GPE 2020 Country-level Prospective Evaluations

FIRST ANNUAL REPORT: NEPAL (APRIL 2019)

Prepared by Stephen Turner and Christine Fenning

Data collection and analysis supported by Yadab Chapagain

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Acronyms

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AIN	Association of International NGOs in Nepal
ALNAP	Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance
ASIP	Annual Strategic Implementation Plan
ASPBAE	Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education
AWPB	Annual Work Plan and Budget
BPEP	Basic and Primary Education Programme
BRM	Budget Review Meeting
CA	Coordinating Agency / Contribution Analysis
CBE	Complementary Basic Education
CEQ	Country evaluation question
CERID	Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development
CFM	Common Financing Mechanism
CLPG	Country Level Process Guide
CSEC	Civil Society Education Coalition
CSEF	Civil Society Education Fund
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CwDs	Children with Disabilities
DCP	Developing Country Partner
DEO	District Education Office
DFID	(UK) Department for International Development
DLI	Disbursement Linked Indicator
DP	Development Partner
DPG	Development Partner Group
ECD	Early Childhood Development

ECED	Early Childhood Education and Development
EFA	Education For All
EGMA	Early Grade Mathematics Assessment
EGR	Early Grade Reading
EGRA	Early Grade Reading Assessment
EGRP	Early Grade Reading Program
EMIS	Education Management Information System
EPDG	Education Sector Program Development Grant
ESA	Education Sector Analysis
ESIP	Education Sector Implementation Plan
ESIP	Education Sector Improvement Project
ESP	Education Sector Plan
ESPDG	Education Sector Plan Development Grant
ESPIG	Education Sector Program Implementation Grant
ETC	Education Training Centre
FPA	Financial Procedures Agreement
FTI	Fast Track Initiative
FY	Financial Year
GA	Grant Agent
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEQ	Global Evaluation Question
GER	Gross Enrolment Ratio
GIR	Gross Intake Ratio
GIZ	Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (German aid agency)
GoN	Government of Nepal
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
GPEM	GPE Multiplier

GPI	Gender Parity Index
GRA	Global and Regional Activities
IFMIS	Integrated Financial Management Information System
JAR	Joint Annual Review
JCM	Joint Consultative Meeting
JFA	Joint Financing Arrangement
JFP	Joint Financing Partner
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
JRM	Joint Review Meeting
ICR	Implementation Completion Report
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
ISCED	International Standard Classification of Education
ITRP	Independent Technical Review Panel
KOICA	Korea International Cooperation Agency
JSR	Joint Sector Review
LEDPG	Local Education Development Partners' Group
LEG	Local Education Group
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MCA	Maximum Country Allocation
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MDTF	Multi-Donor Trust Fund
MECs	Minimum Enabling Conditions
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MToT	Master Training of Trainers
NASA	National Assessment of Student Achievement

NCED	National Centre for Educational Development
NCE-N	National Campaign for Education Nepal
NCF	National Curriculum Framework
nd	not dated
NEGRP	National Early Grade Reading Programme
NER	Net Enrolment Ratio
NESP	National Education Sector Plan
NFE	Non-Formal Education
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NIR	Net Intake Ratio
NIRT	National Institute for Research and Training
NPR	Nepalese Rupee
NSO	National Statistics Office
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OOSC	Out-of-School Children
ORT	Other Recurrent Transactions
PCR	Pupil-Classroom Ratio
PDG	Program Development Grant
PDO	Project Development Objective
PE	Prospective Evaluation
PEA	Primary Education Adviser
PFT	Program Facilitation Team
PMECs	Priority Minimum Enabling Conditions
PPE	Pre-Primary Education
PRSP	Poverty Reducation Strategy Paper
PTA	Parent Teacher Association

QA	Quality Assurance
QAR	Quality Assurance Review
RC	Resource Centre
REACH	Results in Education for All Children
RED	Regional Educational Directorate
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SIP	School Improvement Plan
SLC	School Leaving Certificate
SMC	School Management Committee
SSDP	School Sector Development Plan
SSRP	School Sector Reform Plan
SWAp	Sector Wide Approach
SWG	Sector Working Group
tbc	To Be Confirmed
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
ToC	Theory of Change
TOR	Terms of Reference
TTC	Teacher Training College
UIS	UNESCO Institute for Statistics
UNFPA	United Nations Fund for Population Activities
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VDC	Village Development Committee
VCDF	Vulnerable Community Development Framework

Terminology

Basic education	Pre-primary (i.e. education before Grade 1), primary (Grades 1-6), lower secondary (Grades 7-9), and adult literacy education, in formal and non-formal settings. This corresponds to International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) 2011 levels 0-2.
Capacity	In the context of this evaluation we understand capacity as the foundation for behavior change in individuals, groups or institutions. Capacity encompasses the three interrelated dimensions of motivation (political will, social norms, habitual processes), opportunity (factors outside of individuals e.g. resources, enabling environment) and capabilities (knowledge, skills).[1]
Education systems	Collections of institutions, actions and processes that affect the educational status of citizens in the short and long run.[2] Education systems are made up of a large number of actors (teachers, parents, politicians, bureaucrats, civil society organizations) interacting with each other in different institutions (schools, ministry departments) for different reasons (developing curricula, monitoring school performance, managing teachers). All these interactions are governed by rules, beliefs, and behavioral norms that affect how actors react and adapt to changes in the system.[3]
Equity	In the context of education, equity refers to securing all children's rights to education, and their rights within and through education to realize their potential and aspirations. It requires implementing and institutionalizing arrangements that help ensure all children can achieve these aims.[4]
Financial additionality	This incorporates two not mutually exclusive components: (a) an increase in the total amount of funds available for a given educational purpose, without the substitution or redistribution of existing resources; and (b) positive change in the quality of funding (e.g. in terms of predictability of aid, use of pooled funding mechanisms, co-financing, non-traditional financing sources, alignment with national priorities).
Gender equality	The equal rights, responsibilities, and opportunities of women, men, girls, and boys, and equal power to shape their own lives and contribute to society. It encompasses the narrower concept of gender equity, which primarily concerns fairness and justice regarding benefits and needs.[5]
Inclusion	Adequately responding to the diversity of needs among all learners, through increasing participation in learning, cultures, and communities, and reducing exclusion from and within education.[6]

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[1] Mayne, John. *The COM-B Theory of Change Model*. Working paper. February 2017.

[2] Moore, Mark. 2015. Creating Efficient, Effective, and Just Educational Systems through Multi-Sector Strategies of Reform. RISE Working Paper 15/004, Research on Improving Systems of Education, Blavatnik School of Government, Oxford University, Oxford, U.K.

[3] World Bank. 2003. World Development Report 2004: Making Services Work for Poor People. Washington, DC: World Bank; New York: Oxford University Press.

[4] Equity and Inclusion in Education. A guide to support education sector plan preparation, revision and appraisal. GPE 2010; p.3. Available at:
file:///C:/Users/anett/AppData/Local/Packages/Microsoft.MicrosoftEdge_8wekyb3d8bbwe/TempState/Downloads/2010-04-GPE-Equity-and-Inclusion-Guide.pdf

[5] GPE Gender Equality Policy and Strategy 2016-2020. GPE 2016, p. 5f. Available at:
http://www.globalpartnership.org/sites/default/files/2016-06-gpe-gender-equality-policy-strategy.pdf

[6] GPE 2010, p.3.

Executive Summary

A)   Overview

1.   This is the first of three annual reports to be submitted during the three-year prospective evaluation (PE) of the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) in Nepal – one of eight country PEs, to be complemented by a total of 22 summative country evaluations, that will be carried out between 2018 and 2020. It follows a baseline report on Nepal that was submitted in May 2018, and reproduces some of the material that was included in that report. It presents the findings of the first PE mission to the country, which took place from 7 to 18 April 2018, and offers some initial, tentative conclusions on the basis of the limited data collection, monitoring and assessment undertaken to date.

B)   Purpose and objectives

2.   The purpose of the prospective evaluations is to assess whether GPE's inputs and influence are orienting education sector planning, dialogue, monitoring, implementation, and financing, towards the intermediary outcomes outlined in its theory of change (ToC). They are forward-looking, and explore what happens, while it happens. They closely observe initial decisions, document the perspectives of decision-makers and focus on the activities and involvement of key stakeholders early in the period under review in order to understand whether progress is being made and whether GPE is making a contribution.

3.   The objective of the prospective evaluations is to assess the relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of GPE's inputs at the country level, as well as the validity of GPE's ToC in light of its strategic plan, GPE 2020. They seek to establish if and how GPE inputs and activities contribute to outcomes and potential impact at country level. They are designed to assess GPE's progress on its goals and objectives.

C)   Intended Audience

4.   The primary intended users of the country level evaluations are members of the Global Partnership for Education. Secondary users are the Secretariat – in particular, but not limited to, senior management and members of the Country Support Team – as well as developing country partner governments and members of local education groups (LEGs) in the sampled countries. Tertiary intended users include the wider education community at global and country levels.

D)   Methodology

5.   The methodology for the prospective evaluations is a theory-based Contribution Analysis (CA) approach, and the guiding framework is provided in an Evaluation Matrix (EM) and a country-level ToC, developed according to GPE's existing overall ToC. It envisages a seven-stage process. The first four stages focus on establishing a solid baseline for each country and the subsequent three stages constitute iterative annual country-level reporting.

6.   Data have been collected through desk review of available documentation and datasets, supplemented by interviews conducted with key informants during the first country mission.

7.   This Nepal PE is challenged by the fact that a new Education Sector Programme Implementation Grant (ESPIG) that will cover much of the evaluation period is currently in preparation. Contribution

analysis will become more feasible and meaningful during years 2 and 3 of the PE, when that ESPIG is being implemented and, as this report shows, a revised scale (and potentially mode) of GPE engagement is operational in Nepal.

E)   GPE Engagement

8.   Nepal joined the Fast Track Initiative, GPE's predecessor, in 2009, and has since received one Program Development Grant (PDG, 2014), one Education Sector Plan Development Grant (ESPDG, 2015), three Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF) allocations[7] to the National Campaign for Education Nepal (NCE Nepal) and two Education Sector Plan Implementation Grants (ESPIGs, 2010-2014 and 2016-2019). A new ESPIG is currently under development.

9.   GPE also engages in various non-financial ways, primarily through the work of the Secretariat, the Grant Agent, the Coordinating Agency, and through GPE's local and global partnership functions (e.g. technical assistance, advocacy, knowledge exchange, quality standards and funding criteria).

F)   Key Findings

10.   **Planning.** Education sector planning in Nepal has been clearly structured and coordinated for some years, through the School Sector Reform Plan (SSRP 2009-2016) and now the School Sector Development Plan (SSDP 2016-2023), both of which have provided a framework for pooled funding by donors, including GPE. The SSDP is a detailed and evidence-based document. It was developed in close consultation with stakeholders. The LEG officially endorsed the SSDP in November 2016. Subsequently a Joint Financing Agreement between the Ministry of Education and Development Partners was put in place for the SSDP.

11.   Building on the design and achievements of the SSRP, the SSDP – to which GPE will continue to contribute during the evaluation period – comprehensively addresses the relevant objectives of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as well as the GPE 2020 agenda, while recognising that significant implementation challenges still lie ahead.

12.   **Implementation.** Progress against SSDP objectives and disbursement-linked indicators (DLIs) was reported as broadly satisfactory during the first year of implementation (2016-17). ESPIG objectives for the evaluation period, in support to SSDP implementation, remain to be finalised. But, based on the previous GPE approach to support for the SSRP, it is reasonable to expect that there will be strong alignment between ESPIG objectives, targeting and activities and national policies on education and gender. This alignment has already been a strong feature of Nepal education sector development for some time and is one of the reasons why the Nepal PE should be particularly instructive within the evaluation as a whole.

13.   To date, the SSDP has been implemented under the auspices of the Ministry of Education (MoE), with its Department of Education hosting the SSDP Implementation Committee and – until now – supervising District Education Offices. With the transition to a federal structure, the latter offices are to be disbanded, and a new management and implementation structure will be needed to link the MoE with the 753 municipalities that are now responsible for basic and secondary education.

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[7] CSEF is a global program supporting civil society engagement in education sector policy, planning, budgeting and monitoring. It is managed by the Global Campaign for Education on behalf of GPE and gives grants to national civil society coalitions to support their advocacy activities, build their capacity to strengthen planning, implementation and impact, and promote cross-country learning and networking. https://www.globalpartnership.org/funding/gpe-grants

14. **Dialogue and inclusive sector monitoring.** The coverage, quantity and quality of monitoring data remain inadequate and new challenges are now arising. While the current climate in Nepal is conducive to the standards of sector dialogue and monitoring that GPE advocates, assumptions identified in the ToC show the importance of keeping this issue under review. All parties must sustain the will to engage constructively in inclusive monitoring and dialogue, in the Local Education Development Partners' Group (LEDPG), LEG and other forums.

15. **Financing.** According to recent data, 77 percent of the federal education budget ceiling of USD982m is allocated to the SSDP. Following the recent transition to a federal system, these funds are now allocated to municipalities through the conditional grant mechanism. Fiscal equalisation grants may be an additional way for municipalities to secure funding for education in their areas. Formal arrangements for ODA contributions to education sector financing are stable, in the sense that external support for the SSDP will continue to be transferred via the Ministry of Finance to the Ministry of Education. Arrangements with municipalities will be internal to the Government of Nepal (GoN). From other perspectives, though, the situation is clearly in flux as systems for budget preparation and approval and fiscal management within the new federal framework are developed. The overall quality of financing – in terms of clarity of budgeting, monitoring and reporting, and of fiduciary standards – will have to be watched carefully over the evaluation period.

16. One of the GPE targets is that education should receive 20 percent of public expenditure. While Nepal's education budget has been increasing annually in real terms and has doubled over the last five years, it has been falling as a proportion of the total. It was 19.4 percent of the combined capital and recurrent allocation in 2014-15, and 15.1 percent in 2017-18 (but 20 percent of recurrent expenditure). The Ministry of Finance points out that other domestic sources in Nepal contribute to education spending, such as civil society organisations and communities. The fall in relative terms is due to heavy expenditures on post-earthquake reconstruction. In addition, the federal transition is imposing major additional costs on the fiscus.

17. **Progress towards a stronger education system.** With the support of GPE and other development partners, progress is being made in a number of areas of education system improvement, such as curriculum development and materials upgrading in various key subjects, and improved teacher management, availability and accountability. The pupil-teacher ratio in primary schools has halved since 2008, but despite administrative changes to discourage the registration of 'ghost' schools, teachers and pupils, there were still 1,483 schools in 2017 with no government-funded teacher. Communities and parents still make significant contributions to education in Nepal.

18. A learning assessment system was introduced in 2010. An Education Management Information System (EMIS) is in place and functioning. A Teacher Rationalisation and Redeployment Plan (2016/17 – 2023/24) is in place, and the expanded EMIS is intended to track the performance of teachers as well as pupils. All parties – and especially the GoN – must ensure that systems and other improvements in the EMIS are not reversed by the new administrative responsibilities created by the federal system. The intention is that municipalities will report directly to the central EMIS. It will be very challenging to implement these changes without any disruption to data flows. The EMIS links into the National Assessment of Student Achievement (NASA) system, which has continued to develop and expand since its introduction in 2010 and (until the recent reallocation of responsibilities) was being adopted by District Education Offices for a range of monitoring and management purposes.

19. **Progress towards stronger learning outcomes and equity.** The enrolment rate in pre-primary education rose to 84 percent in 2017. Net enrolment in primary education was 95 percent in 2017 (93 percent for girls and 96 percent for boys). The primary to secondary transition rate was 82 percent overall in 2016 (81 percent for girls, 84 percent for boys). The net enrolment rate in secondary education was

55 percent overall in 2017 (57 percent for girls, 53 percent for boys). In 2011, 80 percent of females in the 15-24 age group were literate, compared with 90 percent of males.

20.   A 2015 sample survey of Grade 3 and 5 achievements in Mathematics, Nepali and English showed wide geographical variation between ecological zones and between rural and urban schools, with students in the latter performing better. The survey found that the difference between boys' and girls' performance had narrowed considerably, although boys outperformed girls more strongly among some ethnic/caste groups (Brahmans and Cheetris) and girls did very slightly better than boys in the Kathmandu Valley.

21.   There are still significant challenges of access to education for disadvantaged social groups, including children with disabilities, those from poor, remote, or low caste families or disadvantaged communities. The number of out-of-school children has risen in recent years, with girls outnumbering boys. The GoN is committed to strengthening the EMIS for better coverage of children with disabilities.

G)   Conclusions

22.   Nepal's education sector has made good progress over the last decade, and there is little doubt that GPE has made significant material and strategic contributions to that progress. Yet major constitutional and consequent institutional changes now being undertaken in the country – for reasons that are broadly accepted as sound – may jeopardise or even reverse that progress. At the very least, they will pose tough new challenges to the GoN, and to its development partners. Seen with some justification, so far, as a GPE success story, Nepal faces a more complicated trajectory over the coming years.

23.   The primary value of GPE is not its funding, but the quality and effects of its advocacy, peer support and partnership structure. From the Nepal perspective, GPE's money will be of relatively little significance during the evaluation period, although the GoN (supported in particular by the Grant Agent and the Coordinating Agency) will still have to work hard to get it. So far, it appears that the GoN considers this effort to be worthwhile, and the intangible and strategic benefits of GPE to be meaningful.

24.   So far, GPE has been able to make an effective and valued contribution to the education sector in Nepal, relying heavily on its Coordinating Agency and Grant Agent. At this early stage, the conclusion must be that the model is viable, but not without risks.

25.   Nepal will be an important and instructive case study for the overall GPE evaluation process, 2018-2020. The monitoring and evaluation of GPE's role and value in the country's pooled funding model will be useful, as will assessment of the partnership's locally perceived value as its financial contributions decline.

H)   Recommendations

26.   At this early stage in the three-year PE, it is inappropriate to offer detailed or extensive recommendations about GPE strategy in Nepal. But the analysis offered in this first annual report does suggest the following priorities for the partnership and for the three-year PE process that recently started.

#	Topic	Finding	Recommendation	Timing
1	The federal transition	The political climate and framework for the transition, and for keeping education a high priority during it, are high-level issues. But the partnership can contribute by showing high awareness and a supportive stance at this difficult time. There was important new discussion on these challenges in the May 2018 Budget Review Meeting, for example. The GPE Secretariat, through its QAR Phase 1, has indicated that the LEG's choice to focus the next ESPIG on this transition is well justified and is in line with GPE objectives.	Continue carefully to monitor and constructively to support the GoN's efforts to reconfigure education funding, administrative and monitoring systems in accordance with the new federal system. DLIs in this regard should be worded so that they are seen as supportive rather than imposing unreasonable conditionalities on what will inevitably be a complex and challenging transition for Nepal.	Ongoing
2	Assessment of countries' budget commitments	One of the GPE targets is that education should receive 20 percent of public expenditure. While Nepal's education budget has been increasing annually in real terms, it has been falling as a proportion of the total. It was 19.4 percent of the combined capital and recurrent allocation in 2014-15, and 15.1 percent in 2017-18 (but 20 percent of recurrent expenditure). The fall in relative terms is due to heavy expenditures on post-earthquake reconstruction. In addition, the federal transition is imposing major additional costs on the fiscus. The draft GPE QAR report of May 2018 points out that Nepal has doubled its education budget over the last five years, and that the GoN remains committed to a 1 percent per year increase in real terms in the education budget during the remainder of the SSDP period.	GPE should assess countries' budget commitments to capital and recurrent spending on education separately.	2019 onwards
3	Monetary and non-monetary benefits of GPE member- ship	The next ESPIG will be significantly smaller (probably about half the amount of the previous one).	GPE should keep the quality and value of its partnership and governance structures and processes under active review. As the value of GPE participation for countries like Nepal decreases in monetary terms, the importance of the partnership model should be sustained or increased if it is to remain relevant and effective.	Ongoing
4	Monetary and non-monetary	Nepal has been an active and respected beneficiary of and participant in regional and global GPE activities and frameworks	GPE should remain active in encouraging Nepal's participation in regional and global governance mechanisms, and in urging the country to make	Ongoing

#	Topic	Finding	Recommendation	Timing
	benefits of GPE member- ship		maximum use of the various adjunct funds and facilities that it offers, such as the Advocacy and Social Accountability mechanism and the Knowledge and Innovation Exchange platform.	
5	Vital role of GA and CA	While there is no indication that GPE's relationship with its Grant Agent or Coordinating Agency has been neglected or taken for granted, the viability and value of the partnership in Nepal or any country depends heavily on the competence, and above all on the commitment, of these two organisations. (Both aspects are partly dependent on the personalities in post at any time.)	GPE should be proactive in nurturing its relationships with the Coordinating Agency and the Grant Agent in Nepal. This will be particularly important following the recent change in CA.	Ongoing

1 Introduction

1.1   Background

1.1.1   Overview of Nepal

1. Despite remaining among the poorest countries in the world, Nepal has made significant progress in many areas, transitioning from a post-conflict status into a country with relatively stable economic performance in recent years. Its Human Development Index (HDI) value for 2016 was 0.558,[8] which meant the country graduated to the medium human development category, positioning it at 144 out of 188 countries and territories. Between 1990 and 2016, mean years of schooling increased by 2.1 years. Nepal's gross national income per capita doubled between 1990 and 2015. In 2016 GNI per capita was US$ 730.[9] A chronology of important national events has been included in Annex H.

2. The country achieved the first Millennium Development Goal of halving extreme poverty ahead of time.[10] Extreme poverty dropped from 33.5 percent of the population in 1990 to 16.4 percent in 2013. The country almost met the target of reducing by half the proportion of underweight children (aged 6 to 59 months) two years early in 2013, as well as making other noteworthy improvements in reducing hunger. Similarly, progress was made in increasing net school enrolment and gender equality in schools, child and maternal mortality decreased, prevalence of HIV/AIDS has been contained, and access to drinking water and sanitation has been improved. However, although the country has made remarkable progress, many of these benefits have been realised in the Kathmandu valley while many of the more remote and inaccessible areas of Nepal still struggle significantly in terms of overall lack of development. There have also been challenges in enrolment and retention of hard-to-reach children (especially from the Terai and the Mid-Western and Far Western regions) in education. Devastating earthquakes in April and May 2015 killed over 9,000 people and injured 23,000 others, while damaging many buildings in the affected areas.[11] These included 9,000 schools and 30,000 classrooms destroyed or damaged.

3. Cultural, ethnic, and religious diversity is a key characteristic of Nepal: the population comprises 125 castes and ethnic groups speaking 123 languages. Dalits (people of the lowest caste, previously "untouchables") occupy the lowest sociocultural and economic status, and are often de facto restricted to certain occupations and face discrimination in many aspects of societal life. People in the remote mountain and hill zones are significantly more disadvantaged than those living in the more accessible areas; the poverty rate averages 45 percent in the Mid- and Far-West Development Regions. The female literacy rate is 57.4 percent, compared to 75.1 percent for males.[12]

4. The ratio of girls to boys in primary education has improved significantly since the 1990s. The country has achieved gender parity index (GPI) scores of 1.09 in primary and 1.0 in secondary education in 2015[13].

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[8] Human Development Index available at http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/NPL

[9] https://data.worldbank.org/country/nepal

[10] https://www.npc.gov.np/images/category/MDG-Status-Report-2016_.pdf

[11] http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/aid/countries/factsheets/nepal_earthquake_en.pdf

[12] Taken from "Nepal - QAR Phase III Final Readiness Review Report - 27 March 2015" p1 (GPE, 2015a).

[13] https://www.npc.gov.np/images/category/MDG-Status-Report-2016_.pdf

There are, however, some disparities by social group and geographical location. The share of women engaged in wage employment in the non-agriculture sector has increased to 44.8 percent, but gender inequality in employment and incomes persists, mostly due to women's lower skill levels and their unpaid care responsibilities. The introduction of gender-responsive budgeting by the government in 2007/2008 has seen an increase in the number of directly gender-responsive programs and projects across sectors; but the budget allocated to the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare (MWCSW) has decreased.

5. Nepal changed from a monarchy to a democratic republic in 2008, following a decade-long conflict. Political uncertainty has had a significant impact on the country since then, in part due to the drafting of the new constitution, which was extended several times by successive parliaments. A new Prime Minister, K. P. Sharma Oli, was sworn in on 15 February 2018 following the completion of elections in December 2017. Oli's appointment is expected to result in a new period of political stability for the country. The first challenge for the Oli government is to manage the newly created seven provinces under the new federal set-up. Significant adjustments need to be made to the government structure. They include amending over 400 existing Acts, restructuring the civil service at all levels, devolving fiscal management, and determining the division of funds, functions, and functionaries between various levels of government.[14]

6. Development cooperation is expected to play an important role in helping Nepal meet the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and become a Middle-Income Country by 2030.[15] Net official development assistance (ODA) to Nepal increased from US$ 883.8 in 2014 to US$ 1,065.9 million in 2016. In the financial year (FY) 2015/16, the education sector received US$ 111.55 million (10.39 percent of ODA).

1.1.2   Education context

7. There has been good progress in the education sector, including towards universal primary education with increases in the net enrolment ratio (NER) to 96.6 percent in 2015.[16] However, the education system in Nepal is characterised by large disparities by gender, region and different social groups, in terms of access to and participation in education, and learning achievements.[17] People living in remote rural areas, females, ethnic minorities, Dalits and the poor are extremely disadvantaged in terms of educational attainment. There are "pockets of marginalised communities" in Karnali Zone but especially in Central Terai. These areas lag behind in enrolment, have the highest student-to-teacher ratios and are far from the national averages in meeting the priority minimum enabling conditions (PMECs). Females are also more disadvantaged than their male counterparts. For example, the never-attendance rate is 23 percent for the male population compared to 44 percent for females. Disparities across urban and rural areas are also wide with urban areas having higher mean years of schooling compared to rural areas (9.6 versus 7.5 years).[18]

8. In recent years (2009/10-2015/16), the education sector was reportedly receiving around 15 percent of the national budget.[19] Data and projections submitted to the GPE Secretariat in February 2018 estimated that 15.1 percent of public expenditure (capital and recurrent) would be allocated to education in 2017/18, compared with 19.4 percent in 2014/15. Recent reductions are partly related to a significant

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[14] http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/nepal/overview

[15] http://www.mof.gov.np/ieccd/newsbook/20170416160028.pdf

[16] https://www.npc.gov.np/images/category/MDG-Status-Report-2016_.pdf

[17] Appraisal of SSD Plan report p.26 (Juho Uusihakala Consulting, 2016)

[18] http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0023/002327/232769E.pdf

[19] GPE Education Plan Development Grant Application (GPE, 2015c) and Nepal Education Sector Analysis (NIRT, 2017)

overall increase of the national budget, partly due to the need to respond the post-disaster emergency needs for reconstruction and recovery. Basic education has consistently been the largest component of government expenditure on education. However, its share has been slowly decreasing in favour of more spending on secondary education. In 2010/11, basic education expenditure represented 64 percent of the overall spending on education; this increased to 68.9 percent in 2011/12 before gradually decreasing to 54.1 percent in 2015/2016. Conversely, secondary education steadily rose from 16.9 percent in 2010/2011 to reach 21.0 percent in 2015/16.

9. The Government of Nepal (GoN), with support from development partners, has undertaken a series of national programs and projects in the school sector over the past two decades with the objective of enhancing equitable access to and improving the quality of education. The School Sector Reform Plan (SSRP 2009-2016) covered the entire school education sector (grades 1-12) as well as early childhood education and development (ECED) and non-formal education. The GoN bears the largest burden of education expenditure although development partners contribute significantly to supporting education. For support to the SSRP, the share of funding from development partners through pooled funding remained between 20 and 24 percent for the first three years. However, this contribution fell to 15 percent in 2015/16, partly because of the GoN's discouragement of foreign loans for financing education.[20]

10. Annex Table 11 in Annex J shows government education expenditure between 2008 and 2015 for primary, secondary and tertiary education.

1.1.3   Structure of the national education system

11. In the Nepal education system, basic education (which is meant to be free and compulsory) covers one year of early childhood education and development and pre-primary education up to primary grade 8. Secondary education (also free, according to the 2015 Constitution), covers grades 9 to 12.[21] Tertiary education follows. Until the SSRP introduced the structure just outlined, the national education system comprised pre-primary (ages 3-4), primary (ages 5-9), secondary (ages 10-16) and tertiary (17-21) education (see Annex Table 16 at Annex J). The academic year – from primary upwards – starts in April and ends in April.

1.1.4   National education policies and plans

12. The main policies, laws, and official documentation relevant to the education system in Nepal are listed in Table 1.

Table 1. Education and related policies and official documents

Policy	Year
Strategy Paper for Early Childhood Development in Nepal	2004
School Sector Reform Plan	2009-2015
Vulnerable Community Development Framework (VCDF)[22]	2009

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[20] Nepal Education Sector Analysis (NIRT, 2017)

[21] SSDP 2016-2023 (MoE, 2016f)

[22] See VCDF, 2009, p. 5.

Policy	Year
Environmental Management Framework for School Sector Reform Plan Nepal	2009
Gender and Inclusion Policy	2013
Gender and Inclusion Strategy	2015-2020
Early Grade Reading Programme	2014/15-2019/20
Consolidated Equity Strategy for the School Education Sector in Nepal[23]	2014
Education (Eighth Amendment) Act [24]	June 2016
Teacher Rationalization and Redeployment Plan[25]	2016/17-2023
School Sector Development Plan[26]	2016-2023
Education (Ninth Amendment) Act Bill passed	August 2017
Transitional Arrangements for Implementation of SSDP in Federal Setup (in draft)	2018-2019

Source: Authors' compilation

13. **School Sector Reform Plan, Vulnerable Community Development Framework, Environmental Management Framework.** A number of development partners jointly supported the implementation of the SSRP using a sector-wide approach (SWAp).[27] The SSRP, which was part of the Education For All National Program of Action (EFA-NPA) built on earlier reforms in the school education sector and sought to improve access, equity and quality of the entire education system from grade 1 to grade 12. It also sought to realign the overall structure of school education: basic education was to cover grades 1 to 8 and secondary education grades 9 to 12. The SSRP was completed in June 2016.

14. **Consolidated Equity Strategy.** In 2014 the Consolidated Equity Strategy for the School Education Sector in Nepal was developed by the GoN, supported by the Access and Equity Thematic Working Group. It was intended to provide a guiding framework for implementing educational programs with targeted interventions across the education sector, addressing disparities in education access across income, ethnic and social groups.

