus</b>, considering actors, processes and products. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Availability, soundness and use of policy and planning processes and guidance</li> <li>○ Capacity of relevant stakeholders to perform their roles</li> <li>○ Adequacy, relevance, implementability of policies and plans being produced.</li> <li>○ Soundness of the expenditure framework, including resource projections and strategies to overcome financial constraints</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ <b>Attention to human rights and vulnerable groups</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Policies / plans are sensitive to human rights instruments the country has agreed to, to identify challenges in the realization of education-related rights, and guide the prioritization of policies for the full range of marginalized</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<p>groups such as persons with disabilities, rural and poor populations, ethnic and linguistic minorities, and refugees and internally displaced persons</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Attention to collaboration with other sectors</b> /ministries; attention to external / contextual risks (i.e., natural disaster, climate change) and the gender-equality dimension.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Operational planning instruments and practices:</b> Shorter-term <a href="#">operational planning</a> instruments like multiyear implementation plans/annual action plans set out the policy framework into actionable and tractable elements for overcoming financial, technical and political constraints to effective implementation. They can also provide a framework for budget and management decisions based on a medium-term expenditure framework to feed into annual budget preparation and monitoring processes. Operational instruments outline detailed activities for a specific and usually short period of time (1 to 3 years) with information on timing, roles, responsibilities and costs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Functioning of operational planning system; coherence/continuation between the policy framework and the <b>operational planning tool</b> in terms of strategies-programs-activities and costing/financing</li> <li>▪ Implementability of the operational planning tool, including detailed programs/activities linked to accountability elements such as defined roles and responsibilities as well as accompanying gender-sensitive targets articulated in a results framework</li> </ul>
<p><b>Budget programming and monitoring:</b> Linking sector planning process to the budget programming process is critical to ensure education policy priorities are adequately funded and can be implemented. Financial soundness, feasibility and sustainability of the sector policy instruments help <a href="#">budget preparation, financial monitoring, budget tracking</a>, as well as engagement with all relevant stakeholders to both evaluate the financial performance and support upcoming budget programming exercises. Effective collaboration between the ministries of education and finance is required to reconcile budget technical inputs with the sector policy priorities and influence the budget allocation to education.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Alignment / coherence of ministry of education modeling, costing, and budget programming with ministry of finance annual budgets and medium-term projections (i.e., MTEF) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Alignment of MoE simulation / medium term costing with MoF medium-term sector finance projections /MTEF;</b> of MoE operational plan budgets with annual MoE budget produced by MoF</li> <li>○ Adequacy of volume of public financing resources and funding gaps, alignment between the cost of plan strategies/programs and available financial resources</li> <li>○ Alignment of MoE / MoF approaches to budget monitoring / tracking</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<p><b>Sector/ implementation monitoring mechanisms:</b> Regular <a href="#">sector monitoring activities and reviews</a> against shared results frameworks included in policy frameworks allow education stakeholders to assess plan implementation achievements and shortcomings, monitor expenditure progress, and agree on ways to course correct and refine policies, interventions and activities. Sector monitoring is critical to ensure relevant, responsive action and mutual accountability across the education stakeholders.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Presence and use of sector plan (or policy) implementation monitoring frameworks and instruments at central and de-central levels, specifically for monitoring and regular reporting on:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Plan implementation, including progress towards targets (and gender-disaggregated considerations), implementation challenges, course correction, and results (including externally financed programs),</li> <li>○ Dialogue and collaboration between ministry of education, ministry of finance and other line ministries</li> <li>○ Progress toward realization of education-related rights and distribution of benefits (technical, capacity, financial) to marginalized groups</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Joint sector reviews, and other feedback loops:</b>  <i>Regularity and quality of joint sector reviews as a tool for monitoring and an instrument for change and forward-looking planning; and/or functioning of other feedback and learning loops: e.g., extent to which monitoring data / stocktaking events (i.e. mid-year reviews) inform planning and course correction</i> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Gender mainstreaming across the policy continuum:</b> <a href="#">Gender-sensitive policies, plans</a> and learning environments support transforming the way education systems function to pave the way for equitable societies. Applying a gender lens to the policy continuum ensures that sector analyses, policies, strategies and interventions target specific groups of girls or boys and the challenges they face in a differentiated way.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Gender sensitiveness across the policy continuum:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Policy framework and operational instrument are adequately sensitive to gender issues</li> <li>▪ Programs for strengthening gender equality are adequately costed and resourced</li> <li>▪ Sector monitoring and reporting clearly consider progress against gender equality objectives</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Possible sources of evidence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ GPE country-level evaluation</li> <li>▪ Available sector gender diagnostics</li> <li>▪ World Bank Public Expenditure Review (PER)</li> <li>▪ Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability (PEFA) reports</li> <li>▪ Medium-term expenditure framework [MTEF]</li> </ul>	

- Financial simulation model
- Education sector plan appraisal report
- Education Sector Analysis (ESA) and system diagnoses
- Education sector implementation reports and joint sector review documentation

### 3. SECTOR COORDINATION

Effective sector coordination increases transparency and mutual accountability between governments, education sector partners and stakeholders, and supports better education service delivery. *Two differentiated areas* cover this factor: 1) inclusive sector dialogue and coordinated action and 2) coordinated financing and funding.

#### 3.1 INCLUSIVE SECTOR DIALOGUE AND COORDINATED ACTION

[Multi-stakeholder policy dialogue mechanisms](#) are recognized as key for fostering partnership culture in country development efforts and supporting evidence-based policy making and national education systems, through the engagement of government, bi- and multilateral agencies, civil society, teachers, philanthropy and the private sector. Building effective coordination requires a mutual understanding of the type of outcomes that can be achieved according to where it can add most value and setting up conditions to yield those outcomes.

This enabling factor therefore examines the relevance and quality of the dialogue taking place within a *country's local education group* and their related entities (thematic/subsector groups) or an equivalent government-led multi-stakeholder coordination body. The components focus on the effectiveness of these mechanisms, including the strategic value of coordination practices and capacities in fulfil coordination functions.

Components	Guiding considerations
<p><b>Coordination functions and practices:</b> The effectiveness of local education groups (or equivalent bodies) relate to their performance in realizing policy dialogue and coordination functions connected to national education goals and priorities across the whole policy cycle—from sector diagnosis, policy design, strategic and operational planning to joint monitoring—thereby contributing to improved education results. This includes its success in fostering synergies and harmonization of partners' support and mutual accountability, and in generating strategic value for government and its development partners.</p>	<p><b>Mechanisms in place with the mandate to facilitate inclusive sector dialogue and coordinated action, and the extent to which these are effective. Consider <i>core policy dialogue and coordination functions</i></b> that can drive priorities and joint action, and whether/how these are demonstrated in practice, for instance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Supporting policy formulation/sector planning</i> – e.g., dialogue around sector analysis, diagnostics and other opportunities linked to data and evidence; policy and operational plan development, including prioritization and implications of reform measures; sharing of good practices and emergent needs</li> <li>• <i>Addressing financing and resource mobilization</i> – e.g., dialogue and advocacy around (safeguarding) education financing,</li> </ul>