15. **School Sector Development Plan.** Following the SSRP and taking over its unfinished agenda, a School Sector Development Plan (SSDP) for 2016-2023 aims to continue to develop an inclusive and high-quality education system for all children. It was developed by the Ministry of Education in consultation with various education stakeholders at national/sub-national levels as well as Local Education Group (LEG) members[28], and with support from a GPE ESPDG (section 1.1.5 below). It was developed in line with the 14th Plan (2016/17 – 2018/19) and the vision of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,[29] with its Sustainable Development Goal 4 to "ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong

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[23] See Consolidated Equity Strategy (MoE, 2014a)

[24] 1971 Education Act

[25] DoE, 2016

[26] MoE, 2016f

[27] A SWAp is a process in which funding for the sector – whether internal or from donors – supports a single policy and expenditure program, under government leadership, and adopts common approaches across the sector. It is generally accompanied by efforts to strengthen government procedures for disbursement and accountability. (https://www.soas.ac.uk/cedep-demos/000_P534_PPM_K3637-Demo/unit1/page_12.htm).

[28] For a full list of the Nepal Local Education Group (LEG) members, please see Annex M.

[29] http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/

learning", which is in line with GPE's 2020 agenda. Annual targets have been established for the first five years.[30] The three main components of the SSDP are basic education; secondary education; and literacy and lifelong learning. It addresses a number of cross-cutting themes: teacher professional development and management; governance and management; institutional capacity development; monitoring and evaluation (M&E); examination and assessment; ICT in education; disaster risk reduction and recovery; and health and nutrition. Its five main objectives concern equity; quality; efficiency; governance and management; and resilience. Its intended overall outcomes are improved access and equity; increased school readiness upon enrolment in grade 1; and improved teaching-learning and equitable student learning outcomes. The SSDP includes an outline expenditure framework and resourcing plan. For details of the SSDP, including its results framework, see Annex K.

1.1.5 GPE in Nepal

16. GPE and its predecessors have been providing support to Nepal since 2010. It has made a number of grants (section 2.1.3 and Annex Table 9 below), and further financial support is in preparation. As a global and local partnership, GPE also performs and facilitates a range of learning, sharing and advocacy functions, primarily through the work of the Secretariat, the Grant Agent, the Coordinating Agency, and from GPE's global-level engagement (e.g. technical assistance, advocacy, knowledge exchange, quality standards and funding requirements). GPE membership gives Nepal access to global and regional learning and debate, and enables it to contribute to the governance of GPE as a whole. Local sharing and joint commitment in the education sector are also promoted through the LEG. In addition, Nepal has been involved in GPE's Global and Regional Activities (GRA) programme, which supports research, capacity development and knowledge sharing at the regional and global levels through technical workshops, peer-learning events and conferences, focusing on learning outcomes, education financing, and out-of-school children. Along with multi-country initiatives to enhance teacher effectiveness through local social dialogue and to improve the quality of assessment systems[31], this program supported the UNICEF-led Data Must Speak initiative, which helped the Government of Nepal (GoN) to develop an equity index and supported he re-development and updating of automated school and district profiles to inform budgeting and planning.[32]

1.1.6 Evaluation background

17. In June 2016, GPE's strategic plan (GPE 2020[33]) aligned its vision and mission to the SDGs, and recognized that education is pivotal to the achievement of all other SDGs. It also articulated this vision into actionable goals as well as both country and global objectives (a broader background to GPE is at Annex B). GPE adopted anM&E strategy for the 2016-2020 strategic plan period, including a results framework for monitoring progress across three goals and five strategic objectives in GPE's theory of change (ToC) and a set of 37 indicators (fully detailed at Annex C). The strategy comprises independent evaluation studies, including programmatic, thematic, and country-level evaluations, which will lead to an evaluation on the entire GPE portfolio.

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[30] See Table 8.1 of SSDP, p. 75 (MoE, 2016f)

[31] https://www.globalpartnership.org/funding/gra

[32] (GPE, 2018b)

[33] GPE, 2016d

The country-level evaluations

18. The country-level evaluations comprise independent prospective and summative analyses. Prospective evaluations focus on eight selected countries to address whether GPE inputs to the education sector during this time are conducive to the intermediary outcomes in the country's ToC. Summative evaluations assess ex-post the contribution of inputs to intermediate outcomes, outcomes and potential impact in a diverse sample of 22 countries.

19. The primary aims of the country-level evaluations are to assess: (i) GPE's contributions to strengthening education systems and, ultimately, achieving education results within developing country partners (DCPs) in the areas of learning, equity, equality, and inclusion; and (ii) the relevance, efficiency, and effectiveness of GPE's ToC and country-level operational model.

The prospective evaluations

20. The purpose of the prospective evaluations (PEs) is to assess if GPE's inputs and influence are orienting education sector planning, implementation and monitoring towards the intermediary outcomes as outlined in the ToC. They are forward-looking, and explore what happens, while it happens. They closely observe initial decisions, document the perspectives of decision-makers and focus on the activities and involvement of key stakeholders early in the period under review in order to understand whether progress is being made and whether GPE is making a contribution.

21. The objective of the prospective evaluations is to assess the relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of GPE's inputs at the country level, as well as the validity of GPE's ToC in light of its strategic plan, GPE 2020. They seek to establish if and how GPE inputs and activities contribute to outcomes and potential impact at country level. They are designed to assess GPE's progress on its goals and objectives towards its mission and vision of inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all.

22. In this context, GPE support is defined as both financial inputs deriving from GPE grants and related funding requirements, and non-financial inputs deriving from the work of the Secretariat, the grant agent, the coordinating agency; from local-level partnership activities; from Nepal's engagement in global partnership activities; and from GPE's global-level engagement (e.g. technical assistance, advocacy, knowledge exchange, quality standards and funding criteria).

23. Table 2 below shows the timeline of the policy cycle, GPE activities and the current evaluation timeline.

Table 2. Timeline of events – Nepal education sector, 2015-2020

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Legislation							Constitution of Nepal Education Act – 8th Amendment		Education Act – 9th Amendment			
Policy, strategies, plans	VCDF			Literate Nepal Mission 2012- 2015 TVET Policy	13th National Plan, 2013/14- 2015/16 Gender and Inclusion Policy	Consolidated Equity Strategy	Gender and Inclusion Policy 2015-2020	14th National Plan, 2016/17- 2018/19 Teacher Rationalization and Redeployment Plan 2016/17- 2023				
Planning	SSRP 2009-2016							SSDP 2016-2021				
GPE Grants	Nepal joins EFA FTI	EFA FTI Grant/ ESPIG				PDG	ESPDG	ESPIG 2015-2019		ESPIG tbc 2018-2020		
Monitoring						Public Expenditure Tracking Survey			Budget Review Meeting	Budget Review Meeting		
Review processes	JCM	JAR	JAR	JAR + MTR of SSRP	JAR	JAR + EGRA	JAR	JRM	JRM			
Evaluation Fieldwork for Prospective Evaluation Reports										1st Field visit (April)	2nd Field visit March 2019	
GPE Prospective Evaluation Reports										1st Annual Prospective Evaluation Report July 2018	2nd Annual Prospective Evaluation Report June 2019	

Source: Compiled by authors during literature review and consultations.

1.1.7 Methodology and Tools

24. There are three Key Evaluation Questions for the GPE country-level evaluations (both the prospective and summative evaluation streams) which are presented below. The full detail of the evaluation questions is presented in an evaluation matrix (included in Annex C)

- Key question 1: Has GPE's support to Nepal contributed to achieving country-level objectives related to sector planning, sector plan implementation, sector dialogue and monitoring, and more/better financing for education? [34] If so, then how?

- Key question 2: Has the achievement of country-level objectives[35] contributed to making the overall education system in the reviewed country more effective and efficient?

- Key question 3: Have changes at education system level contributed to progress towards impact?

25. The methodology for the prospective evaluations is a theory-based Contribution Analysis (CA) approach, and the guiding framework is provided in an Evaluation Matrix (EM) and a generic country-level ToC, developed according to GPE's existing overall ToC. It envisages a seven-stage process. The first four stages focus on establishing a solid baseline for each country and subsequent three stages constitute iterative annual country-level reporting. This is further described in Annex C and in the inception report.[36]

26. This approach is consistent with that of the summative evaluations and thus contributes to their final combination for a summative 2020 evaluation. In the application of CA, prospective evaluations are forward-looking and assess if inputs and influence into the education sector planning are conducive to intermediary outcomes, as per the ToC. Conversely, summative evaluations trace the ToC ex-post to assess the contribution of inputs to intermediate outcomes, outcomes and impact.

27. The focus for data collection and analysis is relevant to the key indicators in GPE's results framework and additional indicators described in the respective countries' education sector plans. The evaluation team has not collected primary quantitative data but has instead drawn upon secondary data to base evaluation findings on a solid quantitative basis. In addition, three rounds of data collection will be conducted in 2018, 2019, and 2020. Each of these will contribute to their respective annual reports.

1.1.8 About this annual report

28. This report frames the country-level evaluation through to 2020. It provides the first annual report for Nepal under this evaluation and describes progress made thus far during the evaluation period. It includes: a country-specific ToC; a stakeholder mapping; an analysis of GPE alignment, coherence and harmonization at baseline and any available information on the current policy cycle's education sector planning and implementation thus far; the country-specific work planning and data collection, and relevant analytical approaches; and a stocktaking of available data for all levels of the ToC, highlighting data gaps that could be addressed in subsequent reporting.

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[34] OECD DAC evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency.

[35] GPE country-level objectives related to sector planning, plan implementation, and mutual accountability through sector dialogue and monitoring

[36] *Design and Implementation of GPE 2020 Country-level Evaluations 2017-2020: Final Inception Report.* Universalia, Results for Development, Itad and Mokoro, December 21, 2017 (Universalia et al., 2017).

29. The anticipated risks and related potential limitations that may negatively affect the conduct of the progressive and summative country evaluations, as well as proposed mitigation strategies, are detailed in Annex E.

30. This first annual report constitutes the baseline in-country analysis, and will contribute to the first synthesis report (November 2018). The second annual country mission and report for Nepal are foreseen for the second quarter of 2019, and will contribute to the cross-country synthesis for the last quarter of 2019. The third annual country mission and report for Nepal will take between March and April 2020. The third annual report will feed into the Final Synthesis being finalized between April and May 2020.[37]

1.2 Country-specific theory of change

1.2.1 Objective

31. The evaluations are based on a generic country-level ToC that elaborates on the key changes targeted by GPE and their main causal explanations, factors, and alternative hypotheses that determine them. The generic ToC assumes a scenario where a country would benefit from all available types of GPE financial and non-financial support for the complete policy cycle. It is therefore a high-level document that has been tailored to each country's context in the form of a country-level ToC.

1.2.2 Development of country-adapted ToC

32. The country-specific ToC is based on the generic country-level ToC for this evaluation and further tailored and enriched with the information and data gathered in stages 1-4 of the evaluation methodology, including the first country mission. These include:
- **Stage One**: Including the assessment of data availability and quality, the preliminary input mapping against the generic ToC, stakeholder mapping and country calendar.
- **Stage Two**: Gathering further evidence on the country-specific ToC through in-country missions including discussions with relevant stakeholders.
- **Stage Three:** Review stakeholders, data availability and evaluation foci across countries with a strategic perspective.
- **Stage Four**: Assessing the ToC on the basis of the evidence assembled in construct of a baseline TOC for each country in the prospective evaluation sample.

33. The assessment of the ToC underpinning GPE's support to Nepal is based on key informant interviews (KIIs) that were undertaken with key stakeholders in Nepal in April 2018 (see also Annex Table 3). A number of national-level stakeholders or actors working in sectors relevant to GPE's support were also interviewed. The assessment also makes use of a document review of secondary data sources and literature.

34. Well aligned with GPE's emphasis on a socially and institutionally inclusive approach to educational development, key stakeholders in Nepal include not only the government's Ministry of Education (and, within that, various bodies including the Department of Education), but also development partners, representatives of civil society and NGOs – all members of the Local Education Group. GPE's Coordinating Agency and Grant Agent (UNICEF and the World Bank respectively) play central roles. Given GPE's structural model, the contribution of UNICEF is particularly important. In the LEDPG, civil society

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[37] Findings across the country-level evaluations will be analysed in two annual and the final synthesis reports to facilitate learning across countries.

participation is funnelled through one member, the National Campaign for Education Nepal (NCE-N), which had 383 member organisations in April 2018.

35. The first country mission focused on understanding the roles of these stakeholders in a rapidly evolving institutional environment, as the GoN reallocates responsibility for basic and secondary education to the 753 rural and urban municipalities, ending the roles of district authorities and District Education Offices (DEOs). The mission explored the working relationships between the Ministry of Education, the Coordinating Agency, the Grant Agent, the LEDPG and GPE against the background of eight years of support from GPE and the generally successful implementation of two ESPs – the latter of which, the SSDP, is ongoing. It also assessed monitoring arrangements for the SSDP and explored all stakeholders' perceptions of GPE financial and non-financial support as a new, much smaller ESPIG was being negotiated and the scale of GPE's financial contribution was expected to become a much smaller fraction of the total ODA support to the national education budget. Interview notes were taken by theme after receiving consent from the interviewees. Data from interviews were organised and analysed by the research team.

36. What is presented in this evaluation is an emergent ToC. It reflects the information gathered for Nepal during the review period. This ToC will continue to be reviewed and updated during the course of the evaluation.

1.2.3   Country-specific theory of change

37. This evaluation is based on a ToC approach as shown in Figure 1 below. The purpose of the ToC is to map out the causal chain in which GPE's interventions, along with those of other stakeholders, are to bring about change in Nepal – and to identify the underlying assumptions. The evaluation may find that some assumptions were inaccurate, that other assumptions should have been identified but were not, or that assumptions about causality prove to be correct, underscoring appropriate design.

38. The prospective evaluation of GPE in Nepal begins at a time when two ESPIGs (the second extended for two years) have been completed in support of the School Sector Reform Plan (2009-2016), and a third is in preparation in support of the SSDP (2016/17- 2022/23). It is more than usually synthetic, therefore: at the time of writing, the next ESPIG is not yet in place, although some funding continues under the previous one, including the Variable Part. However, it can be assumed that the working relationships that have framed GPE support to the Nepal education sector to date will be continued, at national level, during the evaluation period.

39. In Nepal, GPE is one of nine development partners contributing pooled funding to a sector-wide approach in the education sector. There is therefore no separate project document or results framework for the GPE funding contribution to the ESP, although of course GPE membership has wider functions and benefits for Nepal than the ESPIG alone. For the previous ESPIGs, performance was assessed in terms of the SSRP as a whole. That will be the arrangement for the next ESPIG in support of the SSDP. While tracking the overall performance of the sector in terms of the SSDP results framework, the PE will undertake contribution analysis to estimate the role of GPE in that performance.

40. As agreed at the baseline stage of the PE, the ToC presented in Figure 1 below is based on the generic GPE country-level theory of change (Annex Figure 3, page 63) and focuses on Nepal's established and ongoing ESP. It begins with the inputs made by various agencies, with funding from various sources. As noted, two thirds of funding for the national education budget comes from domestic sources; the contributions of parents, communities and local institutions are significant alongside those of government itself. GPE's financial contribution is small and will become smaller; its technical and networking contributions are also important, and are shown in the ToC, whose 'activities' column represents the

quantitative and qualitative dimensions of GPE support alongside those of the GoN, civil society and other members of the LEDPG and LEG.

41. The resultant outputs shown in the ToC are ongoing and partially achieved results from the SSDP and its predecessor, the SSRP, to which the further GPE support that is now envisaged should contribute. The intended improvements in sector planning and management will now have to be reconfigured to adjust to the new federal structure and its reallocation of authority and roles. More than ever before, the partnerships that GPE seeks to stimulate will be vital in steering and supporting these adjustments. Success in this regard will help deliver the first of the immediate outcomes in the ToC, which is effective and efficient sector performance within the federal governance and management structure. Other governance outcomes shown at this level are also vital, including enhanced teacher management, participation and performance and improved mutual accountability across the sector. The intermediate outcomes in the ToC are interdependent: an effective and efficient education system for the nation depends in part on social, gender and geographical equity in sector performance, and vice versa.

42. Table 3 below lists the key assumptions that underlie the ToC. Many of these are common to GPE support in all countries, and concern satisfactory levels of commitment and performance by all stakeholders. Specific to Nepal is assumption 10 – shown as affecting the conversion of activities and outputs, and again of outputs to immediate outcomes – that progress will not again be disrupted by a major natural disaster, as it was by the devastating earthquakes of 2015. A second key current concern is represented by assumptions 4 and 12: that years of strong progress in the education sector will not be set back by the massive institutional transformations and restructuring currently under way following adoption of the new federal constitution. Thirdly, and less Nepal-specific, assumptions 13, 15 and 23 refer to various aspects of political will. The political commitment to promoting equity and an inclusive approach to the planning and management of education in Nepal has been important to recent progress, and is assumed to continue.

Table 3.   Key assumptions in the theory of change

#	Inputs to activities
1.	There will be continued support and commitment by the Government of Nepal to increase education expenditure, and to strengthen and improve the national education system.
2.	The interventions by DPs, Government, professional bodies, CSOs, and the private sector continue to align with and be complementary to, the national objectives as defined in the Education Act and SSDP. Country-level partners align and work through the LEDPG.
3.	Development Partners honour their financial commitments to the sector.
4.	The Government deploys adequate human resources through the new federal structure and systems to implement the SSDP.
5.	Available funding is sufficient to implement all elements of the sector plan and mechanisms for priority setting through reviews make it possible to focus on the most critical elements of the plan when funding is not sufficient.
#	**Activities to outputs**
6.	Relevant actors have adequate technical capacity to implement all elements of the sector plan.
7.	There is sufficient national capacity (or relevant technical assistance) to analyse available data and maintain and improve the Education Management System (EMIS).
8.	Country-level partners work inclusively through the LEDPG to support government and take part in regular, evidence-based joint sector reviews.
9.	Within the LEDPG, GPE has sufficient leverage to influence domestic and international education sector financing, LEDPG approaches and national policy.

10.	No significant disruption to SSDP or related initiatives and services by earthquakes or other natural disasters. [Also affects output – outcome linkages.]
#	**Outputs to outcomes**
11.	External (contextual) factors permit national and international actors to increase/improve the quantity and predictability of education sector financing.
12.	Challenges presented by reallocation of responsibilities for education within the new federal system are successfully overcome.
13.	There is political will and institutional incentives to use evidence and best practice in sector analysis and planning.
14.	Civil society organizations and teacher organizations have the capacity to monitor sector plan implementation.
15.	Government has the political will to create space for country-level stakeholders - including teachers and civil society organizations and the private sector - to engage in policy dialogue, priority setting and monitoring.
16.	All stakeholders (government at all levels, donor partners, professional bodies, NGOs, CSOs, private sector) work together and improve coordination and communication.
17.	Changes in personnel due to staff turnover or redeployment would not be at a level that diminishes the effectiveness of staff and institutional capacity development.
#	**Outcomes to impact**
18.	Education sector plan implementation leads to improvements of previous shortcomings in the education system. Government support (across ministries) for reformed sectoral planning and budget processes and demand for timely data grows.
19.	Government has capacity to facilitate policy reform quickly and scale up domestic financial resources for the education sector.
20.	Political and economic situation is conducive to service delivery.
21.	Other obstacles to education, such as violence, hunger and health issues that children may face, are addressed and mitigated adequately and in a timely manner.
22.	Removal of barriers to school participation is sufficiently effective to achieve a positive impact on learning, equity, equality and inclusion.
23.	There is political will to make institutional, management and governance changes that ensure the education sector is effectively managed at all levels (national, municipality and school level).

1.2.4 Assembling the Contribution Story

43. The GPE contribution in Nepal will focus on the promotion of high standards of planning, management, monitoring, inclusion, equity and accountability. Higher standards of planning are an essential foundation for a more efficient and effective education system, which depends for the maintenance of those qualities on competent management. To be effective, management depends on prompt, timely and accurate monitoring, and inclusive dialogue around performance. Achieving all these high operational standards in the education system must in turn be combined with an inclusive and equitable approach to education services across all groups of the population wherever they live. Adherence to high operational standards and to nationally endorsed principles of inclusion are equity depend on strong systems of accountability, reinforced by national standards and systems of governance that call for efficiency, transparency and equity in all fields of educational service to the people of Nepal.

44. GPE's contribution will aim to strengthen Nepal's commitment to these principles by facilitating the country's engagement in its global structures and debates: for example, Nepal represents Asia and the Pacific on its Strategy and Impact Committee and has served as Focal Point for that GPE Board constituency. GPE encourages innovation, technical developments in the sector and improved accountability through its Knowledge and Innovation Exchange mechanism (replacing its Global and

Regional Activities Programme (section 1.1.5) and its Advocacy and Social Accountability funding. While some of these broader GPE contributions have monetary value, the main issue for Nepal is whether they are qualitatively attractive and regarded as making the administrative burden of GPE membership worthwhile.

45. There are two reasons why GPE's contributions must be assessed from a qualitative rather than a quantitative perspective during the evaluation period. First, as noted above, the total likely value of the next ESPIG, at USD 24.2m, is very small compared to those of other development partners, and tiny compared to the GON's own expenditure. Secondly, the main GPE funding contributions, as before, will be provided through a sector-wide approach that complicates the attribution of ESP performance to any specific funding source. Current discussions about the next ESPIG suggest that that GPE support would be entirely results-based, on the basis of disbursement-linked indicators (DLIs), mainly linked to the federal transition. It remains to be seen how the indicators will be defined and measured, and whether any attribution to GPE will be feasible. Consultations are ongoing at the time of writing. The Concept Note for the next ESPIG does emphasise that the bulk of the new grant should be dedicated to supporting local municipalities to implement the SSDP successfully in the context of the federal transition; whether this intention will be converted entirely into a set of DLI criteria is not yet clear.

46. The contribution story will mainly have to be written and read in terms of the qualitative value that GPE membership adds for Nepal. As several informants have observed, that membership comes with significant transaction costs, relative to the financial gain. Negotiating GPE funding is a lengthy process during which the GON must prove that it satisfies various criteria and undergo GPE quality assurance procedures. From a budget perspective, the impact of leaving GPE would be minimal for Nepal. From GPE perspective, this is a risk that assessment of the contribution story over the evaluation period will calibrate.

47. The baseline assessment is that Nepal is likely to remain a GPE member because of the principles that GPE, largely through its centrally important Coordinating Agency, UNICEF, promotes across the education sector through the deliberations of the LEDPG and in direct consultations with the Ministry of Education.

Figure 1.   **Inferred theory of change for GPE in Nepal**

Inferred Theory of Change – Nepal
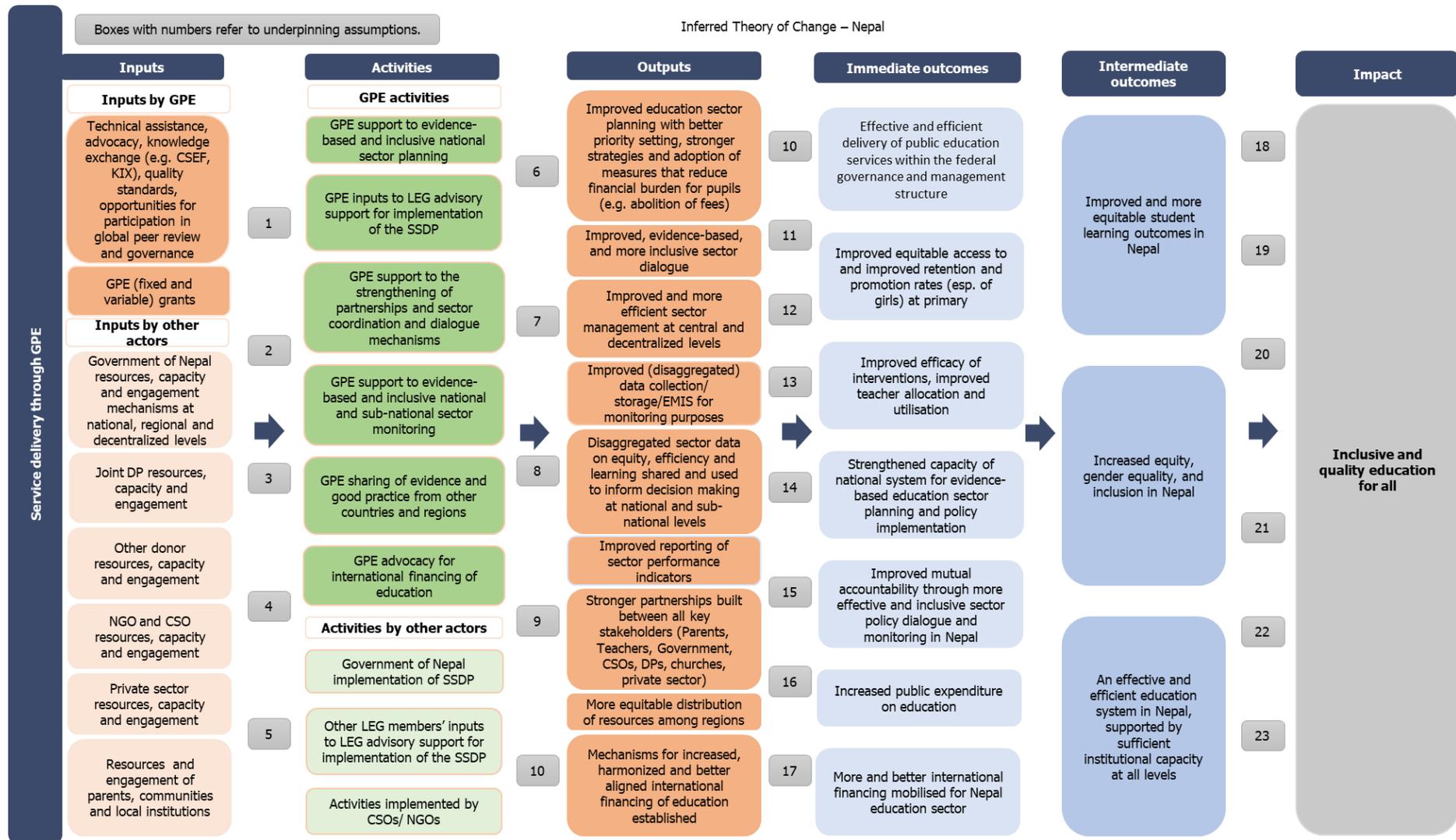
48. Table 4 below lists the contribution claims and underlying assumptions (numbered as per Table 3 above). Key indicators can be found in the evaluation matrix in Annex Table 3 of Annex C.

Table 4. Contribution Claims and critical underlying assumptions

Explanatory Mechanism	Critical Underlying Assumptions	(Implicit) Contribution Claim
BECAUSE (1) GPE provides Education Sector Plan Development Grants and guidance, quality assurance, capacity development and technical guidance, and (2) promotes evidence-based and adaptive planning – DCP governments produce and own credible and evidence-based sector plans focused on equity, efficiency and learning.	1) There will be continued support and commitment by the Government of Nepal to increase education expenditure, and to strengthen and improve the national education system. 2) The interventions by DPs, Government, professional bodies, CSOs, and the private sector continue to align with and be complementary to the national objectives as defined in the Education Act and SSDP. Country-level partners align and work through the LEDPG. 9) Within the LEDPG, GPE has sufficient leverage to influence domestic and international education sector financing, LEDPG approaches and national policy. 23) There is political will to make institutional, management and governance changes that ensure the education sector is effectively managed at all levels (national, municipality and school level).	**Contribution claim A:** GPE (financial and non-financial) support and influence contribute to the *development* of government owned, credible and evidence-based sector plans focused on equity, efficiency and learning.
BECAUSE (1) GPE supports and promotes evidence-based and inclusive national sector monitoring and adaptive planning at global and country levels, (2) GPE promotes and facilitates mutual accountability for education sector progress and (3) GPE promotes and facilitates cross-national sharing of evidence and good practice – there is mutual accountability for sector progress through inclusive sector policy dialogue and monitoring.	8) Country-level partners work inclusively through the LEDPG to support government and take part in regular, evidence-based joint sector reviews. 2) The interventions by DPs, Government, professional bodies, CSOs, and the private sector continue to align with and be complementary to, the national objectives as defined in the Education Act and SSDP. Country-level partners align and work through the LEDPG. 9) Within the LEDPG, GPE has sufficient leverage to influence domestic and international education sector financing, LEDPG approaches and national policy. 15) Government has the political will to create space for country-level stakeholders – including teachers and civil society	**Contribution claim B:** GPE (financial and non-financial) support for inclusive sector planning and joint monitoring contribute to *mutual accountability* or education sector progress.

Explanatory Mechanism	Critical Underlying Assumptions	(Implicit) Contribution Claim
	organizations and the private sector – to engage in policy dialogue, priority setting and monitoring. 16) All stakeholders (government at all levels, donor partners, professional bodies, NGOs, CSOs, private sector) work together and improve coordination and communication.	
BECAUSE (1) GPE advocates for increased, harmonized and better coordinated international financing for education, and (2) GPE funding requirements include the promotion of improvements in domestic financing for education – there is more and better financing for education is mobilized in the country.	4) Development Partners honor their financial commitments to the sector. 5) Available funding is sufficient to implement all elements of the sector plan and mechanisms for priority setting through reviews make it possible to focus on the most critical elements of the plan when funding is not sufficient. 9) Within the LEDPG, GPE has sufficient leverage to influence domestic and international education sector financing, LEDPG approaches and national policy. 11) External (contextual) factors permit national and international actors to increase/improve the quantity and predictability of education sector financing. 19) Government has capacity to facilitate policy reform quickly and scale up domestic financial resources for the education sector.	**Contribution claim C:** GPE advocacy and funding requirements contribute to more and better financing for education in the country.
BECAUSE – (1) GPE funding through PDGs and ESPIGs, (2) GPE quality assurance, processes, guidelines, capacity building and technical guidance for ESPIG development and implementation, (3) there is mutual accountability for education sector progress, (4) the country has developed a credible and evidence based sector plan, and (5) more and better domestic and international financing for education is available – the country implements and monitors realistic evidence-based sector plans based on equity, efficiency and learning	4) The Government deploys adequate human resources through the new federal structure and systems to implement the SSDP. 5) Available funding is sufficient to implement all elements of the sector plan and mechanisms for priority setting through reviews make it possible to focus on the most critical elements of the plan when funding is not sufficient. 8) Country-level partners work inclusively through the LEDPG to support government and take part in regular, evidence-based joint sector reviews. 10) No significant disruption to SSDP or related initiatives and	**Contribution claim D:** GPE (financial and non-financial) support and influence contribute to the effective and efficient implementation of sector plans.

Explanatory Mechanism	Critical Underlying Assumptions	(Implicit) Contribution Claim
	services by earthquakes or other natural disasters. 11) External (contextual) factors permit national and international actors to increase/improve the quantity and predictability of education sector financing. 12) Challenges presented by reallocation of responsibilities for education within the new federal system are successfully overcome. 16) All stakeholders (government at all levels, donor partners, professional bodies, NGOs, CSOs, private sector) work together and improve coordination and communication.	
BECAUSE (1) countries implement and monitor realistic, evidence-based education sector plans based on equity, efficiency and learning – the education system becomes more effective and efficient towards delivering equitable quality educational services for all.	6) Relevant actors have adequate technical capacity to implement all elements of the sector plan. 7) There is sufficient national capacity (or relevant technical assistance) to analyse available data and maintain and improve the Education Management System (EMIS). 8) Country-level partners work inclusively through the LEDPG to support government and take part in regular, evidence-based joint sector reviews. 13) There is political will and institutional incentives to use evidence and best practice in sector analysis and planning. 14) Civil society organizations and teacher organizations have the capacity to monitor sector plan implementation. 23) There is political will to make institutional, management and governance changes that ensure the education sector is effectively managed at all levels (national, municipality and school level).	**Contribution claim E:** The development, implementation and monitoring of realistic evidence-based sector plans contributes to positive changes at the level of the overall education system.
BECAUSE (1) sector plan implementation includes provisions for strengthened EMIS and LAS and (2) because GPE promotes and facilitates sharing of evidence and mutual accountability for education sector progress - country	4) The Government deploys adequate human resources through the new federal structure and systems to implement the SSDP. 6) Relevant actors have adequate technical capacity to implement all elements of the sector plan.	

Explanatory Mechanism	Critical Underlying Assumptions	(Implicit) Contribution Claim
produces and shares disaggregated data on equity, efficiency, and learning.	7) There is sufficient national capacity (or relevant technical assistance) to analyse available data and maintain and improve the Education Management System (EMIS). 8) Country-level partners work inclusively through the LEDPG to support government and take part in regular, evidence-based joint sector reviews. 13) There is political will and institutional incentives to use evidence and best practice in sector analysis and planning. 14) Civil society organizations and teacher organizations have the capacity to monitor sector plan implementation.	
BECAUSE of improvements at the level of the overall education system, there are improved learning outcomes and improved equity, equality and inclusion in education.	18) Education sector plan implementation leads to improvements of previous shortcomings in the education system. Government support (across ministries) for reformed sectoral planning and budget processes and demand for timely data grows. 19) Government has capacity to facilitate policy reform quickly and scale up domestic financial resources for the education sector. 20) Political and economic situation is conducive to service delivery. 21) Other obstacles to education, such as violence, hunger and health issues that children may face, are addressed and mitigated adequately and in a timely manner. 22) Removal of barriers to school participation is sufficiently effective to achieve a positive impact on learning, equity, equality and inclusion. 23) There is political will to make institutional, management and governance changes that ensure the education sector is effectively managed at all levels (national, municipality and school level).	**Contribution claim F:** Education system-level improvements result in improved learning outcomes and in improved equity, gender equality, and inclusion in education.

1.2.5 Stakeholder mapping

49. A stakeholder mapping exercise (see Annex M) identifies and maps key stakeholders at the national level that are to be consulted during the evaluation; it assesses each stakeholder's role and influence with regard to GPE activities. In the context of the prospective country evaluations, mapping the essential activities taking place over the evaluation period will also be of relevance. This will inform decisions regarding visits and missions, to the extent possible in line with the evaluation work plan, and will also make sure that evaluations and reports due to emerge in the course of the PE are factored into its analysis.

2 Assessment of GPE contributions to Education Sector Planning and Policy Implementation, Financing, and Sector Dialogue/Monitoring in Nepal

2.1   Situation analysis at Year 1

50. Stakeholder consultations during the first annual evaluation visit to Nepal emphasised the central importance for the education sector of the transformation that the country is currently undergoing with the introduction of the federal system through the 2015 Constitution, involving structural and functional reforms that will affect policy and regulatory frameworks. The right to education is guaranteed by the constitution, and the Eighth and Ninth Amendments to the 1971 Education Act (2016 and 2017 respectively) were to "ensure compatibility between and among education institutions and pave the way for reforms in line with the new constitutional mandate."[38] How well this will work in practice remains to be seen over the coming years.

51. A transitional plan for the SSDP in the federal context is under development and will be framed in due course by a Federal Education Act that will legislate structures and roles for the sector. These are major structural reforms and will certainly affect the delivery of the SSDP. The local municipalities will bear much more responsibility and will need to be equipped and capacitated to be able to fulfil their new mandate. The question of sufficient human resources at local level will also be important in delivering education services effectively. There is an increased risk of disruption of the service delivery and the implementation of the SSDP's five-year costed plan as these multiple changes to structures and systems are made. GPE is actively involved in debate and planning around these issues, including during missions by the Secretariat to Nepal (as in November 2017) and in Budget Review Meetings.[39]

52. Current preparation of the next GPE ESPIG is taking these new challenges into account (section 1.2.4 above, and exactly which data will form the basis of new DLIs remains to be seen. In the meantime, the baseline work for this PE has included comprehensive data gathering on all relevant indicators, as shown in Annex J, Annex K and Annex O below).

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[38] Transitional Arrangements for Implementation of SSDP in Federal Setup 2018-19. Zero draft (MoE, 2018a).

[39] MoE, 2018c.

2.1.1 Education sector planning

Summary

- *In Nepal, education sector planning has been clearly structured and coordinated for some years.*

- *Education sector planning is solidly established and competently executed through the sector-wide processes undertaken for the SSRP and, more recently, the SSDP – seen mainly as a continuation and consolidation of the SSRP's achievements. Both the SSRP (2009-2016) and the SSDP (2016-2023) were funded through pooled funding.*

- *GPE has contributed to education sector planning through two previous grants and a third one is being developed.*

- *The principal change concerns ongoing efforts to adjust sector planning to the new realities of the federal system, with the major reallocation of responsibility for the sector from district to municipality structures.*

- *A challenge this entails is that education sector planning before 2018 took place before the full implications of the transition to a federal system were apparent.*

- *In terms of Indicator 16 of the GPE Results Framework, the purpose of which is to assess the quality and credibility of education sector plans against a set of criteria, the GPE Secretariat rated the current Nepal ESP (the SSDP) as meeting the expected standards (7 out of 7 criteria fully met).*

Assessment of sector planning

53. **School Sector Development Plan.** As described in more detail in ¶15 above, following on from the SSRP, the SSDP 2016/17-2022/23 aims to continue to develop an inclusive and high-quality education system for all children. In terms of Indicator 16 of the GPE Results Framework, the purpose of which is to assess the quality and credibility of education sector plans against a set of criteria,[40] the GPE Secretariat rated the Nepal ESP as partially meeting the expected standards; seven out of seven were fully met (overall assessment shown in Table 5 below).[41]

Table 5.   Rating by GPE Secretariat of Nepal ESP against Indicator 16 of the GPE Results Framework

Criteria	Quality Standard Status
Criterion 1 - Overall Vision	Met
Criterion 2 - Strategic	Met
Criterion 3 - Holistic	Met

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[40] Indicators 16 a, b, c, & d are assessed against a series of standards including the extent to which the plan is guided by an overall vision, is strategic and holistic, is evidence-based and achievable, is sensitive to context, and is also attentive to disparities. For more detail see the GPE Results Framework Technical Guide (June, 2017) pp.38 – 43.

[41] A 2018 appraisal by the GPE Secretariat (GPE, 2018d) also found that the SSDP meets all seven criteria (see ¶ 81).

Criteria	Quality Standard Status
Criterion 4 - Evidence-based	Met
Criterion 5 - Achievable	Met
Criterion 6 - Sensitive to Context	Met
Criterion 7 - Attentive to disparities	Met
Number of Criteria Met (ranges from 0 to 7)	7[42]

Source: Data provided by GPE Secretariat, assessment revised in 2019

54. Education sector planning in Nepal has been clearly structured and coordinated for some years, through the SSRP (2009-2016) and now the SSDP (2016-2023) – both of which provided a framework for pooled funding by donors, including GPE. Annex K outlines the SSDP and its objectives. The SSDP is a detailed and evidence-based document. It was developed in close consultation with stakeholders[43] who provided detailed feedback. Official endorsement of the SSDP by the LEG was given on 21 November 2016.[44] Subsequently a Joint Financing Agreement[45] was put in place.

55. Building on the design and achievements of the SSRP, the SSDP to which GPE will continue to contribute during the evaluation period (Annex K) comprehensively addresses the relevant objectives of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as well as the GPE 2020 agenda (see section 1.1.2 and Annex K), while recognising that significant implementation challenges still lie ahead.

56. Complementarity between initiatives is central to the established pooled funding approach to donor support for educational development in Nepal, to which GPE contributed through its two previous ESPIGs and which it will continue to support with a further ESPIG during the evaluation period (section 1.1.5).

57. The second ESPIG (2016-2019) remained in place at the start of the evaluation period, with the third ESPIG being planned and negotiated. The principal change that has occurred concerns ongoing efforts to adjust sector planning to the new realities of the federal system, with the major reallocation of responsibility for the sector from district to municipality structures. The Ministry of Education has been working on transition planning,[46] and "the government and the partners have agreed to adjust the SSDP during the Mid-Term Review (MTR) in 2019 in view of the move to federalism".[47] Transition planning is an ongoing and dynamic process at present. It covers legal arrangements, revised institutional and management arrangements at central and local levels, M&E and reporting, financial management (including revised grant structure and the distribution of revenue and resources), financial reporting, and the implications of all of these aspects for international economic cooperation and coordination.[48]

58. Education sector planning is solidly established and competently executed through the sector-wide processes undertaken for the SSRP and, more recently, the SSDP – seen mainly as a continuation and consolidation of the SSRP's achievements. Those processes were widely viewed as consultative and comprehensive, providing a strong framework for the implementation of a range of

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[42] At least five out of seven need to be met to pass the assessment.

[43] Synopsis of the Reports of the Stakeholder Consultation (MoE, 2016d)

[44] School Sector Development Plan endorsement letter from the Nepal Local Education Development Partner Group (EUD et al., 2016)

[45] Draft SSDP Joint Financing Agreement, 1 March 2017 (GoN et al., 2017a)

[46] Transitional Arrangements for Implementation of SSDP in Federal Setup 2018-19. Zero draft (MoE, 2018a)

[47] QAR 1: Initial Program Consultation: Nepal (GPE, 2018d): np.

[48] MoE, 2018a.

improvements across the sector. The principal 'weakness' (better described as a challenge) is that the bulk of education sector planning before 2018 took place before the full implications of the transition to a federal system were apparent. Although an appraisal of the SDP considered that it "laid strong foundation for further consultations during the implementation of the SSDP, and for preparing for the forthcoming federal structure in education", it also acknowledged that "it is possible that the SSDP will be significantly revised in three years' time".[49]

GPE contribution to sector planning

59. In this section we outline how GPE financial and non-financial support to sector planning is intended to fulfil the contribution claim that GPE support and influence the development of government-owned, credible and evidence-based sector plans focused on equity, efficiency and learning. The plausibility of this contribution is then assessed based on the baseline situation, progress thus far and the wider evidence base.

60. At the time of the first annual PE mission to Nepal, GPE was not making a direct contribution to sector planning, as the SSDP – the country's second major sector plan, following the SSRP – was in place. (GPE had made significant contributions to SSDP preparation).[50] As noted above, the MoE was actively working to plan transition arrangements to the new federal disposition of arrangements for responsibility in the education sector. While supportive of these efforts, the GPE Secretariat was primarily concerned with what the outcome would be as it worked with the GoN to prepare the next ESPIG.

61. There have been no significant changes in GPE contribution to sector planning during the review period. Like other development partners, GPE has been in a mode of supportive concern as it prepares a second round of support to the SSDP (through a third ESPIG) against the background of the federal transition.

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[49] Juho Uusihakala Consulting, 2016, p. 25.

[50] Annex Table 9.

2.1.2 Mutual accountability through sector dialogue and monitoring

Summary

- *Sector dialogue is generally reported to be working smoothly through the LEDPG and the LEG.*

- *Nepal has an established tradition of strong dialogue between government, development partners and civil society on the progress and strengthening of the education sector.*

- *Through the active participation of its GA and CA in the LEDPG, and its broader advocacy of regional and global dialogue about educational development, GPE makes a strong contribution to the quality and value of education dialogue in Nepal.*

- *Some concern was expressed about the adequacy of civil society representation and engagement, with the GoN reportedly preferring to limit CSO involvement to the two existing bodies and some other stakeholders preferring a less rigid cap on such participation.*

- *There is a new challenge over how the federal transition may affect sector dialogue.*

Assessment of sector dialogue

62. The SSDP was developed on the basis of a wide-ranging national policy dialogue (see section 1.1.2) and sector dialogue generally is reported to be working smoothly through the LEDPG and the LEG (see Annex M).

63. As described in the baseline report, the LEDPG (currently chaired by UNICEF) is active, meeting monthly, and serving a valuable purpose in sector dialogue. The more broadly-based LEG does not meet so regularly. While the added value of this second structure could be questioned, its broader membership is important, particularly because it gives more opportunity for civil society representation. The issue of the adequacy of civil society representation and engagement in education sector dialogue is a concern for some informants, with the GoN reportedly preferring to limit CSO involvement to the two existing bodies and some other stakeholders preferring a less rigid cap on such participation. Nevertheless, overall, Nepal continues its established tradition of strong dialogue between government, development partners and civil society on the progress and strengthening of the education sector. The LEDPG epitomises this.

64. There have been no significant recent changes in the quality of sector dialogue. While the current climate in Nepal is conducive to the standards of sector dialogue and monitoring that GPE advocates, assumptions identified in the ToC (section 1.2.3 and Table 3 above) show the importance of keeping this issue under review – including the extent to which civil society is represented – and especially in the light of the federal transition. There are concerns regarding how this transition may affect sector dialogue. It can be envisaged that new representative structures will be needed to enable municipalities to engage in national debate about education. Although sector stakeholders are undoubtedly aware of this issue, meeting reports do not give much indication of its being systematically addressed yet. All parties must sustain the will to engage constructively in inclusive dialogue, in the LEDPG and other forums such as the LEG.

Assessment of sector monitoring

65. Biannual Joint Sector Reviews take place through Joint Review Meetings (JRMs) and Budget Review Meetings (BRMs). The latest JRM took place in November 2017; a BRM was held in May 2018. Sector stakeholders participate in Joint Quarterly Meetings to monitor the progress of SSDP implementation and hold a Joint Consultative Meeting each December. Various technical working groups allow for more detailed consultation and monitoring on issues like early grade reading, teacher professional development and the EMIS. The recent GPE Quality Assurance Review (QAR) stated that "[sector] monitoring systems have been in place for many years and are working well."[51] The relatively robust sector dialogue structure just outlined complements the GoN's own commitment to sector monitoring through the EMIS (section 2.2 below). To date, monitoring data have been regularly delivered to national authorities and to sector dialogue structures, and – according to informants – are an important input to dialogue and decision-making.

66. There have been no significant changes in recent years in the extent to which sector monitoring by the GoN and development partners feeds into planning processes and dialogue about sector development strategy. This PE will assess the extent to which changes may now occur as the structure of the monitoring system is revised to accord with the new disposition of authority for the monitoring process at municipality level. As indicated above, major new effort will be needed in this regard.

67. Indicator 18 in the GPE results framework concerns the achievement of quality standards for joint sector reviews (JSRs), based on assessment of five aspects of performance. The 2017 indicator scores for Nepal were positive. For four of the five quality standards, joint sector reviews in Nepal were found to be fully satisfactory: "evidence-based"; "comprehensive'; "monitors sector performance and key indicators"; and "anchored into an effective policy cycle". Nepal JSRs were not scored as fully satisfactory on one standard, "participatory and inclusive: the JSR includes effective participation from all education sector stakeholders transparently. It sets the stage for a reinforced mutual accountability framework".[52] This may be due to the concerns about civil society participation mentioned above, although the two CSOs (NCE and the Association of International Non-Governmental Organisations in Nepal (AIN)) are able to participate fully in JSRs.

68. Under 'areas for improvement' the SSDP Status Report 2016-2017 states that

> *An emphasis has got to be given to develop and apply results-based monitoring tools. Self-evaluation mechanism is essential at all levels. Accountability ladder and reporting procedure ought to be developed and adopted in different levels of management including schools. A condensed research on monitoring and evaluation based on field observation, stated in ASIP [Annual Strategy Implementation Plan] is required to bring in implementation.[53]*

GPE contribution to sector dialogue and monitoring

69. GPE makes a strong contribution to the quality and value of education dialogue in Nepal. With its emphasis on broad-based consultative and participatory dialogue in the education sector, and on an evidence-based approach to education policy and programming, GPE began the evaluation period in Nepal with an established stance and a reputation of constructive contribution to enhanced sector dialogue and monitoring. This is due to its support for the LEDPG and LEG forums and the way in which it has used these and other consultative structures in the planning and monitoring of its own grants to Nepal, with its GA and CA actively participating in the LEDPG. GPE also engages in broader advocacy of regional and global dialogue about educational development. Informants stated that grants from

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[51] GPE, 2018d.

[52] GPE data and Results Framework Indicators: Methodological Briefs, page 47 (GPE, 2017c).

[53] SSDP Status Report 2016-2017, p. 50 (DoE, 2017b)

the CSEF to NCE Nepal (section 1.1.5 above) were an appreciated additional contribution to civil society engagement in sector dialogue. The first two of these took place before the evaluation period.

> *NCE Nepal has been conducting budget advocacy to ensure an increase in spending from 15% to 20% of the overall budget, and monitoring its execution. It has also participated in formal government-led fora, such as the Joint Annual Review (JAR). These meetings enabled the coalition to contribute to the national definition of the SDG4 indicators, and shape the strategy for the SDGs in Nepal.[54]*

2.1.3   Education Sector Financing in Nepal

Summary

- *Pooled funding for support to education is well established in Nepal. Development partners and the GoN generally collaborate constructively for this purpose, as evidenced by annual BRM reports that include reference to the coordination and independent verification of DLIs.*

- *While Nepal's education budget has been increasing annually in real terms, it has been falling as a proportion of the total. The fall in relative terms is due to heavy expenditures on post-earthquake reconstruction. In addition, the federal transition is imposing major additional costs on the fiscus.*

- *Nepal has doubled its education budget over the last five years, and the GoN remains committed to a 1 percent per year increase in real terms in the education budget during the remainder of the SSDP period.*

- *Other modes of instability persist in ODA to Nepal, as some funding agencies reduce or withdraw their support and others maintain or even increase it. It remains to be seen whether development partners' faith in the Nepal education sector – and, consequently, their willingness to support it – is damaged by the progress of the federal transition.*

Assessment of sector financing

70. According to recent data reviewed by the May 2018 Budget Review Meeting (BRM),[55] 77 percent of the federal budget ceiling of USD 982m is allocated to the SSDP. Under the new federal system, these are funds allocated to municipalities through the conditional grant mechanism. Fiscal equalisation grants may be an additional way for municipalities to secure funding for education in their areas. The BRM noted that the Ministry of Education will have extra work to do in calculating the total amounts allocated for education. What the incremental implications are has not yet been fully clarified, but it is understood that these may be significant.[56]

71. According to the first annual report on the SSDP (2016-17), the total education sector budget for 2016-17 was NPR 116.36 bn (USD 1.03 bn at current exchange rates). Of this, 6.6 percent was provided by grants from foreign development partners (DPs), and 26.1 percent by loans from foreign DPs.[57] The budgeted ODA contribution has not been fully realised, and the gap widened with the recent

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[54] Global Campaign for Education, 2018a. See also Global Campaign for Education, 2018b.

[55] MoE, 2018c.

[56] MoE, 2018a.

[57] DoE, 2017b: 20; see also Annex Table 12 - Annex Table 14 and Annex Figure 5.

departure of Australia as an education sector donor to Nepal – which according to the aide memoire of the 2018 BRM, "caus[ed] the projected financing gap for the remaining SSDP program period to increase by US$ 9 million".[58] The new GPE ESPIG will partly compensate for that shortfall.

72. Pooled funding of the kind through which GPE funding support is provided to Nepal is appropriate in principle, being aligned with the principles of the Paris Convention.[59] It promotes government ownership and coordination of the development process, enhances donor alignment with national objectives and systems, harmonises donor procedures and promotes the mutual accountability of development partners. In the Nepal education sector, reality largely conforms to this theory. Pooled funding for support to education is now well established. Development partners and the GoN generally collaborate constructively for this purpose, as evidenced by annual BRM reports that include reference to the coordination and independent verification of DLIs. "The SSDP makes high use of the national systems of programming, accounting, auditing, procurement, reporting etc… It scores high on the [GPE] Secretariat's alignment assessment."[60]

73. One of the GPE targets is that education should receive 20 percent of public expenditure. While Nepal's education budget has been increasing annually in real terms, it has been falling as a proportion of the total. It was 19.4 percent of the combined capital and recurrent allocation in 2014-15, and 15.1 percent in 2017-18 (but 20 percent of recurrent expenditure). This indicates that it would be more meaningful to assess countries' capital and recurrent budget commitments to education separately.

74. The Ministry of Finance points out that other domestic sources in Nepal contribute to education spending, such as civil society organisations and communities. (Until recently, government funding was also reaching schools from other sources, such as the Ministry of Local Development.) Those contributions are not included in the calculations to which GPE and others refer.

75. Donor funding for the Nepal education sector rose from USD 102m in 2009/10 to USD 116m in 2013/14.[61] For 2015/16 the anticipated donor contribution was USD 129m.[62] For 2016/17 the JRM aide memoire quoted USD 96m as disbursed but does not say what the commitment was (see ¶71 above).[63]

76. The fall in relative terms is due to heavy expenditures on post-earthquake reconstruction. In addition, the federal transition is imposing major additional costs on the fiscus. The draft GPE QAR report of May 2018 points out that Nepal has doubled its education budget over the last five years, and that the GON remains committed to a 1 percent per year increase in real terms in the education budget during the remainder of the SSDP period.[64] Further details are given in Annex J.

77. Formal arrangements for ODA contributions to education sector financing are stable, in the sense that, according to informants, external support for the SSDP will continue to be transferred via the Ministry of Finance to the Ministry of Education. Arrangements with municipalities will be internal to the GON. From other perspectives, though, the situation is clearly in flux as systems for budget preparation and approval and fiscal management within the new federal framework are developed. The overall quality of financing – in terms of clarity of budgeting, monitoring and reporting, and of

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[58] MoE, 2018c: 3.

[59] OECD, n.d.

[60] GPE, 2018d.

[61] NIRT, 2017: 26.

[62] JRM, 2016: 11.

[63] JRM, 2017a: 4.

[64] GPE, 2018d.

fiduciary standards – will have to be watched carefully over the evaluation period. Other modes of instability persist in ODA to Nepal, as some funding agencies reduce or withdraw their support and others maintain or even increase it. It remains to be seen whether development partners' faith in the Nepal education sector – and, consequently, their willingness to support it – is damaged by the progress of the federal transition.

GPE contribution to sector financing

78. Nepal has received support from GPE and from its precursor the Education for All Fast Track Initiative (EFA FTI) since 2010.[65] As can be seen from Annex Table 9 on page 100, GPE has provided one Program Development Grant (PDG, 2014), one Education Sector Plan Development Grant (ESPDG, 2015), three Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF) allocations[66] to the National Campaign for Education Nepal (NCE Nepal) and two Education Sector Plan Implementation Grants (ESPIGs, 2010-2014 and 2016-2019). Annex Table 9 shows the chronology of GPE grants to Nepal. A further ESPIG is currently in preparation, and it has been agreed "that the strategic use of ESPIG funds would be the support to the successful roll-out of the federal transition in the education system, i.e. support to the local level governments to implement the SSDP".[67]

79. It should also be noted that, during 2017, Nepal's expression of interest to participate in the USD 300m GPE Multiplier (GPEM) was approved. The new GPEM scheme is aimed at expanding the funding that development partners provide for implementation of education sector plans like the SSDP. Following the withdrawal of Australian funding (due to changes in that country's aid policy), Nepal still has funding allocations from USAID and the ADB that will entitle it to additional support from the GPEM.

> *At the time of the QAR 1 mission in April 2017, Australia retracted its funding commitment (US$ 1m), due to the government decision to halt bilateral support to education. As for USAID, US$ 3.5m is committed for an additional funding on inclusive education (non-pooled funding support to the SSDP). This was approved in late 2017. Finally, ADB has committed US$ 64.5m for DRR and comprehensive school safety. Therefore, the two remaining funding sources exceed the US$ 3 to US$ 1 resource mobilization requirement for accessing Nepal's US$ 15 million Maximum Country Allocation from the Multiplier.*
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> *Based on country-level discussion, the GPEM has enabled Nepal to leverage new, additional funding to supplement resources from DPs for the SSDP. These funding sources encouraged an overall increase in resource mobilization, consolidating additional commitments to the education sector.*[68]

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[65] The FTI grant of USD 120m was approved on 5 November 2009.

[66] CSEF is a global program supporting civil society engagement in education sector policy, planning, budgeting and monitoring. It is managed by the Global Campaign for Education on behalf of GPE and gives grants to national civil society coalitions to support their advocacy activities, build their capacity to strengthen planning, implementation and impact, and promote cross-country learning and networking. https://www.globalpartnership.org/funding/gpe-grants

[67] GPE, 2018d.

[68] GPE, 2018d.

2.1.4 Education sector plan implementation in Nepal

Summary

- *The first annual status report on the SSDP found its overall progress of implementation satisfactory.*

- *A costed implementation plan for the first five years and annual targets for each year were formulated, along with a results framework.*

- *Administrative challenges persist, as government support to schools remains inconsistent and incomplete.*

- *The major challenge now is the transition to the federal structure: a new management and implementation structure will be needed to link the MoE with the 753 municipalities.*

- *A 2019 mid-term review of the SSDP is expected to address these challenges/implications.*

Assessment of sector plan implementation

80. The first annual status report on the SSDP, for 2016/17, states that "the overall physical and financial progress of the programmes under the SSDP JFA budget sub-heads was found satisfactory."[69] This view was broadly endorsed by the November 2017 JRM, which also noted initiation of the required actions in the Programme Action Plan, despite delays, and progress in most areas linked to the DLIs.[70] The 2016/17 SSDP status report cites a range of achievements related to enhanced quality of education, in such fields as early childhood education, early grade reading and disaster risk reduction and school safety. It also refers to progress in "strengthened access and retention to education, as well as reduction of disparities in the vulnerable groups of students", including scholarships for children from disadvantaged groups, for disabled children and for girls.[71] In appraising Nepal's application for a further ESPIG, the GPE Secretariat found that "SSDP meets all seven of the ESP quality standards".[72] In the JRM of November 2017, "overall, satisfactory progress against the SSDP KPIs was observed",[73] although it noted the continuing challenges with teacher management, availability and accountability. Now, the SSDP now faces new implementation challenges as a result of the federal transition.

81. Along with the SSDP, a costed implementation plan has been developed for the first five years and annual targets for each year have been formulated. In addition, the programme is guided by Annual Strategic Implementation Plans and Annual Work Plans and Budgets. A results framework exists and can be found in Annex K. Targets that the education sector aims to achieve are well documented.

82. To date, the SSDP has been implemented under the auspices of the MoE, through an SSDP Steering Committee, with the relevant roles played by the MoE Planning and Monitoring Division, Planning Division (including its Foreign Coordination Section) and Department of Education – with the Department hosting the SSDP Implementation Committee and – until now – supervising District

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[69] DoE, 2017b: x.

[70] JRM, 2017a: 4-7

[71] DoE, 2017b: x-xii.

[72] GPE, 2018d. However, a 2017 appraisal by the GPE Secretariat stated that two of the seven criteria were not fully met (see ¶53).

[73] JRM, 2017a: 2.

Education Offices. With the transition to a federal structure, the latter offices are to be disbanded, and a new management and implementation structure will be needed (in terms of the Local Government Operation Act) to link the MoE with the 753 municipalities. The Ministry of Federal Affairs and General Administration will play an important role in designing and supervising the new implementation arrangements. It has drawn up a sample set of education regulations for municipalities to consider adopting. Data are not yet available to show conclusively what the effects of the federal transition on SSDP implementation have been. This will be an important topic for future PE annual reports.

83. The Nepal education sector has made significant progress during the period of GPE support, as shown in section 2.3 below (with further detail at Annex J). However, government support to schools remains inconsistent and incomplete, and various other administrative challenges persist even as a relatively stable period of implementation through District Education Offices draws to a close (¶99 below). Those challenges, and how the GoN and GPE respond to them, are the central theme of this first evaluation report.