	<p>including domestic and external financing and new financing, as well as facilitating collaboration with the ministry of finance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Promoting harmonization and alignment</i> – e.g., dialogue around the harmonization of partner support for advancing agreed development goals and ensuring coherent approaches to investments in the sector to reduce stand-alone projects (including on cross-cutting issues such as gender-equality), fragmentation of aid, and transaction costs.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Capacities for coordination:</b> Capacities for coordination comprise both ‘soft’ and tangible aspects: 1) <i>Collaborative capacities</i> such as <i>commitments, behaviors and values</i> which influence healthy partnership dynamics and engaged leadership, and a local education group’s success in creating a culture of productive relationships; and 2) <i>Organizational capacities</i> such as <i>structures, processes and resources</i> which help align partner interests, coordinate expertise, assets and capacities, periodically keep members updated, and review how the partnership works. These foundations are the bedrock of partnership success, underpinning the potential of actors to work purposefully together.</p>	<p><b>Consider the soft and tangible aspects of capacities that may affect relevance and quality of dialogue and overall effectiveness of coordination practices:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Clear, formalized mandate and mutually agreed objectives, functions, governance and working arrangements</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Inclusion and representation (key stakeholder categories; national, subnational)</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Participation, meaningful stakeholder engagement and partner support strategies – ensuring continuous dialogue on critical issues such as gender equality</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Roles and responsibilities leveraging partner strengths, knowledge, insights and resources</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Stakeholder ownership, motivation and commitment to agreed policy dialogue purposes</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Leadership and resources for coordination (human, financial, technical) including secretarial functions</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Working arrangements and whether these are fit-for-purpose to address core priorities</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Management of dialogue agenda around key priorities and meeting stakeholder interests and coordination needs</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Arrangements for inter-ministerial coordination, and coordination among development partners</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Links with the education cluster (if activated) regarding education programming in crisis and emergency situations</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Interface with other sectors regarding education programming (e.g., health, child protection, water)</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>

- |  |  |
|--|--|
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Regular reviews of coordination effectiveness ensuring continued improvements, buy-in of education sector stakeholders and their trust in the coordination mechanisms</i></li> </ul> |
|--|--|

**Possible sources of evidence**

- Summary of GPE country-level evaluation
- Terms of reference (or the equivalent) of the local education group
- Minutes of local education group/coordination meetings (including education sector plan endorsement letter)
- Review/diagnostic/self-assessment of sector/subsector coordination bodies
- Education sector governance reviews
- Education sector implementation reports
- Joint sector review aide-mémoires
- Education Out Loud grantee progress reports for the country
- Education Out Loud grantee reports/publications from country



## 3.2 COORDINATED FINANCING AND FUNDING

Better coordinated financing and funding for education can be achieved through increased alignment and harmonization of external aid. This means alignment of aid with the national budget and public financial management systems, and harmonization through the pooling of aid – or the establishment of joint financing arrangements – to reduce fragmentation.

Alignment with national systems increases opportunities for structural engagement with the broader education system and national institutions through the ministries of education, ministry of finance, parliament, government oversight bodies such as the national audit office, local government, and semi-autonomous government agencies. This alignment with national systems offers unique opportunities for greater government responsibility and accountability, increased transparency of public resource allocation and expenditure, supporting national financing at scale, more relevant sector dialogue around the national budget and systems, leveraging critical cross-cutting national reforms for education (such as decentralization and PFM reform) and transforming those systems for improved education service delivery at scale.

The components listed below look into the current availability of an aligned and/or joint financing mechanism for education, the level of accountability and dialogue around issues of aid effectiveness, and commitments towards greater aid effectiveness for education in the future.

Components	Guiding considerations
<p><b>Availability of aid alignment and joint financing mechanisms:</b> review the current existence of aligned modalities available for the education sector, as well as joint financing mechanisms. Their existence constitutes an enabling factor for the education sector and system transformation. In the absence of such a mechanism in education, the availability of such mechanisms in other sectors can be noted.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identification of existing aligned modalities, in education, or examples from other sectors.</li> <li>• Identification of joint financing mechanisms in education.</li> </ul> <p><u>Alignment</u> is defined as “using a partner country’s <i>institutions, human resources, procedures, and tools</i> as the mainstays for the implementation of aid to education.” This means aligning aid not only with national sector policies, strategies and planning, but also with the national systems that implement regular financing for education through the national budget process and public financial management (PFM) systems.</p>

Alignment of aid for education can take different forms, adaptable to the level of fiduciary risk and requirements for risk management. Lower risk environments can use full *budget support* (direct disbursements – triggered by agreed conditions and indicators – to the national treasury, with no ringfencing or earmarking) and higher risk environments can use *aid-on-budget* mechanisms (also known as *ringfenced* or *earmarked* budget support), which allows more targeted operational planning, oversight, ex-post controls (audits) and capacity supporting measures.

*Seven dimensions of alignment are useful to consider in assessing the existence of an aligned modality:*

- *ON PLAN: (i) Alignment with education sector planning and (ii) alignment with ministry of finance's medium-term expenditure framework*
- *ON BUDGET: (i) Aid is reported in the annual national budget documentation and (ii) specific appropriations authorized by parliament*
- *ON TREASURY: (i) External aid disbursed into the main revenue accounts of government (Treasury) and (ii) managed through the government's standard public financial management system and human resources*
- *ON PROCUREMENT: Procurement of aid modality follows national procurement rules and systems*
- *ON ACCOUNTING: External aid is recorded and accounted for in the national accounting system [integrated public expenditure system], in line with the national chart of accounts*
- *ON AUDIT: External aid audited by the country's independent auditor [national audit office or court of auditors]*
- *ON REPORT: External aid included in regular sector implementation, financial and monitoring reports prepared by ministry/ministries in charge of education [consolidated data and reporting on the implementation of annual sector operational plans]*

*Note: GPE has compiled and monitored the degree of alignment with national systems for the implementation of core GPE grants, since 2016. This information is available with the GPE Secretariat*

<p><b>Accountability and dialogue around aid effectiveness:</b>  what is the level of understanding, including data, and dialogue on aid effectiveness in the education sector (alignment vs. non-alignment, joint financing vs. fragmented aid)?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Identification of data and information regularly reported on the state of aid effectiveness across the education sector. What proportion of external aid (by volume, by number of projects/programs) is aligned and not aligned with national systems? What is the degree of aid fragmentation (number of different projects/programs/financing modalities)?</i></li> <li>• <i>Review of current projects/programs. Are they providing absorption of financing and funding at scale? Are they structurally leveraging sustainable system capacity development and system transformation?</i></li> <li>• <i>Level of dialogue around aid effectiveness and its challenges for the education system. What are the consequences of the level of non-alignment and fragmentation?</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Commitment towards greater aid effectiveness practices:</b>  review current plans or commitments in using or developing aligned funding mechanisms and joint financing arrangements for the future</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Identification of expanded or improved use of existing aligned and joint financing mechanisms. This may include situations of underperformance of existing aligned/joint financing mechanisms [absorption or fiduciary challenges, for example]</i></li> <li>• <i>Identification of plans to develop an aligned and/or joint financing mechanism in the future (short or medium term)</i></li> <li>• <i>Commitment towards exploring the development of an aligned and joint financing mechanism (medium or longer term)</i></li> <li>• <i>Are there development partners present with the capacity and experience to support an aligned and joint financing mechanism?</i></li> </ul> <p>Note: experience across the Partnership has shown that alignment is possible across a broad number of country contexts, as long as the type of alignment (cf. supra – <i>budget support</i> vs <i>aid-on-budget</i>) is adapted to the challenge, as well as the deployment of appropriate additional oversight, control and capacity supporting measures.</p> <p>Assessment of fiduciary risk can be garnered from various reports. For a broader level of international comparison, the World Bank’s publicly available annual Country Policy and Institutional Assessment (CPIA) can be useful. It provides annual scores for 70+ countries (IDA eligible countries). Among the most useful ratings: (i) the cluster average rating for “Public Sector</p>

Management and Institutions”; (ii) the rating for “Transparency, Accountability & Corruption in the Public Sector”.

Empirical evidence from the GPE grant portfolio has indicated that countries with a cluster average rating for “Public Sector Management and Institutions” of 2.6 or above can and have been able to successfully deploy aligned funding modalities, with the right risk management adaptations. On the other hand, there are currently no examples of aligned modalities in countries with scores at or below 2.5.