GPE contribution to sector plan implementation

84. As noted, it is difficult to discern the contributions of individual organisations/donors since Nepal works through a SWAp where funding is pooled. The current GPE ESPIG to Nepal, for 2015-2019, was designed to add pooled support to the SSRP and continues at present with support to the SSDP. The project document states that:

> *The primary objective of Component 1 (basic education) is to ensure equitable access to and quality of basic education for all children in the 5-12 year age group, prepare pre-school-age children through ECED for basic education, and deliver basic numeracy and literacy to youths and adults, especially women and marginalized groups. Component 2 (secondary education) aims to improve access, equity, and quality and relevance of secondary education and targets children in the age 13-16 year group, with a view to ensuring access to quality secondary education. This component further focuses on improving the relevance of secondary education by introducing and exposing children to various vocational and technical education programs, that would help facilitate school to work transition. Component 3 (institutional capacity strengthening) aims to improve the capacity of SSRP implementation agencies and its partners to enhance delivery and monitoring of educational services and products.[74]*

85. The current ESPIG was innovative in comprising a programme-based modality (the 'Fixed Part', as described above) and DLIs (the 'Variable Part'). DLI 1 concerned single subject certification in the School Leaving Certificate (SLC) and Higher Secondary Education (HSE). DLI 2 required standardized classroom-based early grade reading (EGR) assessments in Grades 2 and 3. DLI 3 required the development and use of an Equity Index for targeted support to districts.[75] According to the January 2018 progress report, "progress in achieving the year-one DLIs of GPE and REACH Trust Fund Additional Financing is also largely on track. Documentary evidence of three year-one DLI targets (DLI1 – implementation of single-subject certification in Grade 10 exams, DLI2 – carrying out of classroom-based early grade reading assessments by schools, and DLI 3 – implementation of out of school children intervention and reduction in out of school children) have been submitted by GoN."[76]

86. The latest round of GPE funding, which will focus on the SSDP, has not yet been approved and assessment of that contribution to sector plan implementation must be deferred for now. The current contribution at the start of the evaluation period is regarded by informants as positive for three reasons. First, the financial support provided under the current ESPIG (section 2.1.3 and

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[74] World Bank, 2016: 4-5.

[75] World Bank, 2015b: 26-30.

[76] World Bank, 2018b: 3.

Annex Table 9) was substantial. Secondly, GPE (through its Coordinating Agency and Grant Agent) has been seen as a constructive participant, largely through the LEDPG, in combined efforts to strengthen SSDP implementation. Thirdly, the broader benefits of GPE membership are seen as having enriched the GoN's competence in sector management.

87. Objectives of the new ESPIG for the later years of the evaluation period, in support to SSDP implementation, remain to be finalised. But, based on the previous ESPIG programme, which directly supported the SSRP under a pooled funding arrangement, and based on the new project appraisal document for the proposed programme (World Bank, 2017c), it is reasonable to expect that there will be strong alignment between GPE objectives, targeting and activities, and national policies on education and gender. This alignment has been a strong feature of Nepal education sector development for some time and is one of the reasons why the Nepal PE should be particularly instructive among the set of prospective evaluations.

2.1.5 *Alternative explanations and unintended/unplanned effects*

88. Changes in education sector planning, dialogue and monitoring, financing and implementation can occur due to a wide variety of factors. In order to be able to assess if GPE has contributed to each at endline, potential alternative explanations are identified and evidence confirming or refuting each alternative explanation will be sought out during the evaluation period. All analysis of GPE-related causality must of course bear in mind the attribution problems caused by the pooled nature of GPE financial support to the SSDP – although GPE does, of course, provide other modes of support as well.

Confirming and refuting alternative explanations

89. The assessment made in this first PE is that several of the claims being made with regard to GPE support are plausible.

Unintended consequences of GPE financial and non-financial support

90. So far, the evaluation process has not identified any unintended consequences of GPE support.

2.2   Progress towards a stronger education system

Summary

- *Nepal expanded and improved comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children over recent years. However, pre-primary education to children above the age of three is uneven between and within districts.*

- *Between 2012 and 2015 transition from primary to secondary and enrolment in secondary school increased and then dropped again in 2016. The 2015 earthquake is likely to have been one of the main reasons for this drop.*

- *The gross intake ratio into the last grade of primary is above 100 percent, which highlights an issue of either late/early enrolment or repetition.*

- *Survival rates to grades 5 and 8 have improved.*

- *Quality of education and equity remain challenges.*

- *Low awareness of parents and communities, issues in the quality of teaching, and management and supervision of teachers.*

- *Although the EMIS has been progressively improved over recent years, quality assurance remains a recognized challenge. Multiple efforts are under way to strengthen the EMIS.*

- *Progress is being made in a number of areas of education system improvement, such as curriculum development and materials upgrading in various key subjects.*

- *Nepal is now in a challenging transition to a very different set of structures and systems as responsibility for basic and primary education is shifted to the 753 municipalities and the district structures that have played a major role to date are dismantled.*

Assessment of progress towards a stronger education system

91. Nepal can celebrate substantial progress in a range of educational system-level indicators over recent years, as well as a significant strengthening of education sector systems and procedures. According to the 2017 Education Sector Assessment (ESA), "the major achievements of Nepal's education pertain to [the national] Education for All (EFA) Goals 1 and 2". Regarding EFA Goal 1 – "expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children", the ESA states that

> *Nepal expanded and improved comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children. According to DoE's Flash Reports (2010-2014), the country had reached 77.7 percent ECED coverage in 2014. The target for 2015 is 82 percent. However, the provision of pre-primary education to children aged above three years is uneven between and within districts. EFA Goal 2 [ensuring free and compulsory access to good quality primary education, especially for girls and disadvantaged groups] is aimed at ensuring that all children, particularly girls and children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to disadvantaged ethnic groups, have access to and complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality. In this regard, the net intake rate in primary schools has risen to 92.7 percent for girls and 93.3 percent for boys. Net enrolment rates have also steadily improved, even if they fell short of the SSRP target of 98 percent. The net enrolment rate in basic education reached 88.7 percent in 2015. Other accomplishments include the gradual increase in secondary education enrolment, a steady fall in repetition*

> *rates in Grades 1 and 8, and improved survival rates to Grades 5 and 8 to 89.4 percent and 77.2 percent respectively.*[77]

92. The ESA goes on to identify some continuing weaknesses.

> *Education in Nepal faces lingering challenges in quality and equity. The student teacher ratio (STR) remains very high in lower secondary schools. In the Terai the STR is a problem in all grades. Student achievement is also a major problem at all levels of education. In 2013/14, on average, 48 percent of Grade 3 students, 51 percent of Grade 5 students, and 52 percent of Grade 8 students did not achieve their grade level in science, math, or English. Trend data shows that achievement challenges do not seem to have changed significantly in 2011, 2012, or 2013. Achievement data is worse for disadvantaged ethnic and caste groups. Children with disabilities, and those from poor, remote, low caste families, and from disadvantaged ethnicities are mostly affected by the access gap.*[78]

93. The ESA identifies some of the factors underlying the continuing challenges.

> *Analysts of the Nepal education sector see myriad factors that contribute to the system's lingering problems. Demand factors include the low awareness of parents and communities, which is tied to lack of capacity in school management committees (SMC) and parent associations (PAs) to ensure that children receive quality education. On the demand side MoE… identifies system factors and teaching and learning factors that undermine the quality of education. Examples of these include low instructional time allocated to the teaching and learning of Nepali languages; inadequate supervision, monitoring, and academic support; problems with teachers' professional development; problems with educational accountability; assessment that is not focused on learning and outcomes, teacher-centred instruction, lack of a comprehensive approach to teaching reading; and multi-level classrooms with high disparities in reading levels.*[79]

94. The World Bank completion report for the SSRP summarised its achievement of outcomes as "satisfactory". Referring to indicator 1 for the project development objectives, net enrolment rate for primary education (Grades 1-5), it stated that "the target for all phases was 98% achieved". On indicator 2, net enrolment rate for basic education (Grades 1-8), the target was 107 percent achieved for phases 1 and 2, 99 percent for phases 3 and 4. Indicator 3, completion rate for primary education (Grade 5) showed that the target was surpassed (103 percent) in phases 1 and 2, and 100 percent achieved in phases 3 and 4. For indicator 4, completion rate for basic education (Grade 8), the achievement rates were 106 percent for phases 1 and 2, and 92 percent for phases 3 and 4. Indicator 5 – the gender parity index in enrolment for primary education (Grades 1-5) - was 99 percent achieved across all phases. Indicator 6 concerned the gender parity index for basic education (Grades 1-8) and was 102 percent achieved in phases 1 and 2; 100 percent achieved in phases 3 and 4. Indicator 7 – the gender parity index for enrolment in secondary education (Grades 9-12) – was 103 percent achieved in phases 1 and 2, and 98 percent achieved in phases 3 and 4. Indicator 8 was linked to student learning assessment in Grades 3, 5 and 8. It was reported achieved in all phases. Finally, indicator 9 concerned the development of an equity strategy and its implementation for basic education. This indicator was introduced at phase 3 restructuring and was not achieved under the SSRP. The completion report stated that further work was planned on this in 2017.[80]

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[77] NIRT, 2017: v.

[78] NIRT, 2017: v-vi.

[79] NIRT, 2017: vi.

[80] World Bank, 2017a: iii-v.

95. The progress made in recent years includes advances in the EMIS (¶102 below). GPE and other development partners are giving special support in this area, although a number of challenges have been identified during recent assessments of EMIS progress (¶144 below).

96. The recent Quality Assurance Review provided a useful summary of the EMIS that Nepal has gradually built over a decade or more of effort:

> *The Education Management Information System (EMIS) data is collected twice per year, published in the Flash reports, and analyzed in the Consolidated Report, annually shared before the JRM. It is characterized by a good disaggregation of data according to gender, population sub-groups, disability, geography, as well as data on School Management Committees/PTAs, Priority Minimum Enabling Conditions, textbook availability and school opening days. It also includes the equity index developed in 2015, one of the Variable Part milestones of the ESPIG approved in 2015…. Nepal reports all of GPE's 12 key indicators (and beyond) to the UIS every year. Nationally representative household surveys include the population census, Demographic Health Surveys, and National Living Standard Surveys.[81]*

97. The EMIS links into the National Assessment of Student Achievement (NASA) system, which has continued to develop and expand since its introduction in 2010 and was being adopted by District Education Offices for a range of monitoring and management purposes (¶138 below).

98. With the support of GPE and other development partners, progress is being made in a number of areas of education system improvement, such as curriculum development and materials upgrading in various key subjects: revisions to the National Curriculum Framework and access to activity-based mathematics, science and English language materials are accompanied by the development of an integrated curriculum for Grades 1-3. A plan has been developed (but not yet implemented) for teacher rationalisation and deployment and work is under way to improve teacher training manuals in science, mathematics and English language. Reforms are under way to reform the assessment and examinations system. Model secondary schools are being developed. New measures are being taken to address the problem of out of school children, with five severely disadvantaged districts targeted.[82]

99. From the relatively stable education sector implementation arrangements in place since GPE began its support to Nepal, the country is now in a challenging transition to a very different set of structures and systems as responsibility for basic and primary education is shifted to the 753 municipalities and the district structures that have played a major role to date are dismantled. However, the national MoE will retain its normative and coordination roles. Many of the details of how the transition will work in practice have yet to be clarified, although the GoN is working (in consultation with DPs) on the multiple adjustments that will be required.[83]

100. Continuous efforts have been made over the years to strengthen Nepal's EMIS – an issue considered sufficiently important to warrant the focus of one of the current DLIs on "enhanced reliability and transparency of EMIS data, including school level data".[84] These efforts to strengthen the EMIS are ongoing.[85] According to the recent QAR[86],

> *As part of ongoing joint efforts to strengthen the EMIS, data, collection from schools has been automated nationwide through a cluster model, enabling schools to upload their records on an ongoing basis and strengthening the student tracking and data analysis within*

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[81] QAR 1: Initial Program Consultation: Nepal (GPE, 2018d): np.

[82] JRM, 2017a: 5-6.

[83] JRM, 2017b; MoE, 2018a.

[84] JRM, 2017a:7.

[85] JRM, 2017a: 7.

[86] QAR 1: Initial Program Consultation: Nepal (GPE, 2018d): np.

> *the EMIS. The EMIS enables the production of a comprehensive data set with disaggregated data by gender and marginalized groups. In addition, the strengthening of EMIS has been included as one of the 10 DLIs within the SSDP JFA, with targets on independent verification, institutionalization of school report cards and web-based EMIS being established.*

101. Although the EMIS has been progressively improved over recent years, it has remained vulnerable to governance challenges in the school sector, as communities and/or school principals may find it advantageous to distort some of the data they submit – for example, on the number of pupils at a school. This problem may be exacerbated by the transfer of sector responsibilities from relatively experienced District Education Offices to municipalities. All stakeholders – and especially the GoN – must be able to ensure that improvements in the EMIS are not reversed by the new administrative responsibilities created by the federal system. The intention is that municipalities will report directly to the central EMIS. It will be very challenging to implement these changes without any disruption to data flows.

102. Against the background of sector restructuring, other challenges persist. Earthquake reconstruction has been slow. The per capita funding system for schools led to the creation of ghost schools and ghost pupils. Ghost teachers have allegedly been common too. There have been efforts at reform, including abandonment of per capita funding, but at the most recent JRM it was reported that, according to the EMIS, 1,483 schools had no government-funded teachers. In many others, the MoE funds only some of the teachers. Many schools depend heavily, or entirely, on community contributions. Further reform efforts will now have to be made through new, and largely untested, administrative systems, with local government structures that are still testing how independent they can be of central government control.

103. The current state of education financing in Nepal is discussed above (¶70 – ¶77), with further information provided at Annex J and strengths and weaknesses outlined in ¶77. Some progress has been made with regard to pupil-teacher ratios. Annex Table 15 in Annex J shows that the pupil-to-teacher ratio decreased significantly in pre-primary and in primary education between 2008 and 2017.

104. Under 'areas for improvement' the SSDP Status Report 2016-2017 states that

> *An emphasis has got to be given to develop and apply results-based monitoring tools. Self-evaluation mechanism is essential at all levels. Accountability ladder and reporting procedure ought to be developed and adopted in different levels of management including schools. A condensed research on monitoring and evaluation based on field observation, stated in ASIP [Annual Strategy Implementation Plan] is required to bring in implementation.*[87]

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[87] SSDP Status Report 2016-2017, p. 50 (DoE, 2017b)

ESP contribution to System-Level Change

105. In Nepal, progress towards a stronger education system primarily means successful implementation of the SSDP. GPE's contribution to SSDP implementation was assessed in ¶84 above.

2.3   Progress towards stronger learning outcomes and equity

Summary

- *There are fewer reliable data on the achievement of learning outcomes than on other aspects of sector performance, such as enrolment and completion rates, but it is clear that indicators of learning outcomes still fall short of the country's aspirations.*

- *Results on learning outcomes show wide variation (differences of over 30 percentage points): → geographical variation (students in Kathmandu valley zone performing best and those in the Mountain zone performing worst); → urban schools outperform rural schools and → students in institutional (or private) schools outperform those in community schools.*

- *Over recent decades Nepal has strengthened its school system and improved learning outcomes (e.g. differences between girls' and boys' performance reduce; however, much remains to be done to improve those outcomes further: access to education for disadvantaged social groups, including children with disabilities, those from poor, remote, or low caste families or disadvantaged communities.*

- *There is not enough evidence to comment on inclusive education for students with disabilities.*

Assessment of learning outcomes

106. A summary of the learning outcomes indicators reported on completion of the SSRP is given in section 2.2. As noted, satisfactory progress was made under the SSRP. Performance reported under the current ESP, the SSDP, is still preliminary. For a key learning outcome indicator, percentage of students displaying grade-level competency on core subjects in Grade 8 measured through NASA, a baseline has been established. On another indicator, percentage of Grade 3 students reading grade-level text with fluency, the first reading assessment had methodological issues and the data were not published.[88]

107. Table 6 below presents some basic education statistics, including the percentage of girls and boys repeating primary grades, the percentage of children reaching the last grade of primary school (~74 percent overall in 2016) and the transition rate of students from primary to secondary. The gross intake ratio into the last grade of primary[89] is above 100 percent, which highlights an issue of either late/early enrolment or repetition.

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[88] World Bank, 2018b.

[89] This is the total number of new entrants in the last grade of primary education, regardless of age, expressed as a percentage of the population at the theoretical entrance age of the last grade of primary education (UIS).

Table 6. Progress and completion in primary education

	Total	Male	Female	Year
School life expectancy ISCED 1-8 (years)	12.2	11.78	12.63	2016
Percentage of repeaters in primary (%)	7.64	7.71	7.56	2017
Survival to the last grade of primary (%)	73.55	73.69	73.41	2016
Gross intake ratio into the last grade of primary (%)	112.76	107.62	118.14	2017
Primary to secondary transition rate (%)	82.38	84.07	80.77	2016

Source: UIS statistics

108. Table 8 indicates that the overall NER for primary school decreased by 3.6 percent between 2011 and 2017, while net enrolment for secondary school increased by approximately 1 percent.[90] The data reported here also show that between 2012 and 2015 transition from primary to secondary and enrolment in secondary school increased and then dropped again in 2016. The 2015 earthquake is likely to have been one of the main reasons for this drop. This is something that will need to be investigated further.

109. Overall, there are fewer reliable data on the achievement of learning outcomes than on other aspects of sector performance, such as enrolment and completion rates. Section 1.2 of Annex Table 22 shows some indicators of learning outcomes, which still fall short of the country's aspirations. In 2015/16 (the SSDP baseline), 27.2 percent of Grade 3 students were reading grade level text with fluency and comprehension. Grade 5 learning achievement scores were 48 percent in Mathematics, 45 percent in Nepali and 47 percent in English. For the same subjects in Grade 8, they were 35 percent, 48 percent and 41 percent.[91]

110. The NASA 2015 report which assessed Grade 3 and 5 student achievements in Mathematics, Nepali and English[92] in sample districts across Nepal[93] provides a number of interesting results. The scores achieved in Mathematics in the sample districts compared to the national mean, for example, show wide variation, with differences of over 30 percentage points, results that point to geographical variation, with students in the Kathmandu Valley zone performing best and those in the Mountain zone doing worst. Furthermore, urban schools outperform rural schools and students in institutional (or private) schools outperform those in community schools.

111. As the period to be reviewed by this PE only began recently, it is premature to offer much comment on changes in learning outcomes. However, it should be noted that, as the PE baseline report pointed out, time series assessment is complicated by inconsistent methodologies from one survey to the next. The NASA 2015 report cautions that direct comparison with NASA 2012 findings should take into account different tools and samples, but shows that, in Grade 5 English, mean scores in 2015 were lower than in 2012 (46.8 percent in 2015, and 53.6 percent in 2012). Differences in mean scores for Grade 5 English in the two years were almost identical, at 53 percent in 2012 and 48.3 percent in 2015.[94] A longitudinal study published in 2016 found little consistency in the Grade 10

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[90] There are differences in data, as mentioned at the beginning of this section, something which will need to be investigated further. In its presentation on Flash II (2016/17) and Consolidated Report and Flash I Report (2017/18) (DoE, 2017a) the Department of Education reports that basic level enrolment decreased by almost 2.5 percent between 2012 and 2016 and increased by 0.5 percent for secondary level enrolment.

[91] The NASA uses specially designed tests. For a detailed presentation on learning assessment methodology, see MoE, 2016a: 21-48.

[92] MoE, 2016a.

[93] See Annex Figure 8 in Annex J.

[94] MoE, 2016a: 224; 96.

completion rates for the Grade 1 cohorts of 2002 – 2006, which ranged from 6.5 percent in the 2006 cohort to 10.6 percent in the 2004 cohort.[95]

112. A 2017 early grade reading assessment (EGRA) found a decline in performance from the 2016 baseline. In the latter year, the average EGRA score for Grades 2 and 3 was 74 percent. The average score for the same grades in 2017 was 65 percent.[96]

113. While there is no doubting the major achievements of Nepal over recent decades in strengthening its school system and improving learning outcomes, it is also clear that much remains to be done to improve those outcomes further. The system as a whole, with its limited budgetary, infrastructural and human resources and the technical, administrative and governance challenges that it faces (as described in this report), is not yet capable of educating young citizens to the level to which the nation and its development partners aspire.

114. A draft education sector analysis apparently prepared in 2016 stated that

> *School Leaving Examinations (SLC) administered at the end of grade 10 show that pass rates have generally ranged between 30 percent and 60 percent, with only 47% of the students passing the exams in 2011. Likewise, the pass rates for grades 11 and 12 in 2011 were 38.2 % and 47.5 %, respectively… In summary, data show endemic quality red flags that begin with reading difficulties in the early grades and expand to less than half of the students achieving at expected levels in grade 8 math, science, and English. Students' performances in all these subjects show that performance in one has a bearing on the performance in the others.*[97]

Assessment of equity, gender equality and inclusion in education

115. Various reports mention challenges of access to education for disadvantaged social groups, including children with disabilities, those from poor, remote, or low caste families or disadvantaged communities.[98] To quote the evaluation of the SSRP:[99]

> *As was concluded in the* [Basic and Primary Education Programme] *BPEP II evaluation, enhancing quality of learning and teaching remains a challenge. Without further considerable improvements in teachers' confidence and competence to use a range of appropriate methods, it will be difficult to make meaningful impact on students. This is especially true for children with disabilities, children from linguistic minorities, or disadvantaged children. Important components to improve the quality of education are, among others, teacher training, curriculum development, adapted textbooks, and improved learning environments… The relative lack of progress observed during the SSRP in quality education can be related to insufficient conceptualisation, prioritisation and resourcing for quality.*

116. These challenges are well known (see also ¶106 above), and efforts are being made to address them. In line with the constitution, the SSDP intends to ensure that mother-tongue education is provided up to the secondary level, and there is a consolidated equity strategy for the school education sector in Nepal.[100] The November 2017 Joint Sector Review was informed that the five most

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[95]DOE, 2016b: 14.

[96] A report on classroom-based early grade reading assessment – 2017, p. 15 (MoE, 2017d).

[97] Education Sector Analysis, pages 72, 74 (Anonymous, 2016).

[98] E.g. Nepal Education Sector Analysis (NIRT, 2017), Joint Evaluation of Nepal's School Sector Reform Plan Programme 2009-2016 (Poyck et al., 2017).

[99] Poyck et al., 2017, p. 35

[100] Consolidated Equity Strategy for the School Education Sector in Nepal, December 2014 (MoE, 2014a).

disadvantaged districts, based on an equity index, were selected for targeted interventions, which resulted in the proportion of out-of-school children being reduced by 22 percent (above the target of 20 percent).[101]

117. Regarding gender differences, the completion report on the SSRP found almost equal proportions of girls and boys entering Grade I with early childhood education experience (64 and 65 percent respectively in 2016/17); surviving to Grade 5 (87 percent in that year); and surviving to Grade 8 (76 and 75 percent respectively in 2016/17).[102]

118. The 2013 NASA report notes that while in previous assessments significant differences in achievements of girls and boys were found, the situation "has changed radically as the difference in achievement score between boys and girls has reduced remarkably", with the average achievement of boys (45.29 percent) and girls (45.3 percent) almost equal in Mathematics – implying a significant uplift in girls' achievement since data were collected in 2011.[103]

119. There are, however, differences between boys' and girls' achievements when ethnicity/caste is taken into account and the situation is more complex, with boys outperforming girls in some groups but not in others. In mathematics, boys outperform girls most strongly among the Brahman and Cheetri groups, and whereas boys do better than girls in this subject in the Mountain, Hill and Terai zones, girls do slightly (but not statistically significantly) better than boys in the Kathmandu Valley.[104]

120. The 2015 gender gap analysis prepared during development of the SSDP assessed the differences between girls' and boys' educational achievements at grades 3, 5 and 8 in 2011 and 2012. It found that "differences of achievement levels between boys and girls are minimal" – although it pointed out that with both groups' scores averaging only about 50 percent there was significant scope for improved learning outcomes.[105]

121. Annex Table 18 shows the number of illiterate persons in the country, and indicates a significant difference between women and men.

122. Annex Table 19 and Figure 2 below show literacy by age group and gender, showing a significant gap between the sexes, though it seems to narrow for the younger age cohort.

Figure 2.   *Literacy rates*
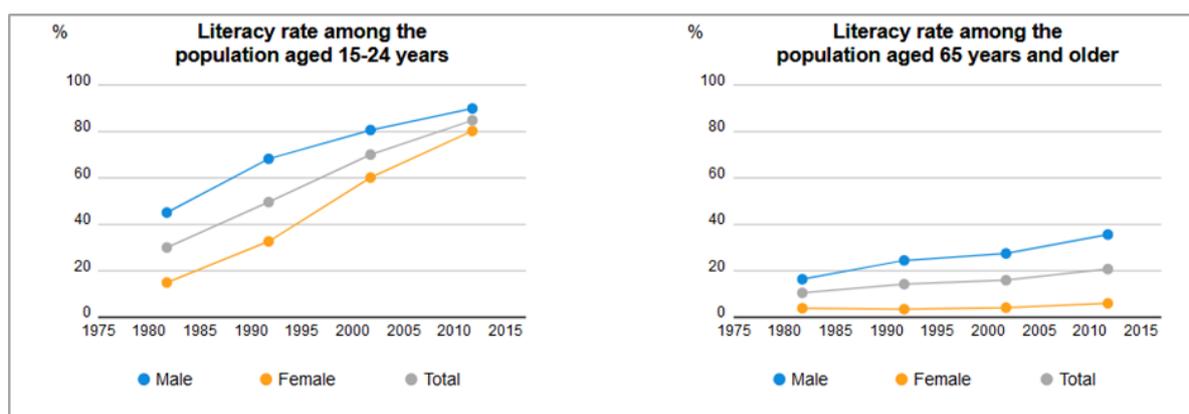
Source: UIS data 2011[106]

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[101] JRM, 2017a, p. 6.

[102] World Bank, 2017a: 25.

[103] MoE, 2013, page 84.

[104] MoE, 2013, page 85.

[105] Gender gap analysis for Nepal's SSDP, 2015, p. 23. (Stenbäck, 2015).

[106] UIS data 2011 (http://uis.unesco.org/en/country/np)

123. A recent FLASH report offered the following summary findings on equity and gender.

- *Gender parity in school enrollment has been achieved.*
- *Girls' enrolment constitutes 50.6% (50.4% in the last school year) at primary level, 50.5% (50.5% in the last school year) at lower secondary level, and 50.6 % (50.5% in the last school year) at basic level. Likewise, girls comprise 51.7% (51.8% in the last school year) at secondary level, 53.9% (54.5% in the last school year) at higher secondary level and 52.5% (52.7% in the last school year) at comprehensive secondary (grades: 9-12) level. This illustrates a higher degree of participation of girls in the school education system, pointing out that when admitted they tend to continue their education more than the boys.*
- *The share of Dalit enrolment is 19.9% at primary, 16.0% at lower secondary, 11.1% at secondary and 6.5% at higher secondary level, which are higher than to the previous school year.*
- *The share of Janajati enrolment is 36.8% at primary level, 40.9% at lower secondary, 33.8% at secondary and 23.3% at higher secondary level. Compared to their population share (37.2%), the participation of Janajati children in school education is reasonably balanced.[107]*

124. The SSDP is explicitly committed to "equitable and inclusive quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all" and "to ensure that the education system is inclusive and equitable in terms of access, participation and learning outcomes, with a special focus on reducing disparities among and between groups having the lowest levels of access, participation and learning outcomes".[108] Nepal also has a National Policy and Action Plan on Disability, which emphasises inclusive education, and the GoN is committed to strengthening the EMIS for better coverage of children with disabilities.[109] Efforts are steadily being made to mainstream children with disabilities into the regular schooling system,[110`] although much still remains to be done in this regard[111] and existing special schools have not escaped sector-wide administrative weaknesses, including slow reconstruction following the 2015 earthquakes.

125. Annex Table 17 shows the number of out-of-school children and adolescents between 2011 and 2017. The number of out-of-school girl children is consistently higher than that of boy children. For adolescents, data are only available for 2016 and 2017 and there the trend is reversed: more male adolescents are out of school compared to girls. This is an issue to be further explored.

126. Table 7 and Table 8 below identify some recent trends in equity indicators. The data presented by the GoN differ from UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS) statistics, and in this section we present a bit of both. Differences will have to be investigated.

127. Annex Figure 7 below shows that the enrolment rate in early childhood development/pre-primary education (ECD/PPE) has increased from 73.7 percent in 2012 to 84.1 percent in 2017. The SSDP has set a target of 86 percent for 2018/19.

128. Table 8 below presents an overview of net enrolment rates (NER) for pre-primary, primary and secondary education, as well as the transition rate from primary to secondary education.

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[107] Flash I report, 2017-18 (DoE, 2018)

[108] MoE, 2016f, pages v-vi.

[109] GPE, 2018c, page 20.

[110] GPE, 2018c, page 14.

[111] Regmi, 2017.

Table 7. Access indicators: baseline and end of project values for NER, GER, GPI and Completion Rates (2009-2016)

Education Level	NER (%)		GER (%)		GPI (%)		Completion Rate[112] (%)	
	2009	2016	2009	2016	2009	2016	2009	2016
Early Child Development (3-4-year population)	-	-	66	83	96	100	-	-
Primary education: Grades 1-5	92	97	147	134	98	99	58	81
Basic education: Grades 1-8	73	91	123	122	95	100	41	70
Secondary education: Grades 9-12	21	39	45	60	91	98	n.a.	n.a.

Source: Completion Report, p. 22. (World Bank, 2017a), World Bank and Flash report I 2015/16

Table 8. Net enrolment rates in pre-primary and primary education and transition into secondary

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Pre-primary Education										
NER pre-primary overall				52.05	56.46	57.93	53	56.97	56.72	57.99
NER pre-primary female				52.57	56.82	58.1	53.56	57.14	54.79	54.99
NER pre-primary male				51.56	56.11	57.77	52.46	56.81	58.56	60.84
Primary Education										
NER primary overall				98.26	99.39		94.13	96.53	96.62	94.7
NER primary female				97.59			93.48	95.72	96.21	93.25
NER primary male				98.88			94.75	97.31	97.02	96.08
Primary to secondary transition rate (percent)										
Total					86.22	87.51	87.3	87.47	82.38	
Female					86.49	86.91	86.32	86.06	80.77	
Male					85.94	88.13	88.32	88.95	84.07	
Secondary Education										
NER secondary overall	48.12		50.49	54.74	57.69	58.84	59.69	60.4	54.37	55.29
NER secondary female	45		49.03	54.38	58.53	60.21	61.81	62.77	55.67	57.26
NER secondary male	51.24		51.94	55.1	56.87	57.5	57.66	58.14	53.14	53.42

Source: UIS statistics

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[112] Completion rate for 2016 is taken from Flash 1 Report (2015/16)

129. The Department of Education reports that the overall NER at basic level increased from 87.5 percent in 2012 to 92.3 percent in 2017 and from 32.4 percent in 2012 to 43.9 percent in 2017 at secondary level, and that gender parity for enrolment was achieved at both levels (GPI of 1.00 in basic and 0.99 at secondary level).[113]

130. While there are data gaps in the UIS database, Annex Table 20 below lists various key education indicators showing some changes over the last five to ten years. Annex Table 22 in Annex J includes the basic education indicators as set by the Annual Strategic Implementation Plan (ASIP) for the first year of the SSDP, the target for the fifth year as well as the baseline.