**Possible sources of evidence**

- Education sector planning and implementation reports (data and information on aid effectiveness/fragmentation)
- Reviews or evaluations on aid effectiveness in the education sector
- National budget and Financial Management Information System (existence of aligned modalities)
- Data and information compiled by the GPE Secretariat on alignment of past/current GPE grants
- Operational manuals of existing aid-on-budget mechanisms (ringfenced/earmarked budget support).
- Joint Financing Arrangement or pooled fund MoU.
- Implementation reports of current GPE-funded project/program (absorption and performance review)
- List of active education development partners (with potential to support an aligned aid modality)
- Country Policy and Institutional Assessment (CPIA) rating for “Public sector management and Institutions”
- PFM reviews or reports

## 4. VOLUME, EQUITY AND EFFICIENCY OF DOMESTIC PUBLIC EXPENDITURE ON EDUCATION

Public expenditure on education refers specifically to allocations to the education sector from the public budget, and it accounts for the largest share of education financing. Sustainable improvements in domestic financing for education require a sharp focus on three core pillars: volume, equity and efficiency.

Components	Guiding considerations
<p><b>Volume:</b> Sufficient resources should be allocated to education to accelerate progress toward delivery of quality education for all. Governments have obligations, as part of their commitments to international rights instruments, to resource education adequately and to mobilize the maximum available resources in order to realize the right to education. Partner countries are expected to either (a.) demonstrate a commitment to spending at least 20% of the public budget (excluding debt service) on education, or (b.) commit to progressively increase levels of public finance towards 20% of the total public budget, or (c.) commit at least 4% of the gross domestic product (GDP) to education. It is critical that the funds allocated are both credible and sustainable for implementation of key education reforms. This means a focus on both the share of the budget allocated to education as well as a country's overall fiscal space, or capacity of the country to generate (primarily) tax revenue. High levels of debt servicing across some also reduce the funding available for education and other social sector spending. High execution rates suggest credible commitments that translate into actual support to the education sector.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Overall level of education expenditure vs. (i) total public spending and (ii) gross domestic product (GDP)</b> (per Domestic Financing Matrix) and its trend over the past and future years               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Supporting documents including national budget are critical to demonstrate credibility of commitments</li> <li>○ decreasing trends of education expenditure can be accompanied by a brief overview of mitigation factors and reasons behind reprioritization of other sectors</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Macro factors that determine fiscal space, including tax: GDP ratio and levels of debt servicing</li> <li>▪ Budget allocation vs. execution rates (especially for non-salary expenditures), distribution between recurrent and capital expenditure</li> </ul>

<p><b>Equity:</b> Often the poorest households bear a disproportionate burden in funding education, and public education expenditure tends to favor wealthier, more powerful groups. This is particularly significant given the ways in which improvements in access to education may mask low completion rates for vulnerable groups. Public financing for education should be focused on the most marginalized, ensuring not only access but also quality learning across a full cycle of education. This includes, for example, gender-responsive budgeting, but also budgeting for refugees and allocating additional resources to schools in the communities hosting refugees and internally displaced persons. The COVID-19 crisis has further exposed the impact of social disparities on learning. Disruptions to household livelihoods are likely to reinforce the importance of a gender lens.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Levels of per capita expenditure and size of out-of-school children population for different subsectors (pre-primary/primary/lower and upper secondary)—Are levels adequate to achieve universal primary education?</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Equitable distribution of resources: Public expenditure by education level and/or income/wealth quintile and/or geographic region and/or learning outcome quintile. This may be reflected in differentials in teacher allocation, quality of schooling environment, learning materials, etc., across groups.</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Education as a share of total household expenditures (private expenditure) relative to income/wealth quintile and/or school type and/or geographic region and/or by education level (pre-primary/primary/upper and lower secondary) and/or level of education of household head</i></li> <li>▪ <b>Presence of financing formulas for allocation of resources that explicitly incorporate equity considerations</b>, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>Mechanisms that allow for funding of programs for marginalized students/vulnerable populations, including refugees and internally displaced persons</i></li> <li>○ <i>Presence and use of gender-responsive budgeting or other tools considering gender considerations for equitable allocation of resources</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Efficiency:</b> It is estimated that almost one-third of education spending is lost to inefficiencies. For the assessment of this factor GPE is primarily concerned with technical efficiency (using minimum resource levels to achieve best outcomes) and internal efficiency (minimizing dropout and repetition). Key efficiency concerns include low levels of learning, high repetition rates, waste in procurement and ensuring better allocation and more transparent payment of teachers. Tackling inefficiencies also includes improving monitoring and financial planning, using real-</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Efficient utilization of the teaching and non-teaching workforce, including teacher hiring and deployment, payment of salaries, controls on payroll and allowances, and accountability measures to reduce unauthorized teacher absenteeism</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Effective resource mobilization between tiers of government (most relevant in federal systems)</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Learning outcomes, e.g., WB Learning Adjusted School Years (LAYS)—i.e., is money spent resulting in learning, not just attendance?</i></li> </ul>