131. The data also indicate that survival throughout primary school has improved since 2012 by almost 20 percent for both female and male pupils. However, challenges persist. The World Development Report (WDR) reports that almost 40 percent of grade 2 pupils in Nepal could not perform simple reading tasks[114] and the gross intake ratios exceeding 100 percent also indicate that there are issues of late/early enrolment and repetition. Furthermore, the issue of out-of-school children needs further attention.

132. Annex Figure 6 belowshows the expansion of ECD/PPE which increased from 55.6 percent in 2012 to 66.3 percent in 2017. The SSDP expected target for 2018/19 is 68.5 percent.

133. While Nepal has worked hard to tackle the challenges of out-of-school children and related sector weaknesses in the remoter parts of the country and among socially disadvantaged groups and castes, it is generally recognised that much remains to be done in this regard. Gender equality, however, is largely achieved. While the issue requires continuing vigilance, with further attention needed to some issues such as the provision of adequate sanitary facilities for girls, this is generally a strong aspect of the Nepal school system.

134. There has been criticism in the literature of Nepal as an example of the gap between donor and domestic perspectives on inclusive education for students with disabilities and learning difficulties. Arguing that Nepal "has in recent years adopted donor definitions of an inclusive education approach", Maudslay claims that "there is not sufficient evidence in Nepal to make judgements about the social and educational inclusion or exclusion of disabled children",[115] but also observes that the GoN has made important progress with its attempts to build a more inclusive education system.

Link between Impact-Level Trends and Observed System-Level Changes

135. Future PE annual reports will need to test to what extent any noticeable improvements can be noted with regard to learning outcomes, equity or gender equalityas a result of system-level changes supported by ESP implementation.

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[113] Presentation on Flash II (2016/17) and Consolidated Report and Flash I Report (2017/18) (DoE, 2017a)

[114] WDR, 2018, Figure O.1. It was noted that data typically pertain to selected regions in countries and are not necessarily nationally representative.

[115] Maudslay, 2014, pages 418, 421.

2.4 Plausibility of the ToC at Year 1

> **Key Finding:**
>
> - *All of the GPE's contribution claims have been found to be plausible based on this preliminary analysis. however, some key country-specific assumptions qualify the apparent plausibility of this ToC.*

136. This section begins by assessing the plausibility of GPE's contribution claims in Table 9 below, and then makes some further comments on the plausibility of the ToC that was presented in section 1.2 above.

Table 9. Assessment of plausibility of contribution claims of GPE's support in Nepal

Contribution Claim	Assessment of Plausibility
Claim A: GPE (financial and non-financial) support and influence contribute to the development of government owned, credible and evidence-based sector plans focused on equity, efficiency and learning.	The last eight years' experience of GPE support in Nepal confirm that this has been the case. The SSDP is government-owned, credible and evidence-based. This evaluation will assess whether any post-SSDP planning towards the end of the evaluation period also has these qualities and whether GPE, with a much-diminished financial contribution, has achieved the same degree of influence in trying to achieve them. Although some informants question the effectiveness of GPE's model of engagement, with no formal country presence, its partnership approach is proving effective.
Claim B: GPE (financial and non-financial) support for inclusive sector planning and joint monitoring contribute to mutual accountability for education sector progress.	Again, on the basis of experience since 2010, this claim appears plausible. A spirit of mutual support and accountability has tended to prevail in the LEDPG, spanning the GoN, civil society and development partners – influenced in part by the principles that GPE has advocated. The PE will assess whether this advocacy remains successful as the ratio of GPE financial to non-financial support changes over the evaluation period and as engagement with the hundreds of local government authorities becomes more important.
Claim C: GPE advocacy and funding requirements contribute to more and better financing for education in the country.	To date, this claim has seemed plausible in Nepal. GPE has benefited from the strength of its Coordinating Agency (UNICEF) and Grant Agent (the World Bank) in their respective roles, stimulating development partner confidence in the SSDP and the LEDPG and probably enhancing the aggregate appetite to fund the education sector in the country. The PE will need to assess whether such leverage can be sustained in the significantly different circumstances that will prevail during the evaluation period.
Claim D: GPE (financial and non-financial) support and influence contribute to the effective and efficient implementation of sector plans.	On the basis of GPE experience in Nepal to date, this claim appears plausible: all stakeholders at national level have been willing to engage constructively with GPE principles and advocacy in the relatively efficient and effective implementation of the SSRP and the SSDP. The progress made can only be attributed partially, and in generic terms, given the pooled nature of the effort, to GPE. The transition to a federal structure poses major new challenges to efficiency and effectiveness in the sector, and the PE will need to assess how this affects GPE support and influence.

Contribution Claim	Assessment of Plausibility
Claim E: The implementation of realistic evidence-based sector plans contributes to positive changes at the level of the overall education system.	Positive assessments of SSRP[116] and SSDP performance to date indicate that, in the policy and institutional environment so far prevailing in Nepal, the implementation of such ESPs has enhanced the performance of the education system. The PE will need to monitor the continued implementation of such plans, taking account of the challenges presented by the transition to a federal structure.
Claim F: Education system-level improvements result in improved learning outcomes and in improved equity, gender equality, and inclusion in education.	The data presented in section 2.3 above (and at Annex J) confirm the plausibility of this claim. The PE will continue to monitor such data, but the leads in influence and the lags in reporting mean that it will not be possible, within the reporting timeframe of the PE, to make definitive claims about whether system-level improvements result in improved learning outcomes and in improved equity, gender quality and inclusion in education.

137. The ToC for Nepal that is presented in section 1.2 has an unusually solid foundation in that many of the causal processes that it posits have already been partially achieved through the years of GPE-supported ESP implementation that have already occurred. But, as argued in Table 3 aboveand ¶42 above, some key country-specific assumptions qualify the apparent plausibility of this ToC. These concerns will be central to the areas of evaluation focus that are identified in chapter 3 below.

2.5 Available evidence at Year 1

2.5.1 Data availability and quality at baseline

Learning assessment system in place

138. Nepal introduced the National Assessment of Student Achievement[117] in 2010. These national assessments assess learning outcomes of grades 3, 5, and 8. The main indicators measured include national level equity indicators (e.g. school location, ethnicity, sex, school type), process indicators relating to curricular content and learning, and sociological indicators (e.g. parents' education and occupation, availability of learning materials at home). NASA findings are used for policy planning. It is reported[118] that DEOs started to follow up on the NASA results and that Regional Education Directorates (REDs) have also used the NASA tools for the assessment of student achievements. With the closure of DEOs, new arrangements will be needed to link the 753 municipalities into the EMIS. Some disruption in the quality, completeness and timeliness of learning assessment and other educational data must be anticipated.

139. At the end of year 10 all students who want to continue with secondary education need to pass the School Leaving Certificate (SLC).

140. Other national assessments of learning outcomes include the Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA: a national sample), the community-based EGRA and school audit programs.[119]

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[116] World Bank, 2017a; DoE, 2017b.

[117] NASA 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015 (MoE, 2015a, MoE, 2015b, MoE, 2016a).

[118] Joint Evaluation of Nepal's SSRP Programme 2009-2016 (Poyck et al., 2017).

[119] Transitional Arrangements for Implementation of SSDP in Federal Setup 2018-19 – zero draft 2018 (MoE, 2018a).

141. At school level, continuous assessment was also introduced and piloted in 2000/01. Literature[120] states that teacher capacity on continuous assessment needs to be built in order for it to be a useful tool to help improve learning outcomes.

Data availability and transparency

142. Data are available both from UIS and from government sources such as the NASA or Flash reports which are also based on EMIS data. These data do not always match, and discrepancies will have to be monitored and explained during the evaluation period. One cause of the mismatch may be differences in the reporting periods to which the various data systems refer.

143. There are also a number of previous evaluations which are listed in Annex L. These will serve as important ongoing references during the evaluation period.

144. 'Enhanced reliability and transparency of EMIS data, including school level data' is one of the DLIs linked to the SSDP. The November 2017 JRM expressed ongoing significant concerns in this area. "There is a strong need to improve the monitoring and evaluation system in the change context of state restructuring. Given that there are several new interventions under SSDP there is a need to develop a robust mechanism to capture all information by Monitoring and Evaluation system through EMIS. The Mission was informed of the various activities that the DOE's M&E division has initiated to strengthen EMIS such as introduction of unique student and teacher ID in EMIS, integration of out-of-school children (OOSC) data into the EMIS, integration of non-formal education EMIS with DOE's EMIS, and piloting of district, VDCs [Village Development Committees] and school profile cards. It was noted that efforts are ongoing on how to integrate EMIS and National Examination Board data. Given the changing context, the Mission agreed for the EMIS Committee to develop a strengthening EMIS action plan to ensure data collection, utilization, and reporting capacity at the local level, and to realign current EMIS from the 77-district structure to 753 local units. The action plan should include an overall needs assessment, including infrastructure and human resource needs under the federated structure, needs to move towards a web-based EMIS, and capacity development needs of the local government. Based on the needs assessment, resources (i.e. DP TA, internal resources, etc.) will be identified to support the EMIS strengthening activities."[121]

145. 'Availability of critical data and evidence for planning, budgeting, managing, monitoring and accountability or alternatively, a strategy to develop capacity to produce and effectively use critical data' is one of the three GPE requirements that must be satisfied in order to receive an ESPIG. The draft report of the April 2018 Quality Assurance Mission for the next ESPIG concluded that, overall, Nepal currently meets this requirement – although it noted that the federal transition will require adjustments to the EMIS.

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[120] MoE, 2018a.

[121] JRM, 2017a, page 7.

3 Evaluation Focus

146. Like all theory-based evaluations, this PE will focus its enquiries over the coming years on the assumptions in its theory of change. As explained in section 1.2, the ToC developed for Nepal is based on the generic one for GPE and adjusted to the specific circumstances of the partnership in that country. All 23 assumptions listed in Table 3 of section 1.2.3 on page 11 are pertinent and must be tracked carefully. Some of them appear particularly crucial and/or uncertain at the time of writing and are likely to warrant particularly focused attention. They span the linkages between activities and outputs, and between outputs and outcomes in the ToC. There is one exception. Assumption 10 is a basic fact of life in Nepal. There is always the possibility that years of effort and progress will be reversed by a natural disaster like the 2015 earthquakes. In this case, there is little to monitor. The reality remains that the progress that GPE supports could be slowed or halted by such an event. In the unfortunate case that such an event occurred, the PE would be in a good position to monitor how well GPE adapted to it.

3.1   Focus themes

147. Nepal is an important case study for this series of GPE evaluations, for two principal reasons. The first (linked to assumption 9) is that the country's educational sector has been making good progress for over a decade, through a sector-wide approach that pooled donor funding (including GPE financial support) and profited from constructive relations between the relevant stakeholders in the LEDPG. While direct attribution of any proportion or aspect of this progress to GPE is precluded by the pooled character of donor support, there is little doubt that GPE's financial and strategic support was instrumental in it. GPE always emphasizes that the qualitative aspects of the partnership are at least as important as the financial ones. The next ESPIG will be significantly smaller (probably about half the amount of the previous one). Relative to the GoN's domestic education budget, it will be insignificant. The evaluation period offers an important opportunity to test the assertion that a government will continue to find membership of this partnership worth the transaction costs as the financial benefits dwindle. Should this not be the case, the plausibility of the entire ToC will be called into question.

148. The second reason for the importance of Nepal as a GPE evaluation case study (linked to assumptions 4 and 12) is that the evaluation period will be a time when apparently impressive and stable progress in the education sector, to which GPE has made an important contribution, will be in jeopardy. In any country a GPE ToC can be invalidated by a major policy shift, linked perhaps to a radical or unconstitutional change of government. That is not the case in Nepal, where the commitment of the national government to sustain and accelerate the progress it has made in education currently remains clear. Instead, the education sector, like all other sectors, must find ways to adjust – with minimal disruption – to the massive changes introduced by the new federal constitution. The Ministry of Education is well aware of this challenge,[122] and of its huge scale and multiple dimensions. The decades of experience assembled in District Education Offices are being disbanded and must be redeployed, while new capacity must be developed in hundreds of municipalities where it is currently rudimentary or non-existent. A principal focus theme for this PE must therefore be the ability of GPE, within the pooled funding arrangements supported and coordinated by the LEDPG, to sustain a constructive contribution to the sector in this time of major institutional instability.

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[122] JRM, 2017b.

149. A further significant theme is too obvious for inclusion in the ToC, but is nevertheless as significant in GPE's progress in Nepal as it is in most initiatives anywhere. GPE has benefited, and continues to benefit, from the strength of its Coordinating Agency and Grant Agent in the country. It depends heavily on the competence and commitment of the relevant offices, and officers, in UNICEF and the World Bank. Given this strong situation at baseline, it will be important to monitor the robustness of the GPE model if, unfortunately, the current strong disposition of personalities and skills in those agencies is weakened by staff redeployments or changes in CA or GA. An obvious global challenge for GPE – already raised by some informants in Nepal – is how influential and useful it can be without a country presence for its Secretariat (which would be contrary to its character as a partnership). Experience in Nepal already shows that the answer can be positive – if the other agencies most centrally involved fulfil their roles optimally.

150. A related focus area (linked to ToC assumption 8) concerns the continuing success of the LEDPG in its vital consultative and coordination roles. The contribution of GPE depends on the smooth and constructive functioning of the LEDPG. This is the central mechanism for collaboration between the GON and its development partners in the education sector. It, too, is partly personality-dependent in terms of individuals and of donor policies that are represented in its deliberations; but it has already shown that it can remain robust through several years of fluctuation in both those qualities. That is no guarantee that it will remain so. The LEDPG is also a vital mechanism for the inclusive approach to education policy and management that GPE advocates, with the civil society, NGO and educator representation that it provides. Concern is periodically expressed – and was again during this evaluation's first mission – about whether that representation is adequate or should be broadened to involve more civil society and/or professional bodies. It will be important to keep that question under review. This evaluation will therefore have to include a focus on how functional the LEDPG and the LEG remain as a central mechanism for GPE advocacy and influence.

151. A further focus area for the evaluation (linked to assumptions 20 and 23) concerns the continuing political will to sustain the approach to educational development that GPE has helped to strengthen over recent years. This links, of course, to the overall political stability of the country. Given recent history in Nepal, there is scope to be hopeful, but not over-confident, on that score. More specifically, it will be important for the evaluation to track the levels of political enthusiasm for driving and sustaining progressive educational change through times of institutional instability (¶148) and (partly related) fiscal stress. Linked in turn to this broad question of political will is the narrower issue of GoN patience with the GPE criterion of dedicating 20 percent of the national budget to education. (As suggested in ¶73 above, it would be more meaningful to assess capital and recurrent commitments separately.) The evaluation has already encountered concerns in this area, with GoN staff suggesting that more flexible or inclusive ways should be used to calculate the nation's total financial contribution to the sector each year. In the background is the broader question of whether the GoN will continue to find donor support and donor relations (including those with GPE) worth the transaction costs (¶147), given the total amount of funding that they yield. This is yet another aspect of the overarching challenge for GPE in Nepal and similar countries: whether the partnership can remain attractive, and continue a meaningful contribution, as its financial inputs decline either absolutely or in relative importance.

152. Additional focus areas link more directly to the ways in which GPE provides or facilitates funding support to the Nepal education sector. These concern the continuing smooth functioning of pooled funding arrangements; the efficiency and effectiveness of DLIs, i.e. performance-based funding (the variable part, in GPE parlance); and the efficiency of the GPEM in securing additional funding.

3.2 Gaps to fill

153. To date, the quantitative database to cover the progress of the education sector and GPE in Nepal is broadly adequate. There are minor gaps and some inconsistencies, which the evaluation will track and seek to understand, and the data on learning outcomes need to be strengthened; but the JRM process and related LEDPG monitoring are supplied with generally adequate information so far through the EMIS and related mechanisms. As noted above, however, the evaluation period will span a period of institutional instability during which the quality, consistency, timeliness and coverage of education data flows may be impaired (¶156 below). Future reports of this PE may identify growing quantitative data gaps as the MOE and the 753 municipalities seek to adjust the EMIS and build local capacity to collect and supply it with the required monitoring information.

154. However, the main focus themes for this evaluation, as outlined in section 3.1, are strategic in nature and less vulnerable to these potential shortcomings in quantitative monitoring data. Tracking these themes will depend more on thorough and sensitive monitoring of the overlapping political, policy and institutional issues that lie at the heart of the GPE model.

3.3 Risks to address

155. The generic anticipated risks and related potential limitations that may negatively affect the conduct of the progressive and summative country evaluations, as well as proposed mitigation strategies, are detailed at Annex E, which is drawn from the overall Inception Report (Universalia et al., 2017). Table 10 below summarizes the main risks identified and their assessed likelihood at the time of finalizing the Inception Report.

Table 10. Summary of main anticipated risks to country-level evaluations[123]

ANTICIPATED RISK	ASSESSED LIKELIHOOD AT INCEPTON
Delays in the timing of the country visits	*High*
Conflict or fragility undermine the ability of our teams to conduct in-country data collection for summative or prospective evaluations	*Medium to high*
Interventions are not implemented within the lifecycle of the evaluation	*Medium*
Large data and evidence gaps	*Medium, but varying by country*
Structure of available data is limiting	*Medium*
Inaccessibility of in-country partners	*Medium*
Being part of an evaluation changes the behavior of actors, independent of GPE support	*Medium to low*
Evaluations (perceived to be) not sufficiently independent from the Secretariat	*Medium to low.*
Prospective country evaluation teams becoming excessively sympathetic to GPE or others through repeat visits	Medium to low.
Countries no longer willing to participate, or wish to withdraw part way through an (prospective) evaluation	Medium to low

156. In most cases, as far as Nepal is concerned, the risks encountered have been at anticipated levels, and the generic mitigation measures described in Annex E are adequate. However, the following limitations require further comment:

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[123] For full descriptions of the risks and proposed mitigations, see Annex Table 5 at Annex E.

Data gaps and limitations: It is unlikely that full outcome data will be available for the period to 2020 at the time of writing the final annual report. Therefore, the evaluation will at best be able to make judgements about likely influence on anticipated outcomes. Furthermore, as explained in section 3.2 above, there is a risk that the so far broadly adequate quality of education sector data is impaired by the major changes to the EMIS that will be required as that system is linked into new monitoring and reporting capacity and procedures based in municipalities. The evaluation will not be able to mitigate this risk, should it materialise; it will only be able to monitor and report the significance of any emerging or widening data gaps. However, as argued in ¶154, the main focus and principal value of this PE will be on the strategic issues arising for GPE during the evaluation period. Monitoring and assessing performance with regard to these issues will be less vulnerable to the risk identified here.

157. Additional context-specific risks that may emerge in the course of the Nepal prospective evaluation will be noted, and tailored mitigation strategies will be developed in consultation with the Secretariat.

158. Meanwhile, this report represents a snapshot of relevant information and data available on the country at this time, gathered via desk review, and informed by consultations with stakeholders during the annual visit undertaken in April 2018. It constitutes a foundation for subsequent analysis. The data it contains will be updated as appropriate through subsequent annual reports.

3.4　Key steps

159. This report concludes the first phase of the evaluation (baseline and first annual report) including the first stages as per the described methodology (see section 1.1.1 above). Continuing from the country-specific work planning, data collection and elaboration of country-specific tools, the next phase will focus on assessing progress being made towards education goals and envisaged country level intermediary outcomes. It will include assembling the contribution story, seeking out additional evidence over time, revising and strengthening the contribution story and elaborating on the GPE contribution story.

160. All eight prospective baseline and first annual reports will contribute to the first synthesis report (December 2018). The second annual country missions and reports for all eight countries are envisaged for the second quarter of 2019, and will contribute to the cross-county synthesis for the last quarter of 2019. The third and final annual country missions and reports for all eight countries will occur between March and April 2020. It will feed into a Final Synthesis being finalized by May 2020.

3.5　Work plan

161. The schedule of in-country visits and the outputs for each visit are shown in Table 11 below.

Table 11. Key activities and due dates for specific tasks

Activity	Due date
Finalise draft prospective baseline report	16 March 2018
Deadline for GPE report reviewing	30 March 2018
First country visit	7–13 April 2018
Submit revised draft baseline report	8 May 2018
GPE & stakeholder review deadline	12 June 2018
Submit final baseline report	25 June 2018
Submit draft first annual country mission report	6 July 2018
Final first annual report due to GPE	December 2018

Activity	Due date
Disseminate and review findings with stakeholders	TBC
2018 synthesis report	December 2018
2019 country visit	Q2 2019
2nd annual country mission report	Q3 2019
2019 synthesis report	January 2020

27. The anticipated timeline for the ESPIG 2018-2020 as presented by the MoE in April 2018 is shown in Table 12 below.

Table 12. ESPIG 2018-2020 timeline

ESPIG 2018-2020 timeline				
1	Discussing ESPIG timeline with LEDPG	Completed	CA	LEDPG
2	LEG endorsement of GA	November 2017	CA	LEG
3	Analysis of Nepal education budget trend and composition	January 2018	CA	JFPs and GoN
4	Submittal of requirement matrix to GPE	January 30th 2018	CA	GA and GoN
5	Consultations on areas for the variable part	January 2017	CA	LEG
6	Selection of variable component area	12-15 February 2018	GA	GA/MOE
7	Submittal of GPE ESPIG concept note	March 21 2018	CA	GA and GoN
8	Quality Assurance Review 1	April 9-12 2018	GPE	LEDPG and GoN
9	Submittal of ESPIG program document	June 7th 2018	CA	GA and GoN
10	Quality Assurance Review 2	July 6th 2018	GPE	LEDPG and GoN
11	Final submittal of GPE ESPIG application to GPE	August 15th 2018	CA	GA and GoN
12	Quality Assurance Review 3	August 13th 2018	GPE	LEDPG and GoN
13	GPE Board decision on Nepal 2018-2020 ESPIG application	Nov/Dec 2018	GPE	

Source: MoE presentation for QAR I, 9 April 2018 (MoE, 2018b)

4 Conclusions and Recommendations

4.1   Conclusions

162. The primary and obvious conclusion from observation and analysis so far of GPE in Nepal is that the partnership's progress is not necessarily linear. Nepal's education sector has made good progress over the last decade, and there is little doubt that GPE has made significant material and strategic contributions to that progress. Yet major constitutional and consequent institutional changes now being undertaken in the country – for reasons that are broadly accepted as sound – may jeopardise or even reverse that progress. At the very least, they will pose tough new challenges to the GoN, and to its development partners as they seek to sustain the progress made and support Nepal in carrying it further forward. Seen with some justification, so far, as a GPE success story, Nepal faces a more complicated trajectory over the coming years.

163. The question during those years will be whether, in these more complex circumstances, GPE is still able to make a constructive contribution to the education sector in Nepal. This links to another emerging conclusion, to be tested in Nepal and elsewhere over the evaluation period: that the primary value of GPE is not its funding, but the quality and effects of its advocacy, peer support and partnership structure. From the Nepal perspective, GPE's money will be of little significance during the evaluation period; although the GoN (supported in particular by the Coordinating Agency) will still have to work hard to get it. So far, it appears that the GoN considers this effort to be worthwhile, and the intangible and strategic benefits of GPE to be meaningful. Future reports of the evaluation will comment on the continuing validity of this emerging conclusion.

164. A related conclusion is that, so far, GPE has been able to make an effective and valued contribution to the education sector in Nepal through its structural model as a partnership. The Secretariat undertakes occasional missions to the country; for the rest it relies heavily on its Coordinating Agency, on its Grant Agent and on the commitment of the MoE to GPE principles, frameworks and mechanisms. This model has worked but is of course heavily dependent on the competence and commitment of those two agencies, which cannot be guaranteed in all countries at all times. Some informants do point out the potential weaknesses of this remote model – which can, conversely, be justified on the argument that GPE is a partnership, not a donor. At this early stage, the conclusion must be that the model is viable, but not without risks. This will be another issue for the evaluation to track.

165. For the reasons advanced in this report, Nepal will be an important and instructive case study for the overall GPE evaluation process, 2018 – 2020. One dimension of this learning relates to a further emerging conclusion: that GPE can function effectively within a sector-wide approach in which its financial contributions are pooled with those of other donors. Although this makes the attribution of particular education sector results to GPE difficult or impossible, the monitoring and evaluation of GPE's role and value in this pooled funding model are feasible and useful. The evaluation process will be largely qualitative, although it can be structured by contribution analysis methods. From the partnership's global strategic perspective, this kind of qualitative, sector-wide assessment of what GPE can achieve is arguably more meaningful than the quantitative attribution of percentage changes in learning outcomes to GPE dollars spent.

166. A final and again obvious conclusion at this stage in the evaluation is that the progress made over the last decade in the Nepal education sector,[124] and the contribution that GPE has made to that progress, are dependent on the prevailing political climate and political will in the country. Without that top-level commitment, progress would have been significantly slower and GPE's effectiveness would have been constrained. The maintenance of that political will depends on domestic political factors, but also on continuation of the belief of national leadership that collaboration with development partners and compliance with their conditionalities, as well as participation in partnerships like GPE, are a worthwhile investment of the government's time and resources.

4.2   Recommendations

167. At this early stage in the three-year PE, it is inappropriate to offer detailed or extensive recommendations about GPE strategy in Nepal. But the analysis offered in this first annual report does suggest the following priorities (Table 13 below) for the partnership and for the three-year PE process that recently started.

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[124] World Bank, 2017b, page 47.

Table 13. Recommendations

#	Topic	Finding	Recommendation	Timing
1	The federal transition	The political climate and framework for the transition, and for keeping education a high priority during it, are high-level issues. But the partnership can contribute by showing high awareness and a supportive stance at this difficult time. There was important new discussion on these challenges in the May 2018 Budget Review Meeting, for example. The GPE Secretariat, through its QAR Phase 1, has indicated that the LEG's choice to focus the next ESPIG on this transition is well justified and is in line with GPE objectives.	Continue carefully to monitor and constructively to support the GoN's efforts to reconfigure education funding, administrative and monitoring systems in accordance with the new federal system. DLIs in this regard should be worded so that they are seen as supportive rather than imposing unreasonable conditionalities on what will inevitably be a complex and challenging transition for Nepal.	Ongoing
2	Assessment of countries' budget commitments	One of the GPE targets is that education should receive 20 percent of public expenditure. While Nepal's education budget has been increasing annually in real terms, it has been falling as a proportion of the total. It was 19.4 percent of the combined capital and recurrent allocation in 2014-15, and 15.1 percent in 2017-18 (but 20 percent of recurrent expenditure). The fall in relative terms is due to heavy expenditures on post-earthquake reconstruction. In addition, the federal transition is imposing major additional costs on the fiscus. The draft GPE QAR report of May 2018 points out that Nepal has doubled its education budget over the last five years, and that the GoN remains committed to a 1 percent per year increase in real terms in the education budget during the remainder of the SSDP period.	GPE should assess countries' budget commitments to capital and recurrent spending on education separately.	2019 onwards
3	Monetary and non-monetary benefits of GPE member-ship	The next ESPIG will be significantly smaller (probably about half the amount of the previous one).	GPE should keep the quality and value of its partnership and governance structures and processes under active review. As the value of GPE participation for countries like Nepal decreases in monetary terms, the importance of the partnership	Ongoing

#	Topic	Finding	Recommendation	Timing
			model should be sustained or increased if it is to remain relevant and effective.	
4	Monetary and non-monetary benefits of GPE member-ship	Nepal has been an active and respected beneficiary of and participant in regional and global GPE activities and frameworks	GPE should remain active in encouraging Nepal's participation in regional and global governance mechanisms, and in urging the country to make maximum use of the various adjunct funds and facilities that it offers, such as the Advocacy and Social Accountability mechanism and the Knowledge and Innovation Exchange platform.	Ongoing
5	Vital role of GA and CA	While there is no indication that GPE's relationship with its Grant Agent or Coordinating Agency has been neglected or taken for granted, the viability and value of the partnership in Nepal or any country depends heavily on the competence, and above all on the commitment, of these two organisations. (Both aspects are partly dependent on the personalities in post at any time.)	GPE should be proactive in nurturing its relationships with the Coordinating Agency and the Grant Agent in Nepal. This will be particularly important following the recent change in CA.	Ongoing

Annexes

Annex A   Approach and Methodology

1.   Country evaluations (both prospective and summative) are evidence-driven and theory-based. Contribution analysis is used to identify program contributions towards the overall goals and objectives. Contribution analysis is an iterative approach to evaluation designed to identify the specific contribution a program or (series of) interventions is making to observed results through an increased understanding of why observed changes have occurred (or not occurred) and the roles played by the intervention and by other internal and external factors respectively. Whereas it does not provide definite proof, it delivers an evidence-based line of reasoning from which plausible conclusions can be drawn on the types and reasons for contributions made by the analyzed program/intervention.

2.   In the context of the prospective evaluations, contribution analysis will place emphasis in understanding (i) whether GPE support is working at a country-level, (ii) whether outputs from GPE support lead and contribute to outcomes and impacts, and (iii) who benefits from GPE support. It therefore draws upon both quantitative and qualitative evidence to elicit a contribution argument for the program or intervention under review. Over the lifecycle of the evaluation the prospective evaluations build the contribution story by tracing GPE inputs along the expected causal pathways.

3.   The approach and methodology for each of the eight country-level prospective evaluations will follow a structured approach deliberately harmonized with the complementary components of this evaluation (namely the summative evaluations) and in consideration of subsequent outputs (the annual and synthesis reports). The stages of this process are depicted schematically in Annex Figure 1 and detailed in turn below.

Annex Figure 1.   Overview of stages for Prospective Country Evaluations
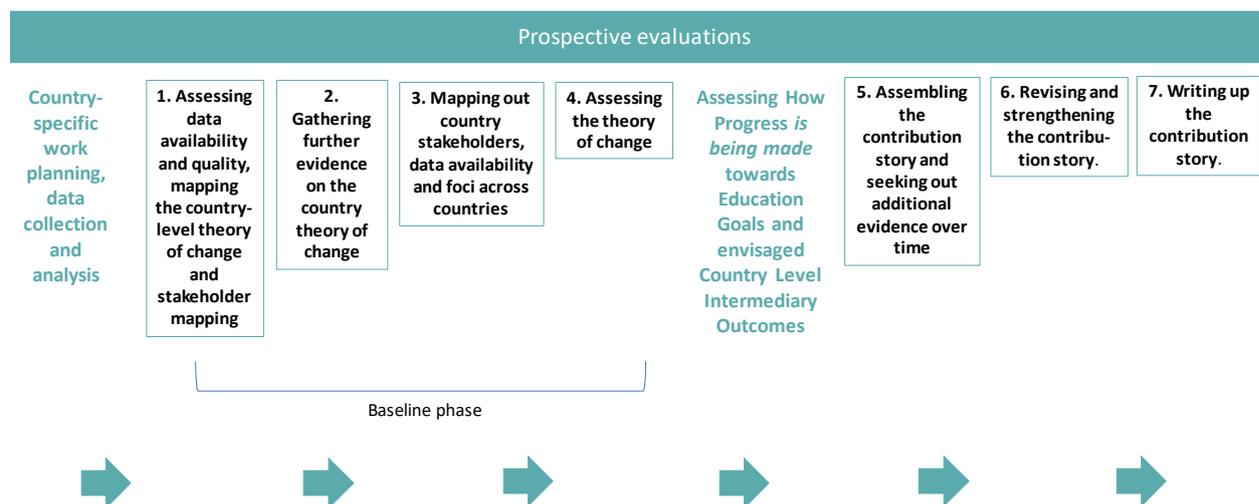
4.   Country-specific work planning, data collection and analysis for prospective evaluations includes:

- **Stage one**: Including the assessment of data availability and quality, the preliminary input mapping against the generic ToC, stakeholder mapping and country calendar.
- **Stage two:** Gathering further evidence on the country-specific ToC through country visits including discussions with relevant stakeholders. In this stage and for each country the evaluation team will develop a country-specific ToC and identify specific points in the theory of change most likely to yield the greatest insights into if and how GPE contributed to outcomes.
- **Stage three**: Review stakeholders, data availability and evaluation foci across countries with a strategic perspective.

- **Stage four**: Assessing the ToC on the basis of the evidence assembled in construct of a baseline TOC for each country in the prospective evaluation sample. Initial, or baseline, assessment of the theory of change for each prospective evaluation country.

5.   The main output from stages above is a baseline report for each of the eight countries subject to a prospective country evaluation, including one for Nepal. They set out the assessment of the GPE country-level ToC in these countries.

6.   Based on this baseline report, the country-level evaluation will continue, assessing how progress is being made towards education goals and envisaged country level intermediary outcomes. This phase will include the following stages:

- **Stage five**: Assembling the contribution story and seeking out additional evidence over time, by collecting and analyzing data subsequently in order to assemble and strengthen the contribution story over time – seeking additional evidence to address weaknesses in the story and probing alternative explanations in more detail. In the context of the prospective country evaluations, this iterative data collection takes the form of country field work during 2018, 2019 and 2020.
- **Stage six:** Revising and strengthening the contribution story: In the final stages of the evaluation, the prospective evaluation team will assess the GPE contribution story to ask *'what* progress has been made', *why* have things changed, and *how* has GPE contributed to the observed changes?' At this point the evaluation team will construct the GPE contribution story from inputs to intermediary outcomes by complementing the evidence derived from three country missions with secondary data.
- **Stage seven:** Write up the GPE contribution story**:** The aim of CA is to build a compelling case that examines the extent to which a) the country-specific theory of change is verified and b) other key influencing factors are accounted for. Critically, in order to infer that GPE support in the targeted countries has made an important contribution to a desired result, each country contribution story will provide a description of the observed outcomes, together with evidence in support of the assumptions behind the key links in the country ToC.

7.   The main outputs deriving from stages five to seven in the prospective country evaluations are the 2018 and 2019 annual prospective evaluation reports, documenting progress across the eight prospective country evaluation countries. The final report on the prospective evaluations will be prepared (2020) on this basis, and so will the final summative GPE evaluation for the complete portfolio in the 2017-2020 period.

8.   In concordance with the summative evaluations, the prospective evaluations build the contribution story in the countries over the lifecycle of the evaluation by tracing GPE inputs along the expected causal pathways. In a structured approach, the baseline phase tailors the country-specific work planning, its data collection and analysis and results in (this) baseline report. The assessment of the progress towards education goals builds on this work. Following the country-level baselines, the main outputs deriving from the prospective country evaluations are a set of annual prospective evaluation reports prepared in 2018 (the current report) and 2019 for each of the selected countries; these will contribute to an annual synthesis report which documents progress across the eight countries in the sample. The final country reports (2020) will provide a final assessment of GPE's contribution to Nepal and the other PE countries over the evaluation period, and will feed into final synthesis reports across the prospective and summative evaluation countries.

Annex B   Background to GPE and the country-level evaluations

The Global Partnership for Education

1.   The Global Partnership for Education (GPE) is the only global fund solely dedicated to education in developing countries. Established in 2002, it is a multi-stakeholder partnership and funding platform that aims to strengthen education systems in developing countries to increase the number of children who are in school and learning. GPE brings together developing countries, donors, international organizations, civil society, teacher organizations, the private sector and foundations.

2.   GPE works closely with partner countries to help them develop and implement quality education sector plans. At the national level, GPE convenes all education partners in a collaborative forum, the local education group (LEG), which is led by the ministry of education. The LEG participates in the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of education sector plans and programs. A coordinating agency (CA) is selected among its members to facilitate the work of the LEG. Additionally, a grant agent (GA) is chosen by the government, and approved by the LEG, to oversee the implementation of GPE grants.

3.   GPE's country-level approach is set out in a series of Country Level Process Guides (CLPG). GPE supports partner developing countries through financial and non-financial support through the following:
- Education Sector Plan Development Grant (ESPDG): supports the development of national education sector plans, and is complementary to government and other development partner financing;
- Program Development Grant (PDG): supports the development of an Education Sector Program Implementation Grant (ESPIG) program proposal;
- Education Sector Program Implementation Grant (ESPIG): supports the implementation of national education sector plans;
- Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF): supports civil society engagement in education sector policy, planning, budgeting and monitoring; and
- Global and Regional Activities (GRA) program: which engages education stakeholders in researching and applying new knowledge and evidence-based practices to resolve education challenges.

4.   GPE adopted as its vision the new Global Goal for education, Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4, which aims to "ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all" by 2030. In June 2016, GPE's strategic plan (GPE2020) aligned its vision and mission to the SDGs, and recognized that education is pivotal to the achievement of all other SDGs. It also articulated this vision into actionable goals as well as both country and global objectives.

5.   The GPE 2020 agenda adopted a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) strategy for the 2016-2020 strategic plan period. It includes a results framework for monitoring progress across three goals and five strategic objectives in GPE's theory of change (ToC), and a set of 37 indicators. The strategy includes linked evaluation studies, including programmatic, thematic, and country-level evaluations, which in combination would inform a summative 2020 evaluation on the entire GPE's portfolio.

6.   There are three key evaluation questions for the GPE country-level evaluations (both the prospective and summative evaluation streams) which are presented below.

Annex Box 1. *Key evaluation questions*

Key question 1: Has GPE's support to the country contributed to achieving country-level objectives related to sector planning, sector plan implementation, sector dialogue and monitoring, and more/better financing for education? If so, then how?

Key question 2: Has the achievement of country-level objectives contributed to making the overall education system in the reviewed country/countries more effective and efficient?

Key question 3: Have changes at education system level contributed to progress towards impact?

Timetable and deliverables for country-level evaluations

7.   Key activities and dates for the remainder of this project are detailed below in Annex Table 1 below.

Annex Table 1. *Activities and Key dates*

DELIVERABLE	DATE
Deliverable 1: Inception Report	**November 2017**
Deliverable 2: First batch summatives (x 2)	--
Deliverable 3: Baseline studies (desk review)	**April 2018**
Deliverable 4: Second batch summatives (x 5)	--
Country mission I	**Q2 2018**
Deliverable 5: 8 Prospective country missions annual report (first year)	**End 2018**
Deliverable 6: Third batch summatives (x 5)	--
Deliverable 7: CY18 Synthesis report	**December 2018**
Deliverable 8: Fourth batch summatives (x 5)	--
Country mission II	**Q2 2019**
Deliverable 9: 8 Prospective country missions annual report (second year)	**Q3 2019**
Deliverable 10: Fifth batch summatives (x 3)	--
Deliverable 11: CY19 Synthesis report	**January 2020**
Learning	**Ongoing**

Source: Project wok plan and timeline

Annex C   Evaluation Tools

1.   The overall Inception Report (Universalia et al., 2017) draws on the GPE 2020 M&E monitoring framework to provide evaluation tools that simultaneously ensure comparability across summative and prospective evaluations yet allow for adaptations to ensure that each country-level evaluation is appropriately tailored to the country context.

2.   The tools provided for reference in this annex as follows:

- Annex Figure 2 reproduces the GPE 2020 theory of change.

- Annex Figure 3 reproduces the generic country-level theory of change which was developed for inclusion in the Inception Report. This is used as a point of reference for the development of a country-specific ToC for each prospective evaluation country.

- Annex Table 2 reproduces the GPE 2020 Results Framework in full.

- Annex Table 3 reproduces the Evaluation Matrix from the Inception Report. This sets out all the principal evaluation questions to be addressed by the summative and prospective evaluations.

i. GPE 2020 Theory of Change

Annex Figure 2. **GPE 2020 Theory of Change**
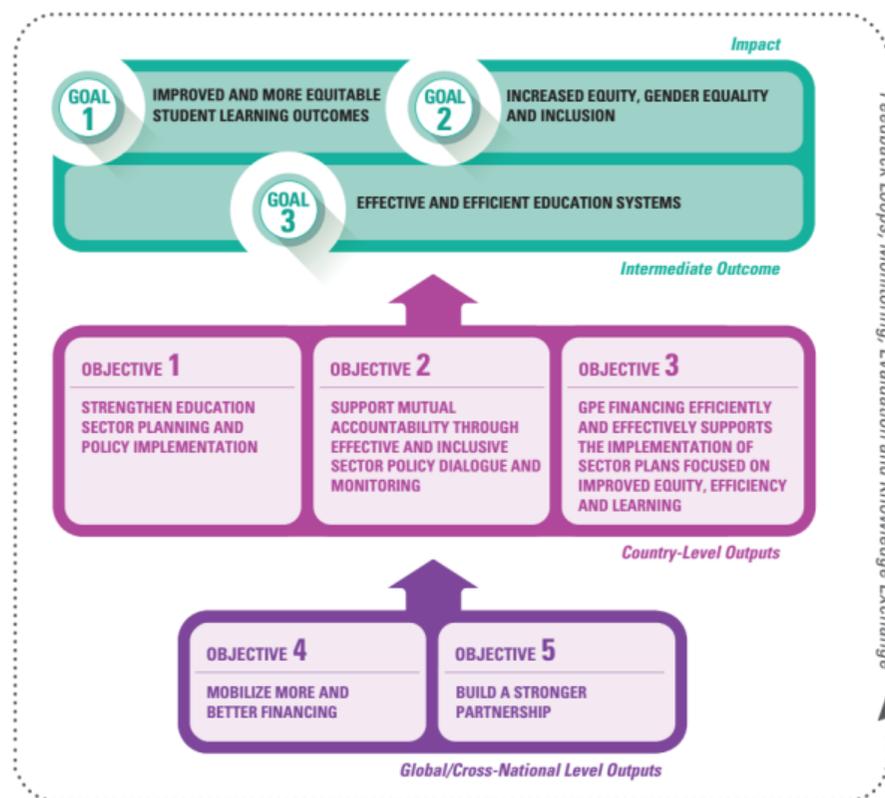
Source: GPE Country-Level Process Guide (GPE, 2017a)

ii.   *Generic country-level theory of change*

Annex Figure 3.   Generic country-level theory of change
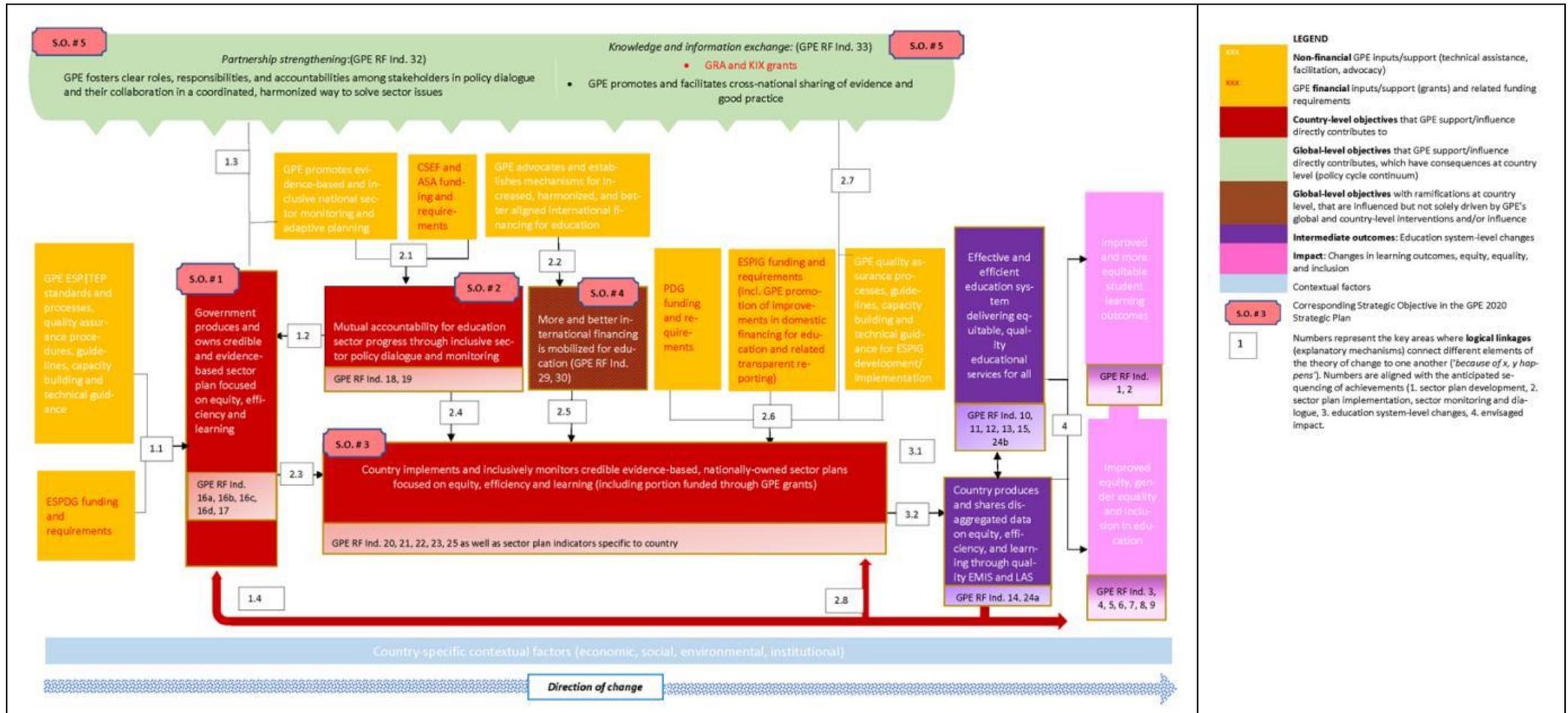
Source: Inception Report (Universalia et al., 2017)

iii.   GPE Results Framework

Annex Table 2.   GPE 2016-2020 Results Framework – 1/15

IMPACT: Improved and more equitable learning outcomes | Increased equity, gender equality and inclusion					
Strategic Goal 1: Improved and more equitable student learning outcomes through quality teaching and learning					
Indicator	Baseline CY2000-2015; N=20 DCPs (4 FCAC[9])		Milestone 2017	Milestone 2017 Status	Target 2020
1. Proportion of developing country partners (DCPs) showing improvement on learning outcomes (basic education)	Overall:	65%	First milestone set for 2018	Baseline	70%[10]
	FCAC:	50%	First milestone set for 2018	Baseline	75%
Indicator	Baseline CY2011-2014; N=22 DCPs (6 FCAC)		Milestone 2017	Milestone 2017 Status	Target 2020
2. Percentage of children under 5 years of age who are developmentally on track in terms of health, learning and psychosocial well-being	Overall:	66%	First milestone set for 2018	Baseline	74%
	FCAC:	62%	-	-	-
	Female:	68%	First milestone set for 2018	Baseline	75%

IMPACT: Improved and more equitable learning outcomes | Increased equity, gender equality and inclusion					
Strategic Goal 2: Increased equity, gender equality and inclusion for all in a full cycle of quality education, targeting the poorest and most marginalized, including by gender, disability, ethnicity and conflict or fragility					
Indicator	Baseline CY2015; N=49 DCPs (24 FCAC)		Milestone 2017 CY2017; N=56 DCPs (28 FCAC)		Milestone 2017 Status	Target 2020
3. Cumulative number of equivalent children supported for a year of basic education (primary and lower secondary) by GPE	Overall:	7.2 million	Planned:	17.3 million	Met	n/a
			Achieved:	18.5 million		
	FCAC:	5.6 million	Planned:	9.5 million	Met	n/a
			Achieved:	14 million		
	Female:	3.4 million	Planned:	8.3 million	Met	n/a
			Achieved:	8.8 million		

8   In this table, the core indicators are indicated in blue font. Please note that "-" stands for not available and "n/a" means not applicable.

9   The Term 'countries affected by fragility and conflict' was formerly 'fragile and conflict-affected countries (FCAC)'. The abbreviated form, FCAC is still used to refer to this classification

10   The 2020 targets (both overall and FCAC) have been revised based on new baseline sample, which consists of 20 DCPs (including four FCAC).

GPE 2016-2020 Results Framework – 2/15

IMPACT: Improved and more equitable learning outcomes | Increased equity, gender equality and inclusion

Strategic Goal 2: Increased equity, gender equality and inclusion for all in a full cycle of quality education, targeting the poorest and most marginalized, including by gender, disability, ethnicity and conflict or fragility

Indicator		Baseline 2013; N=61 DCPs (28 FCAC)		Milestone 2017 2015; N=61 DCPs (28 FCAC)	Milestone 2017 Status	Target 2020
4. Proportion of children who complete (a) primary education; (b) lower secondary education	Primary Education:					
	Overall:	72.5%	Planned:	74.8%	Met	78.3%
			Achieved:	76.1%		
	FCAC:	68.1%	Planned:	70.6%	Not met	74.6%
			Achieved:	68.3%		
	Female:	70.1%	Planned:	72.3%	Met	75.9%
			Achieved:	73.9%		
	Lower Secondary Education:					
	Overall:	47.9%	Planned:	49.5%	Met	52.1%
			Achieved:	50.2%		
	FCAC:	41.1%	Planned:	42.7%	Met	45.4%
			Achieved:	42.8%		
	Female:	45.7%	Planned:	48.1%	Met with tolerance	51.8%
			Achieved:	47.9%		

Indicator		Baseline 2013; N=61 DCPs (28 FCAC)		Milestone 2017 2015; N=61 DCPs (28 FCAC)	Milestone 2017 Status	Target 2020
5. Proportion of GPE DCPs within set thresholds for gender parity index of completion rates for (a) primary education; (b) lower secondary education	Primary Education:					
	Overall:	62%	Planned:	65%	Met	69%
			Achieved:	66%		
	FCAC:	54%	Planned:	55%	Met	61%
			Achieved:	57%		

GPE 2016-2020 Results Framework – 3/15

IMPACT: Improved and more equitable learning outcomes | Increased equity, gender equality and inclusion						
Strategic Goal 2: Increased equity, gender equality and inclusion for all in a full cycle of quality education, targeting the poorest and most marginalized, including by gender, disability, ethnicity and conflict or fragility						
5. Proportion of GPE DCPs within set thresholds for gender parity index of completion rates for (a) primary education; (b) lower secondary education (continued…)	Lower Secondary Education:					
	Overall:	49%	Planned:	56%	Not met	66%
			Achieved:	51%		
	FCAC:	36%	Planned:	38%	Met	54%
			Achieved:	39%		

Indicator	Baseline 2013; N=61 DCPs (28 FCAC)		Milestone 2017 2015; N=61 DCPs (28 FCAC)		Milestone 2017 Status	Target 2020
6. Pre-primary gross enrollment ratio	Overall:	28.2%	Planned:	29.8%	Met	32.2%
			Achieved:	37.2%		
	FCAC:	22.6%	Planned:	24.0%	Met	26.0%
			Achieved:	35.5%		
	Female:	27.5%	Planned:	29.1%	Met	31.6%
			Achieved:	36.7%		

Indicator	Baseline 2013; N=61 DCPs (28 FCAC)		Milestone 2017 2015; N=61 DCPs (28 FCAC)		Milestone 2017 Status	Target 2020
7. Out-of-school rate for (a) children of primary school age; (b) children of lower secondary school age	Children of Primary School Age:					
	Overall:	20.3%	Planned:	19.0%	Met with tolerance	17.0%
			Achieved:	19.4%		
	FCAC:	25.8%	Planned:	24.2%	Not met	21.7%
			Achieved:	25.9%		
	Female:	22.7%	Planned:	21.1%	Met with tolerance	18.6%
			Achieved:	22.0%		

GPE 2016-2020 Results Framework – 4/15

IMPACT: Improved and more equitable learning outcomes | Increased equity, gender equality and inclusion

Strategic Goal 2: Increased equity, gender equality and inclusion for all in a full cycle of quality education, targeting the poorest and most marginalized, including by gender, disability, ethnicity and conflict or fragility

7. Out-of-school rate for (a) children of primary school age; (b) children of lower secondary school age (continued…)	Children of Lower Secondary School Age:					
	Overall:	33.4%	Planned:	32.0%	Met with tolerance	29.9%
			Achieved:	32.9%		
	FCAC:	38.4%	Planned:	36.0%	Not met	32.4%
			Achieved:	40.8%		
	Female:	35.3%	Planned:	33.3%	Met with tolerance	30.2%
			Achieved:	34.1%		

Indicator	Baseline 2013; N=61 DCPs (28 FCAC)		Milestone 2017 2015; N=61 DCPs (28 FCAC)		Milestone 2017 Status	Target 2020
8. Gender parity index of out-of-school rate for (a) primary education; (b) lower secondary education	Primary Education:					
	Overall:	1.27	Planned:	1.25	Not met	1.22
			Achieved:	1.30		
	FCAC:	1.34	Planned:	1.32	Not met	1.29
			Achieved:	1.40		
	Lower Secondary Education:					
	Overall:	1.12	Planned:	1.09	Met	1.04
			Achieved:	1.08		
	FCAC:	1.19	Planned:	1.15	Met	1.10
			Achieved:	1.14		

GPE 2016-2020 Results Framework – 5/15

IMPACT: Improved and more equitable learning outcomes | Increased equity, gender equality and inclusion

Strategic Goal 2: Increased equity, gender equality and inclusion for all in a full cycle of quality education, targeting the poorest and most marginalized, including by gender, disability, ethnicity and conflict or fragility

Indicator	Baseline CY2010-2014; N=59 DCPs (27 FCAC)		Milestone 2017 CY2010-2016; N=59 DCPs (27 FCAC)		Milestone 2017 Status	Target 2020
9. Equity index	Overall:	32%	Planned:	36%	Met	42%
			Achieved:	42%		
	FCAC:	33%	Planned:	37%	Met	43%
			Achieved:	41%		

OUTCOME: Strategic Goal 3: Effective and efficient education systems

Strategic Goal 3: Effective and efficient education systems delivering equitable, quality educational services for all

Indicator	Baseline CY2015; N=49 DCPs (22 FCAC)		Milestone 2016[11] 2016; N= 42 (19 FCAC)		Milestone 2016 Status	Target 2020
10. Proportion of DCPs that have (a) increased their public expenditure on education, or (b) maintained sector spending at 20% or above	Overall:	78% (a - 24%; b - 53%)	Planned:	76%	Met	90%
			Achieved:	79% (a – 29%, b – 50%)		
	FCAC:	77% (a - 32%; b - 45%)	Planned:	74%	Not met	86%
			Achieved:	63% (a – 21%, b - 42%)		

Indicator	Baseline CY2010-2014; N=21 DCPs (11 FCAC)[12]		Milestone 2017	Milestone 2017 Status	Target 2020
11. Equitable allocation of teachers, as measured by the relationship (R2) between the number of teachers and the number of pupils per school in each DCP	Overall:	29%	First milestone set for 2018	Baseline	48%
	FCAC:	18%[13]	-	-	-

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11   CY2017 data will be available by June 2018 and will be published in the next Results Report.

12   Revised N for FCAC is 12.

13   Revised value is 25%.

GPE 2016-2020 Results Framework – 6/15

OUTCOME: Strategic Goal 3: Effective and efficient education systems

Strategic Goal 3: Effective and efficient education systems delivering equitable, quality educational services for all

Indicator	Baseline 2013; N=55 DCPs (24 FCAC)		Milestone 2017 2015; N=49 DCPs (20 FCAC)		Milestone 2017 Status	Target 2020
12. Proportion of DCPs with pupil/trained teacher ratio below threshold (<40) at the primary level	Overall:	25%	Planned:	29%	Not met	35%
			Achieved:	24%		
	FCAC:	13%	Planned:	17%	Not met	21%
			Achieved:	15%		

Indicator	Baseline CY2010-2014; N=19 DCPs (12 FCAC)		Milestone 2017	Milestone 2017 Status	Target 2020
13. Repetition and dropout impact on efficiency, as measured by the internal efficiency coefficient at the primary level in each DCP	Overall:	26%	First milestone set for 2018	Baseline	42%
	FCAC:	17%	Target set for 2020	Baseline	25%

Indicator	Baseline 2012-2013; N=61 DCPs(28 FCAC)		Milestone 2017 2014-2015; N=61 DCPs (28 FCAC)		Milestone 2017 Status	Target 2020
14. Proportion of DCPs reporting at least 10 of 12 key international education indicators to UIS (including key outcomes, service delivery and financing indicators as identified by GPE)	Overall:	30%	Planned:	38%	Not met	66%
			Achieved:	30%		
	FCAC:	32%	Planned:	39%	Not met	54%
			Achieved:	21%		

Indicator	Baseline CY2011-2015; N=60 DCPs (28 FCAC)		Milestone 2017	Milestone 2017 Status	Target 2020
15. Proportion of DCPs with a learning assessment system within the basic education cycle that meets quality standards	Overall:	32%	First milestone set for 2018	Baseline	47%
	FCAC:	21%	First milestone set for 2018	Baseline	36%

GPE 2016-2020 Results Framework – 7/15

COUNTRY-LEVEL OBJECTIVES: Strategic Objective 1: Strengthen education sector planning and policy implementation

Support evidence-based, nationally owned sector plans focused on equity, efficiency and learning

Indicator		Baseline CY2014-2015; N=19 sector plans (16 ESPs and 3 TEPs)	Milestone 2017	Milestone 2017 Status	Target 2020
16.a Proportion of endorsed (a) education sector plans (ESP) or (b) transitional education plans (TEP) meeting quality standards	Overall:	58% of ESPs/TEPs met at least the minimum number of quality standards	First milestone set for 2018	Baseline	100%
	ESPs:	56% of ESPs met at least 5 out of 7 quality standards	First milestone set for 2018	Baseline	100%
	TEPs:	67% of TEPs met at least3 out of 5 quality standards	First milestone set for 2018	Baseline	100%

Indicator		Baseline CY2014-2015; N=19 sector plans (16 ESPs and 3 TEPs)	Milestone 2017	Milestone 2017 Status	Target 2020
16.b Proportion of ESPs/ TEPs that have a teaching and learning strategy meeting quality standards	Overall:	58% of ESPs/TEPs met at least 4 out of 5 quality standards	First milestone set for 2018	Baseline	100%
	ESPs:	50% of ESPs met at least 4 out of 5 quality standards	First milestone set for 2018	Baseline	100%
	TEPs:	100% of TEPs met at least 4 out of 5 quality standards	First milestone set for 2018	Baseline	100%

GPE 2016-2020 Results Framework – 8/15

COUNTRY-LEVEL OBJECTIVES: Strategic Objective 1: Strengthen education sector planning and policy implementation					
Support evidence-based, nationally owned sector plans focused on equity, efficiency and learning					
Indicator	**Baseline** **CY2014-2015; N=19 sector plans** **(16 ESPs and 3 TEPs)**		**Milestone 2017**	**Milestone 2017 Status**	**Target 2020**
16.c Proportion of ESPs/TEPs with a strategy to respond to marginalized groups that meets quality standards (including gender, disability and other context-relevant dimensions)	Overall:	68% of ESPs/TEPs met at least 4 out of 5 quality standards	First milestone set for 2018	Baseline	100%
	ESPs:	63% of ESPs met at least 4 out of 5 quality standards	First milestone set for 2018	Baseline	100%
	TEPs:	100% of TEPs met at least 4 out of 5 quality standards	First milestone set for 2018	Baseline	100%
Indicator	**Baseline** **CY2014-2015; N=19 sector plans** **(16 ESPs and 3 TEPs)**		**Milestone 2017**	**Milestone 2017 Status**	**Target 2020**
16.d Proportion of ESPs/TEPs with a strategy to improve efficiency that meets quality standards	Overall:	53% of ESPs/TEPs met at least 4 out of 5 quality standards	First milestone set for 2018	Baseline	100%
	ESPs:	50% of ESPs met at least 4 out of 5 quality standards	First milestone set for 2018	Baseline	100%
	TEPs:	67% of TEPs met at least 4 out of 5 quality standards	First milestone set for 2018	Baseline	100%
Enhance sector plan implementation through knowledge and good practice exchange, capacity development, and improved monitoring and evaluation, particularly in the areas of teaching and learning and equity and inclusion					
Indicator	**Baseline** **FY2015; N=1 ESPIG application identified with data gaps to inform key indicators**		**Milestone 2017** **FY2017; N=0 ESPIG application identified with data gaps to inform key indicators**	**Milestone 2017 Status**	**Target 2020**
17. Proportion of DCPs or states with a data strategy that meets quality standards	100%		Planned: 100% Achieved: n/a	No grants applicable	100%

GPE 2016-2020 Results Framework – 9/15

COUNTRY-LEVEL OBJECTIVES: Strategic Objective 2: Support mutual accountability through effective and inclusive sector policy dialogue and monitoring

Promote inclusive and evidence-based sector policy dialogue and sector monitoring, through government-led local education groups and the joint sector review process, with participation from civil society, teachers' organizations, the private sector and all development partners