<p>time data to track how resources are spent. Improved accountability for spending and demonstrating convincing results is also a key step toward stronger dialogue with ministry of finance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b><i>Internal efficiency coefficient, or repetition and dropout rates as a proxy if not available</i></b>; extent of over- and underage enrollment</li> <li>▪ <i>Do expenditures reflect value for money (VfM) in areas of significant spending (teachers, textbooks, classroom construction, etc.)?</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Broader system issues, including budgeting framework, procurement processes, controls on fraud and corruption and management of civil servants. This may also include considerations of transparency and accountability in financial reporting, with timely, complete data on executed expenditure.</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Possible sources of evidence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ World Bank Public Expenditure Reviews (PERs)</li> <li>▪ Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability (PEFA) reports</li> <li>▪ Financial simulation model</li> <li>▪ Education Sector Analysis (ESA)</li> <li>▪ National budget documents showing executed and projected expenditures, incl. national and/or sector medium-term expenditure framework</li> <li>▪ Macro projections from IMF and World Bank</li> </ul>	

# **REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT TECHNICAL ADVISORY PANEL (ITAP)**

## **ASSESSMENT OF ENABLING FACTORS**

**COUNTRY | MONTH XX, 2022**

### **Background**

In line with the GPE 2025 operating model, the government and country partners have analyzed country progress in the four enabling factor areas for system transformation. The *Contextualized Enabling Factors Analysis* completed by the local education group and supporting documentation were shared with the ITAP, tasked by the Board with providing an assessment of country status against the enabling factors.

The ITAP assessment seeks to contribute to country policy dialogue on the partnership compact. The ITAP considers the extent to which challenges in enabling factor areas act as bottlenecks to country education system transformation goals. Based on this assessment, it classifies each area as a low, medium, or high priority for action. A designation of high indicates that identified challenges may act as significant bottlenecks to transformation goals.

The ITAP report is shared with the government and country partners to collectively review for any disagreements in two areas: a) major factual errors that have affected the ITAP assessment, and; b) ITAP prioritization of enabling factors. Any such disagreements should be clearly and concisely explained and will be considered by the ITAP. Comments are optional: Should the government and country partners broadly agree with the conclusions in the report, a notification to this effect can be submitted. Comments are due within two weeks or the report is final.

The ITAP report is ultimately shared with the Board and feeds into Board decision-making on the system transformation grant allocation, with special attention given to how challenges in the high priority enabling factors are resolved in the country compact.



## Part A: Main Panel Conclusions

### **Guidance for ITAP:**

Recommended length: 1.5 pages

Provide a summary assessment for each enabling area. Clearly state the challenges identified by ITAP and why ITAP deemed it appropriate to designate the rating of low/medium or high priority. See definitions of low, medium and high in the ITAP Guidelines.

### **Data and Evidence**

[Summarize assessment]

### **Gender-Responsive Planning, Policy and Monitoring**

[Summarize assessment]

### **Sector Coordination**

*Inclusive Sector Dialogue and Coordinated Action:*

[Summarize assessment]

*Coordinated Financing and Funding:*

[Summarize assessment]

### **Volume, Efficiency and Equity of Domestic Financing**

[Summarize assessment]

## Part B: Assessment of Enabling Factors

### Guidance for ITAP:

In this section, provide an assessment of country status vis-à-vis each enabling factor drawing on: 1) the methodology set out in Annex 1 of the ITAP Guidelines, inclusive of the definitions, components, and guiding considerations, and; 2) the country enabling factors package, including the Initial Screening Template (and related documents) and the *Contextualized Enabling Factors Analysis*.

For all enabling factors, if designated 'high priority' please further explain which specific issues/challenges are identified as barriers to education system transformation and the nature of the issues identified (i.e., are they mainly capacity/technical/financial barriers, or do they include institutional, service delivery, or political economy elements).

Also, In your Conclusion for each enabling factor, please note concurrence or disagreement with the country analysis, as applicable. In cases where the ITAP assessment varies from the analysis provided by the country, please explain why the ITAP assessment is different. If there are gaps in the country analysis, please note.

Please note:

- Keep the ITAP report at a strategic level; avoid more than 2-3 main messages per enabling factor area.
- **The objective of the report is to provide an assessment (What are the gaps? What are the implications of these gaps?), not recommendations. Based on gaps/challenges identified, country partners can identify ways forward.**<sup>4</sup>
- The local education group and the GPE Board are the main audiences: practice clarity, brevity; avoid run-on sentences, lengthy exposition (i.e., repeating the SDGs, country ESP priorities, etc.)

---

<sup>4</sup> In some cases, state of the art/expert guidance may be provided, e.g., reference to Washington Group questions on inclusion/CwD approach). However, we want to avoid the report suggesting how to resolve issues which may most benefit from exploration and dialogue among country-level partners.

## 1. Data and Evidence

### Guidance for ITAP:

Recommended length: two pages

Consider the following questions:

***What is the ITAP assessment of country progress and challenges in this enabling factor (i.e., EMIS, LAS, Evidence production and use)?***

***Considering the above assessment, please consider existing country plans and proposed actions in this enabling factor. What areas, if any, require greater emphasis or attention?***

### Education Management Information Systems (EMIS)

[Provide assessment here]

### Learning Assessment Systems

[Provide assessment here]

### Evidence Production and Use

[Provide assessment here]

**Conclusion:** *[Note the challenges identified based on which the enabling factor is categorized by ITAP as low, medium, or high priority and justify the rating]*

Considering the challenges of ....., ITAP is rating this enabling factor as [low, medium, high] because .....

## 2. Gender-Responsive Sector Planning, Policy and Monitoring

**Guidance for ITAP:**

Recommended length: two and a half pages

Consider the following questions:

***What is the ITAP assessment of country progress and challenges in this enabling factor (i.e., strategic planning, gender responsive planning, operational planning, budget programming and monitoring, sector monitoring)?*** †

**Please include in the assessment the progressive realization of education-related rights**, acknowledging international human rights frameworks to which the country is a signatory, and any challenges in the realization.

***Considering the above assessment, please consider existing country plans and proposed actions in this enabling factor. What areas, if any, require greater emphasis or attention?***

**Strategic planning frameworks and practices**

[Provide assessment here]

**Operational planning instruments and practices**

[Provide assessment here]

**Budget programming and monitoring**

[Provide assessment here]

**Sector/implementation monitoring mechanisms**

[Provide assessment here]

**Gender mainstreaming across the policy continuum**

[Provide assessment here]

**Conclusion:** *[Note the challenges identified based on which the enabling factor is categorized by ITAP as low, medium, or high priority and justify the rating]*

Considering the challenges of ....., ITAP is rating this enabling factor as [low, medium, high] because .....