Indicator		Baseline CY2015; N=35 JSRs (20 in FCAC)		Milestone 2017 CY2017; N=19 JSRs (11 in FCAC)	Milestone 2017 Status	Target 2020
18. Proportion of joint sector reviews (JSRs) meeting quality standards	Overall:	29% of JSRs met at least 3 out of 5 standards quality	Planned:	53%	Not met	90%
			Achieved:	32%		
	FCAC:	25% of JSRs met at least 3 out of 5 quality standards	Planned:	51%	Not met	90%
			Achieved:	18%		

Strengthen the capacity of civil society and teacher organizations to engage in evidence-based policy dialogue and sector monitoring on equity and learning, leveraging social accountability to enhance the delivery of results

Indicator		Baseline FY2016; N=61 LEGs (28 in FCAC)		Milestone 2017 FY2017; N=62 LEGs (31 in FCAC)	Milestone 2017 Status	Target 2020
19. Proportion of LEGs with (a) civil society and (b) teacher representation	Overall:	44% (a – 77%; b – 48%)	Planned:	48%	Met	59%
			Achieved:	53% (a - 87%, b - 56%)		
	FCAC:	55% (a – 77%; b – 58%)	Planned:	59%	Met	70%
			Achieved:	61% (a - 90%, b - 65%)		

GPE 2016-2020 Results Framework – 10/15

COUNTRY-LEVEL OBJECTIVES: Strategic Objective 3: GPE financing efficiently and effectively supports the implementation of sector plans focused on improved equity, efficiency and learning

(a) GPE financing is used to improve national monitoring of outcomes, including learning

Indicator	Baseline FY2015; N=53 active ESPIGs at the end of FY (29 in FCAC)		Milestone 2017		Milestone 2017 Status	Target 2020
20. Proportion of grants supporting EMIS/learning assessment systems	Overall:	38%	First milestone set for 2018		Baseline	60%
	FCAC:	34%	First milestone set for 2018		Baseline	51%

(b) GPE financing is used to improve teaching and learning in national education systems

Indicator	Baseline FY2016; N=13 overall,(9 FCAC)		Milestone 2017 FY2017; N=14 overall, (9 FCAC)		Milestone 2017 Status	Target 2020
21. Proportion of textbooks purchased and distributed through GPE grants, out of the total planned by GPE grants	Overall:	74%	Planned:	78%	Met	90%
			Achieved:	114%		
	FCAC:	71%	Planned:	76%	Met	90%
			Achieved:	118%		

Indicator	Baseline FY2016; N=30 overall, (17 FCAC)		Milestone 2017 FY2017; 38 overall (22 FCAC)		Milestone 2017 Status	Target 2020
22. Proportion of teachers trained through GPE grants, out of the total planned by GPE grants	Overall:	86%	Planned:	87%	Met	90%
			Achieved:	98%		
	FCAC:	83%	Planned:	85%	Met	90%
			Achieved:	90%		

(c) GPE financing is used to improve equity and access in national education systems

Indicator	Baseline FY2016; N=25 overall (17 FCAC)		Milestone 2017 FY2017; N =28 overall, (20 FCAC)		Milestone 2017 Status	Target 2020
23. Proportion of classrooms built or rehabilitated through GPE grants, out of the total planned by GPE grants	Overall:	65%	Planned:	69%	Met	80%
			Achieved:	76%		
	FCAC:	71%	Planned:	73%	Not met	80%
			Achieved:	71%		

GPE 2016-2020 Results Framework – 11/15

COUNTRY-LEVEL OBJECTIVES: Strategic Objective 3: GPE financing efficiently and effectively supports the implementation of sector plans focused on improved equity, efficiency and learning

(d) The GPE funding model is implemented effectively, leading to the achievement of country-selected targets for equity, efficiency and learning

Indicator		Baseline FY2015; N=(a) 3 ESPIG applications; (b) 0 active ESPIGs with such performance indicators due for assessment in FY15	Milestone 2017 FY2017: N=(a) 1 ESPIG applications; (b) 1 active ESPIGs with such performance indicators due for assessment in FY17		Milestone 2017 Status	Target 2020
24. Proportion of GPE program grant applications approved from 2015 onward, (a) identifying targets in funding model performance indicators on equity, efficiency and learning; (b) achieving targets in funding model performance indicators on equity, efficiency and learning	Overall:	(a) Not applicable (b) Not applicable	Planned:	(a) 95% (b) 90%	Met	(a) 95% (b) 90%
			Achieved:	(a) 100% (b) 100%		
	FCAC:	(a) Not applicable (b) Not applicable	Planned:	(a) 90% (b) 90%	Met	(a) 90% (b) 90%
			Achieved:	(a) 100% (b) n/a		

(e) GPE financing is assessed based on whether implementation is on track

Indicator		Baseline FY2016; N=54 active ESPIGs at the end of FY (29[14] in FCAC)	Milestone 2017 FY2017; N=48 active ESPIGs at the end of FY (27 in FCAC)		Milestone 2017 Status	Target 2020
25. Proportion of GPE program grants assessed as on track with implementation	Overall:	80%	Planned:	82%	Not met	85%
			Achieved:	79%		
	FCAC:	77%	Planned:	79%	Met	83%
			Achieved:	85%		

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14   Revised value is 31.

GPE 2016-2020 Results Framework – 12/15

GLOBAL-LEVEL OBJECTIVES: Strategic Objective 4: Mobilize more and better financing

(a) Encourage increased, sustainable and better-coordinated international financing for education by diversifying and increasing GPE's international donor base and sources of financing

Indicator	Baseline FY2015	Milestone 2017 FY2017		Milestone 2017 Status	Target 2020
26. Funding to GPE from nontraditional donors (private sector and those who are first-time donors to GPE)	US$5 million	Planned:	US$8.5 million	Met	n/a
		Achieved:	US$10 million		

Indicator	Baseline FY2015; N=17 pledges	Milestone 2017 FY2017; N=22 pledges		Milestone 2017 Status	Target 2020
27. Percentage of donor pledges fulfilled	100% of pledges fulfilled	Planned:	100%	Met	100%
		Achieved:	100%		

Indicator	Baseline CY2010 – 2014; N=21 donors	Milestone 2017 CY2014-2016; N=21 donors		Milestone 2017 Status	Target 2020
28. Proportion of GPE donors that have (a) increased their funding for education; (b) maintained their funding	48% (a – 38%; b – 10%)	Planned:	50%	Met	56%
		Achieved:	62% (a – 57%; b – 5%)		

(d) Advocate for improved alignment and harmonization of funding from the Global Partnership and its international partners around nationally owned education sector plans and country systems

Indicator	Baseline FY2015; N=68 active ESPIGs at any point during FY (37 in FCAC)		Milestone 2017 FY2017; N=57 active ESPIGs at any point during FY (34 in FCAC)		Milestone 2017 Status	Target 2020
29. Proportion of GPE grants aligned to national systems	Overall:	34% of ESPIGs meet at least 7 elements of alignment out of a total of 10	Planned:	41%	Not met	51%
			Achieved:	28%		
	FCAC:	27% of ESPIGs meet at least 7 elements of alignment out of a total of 10	Planned:	31%	Not met	38%
			Achieved:	24%		

GPE 2016-2020 Results Framework – 13/15

Indicator		Baseline FY2015; N=68 active ESPIGs at any point during FY (37 in FCAC)		Milestone 2017 FY2017; N=57 active ESPIGs at any point during FY (34 in FCAC)		Milestone 2017 Status	Target 2020
30. Proportion of GPE grants using (a) co-financed project or (b) sector pooled funding mechanisms	Overall:	40% of ESPIGs are co-financed or sector pooled (a – 26%; b – 13%)	Planned:	48%		Not met	60%
			Achieved:	37% (a – 25%; b – 12%)			
	FCAC:	32% of ESPIGs in FCAC are co-financed or sector pooled (a – 22%; b – 11%)	Planned:	38%		Not met	45%
			Achieved:	31% (a – 21%; b – 9%)			

(d) Support increased, efficient and equitable domestic financing for education through cross-national advocacy, mutual accountability, and support for transparent monitoring and reporting

Indicator		Baseline FY2015; N=57 missions (34 to FCAC)		Milestone 2017 FY2017; N=62 missions (28 to FCAC)	Milestone 2017 Status	Target 2020
31. Proportion of country missions addressing domestic financing issues	Overall:	47%	Planned:	54%	Met	65%
			Achieved:	70 %		
	FCAC:	62%	Planned:	65%	Met	65%
			Achieved:	77%		

GLOBAL-LEVEL OBJECTIVES - Strategic Objective 5: Build a stronger partnership

(a) Promote and coordinate consistent country-level roles, responsibilities and accountabilities among governments, development partners, grant agents, civil society, teachers organizations and the private sector through local education groups and a strengthened operational model

Indicator		Baseline		Milestone 2017 FY2017 N =116 respondents in 20 DCPs (72 in 12 FCAC)	Milestone 2017 Status	Target 2020
32. Proportion of (a) DCPs and (b) other partners reporting strengthened clarity of roles, responsibilities and accountabilities in DCP processes	All respondents					
	DCPs:	n/a	Planned:	65%	Met	80%
			Achieved:	65%		
	Other partners:	n/a	Planned:	65%	Not met	80%
			Achieved:	60%		

GPE 2016-2020 Results Framework – 14/15

32. Proportion of (a) DCPs and (b) other partners reporting strengthened clarity of roles, responsibilities and account-abilities in DCP processes (continued..)	Respondents in FCAC					
	DCPs:	n/a	Planned:	65%	Not met	80%
			Achieved:	58%		
	Other partners:	n/a	Planned:	65%	Not met	80%
			Achieved:	55%		

(b) Use global and cross-national knowledge and good practice exchange effectively to bring about improved education policies and systems, especially in the areas of equity and learning

Indicator	Baseline FY2015	Milestone 2017 FY2017		Milestone 2017 Status	Target 2020
33. Number of policy, techni-cal and/or other knowledge products developed and disseminated with funding or support from GPE	4	Planned:	21	Met	64
		Achieved:	36		

(c) Expand the partnership's convening and advocacy role, working with partners to strengthen global commitment and financing for education

Indicator	Baseline FY2016	Milestone 2017 FY2017		Milestone 2017 Status	Target 2020
34. Number of advocacy events undertaken with partners and other external stakeholders to support the achievement of GPE's strate-gic goals and objectives	11[15]	Planned:	26	Met	65
		Achieved:	26		

(d) Improve GPE's organizational efficiency and effectiveness, creating stronger systems for quality assurance, risk management, country support and fiduciary oversight

Indicator	Baseline FY2016; N=12 audit reports	Milestone 2017 FY2017; N=25 audit reports		Milestone 2017 Status	Target 2020
35. Proportion of significant issues identified through audit reviews satisfactorily addressed	100%	Planned:	100%	Met	100%
		Achieved:	100%		

GPE 2016-2020 Results Framework – 15/15

Indicator	Baseline FY2015; N=2,254.74 total work weeks	Milestone 2017 FY2017; N=3,297 total work weeks		Milestone 2017 Status	Target 2020
36. Proportion of Secretariat staff time spent on country-facing functions	28%	Planned:	36%	Met	50%
		Achieved:	41%		

(e) Invest in monitoring and evaluation to establish evidence of GPE results, strengthen mutual accountability and improve the work of the partnership				
Indicator	Baseline FY2015; N=1 results report and 1 evaluation reports	Milestone 2017	Milestone 2017 Status	Target 2020
37. Proportion of results reports and evaluation reports published against set targets	100%	First milestone set for 2018	Baseline	100%

Note: The country-level data from the UIS February 2018 release were used to compute 2017 values of indicator 5, 12 and 14. GPE aggregates from the UIS July 2017 release was used for all other UIS-based indicators.

Source: GPE Results Framework (https://www.globalpartnership.org/content/results-report-2018[125])

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[125] Compare to original logframe: *https://www.globalpartnership.org/content/gpe-results-framework-2016-2020.*

iv. *Evaluation Matrix*

Annex Table 3. *Evaluation Matrix*

MAIN EVALUATION QUESTIONS AND SUB-QUESTIONS	INDICATORS	MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION	ANALYSIS
Key question I: Has GPE-support to [country] contributed to achieving country-level objectives related to sector planning, sector plan implementation, sector dialogue and monitoring, and more/better financing for education?[126] If so, then how?			
CEQ 1: Has GPE contributed to education sector planning and sector plan implementation in [country] during the period under review? [127] How?			
CEQ 1.1 What have been strengths and weaknesses of education sector planning during the period under review?	• Extent to which the country's most recent sector plan meets GPE/UNESCO IIEP appraisal criteria.[128] – Plan preparation process has been country-led, participatory, and transparent – Plan constitutes a solid corpus of strategies and actions addressing the key challenges of the education sector – Issues of equity, efficiency, and learning are soundly addressed to increase sector performance – There is consistency between different components of the sector plan – Financing, implementation and monitoring arrangements offer a good perspective for achievement • Extent to which previous sector plans met current GPE or other (e.g. country specific) quality standards (if and where data is available) • Stakeholder views on strengths and weaknesses of (most recent and previous) sector planning processes in terms of: – Leadership for and inclusiveness of sector plan preparation – Relevance and coherence of the sector plan – Adequacy of sector plan in addressing equity, efficiency and learning issues – Timeliness of plan preparation processes	• Current and past sector plans (including from period prior to country joining GPE if available) • GPE ESP/TSP quality assurance documents • JSR reports • Other relevant reports or reviews that comment on the quality of previous sector plans • Interviews	• Pre-post analysis (where data on previous policy cycles is available) • Triangulation of data deriving from document review and interviews
CEQ 1.2 What have been strengths and weaknesses of sector plan implementation	• Progress made towards implementing sector plan objectives/meeting implementation targets of current/most recent sector plan. (If data is available:	• Current and past sector plans (including from period prior to	• Pre-post analysis (where data on previous

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[126] OECD DAC evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency, sustainability and impact.

[127] The core period under review varies for summative and prospective evaluations. Prospective evaluations will primarily focus on the period early 2018 to early 2020 and will relate observations of change back to the baseline established at this point. The summative evaluations will focus on the period covered by the most recent ESPIG implemented in the respective country. However, for selected indicators (and subject to data availability) the summative evaluations will look back up to five years prior to the country becoming a GPE member to conduct a trend analysis of relevant data.

[128] Global Partnership for education, UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning. Guidelines for Education Sector Plan Appraisal. Washington and Paris. 2015. Available at: file:///C:/Users/anett/AppData/Local/Packages/Microsoft.MicrosoftEdge_8wekyb3d8bbwe/TempState/Downloads/2015-06-gpe-iiep-guidelines-education-sector-plan-appraisal.pdf

MAIN EVALUATION QUESTIONS AND SUB-QUESTIONS	INDICATORS	MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION	ANALYSIS

during the period under review?	compared to progress made on implementing previous sector plan)
	• Extent to which sector plan implementation is fully funded (current/most recent plan compared to earlier sector plan if data is available)
	• Stakeholder views on timeliness, effectiveness and efficiency of sector plan implementation, and on changes therein compared to earlier policy cycles, due to:
	  – Extent to which plans are coherent and realistic
	  – Implementation capacity and management
	  – Funding
	  – Other (context-specific)
		country joining GPE if available)
		• DCP government ESP/TSP implementation documents including mid-term or final reviews
		• Relevant programme or sector evaluations, including reviews preceding the period of GPE support under review
		• JSR reports
		• Reports or studies on ESP/TSP commissioned by other development partners and/or the DCP government
		• CSO reports
		• Interviews
			policy cycles is available)
			• Triangulation of data deriving from document review and interviews

CEQ 1.3 Has GPE contributed to the observed characteristics of sector planning? How? a) Through the GPE ESPDG grant- (funding, funding requirements) b) Through other support (technical assistance, advocacy, standards, quality assurance procedures, guidelines, capacity building, facilitation, CSEF and ASA grants, and cross-national sharing of evidence/good practice)[129]	a) Contributions through GPE ESPDG grant and related funding requirements: • ESPDG amount as a share of total resources invested into sector plan preparation. Evidence of GPE ESPDG grant addressing gaps/needs or priorities identified by the DCP government and/or LEG b) Contributions through other (non ESPDG-related) support: • Support directed at priority needs/gaps identified by the DCP government and/or LEG • Support adapted to meet the technical and cultural requirements of the specific context in [country] • Support aimed at strengthening sustainable local/national capacities for sector planning or plan implementation • Stakeholder views on relevance and appropriateness of GPE technical assistance, advocacy, standards, guidelines, capacity building, facilitation, CSEF and ASA grants, and knowledge exchange in relation to: – Addressing existing needs/priorities	• ESP implementation data including joint sector reviews • GPE grant agent reports and other grant performance data • Secretariat reports, e.g. country lead back to office/mission reports • GPE ESP/TSP quality assurance documents • Other documents on technical assistance/advocacy • Country-specific grant applications • Interviews • Education sector analyses • Country's poverty reduction strategy paper	• Triangulation of data deriving from document review and interviews • Where applicable: Comparison of progress made towards ESPIG grant objectives linked to specific performance targets with those without targets (variable tranche)

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[129] Technical assistance and facilitation provided primarily through the GPE Secretariat, the grant agent and coordinating agency. Advocacy can include inputs from Secretariat, grant agent, coordinating agency, LEG, and GPE at global level (e.g. Board meetings, agreed upon standards). Knowledge exchange includes cross-national/global activities related to the diffusion of evidence and best practice to improve sector planning and implementation.

MAIN EVALUATION QUESTIONS AND SUB-QUESTIONS	INDICATORS	MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION	ANALYSIS
	− Respecting characteristics of the national context − Adding value to country-driven processes (e.g. quality assurance provided by Secretariat)		
CEQ 1.4 Has GPE contributed to the observed characteristics of sector plan implementation? How? a) Through GPE EPDG, ESPIG grants-related funding requirements and the variable tranche[130] b) Through non-financial support (technical assistance, advocacy, standards, quality assurance procedures, guidelines, capacity building, and facilitation, and cross-national sharing of evidence/good practice)[131]	a) Contributions through GPE EPDG and ESPIG grants, related funding requirements and variable tranche (where applicable) • Absolute amount of GPE disbursement and GPE disbursement as a share of total aid to education • Maximum allocation amounts and actual amount a country received from GPE through the fixed and/or the variable tranche and reasons for not receiving the total MCA; • Evidence of GPE grants addressing gaps/needs or priorities identified by the DCP government and/or LEG. • Progress made towards targets outlined in GPE grant agreements as triggers for variable tranche, compared to progress made in areas without specific targets (where applicable) • Proportion of overall sector plan funded through GPE ESPIG • Proportion of textbook purchases planned under current/most recent sector plan funded through GPE grant • Proportion of teachers trained under current/most recent sector plan funded through GPE grant • Proportion of classrooms built under current/most recent sector plan funded through GPE grant • Progress made towards objectives/targets outlined in GPE grant agreement (where applicable: compare progress made in areas with specific targets as triggers for release of variable tranche compared to progress made in areas without specific targets) • Timeliness of implementation of GPE grants (Education Sector Plan Development Grant, Program Development Grant, Education Sector Plan Implementation Grant) • Grant implementation is on budget	• ESP implementation data including joint sector reviews • GPE grant agent reports and other grant performance data • Secretariat reports, e.g. country lead back to office/mission reports • GPE ESP/TSP quality assurance documents • Other documents on technical assistance/advocacy • Country-specific grant applications • Interviews • Education sector analyses • Country's poverty reduction strategy paper	• Triangulation of data deriving from document review and interviews • Where applicable: Comparison of progress made towards ESPIG grant objectives linked to specific performance targets with those without targets (variable tranche)

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[130] Where applicable.

[131] Technical assistance and facilitation provided primarily through the GPE Secretariat, the grant agent and coordinating agency. Advocacy – including inputs from Secretariat, grant agent, coordinating agency, LEG, and GPE at global level (e.g. Board meetings, agreed upon standards). Knowledge exchange - including cross-national/global activities related to the diffusion of evidence and best practice to improve sector planning and implementation.

MAIN EVALUATION QUESTIONS AND SUB-QUESTIONS	INDICATORS	MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION	ANALYSIS

	b) Contributions through non-financial support
	• GPE support aimed at strengthening sustainable local/national capacities for plan implementation
	• Stakeholder views on relevance and appropriateness of GPE non-financial support in relation to:
	  − Addressing existing needs/priorities
	  − Respecting characteristics of the national context
	  − Adding value to country-driven processes (e.g. quality assurance provided by Secretariat)		

CEQ 1.4 Has GPE contributed to leveraging additional education sector financing and improving the quality of financing? a) Leveraging of additional finance from the government? b) Leveraging of additional finance from other partners through the GPE multiplier funding mechanisms (where applicable)? c) Leveraging of additional finance from other partners through means other than the multiplier funding mechanism? d) Improvements in the quality of education finance (e.g. short, medium and long-term predictability, alignment with government systems)?	a) Leveraging additional finance from government • Changes in country's public expenditures on education during period under review (by sub-sector if available) b) Leveraging additional finance through multiplier funding • Extent to which country has achieved, maintained or exceeded 20% of public expenditures on education during period under review • Amount received through the GPE multiplier fund (if applicable). c) Leveraging additional finance through other means • Amounts and sources of domestic resources mobilized through GPE advocacy efforts (b and c): • Changes in relative size of GPE financial contribution in relation to other donor' contributions • Trends in external and domestic financing channeled through and outside of GPE, and for basic and total education, to account for any substitution by donors or the country government • Changes in donor aid to country; Extent to which GPE Program Implementation Grant-supported programs have been co-financed by other actors or are part of pooled funding mechanisms; Amounts and sources of non-traditional financing (e.g. private or innovative finance) that can be linked to GPE leveraging d) Quality of education finance • Alignment of GPE education sector program implementation grants with GPE's system alignment criteria (including the 10 elements of alignment and the elements of harmonization captured by RF indicators 29, 30 respectively) • Possible reasons for non-alignment or non-harmonization (if applicable)	• Interviews with national actors (e.g. Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Education, Local Education Groups/ Development partner groups) • GPE data (e.g. grant documents, country commitments and disbursements, donor pledges and contributions) • Creditor Reporting System (CRS) by OECD-DAC • UIS data by UNESCO • National data (e.g. Education Management Information Systems, school censuses and surveys, National Education Accounts, Joint Sector Reviews, public expenditure reviews)	• Trend analysis for period under review • Comparative analysis (GPE versus other donor contributions) • Triangulation of quantitative analysis with interview data

MAIN EVALUATION QUESTIONS AND SUB-QUESTIONS	INDICATORS	MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION	ANALYSIS
CEQ 2 Has GPE contributed to strengthening mutual accountability for the education sector during the period under review? If so, then how?			

CEQ 2.1 Has sector dialogue changed during the period under review?	• Composition of the country's LEG (in particular civil society and teacher association representation), and changes in this composition during period under review
	• Frequency of LEG meetings, and changes in frequency during period under review
	• Stakeholder views on changes in sector dialogue in terms of:
	  – Inclusiveness
	  – Frequency, consistency, clarity of roles and responsibilities
	  – Relevance (i.e. perceptions on whether stakeholder input is taken into account for decision making)
	  – Quality (evidence-based, transparent)
		• LEG meeting notes
		• Joint sector reviews or equivalents from before and during most recent ESPIG period
		• GPE sector review assessments
		• ESP/TSP, and documents illustrating process of their development
		• Back to office reports/memos from Secretariat
		• Interviews
			• Pre-post comparison
			• Triangulate results of document review and interviews
			• Stakeholder analysis and mapping

CEQ 2.2 Has sector monitoring changed?	• Frequency of joint sector reviews conducted, and changes in frequency during period under review
	• Extent to which joint sector reviews conducted during period of most recent ESPIG met GPE quality standards (if data is available: compared to JSRs conducted prior to this period)
	• Evidence deriving from JSRs is reflected in DCP government decisions (e.g. adjustments to sector plan implementation) and sector planning
	• Measures in the current sector plan to strengthen sector monitoring (especially monitoring the quality of teaching and learning, equity, equality and inclusion) are implemented
	• Stakeholder views on changes in JSRs in terms of them being:
	  – Inclusive and participatory
	  – Aligned to existing sector plan and/or policy framework
	  – Evidence based
	  – Used for learning/informing decision-making
	  – Embedded in the policy cycle (timing of JSR appropriate to inform decision making; processes in place to follow up on JSR recommendations)[132]
	• Stakeholder views on extent to which current practices of sector dialogue and monitoring amount to 'mutual accountability' for the education sector.
		• LEG meeting notes
		• Joint sector reviews or equivalents from before and during most recent ESPIG period
		• GPE sector review assessments
		• Grant agent reports
		• Back to office reports/memos from Secretariat
		• Interviews
			• Pre-post comparison
			• Triangulate the results of document review and interviews

CEQ 2.3 Has GPE contributed to observed	a) Grants and funding requirements	• LEG meeting notes	• Triangulate the results of

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[132] Criteria adapted from: Global Partnership for Education. Effective Joint Sector Reviews as (Mutual) Accountability Platforms. GPE Working Paper #1. Washington. June 2017. Available at: https://www.globalpartnership.org/blog/helping-partners-make-best-use-joint-sector-reviews

MAIN EVALUATION QUESTIONS AND SUB-QUESTIONS	INDICATORS	MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION	ANALYSIS

changes in sector dialogue and monitoring? How?
a) Through GPE grants and funding requirements
b) Through other support[133]
	• Proportion of EMIS-related improvements outlined current/most recent sector plan funded through GPE grant
	b) Non-grant related support
	• Support is targeted at issues identified as priorities by DCP government and/or LEG
	• Support is adapted to meet the technical and cultural requirements of the specific context in [country]
	• Support is aimed at strengthening local/national capacities for conducting inclusive and evidence-based sector dialogue and monitoring
	a) and b)
	• Stakeholder view on relevance and appropriateness of GPE grants and related funding requirements, and of technical assistance in relation to:
	  − Addressing existing needs/priorities
	  − Respecting characteristics of the national context
	  − Adding value to country-driven processes (e.g. around JSRs)
		• Joint sector reviews or equivalents from before and during most recent ESPIG period
		• GPE sector review assessments
		• Grant agent reports
		• Back to office reports/memos from Secretariat
		• Interviews
			document review and interviews

CEQ 3: Has GPE support had unintended/unplanned effects? What factors other than GPE support have contributed to observed changes in sector planning, sector plan implementation, sector financing and monitoring?			

CEQ 3.1 What factors other than GPE support are likely to have contributed to the observed changes (or lack thereof) in sector plan development, sector financing and plan implementation, and in sector dialogue and monitoring?	• Changes in nature and extent of financial/non-financial support to the education sector provided by development partners/donors (traditional/non-traditional donors including foundations)
	• Contributions to sector planning, plan implementation, sector dialogue or monitoring made by actors other than GPE
	• Changes/events in national or regional context(s)
	  − Political context (e.g. changes in government/leadership)
	  − Economic context
	  − Social/environmental contexts (e.g. natural disasters, conflict, health crises)
	  − Other (context-specific)
		• Documents illustrating changes in priorities pursued by (traditional/non-traditional) donors related implications for [country]
		• Relevant studies/reports commissioned by other education sector actors (e.g. donors, multilateral agencies) regarding nature/changes in their contributions and related results
		• Government and other (e.g. media) reports on changes in relevant national contexts and implications for the education sector
		• Interviews
			• Triangulate the results of document review and interviews

CEQ 3.2 During the period under review, have there been unintended, positive or negative, consequences	• Types of unintended, positive and negative, effects on sector planning, sector financing, sector plan implementation, sector dialogue and	• All data sources outlined for CEQs 1 and 2 above • Interviews	• Triangulate the results of document review and interviews

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[133] Technical assistance, advocacy, standards, quality assurance, guidelines, capacity building, facilitation, and cross-national sharing of evidence/good practice

MAIN EVALUATION QUESTIONS AND SUB-QUESTIONS	INDICATORS	MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION	ANALYSIS
of GPE financial and non-financial support?	monitoring deriving from GPE funding (grants) • Types of unintended, positive and negative, effects deriving from other GPE support.		
Key question II: Has the achievement of country-level objectives[134] contributed to making the overall education system in [country] more effective and efficient?			
CEQ 4 During the period under review, how has the education system changed in relation to: a) Quality of teaching/instruction b) Evidence-based, transparent decision making[135] c) Country-specific areas of system strengthening for furthering equity and/or learning, and for ensuring effective and efficient use of resources.	a) Quality of teaching/instruction • Changes in pupil/trained teacher ratio during period under review • Changes in equitable allocation of teachers (measured by relationship between number of teachers and number of pupils per school) b) Evidence-based, transparent decision making • Changes in number of education indicators that country reports to UIS during period under review • Changes in whether country has quality learning assessment system within the basic education cycle during period under review • Other, country-specific indicators illustrating changes in evidence-based, transparent data collection, reporting and decision making c) Indicators for specific areas of education systems strengthening as outlined in the country's current sector plan related to: • Sector management (e.g. changes in ministerial, district and/or school level management structures, guidelines, staffing, financing, approaches to ensuring effective and efficient use of resources) • Learning (appropriate and available education inputs, additional country-specific efforts to enhance the quality of teaching/instruction, e.g. through new/improved incentives for schools/teachers) • Equity (removal of barriers to school participation for all learners; creating inclusive learning environments) (a-c): Stakeholder perceptions of areas within the education system that have/have not changed during period under review	• Education Management Information System (EMIS) • UIS data • World Bank data • Household survey data • ASER/UWEZO other citizen-led surveys • Grant agent progress reports • Implementing partner progress reports • Mid-term Evaluation reports • GPE annual Results Report • Appraisal Reports • Public expenditure reports • CSO reports • SABER database • Education financing studies • Literature on good practices in education system domains addressed in country's sector plan • Interviews	• Pre-post comparison of statistical data for periods under review • Triangulate the results of document review with statistical data, interviews and literature on 'good practice' in specific areas of systems strengthening

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[134] GPE country-level objectives related to sector planning, plan implementation, and mutual accountability through sector dialogue and monitoring

[135] Sub-questions a) and b) reflect indicators under Strategic Goal #3 as outlined in the GPE results framework. Sub-questions c) explores additional, country-specific indicators for system-level change.