### 3. Sector Coordination: Inclusive Sector Dialogue and Coordinated Action and Coordinated Financing and Funding

#### Guidance for ITAP:

Recommended length: two pages

Consider the following questions:

***What is the ITAP assessment of country progress and challenges in enabling factor 3.1: dialogue around policy formulation/sector planning; financing and resource mobilization; harmonization and alignment; monitoring & mutual accountability?***

***Considering the above assessment, please consider existing country plans and proposed actions in this enabling factor. What areas, if any, require greater emphasis or attention?***

Similarly, provide an assessment of enabling factor 3.2, coordinated financing and funding, including of coordination of external financing, alignment with the national budget and systems.

#### 3.1 Inclusive Dialogue and Coordinated Action

##### Coordination functions and practices

[Provide assessment here]

##### Capacities for coordination

[Provide assessment here]

**Conclusion on 3.1:** *[Note the challenges identified based on which the enabling factor is categorized by ITAP as low, medium, or high priority and justify the rating]*

Considering the challenges of ....., ITAP is rating this enabling factor as [low, medium, high] because .....

#### 3.2 Coordinated Financing and Funding

##### Availability of aid alignment and joint financing mechanisms

[Provide assessment here]

##### Accountability and dialogue around aid effectiveness

[Provide assessment here]

**Commitment towards greater aid effectiveness practices**

[Provide assessment here]

**Conclusion on 3.2:** *[Note the challenges identified based on which the enabling factor is categorized by ITAP as low, medium, or high priority and justify the rating]*

Considering the challenges of ....., ITAP is rating this enabling factor as [low, medium, high] because .....

## 4. Volume, Equity, and Efficiency of Domestic Public Expenditure on Education

### Guidance for ITAP:

Recommended length: two pages

Consider the following questions:

***What is the ITAP assessment of country progress and challenges in this enabling factor (i.e., volume, equity, and efficiency)?***

On Volume, include an assessment of whether (i) government is committed to increase the share of domestic resources to education progressively towards 20 percent of total budget" or, alternatively whether (ii) government committed to annually allocate at least 4% of the value of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to education. A failure to meet (i) or (ii) indicate that domestic financing is a high priority challenge, unless a significant mitigating explanation is provided.

***Considering the above assessment, please consider existing country plans and proposed actions in this enabling factor. What areas, if any, require greater emphasis or attention?***

### Volume

[Provide assessment here and complete the table below]

**Table 1: Share of education expenditure in GDP and in total government expenditure**

	Yes	Year	Year	Year	Year	Year	Year
Education as per cent of GDP							
Education as per cent of government expenditure (excluding debt service)							
Recurrent education expenditure as per cent of public recurrent expenditure (excluding debt service)							

Source: Computed from "Domestic financing requirement matrix"



**Equity**

[Provide assessment here]

**Efficiency**

[Provide assessment here]

**Conclusion:** *[Note the challenges identified based on which the enabling factor is categorized by ITAP as low, medium, or high priority and justify the rating]*

Considering the challenges of ....., ITAP is rating this enabling factor as [low, medium, high] because .....

## Part C: High-Level Summary of Enabling Factors Assessed as High Priority

### Guidance for ITAP:

Recommended length: no more than one page.

Please state the challenges and the rationale for the “high” ranking.<sup>5</sup>

Enabling Factor	Challenges and Rationale for High Priority Rating
	<b>Challenge:</b>  <b>Rationale for high priority:</b>
	<b>Challenge:</b>  <b>Rationale for high priority:</b>

<sup>5</sup> Please note that this table is inserted in the Board document on the compact/allocation and may impact the use of a top-up allocation (amount of the indicative allocation withheld until such time when the conditions for accessing the top-up (policy actions and triggers) have been fulfilled). The information in this table therefore requires sufficient specificity so that countries can propose specific policy actions and triggers that show progress against the challenge identified by ITAP.