MAIN EVALUATION QUESTIONS AND SUB-QUESTIONS	INDICATORS	MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION	ANALYSIS
CEQ 5 How have changes in sector planning, plan implementation, and mutual accountability contributed to observed changes at education system level?	• The specific measures put in place as part of sector plan implementation address previously identified bottlenecks at system level • Alternative explanations for observed changes at system level (e.g. changes due to external factors, continuation of trend that was already present before current/most recent policy cycle, targeted efforts outside of the education sector plan) • Stakeholder perceptions of reasons for observed changes	• Sources as shown for CEQ 4 • Literature on good practices in education system domains addressed in country's sector plan • Education sector analyses • Country's poverty reduction strategy paper	
Key question III: Have changes at education system level contributed to progress towards impact?			
CEQ 6: During the period under review, what changes have occurred in relation to: a) Learning outcomes (basic education)? b) Equity, gender equality and inclusion in education?	a) Learning outcomes: • Changes in learning outcomes (basic education) during period under review. • Changes in percentage of children under five (5) years of age in COUNTRY who have been developmentally on track in terms of health, learning and psychosocial well-being. Or changes in other early childhood care and education measures from country-level surveys b) Equity, gender equality, and inclusion: • Changes in proportion of children who complete (i) primary, (ii) lower-secondary education • Changes in out of school rate for (i) primary, (ii) lower-secondary education • Changes in the distribution of out of school children (girls/boys; children with/without disability; ethnic, geographic and/or economic backgrounds) • Education sector plan sets gender parity index/targets for (i) primary, (ii) lower-secondary education • Extent to which these targets have been achieved • Stakeholder perceptions on extent of, and reasons for, impact level changes during period under review (a and b): Additional country-specific indicators as outlined in current sector plan and/or related monitoring framework	• Sector performance data available from GPE, UIS, DCP government and other reliable sources • Teacher Development Information System (TDIS) • Education Management Information System (EMIS) • National examination data • International and regional learning assessment data • EGRA/EGMA data • ASER/UWEZO other citizen-led surveys • Grant agent and Implementing partner progress reports • Mid-term Evaluation reports • GPE annual Results Report • Appraisal Reports • Interviews	• Pre-post comparison of available education sector data during period under review • Triangulation of statistical data with qualitative document analysis and interviews
CEQ 7 Is there evidence to link changes in learning outcomes, equity, gender equality, and inclusion to system-level changes identified under CEQ 4? What other factors can explain changes in learning outcomes, equity, etc.?	• Changes in country's change trajectory related to learning outcomes, equity, gender equality, and inclusion during period under review • Additional explanations for observed changes in learning outcomes, equity, gender equality, and inclusion other than system-level changes noted under CEQ 4 and 5 • Stakeholder perceptions on extent of, and reasons for, impact-level changes during period under review	• Studies/evaluation reports on education (sub)sector(s) in country commissioned by the DCP government or other development partners (where available)	• Pre-post comparison of available education sector data during period under review • Triangulation of statistical data with qualitative document

MAIN EVALUATION QUESTIONS AND SUB-QUESTIONS	INDICATORS	MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION	ANALYSIS
		• Literature on key factors affecting learning outcomes, equity, equality, and inclusion in comparable settings • Interviews	analysis and interviews • Weigh supporting and refuting evidence of GPE contributions to sector outcomes during period of review

Source: Inception Report (Universalia et al., 2017)

Annex D Mapping of Nepal-specific Assumptions against IR

The table below maps the underlying assumptions of the Nepal-specific ToC against the assumptions in the generic ToC as included in the inception report.

Annex Table 4. *Underlying ToC assumptions – comparison*

Contribution Claim	Underlying Assumptions in the Generic ToC[136]	Underlying Assumptions in the Nepal ToC
Contribution Claim A: GPE (financial and non-financial) support and influence contribute to the *development* of government owned, credible and evidence-based sector plans focused on equity, efficiency and learning	Country level stakeholders have the capabilities (knowledge and skills), opportunities (resources, conductive external environment), and motivation (political will, incentives) to jointly and collaboratively improve sector analysis and planning	See Assumptions #1, 2
	GPE has sufficient leverage within the country for GPE financial and non-financial support to influence sector planning, including LEG existence and functioning	See Assumption # 9
	EMIS and learning assessment and reporting systems (LAS) produce relevant and reliable data	See Assumption #23
Contribution Claim B: **GPE (financial and non-financial) support for inclusive sector planning and joint monitoring contribute to *mutual accountability* for education sector progress**	GPE has sufficient leverage at global and country levels to positively influence LEG existence and functioning.	See Assumptions # 3, 9, 16
	Country level stakeholders have the capabilities (knowledge and skills), opportunities (including resources), and motivation (including political will and incentives) to work together to solve education sector issues.	See Assumptions #2, 8, 15, 16
Contribution Claim C: **GPE advocacy and funding requirements contribute to more and better financing**	GPE has sufficient leverage to influence the amount of and the quality of domestic and international education sector financing.	See Assumptions #4, 9
	External (contextual) factors permit national and international actors to increase/improve the quality of education sector financing	See Assumptions #5, 10, 11, 19
Contribution Claim D: **GPE (financial and non-financial) support and influence contribute to**	Relevant country-level actors have the technical capabilities, motivation (political will, incentives) and opportunity (funding, conducive environment) to implement all elements of the sector plan.	See Assumptions #4, 8, 17

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[136] As provided in 'Appendix XVI Explanatory mechanisms and key underlying assumptions in the generic country ToC', *Design and Implementation of GPE 2020 Country-Level Evaluations 2017 - 2020*, 21 December 2017, p. 115 - 118.

Contribution Claim	Underlying Assumptions in the Generic ToC[136]	Underlying Assumptions in the Nepal ToC
the effective and efficient *implementation* of sector plans	Available domestic and international funding is sufficient in quantity and adequate in quality to implement all elements of the sector plan.	See Assumptions #5, 11
	Country-level development partners have the motivation and opportunity (e.g. directive from respective donor government) to align their own activities with the priorities of the sector plan and to work through the LEG as a consultative and advisory forum	See Assumptions #8, 12, 16
	Country-level stakeholders take part in regular, evidence-based joint sector reviews and apply recommendations deriving from these reviews to enhance equitable and evidence-based sector plan implementation	See Assumption #8
	The sector plan includes provisions for strengthening EMIS and LAS to produce timely, relevant and reliable data	See Assumption #15
Contribution Claim E: **The development, implementation and monitoring of realistic evidence based sector plans contributes to positive changes at the level of the overall *education system***	Education sector plan implementation leads to improvements of previous shortcomings in the education system including related to each of, as well as to the interaction between elements, such as Sector Management, Learning, and Equity	See Assumptions #4, 6, 23
	There is sufficient national capacity (technical capabilities, political will, resources) or relevant technical assistance to analyze and report on available data and maintain EMIS and LAS.	See Assumptions #7, 17
	There are clearly delineated roles and responsibilities to produce data, report against data, and use data to monitor implementation	See Assumptions #8, 13, 14
Contribution Claim F: **Education system-level improvements result in *improved learning outcomes* and in *improved equity, gender equality***	Changes in the education system positively affect learning outcomes and equity	See Assumption #18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23
	Country-produced data on equity, efficiency and learning allow measuring/tracking these changes	See Assumptions #7, 18

Annex E   Risks to the Evaluation, Quality Assurance and Ethics

Risks to the Evaluation

1.   Annex Table 5 below outlines the key anticipated risks and limitations as outlined in the risk management and contingency plan section of the Inception Report. It also puts forward the anticipated mechanisms to mitigate risks.

Annex Table 5.   Key Anticipated Risks and Limitations, and Proposed Mitigation Mechanisms

ANTICIPATED RISK AND CONSEQUENCES	MITIGATION MECHANISMS
Delays in the timing of the 24 country visits Consequences: some country evaluation reports are submitted later than required to inform GPE Strategy and Impact Committee and/or Board meetings, or to feed into Synthesis report. *Likelihood: High*	If full evaluation/progress reports are not yet complete, the evaluation team will provide the Secretariat with at least an overview of emerging key findings at the agreed upon timelines that are linked to SIC and Board meetings or the submission of synthesis reports. The full reports will be submitted as soon as possible thereafter and will be reflected in subsequent synthesis reports in case important information was missed.
Conflict or fragility undermine the ability of our teams to conduct in-country data collection for summative or prospective evaluations Consequences: international consultants cannot conduct in-person data collection on the ground. Delays in conduct of site visits and of subsequent deliverables. *Likelihood: Medium to High*	Change timing of site visits, and postpone related deliverables Change order in which 22 summative evaluations are being conducted and/or make use of the contingency provision of two extra countries included in the sample for summative evaluations Collect data from individual in-country stakeholders via email, telephone, Skype; use electronic survey to reach several stakeholders at once Increase Level of Effort of national consultant(s) to ensure in-country data collection
Interventions are not implemented within the lifecycle of the evaluation This constitutes a risk in particular for the *prospective* evaluations. While a lack of implementation can create learning opportunities in impact evaluations, such situations do not present value for money. *Likelihood: Medium*	If interventions are not implemented within the lifecycle of the evaluation, data on bottlenecks, barriers, contextual factors and the political economy will be able to shed light on why implementation didn't take place and the extent to which such factors were within GPE's control.
Large data and evidence gaps Consequences: Inability to conduct reliable trend analysis. Lack of a solid basis on which to assess country progress made in strengthen the overall education system and education outcomes, as well as GPE contributions along the theory of change. *Likelihood: Medium, but varying by country*	Inclusion of data availability as a consideration in the sampling strategy. Work with the Secretariat and in-country stakeholders to fill data gaps. For prospective evaluations, if gaps identified as baseline cannot be filled, adjusting the prospective evaluation focus to make the most of alternative data that may be available. Use of qualitative data, e.g., based on stakeholder consultations, to reconstruct likely baseline for key issues relevant for assembling the contribution story Clearly identifying data gaps and implications for data analysis in all deliverables

ANTICIPATED RISK AND CONSEQUENCES	MITIGATION MECHANISMS
Structure of available data is limiting To assess education sector progress, the evaluation team will use the best data available at country level. However, the format of available data may vary by country. For example, countries may use different criteria to define 'inclusion' in their data. This can pose challenges to synthesizing findings on GPE contributions in the respective area. *Likelihood: Medium*	As qualitative synthesis does not bring the same limitations, we will mitigate this risk by describing differences in measurement criteria across countries.
Inaccessibility of in-country partners, resulting in incomplete data sets, limited triangulation, partners not fully seeing their views reflected in, and therefore reject evaluation findings and forward-looking suggestions; increase in costs and time required for data collection; delays in completing data collection and submitting deliverables. *Likelihood: Medium*	Reaching out to in-country stakeholders as early as possible before scheduled mission to explore their availability Data collection via email, telephone Skype, or through local consultant before or after site visit Close collaboration with the Secretariat country lead and in-country focal point (e.g., Coordinating Agency) to identify and gain access to all key in-country stakeholders Consult other individuals from same stakeholder group if key envisaged informants are not available
Being part of an evaluation changes the behavior of actors, independent of GPE support GPE partners within *prospective* evaluation countries may, involuntarily, perceive the prospective evaluation countries as showcase examples and increase efforts due to the evaluation. *Likelihood: Medium to Low*	The evaluation team will review the performance data for the full set of GPE countries and see if the prospective evaluation countries have moved in their performance ranking over the lifecycle of the evaluation.
Evaluations (perceived to be) not sufficiently independent from the Secretariat Consequences: Negative effects on credibility of evaluation findings and forward-looking suggestions in the eyes of key stakeholders. Limited use of evaluations to inform decision making and/or behaviors of key stakeholders. Reputational damage for the Secretariat and consortium members. *Likelihood: Medium to Low*	Findings, conclusions and forward-looking suggestions will be based on clearly identified evidence Review of all draft deliverables by an Independent Technical Review Panel (ITRP). The evaluation team will incorporate feedback received on draft deliverables as follows: (a) factual errors will be corrected; (b) for other substantive comments, the evaluation team will decide based on the available evidence whether and how to incorporate them or not. If comments/suggestions are not accepted, the evaluation team will explain why.
***Prospective* country evaluation teams becoming excessively sympathetic to GPE or others through repeat visits** This can result in overly positive reports that miss areas requiring constructive criticism. *Likelihood: Medium to Low*	The internal, independent and external quality assurance mechanisms described below as well as feedback received from the ITRP will allow identifying any cases where prospective evaluation reports provide insufficient evidence for overly positive assessments.
Countries no longer willing to participate, or wish to withdraw partway through an (prospective) evaluation	Transparent selection/sampling process

ANTICIPATED RISK AND CONSEQUENCES	MITIGATION MECHANISMS
Consequences: An unbalanced sample of summative or *prospective* evaluations. Difficulty completing all eight prospective evaluations in a consistent manner. *Likelihood: Medium to Low*	Early work with GPE country leads and in-country implementing partners to build support for all country-level evaluations Early and ongoing direct engagement with senior decision-makers in DCPs to ensure that key stakeholders understand the nature and anticipated duration of especially the prospective evaluations

Source: Inception Report (Universalia et al., 2017)

Quality Assurance

2.   Our consortium is committed to providing high-quality reports to GPE. The Team Leader, working with the Itad coordinator, will play the principal roles with respect to liaison and coordination with the Secretariat regarding quality assurance throughout the assignment. The table below provides an overview of our approach to ensuring the high quality of all deliverables submitted to the Secretariat.

Annex Table 6.   *Quality Assurance Mechanisms*

Prospective country evaluations	• **Internal quality assurance**: Rachel Outhred and/or Stephen Lister will review (from drafting stage to finalization stage) all major outputs of country team leaders contracted by Itad or Mokoro for the prospective country evaluations. During finalization of reports Rachel Outhred and Stephen Lister will ensure that feedback received from the Secretariat and the ITRP has been addressed. • **Independent quality assurance**: will be provided by the Itad Quality Advisor Sam MacPherson, an Itad Director external to the evaluation team, who will provide written comments on all major deliverables once reviewed by Rachel Outhred or Stephen Lister. • **External quality assurance**: will be provided through members of the Expert Advisory Panel who will conduct a review of draft deliverables in parallel to reviews conducted by the Secretariat, the ITRP and country stakeholders[137].

Ethics

3.   The members of our consortium abide by and uphold internationally recognized ethical practices and codes of conduct for evaluations, especially when they take place in humanitarian and conflict situations, and with affected and vulnerable populations.

4.   For this evaluation the work of the evaluation team will be guided by: OECD-DAC Evaluation Quality Standards for Development Evaluation;[138] UNEG Norms, Standards, Ethical Guidelines and Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System;[139] the World Bank's principles and standards for evaluating global and regional partnership programs;[140] ALNAP's Evaluation of Humanitarian Action Guide;[141] the Sphere Handbook and Standards for Monitoring and Evaluation;[142] and guidance on Ethical Research Involving Children.[143]

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[137] No feedback was received from country stakeholders.
[138] http://www.oecd.org/development/evaluation/qualitystandards.pdf
[139] http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/21 and http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/22   ,
http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/102 and http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/100
[140] http://siteresources.worldbank.org/XTGLOREGPARPROG/Resources/sourcebook.pdf
[141] http://www.alnap.org/resource/23592.aspx
[142] http://www.sphereproject.org/silo/files/sphere-for-monitoring-and-evaluation.pdf
[143] http://childethics.com/

Annex F   Interview Guides

1.   These guidelines are not intended as questionnaires. It will not be possible to cover all issues in all categories with all individuals or groups. The evaluation team members will use their judgement and focus on areas which are likely to add most to the team's existing knowledge, while allowing interviewees and groups to highlight the issues that are most important to them.

2.   The evaluators will formulate questions in a (non-technical) way that respondents can easily relate to, while generating evidence that is relevant to the evaluation questions that the evaluators have in mind.

Approach to Interviews

3.   Interviews will be a major source of information for this evaluation. These will be a means to extract evidence, as well as to triangulate evidence drawn from other interviews and the document review and will form part of the consultative process.

4.   A stakeholder analysis as presented in baseline report will inform the selection of interviewees. Over the evaluation period the evaluation team aims to target a comprehensive range of stakeholders that fully represent all significant institutional, policy and beneficiary interests. The team will periodically review the list of those interviewed to ensure that any potential gaps are addressed and to prevent under-representation of key stakeholders.

5.   All interviews will comply with the team's commitment to the respective evaluation ethics. (The work of the evaluation team will be guided by: OECD-DAC Evaluation Quality Standards for Development Evaluation; UNEG Norms, Standards, Ethical Guidelines and Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System; the World Bank's principles and standards for evaluating global and regional partnership programs; ALNAP's Evaluation of Humanitarian Action Guide; the Sphere Handbook and Standards for Monitoring and Evaluation; and guidance on Ethical Research Involving Children.)[144]

6.   Interviews will be conducted in confidence and usually on a one-to-one or one-to-two basis (to enable note taking). Reports will not quote informants by name and will not include direct quotes where it could risk revealing the participant's identity or attribution without prior consent.

7.   A protocol and standard format for recording interview notes is presented below. This will be used for all interviews and will ensure systematic recording of details, while allowing for flexibility in the specific questions asked. Interview notes will be written up, consolidated into an interview compendium and shared among team members via the internal team-only e-library. To respect interviewee confidentiality, the interview notes will be accessible only to team members. The compendium of interview notes will facilitate analysis across all interviews and will enable searches on key thematic terms, initiatives and so on. This will maximise the analytical potential of interviews and the possibilities for triangulation.

Focus group discussions

8.   The evaluation team may also make use of focus group discussions (FGDs). Similar to the interview guides, the sub-headings and discussion guide points used are linked to the areas of enquiry and evaluation questions set out in the evaluation matrix, and are intended as a guide only, for the evaluation team to follow flexibly in order to maximise its learning from each discussion group.

9.   All focus group discussions will comply with the ET's commitment to appropriate evaluation ethics (as referenced above).

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[144] See references cited in Annex E, ¶4.

Annex Table 7.   *Interview template*

Date of Interview:			
Location:	*Include whether remote or face-to-face*		
Team members present:			
Notes by:		Date completed:	
Interviewees			
Name	**m/f**	**Designation (position/unit/organisation):**	**Contact (email/phone)**
add rows for additional people.		*Give sufficient information for the list of people consulted in our reports*	

Interviewee background

Interviewee's relevance to the CPE

Main topic

Use topic headings, not necessarily in order discussed

Subtopic

Main topic

Subtopic

Recommended follow-up

People to consult

Recommended documents/data

Annex G   Nepal Map

Annex Figure 4.   *Nepal Map*
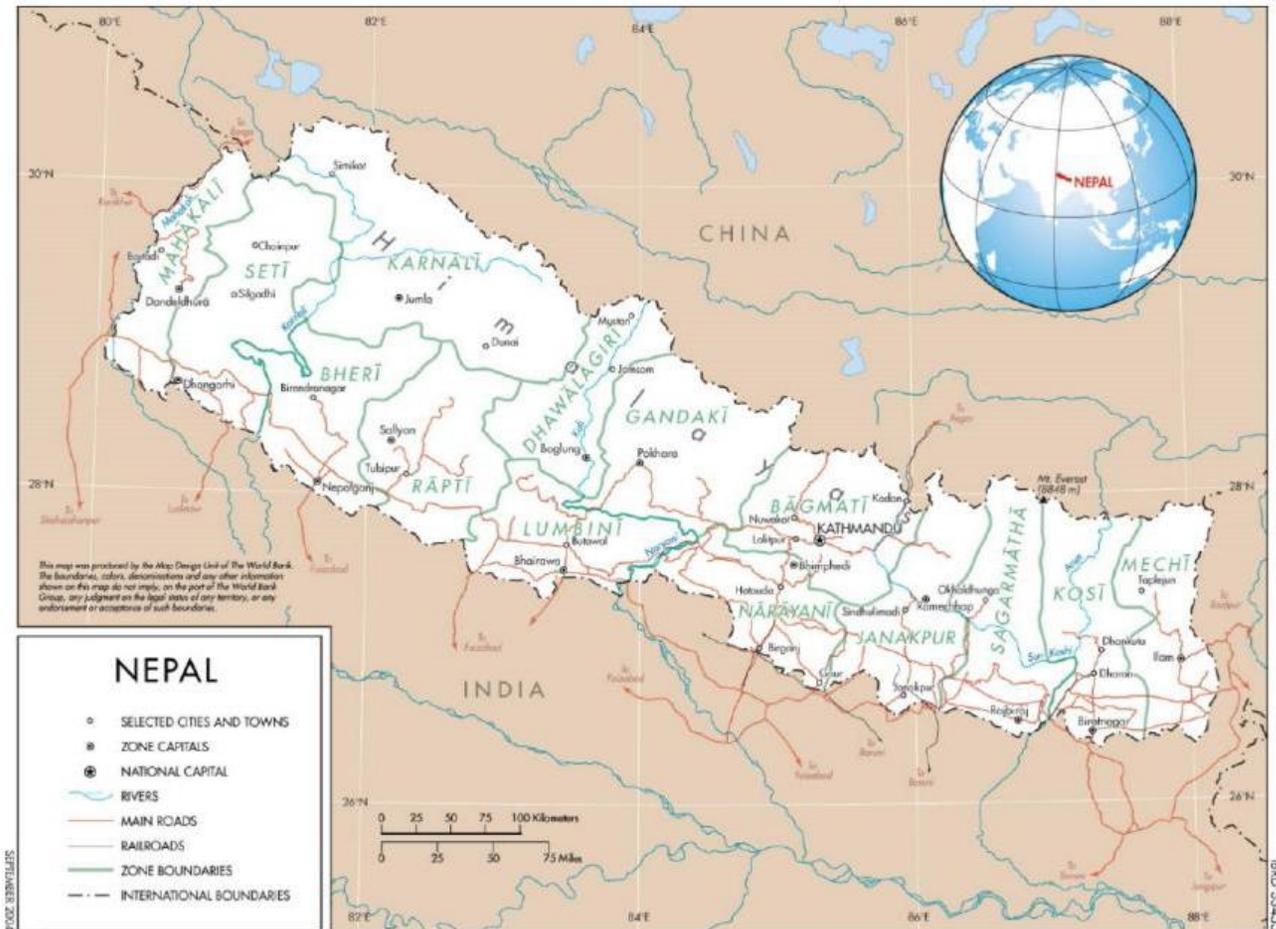
Source: World Bank, Map Design Unit, September 2004

Annex H   Chronology

This annex contains the following tables:

- Annex Table 8   Nepal Country Chronology
- Annex Table 9   GPE grants to Nepal (2014-2020)

Annex Table 8.   *Nepal Country Chronology*

Year	Nepal general	Education sector	GPE Engagement
1990		Nepal Government commits to EFA, which was launched at the Jomtien World Conference in 1990	
1993		**Basic Primary Education Programme (BPEP**) 1993-97, initially five districts, expanded to 15-20 districts.	
1996	Internal civil and military unrest from 1996 until 2006		
1999		BPEP I, 1999-2004 (also called the EFA intervention) a comprehensive and coordinated multi-donor intervention with World Bank, UNICEF, UNDP, JICA. Covered 40 districts, similar orientation to BPEPI. Govt investment in education is 2.9% of GDP	
2000		The World Education Forum on Education for All, held in Dakar, in 2000 MDGs	
2001		7th Amendment to the Education Act (2001)	
2002		Teacher Education Project (TEP, 2002-2007)	
2003		**Secondary Education Support Programme (SESP)**	
2004		**BPEP II - Education For All Programme (EFA, 2004-2009)** was launched in August 2004. Marked transition to a more national-led programme, with oversight by Department of Education (DoE).	

Year	Nepal general	Education sector	GPE Engagement
2005			
2006	Restoration of popular democracy in 2006		
2007	Interim Constitution is adopted National Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) 2007-10	Accession of ADB and UNICEF to JFA. 2007	
2008	Nepal Labour Force Survey 2008	Joint Consultation Meeting of Education for All and Secondary Education Support Programme, November 26–28, 2008. Joint Annual Review Meeting of Education for All and Secondary Education Support Programme, May 12–14, 2008.	
2009	Maoist-led government stepped down from office in May 2009 and a new coalition Government has been formed, led by the Unified Marxist Leninist (UML) party and supported by the Nepali Congress and other parties	School Sector Reform Plan (SSRP) start. Funding is provided by a group of DPs, GPE and the GoN. Timeline 2009-2016 92% net enrolment rate (NER) for primary levels (Grades 1 -5) Near gender parity at primary and lower secondary levels (Grades 6 – 8) Education For All Fast Track Initiative (EFA/FTI) Catalytic Fund grant agreement of $120 million over three years approved	Nepal joins GPE SSRP design missions carried out between December 1 and 11, 2008; February 1 and 13, 2009; March 22 and April 2, 2009; and April 27 and 30, 2009. SSRP starts in July
2010	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2010	First Joint Annual Review (JAR) from April 19 to 23, 2010. Govt investment in education is 4.7% of GDP	SSRP starts First GPE grant US$117,8 million (2010-14)
2011	Population projections 2011-2031 Nepal Living Standard Survey 2011 Census 2011 Demographics and Health Survey 2011		SSRP
2012	Gender audit 2012,	Adoption of TVET policy First Joint Annual Review	SSRP

Year	Nepal general	Education sector	GPE Engagement
	National framework for capacity development 2012. Annual Household survey 2012	Mid-Term Review of the SSRP 2012,	
2013	Annual Household survey 2013	CBS data on out-of-school children 2013, Textbook printing and distribution study 2013, School effectiveness, Comprehensive teacher management study 2013, Institutional analysis and capacity development 2013, Nepal education studies: school and household survey 2013	SSRP The initial plan of the LEG to apply for the 2 year cycle in 2013 was postponed in line with communication from GPE as the replenishment meeting had to first be completed.
2014		Nepal Early Grade Reading Assessment 2014, Public Expenditure Tracking Survey 2014, Comprehensive Equity Strategy 2014	SSRP ends SSRP extension plan begins SSRP Extension document has been based on consultation of LEG members and educational stakeholders through establishment of Thematic Working Groups aligned with the SSRP components at local, district, regional and national level.
2015	25th April – Gorkha Earthquake, 12th May – Earthquake – destroyed or damaged nearly 36,000 classrooms. Economic blockade drastically reduced e.g. availability of gas or diesel. In September, President Yadav signs a landmark constitution, which defines Nepal as a secular country. In October K.P. Prasad becomes the first prime minister to be elected under the new constitution. Nepal produces a National Report to guide Nepal in operationalizing the SDGs at all levels national, regional and local.	8th Amendment to the Education Act (2015) 3rd March –Post SSRP Education Sector Plan Technical Committee: agree to adopt SSDP as working title SEP	SSRP extension plan New grant of US$59.3 million prepared prior to 2015 earthquakes Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD) 2015 evaluation of their multilateral support for basic education in Nepal that is channeled through UNICEF and GPE/World Bank

Year	Nepal general	Education sector	GPE Engagement
2016			June: SSRP extension plan ends SSRP completed School Sector Development Plan (SSDP) (2017-2021) begins 2016 November Joint Review Meeting (JRM)
2017			20-31 March: the first Budget Review Meeting (BRM) May: achievement and verification report is presented by the MoE to the JFPs in May 2017. November JRM
2018	In February P Oli from Communist Party of Nepal was sworn in on Thursday as Nepal's 41st prime minister.	Education Amendment Act to be passed Transition to federal structure as per new constitutional mandate	March 2018 BRM

Annex Table 9.   *GPE grants to Nepal (2014-2020)*

Grant Type	Approval	Implementation dates	Amount	Features
1. Program Development Grant (PDG)	2014		US$179,700	Facilitate preparation and implementation of ESP
2. Education Sector Plan Development Grant (ESPDG)	2015		US$465,774	Support the MoE to prepare the new ESP (the SSDP)
3. Education Sector Program Implementation Grant (ESPIG)	2010	2010-2014	US$117,760,473	Develop a program for the implementation of the new ESP
4. ESPIG	2016	2016-2019	US$59,300,000	
5. Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF)	2016		US$86,306	NCE Nepal is a member of the LEDPG and involved in policy development
6. CSEF	2017		US$89,395	
7. CSEF	2018		Tbc	
8. Education Sector Program Implementation Grant (ESPIG)	Expected 2018	2016/17-2020/21	US$185 million for approval	Support implementation of the SSDP in 3 areas: learning outcomes, equitable access to education, strengthened education system[145]

Source: GPE program documents

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[145] For details see Annex J.

Annex I   People Consulted

Annex Table 10 below lists the people consulted (in alphabetical order by organisation and name) during the first country visit.

Annex Table 10.   *List of people consulted*

ORGANIZATION	FIRST NAME LAST NAME	TITLE (AND DEPARTMENT)	M/F
ASPBAE	Cecilia "Thea" Soriano	Programmes and Operations Coordinator	F
Embassy of Finland	Indra Gurung	Special Adviser	F
European Union	Wendy Fisher	Education Advisor	F
GPE	Aya Kibesaki	Country Lead and Senior Education Specialist	F
GPE	Naoko Hosaka	Senior Monitoring and Evaluation Officer	F
JICA	Yukiko Okugawa	Education Advisor	F
Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MOEST)	Baikuntha Prasad Aryal	Joint Secretary, Planning Division	M
MOEST	Deepak Sharma	Director, DOE	M
MOEST	Dr Mukundamani Khanal	Under Secretary, MOES	M
MOEST	Dr. Dhruba Raj Regmi	Under Secretary, Finance section	M
MOEST	Dr. Tulashi Prasad Thapaliya	ED, Teachers Service Commission (GPE SIC member)	M
MOEST	Ghanashyam Aryal	Deputy Director, Planning Division, DOE	M
MOEST	Khagaraj Poudel	Under Secretary, Foreign Coordination Section	M
MOEST	Meghnath Sharma	Under Secretary, Budget and Planning Section	M
MOEST	Mina Regmi Poudel	Section Officer, Foreign Coordination Section	F
MOEST	Ramesh Prashad Ghimire	Curriculum Development Officer, CD Centre	M
MOEST	Shankar B Thapa	Deputy Director, DOE (EMIS)	M
Ministry of Finance	Tek Bahadur Khatri	Under Secretary	M
NCE Nepal	Sattya Kunwar	Board Member	F
NCE-Nepal	Kumar BhatTerai	Chair	M
NCE-Nepal	Prakash Silwal	Board Member	M
NCE-Nepal	Ram Gaire	Programme Manager;	M
NCE-Nepal	Sharada Kumal		F
NCE-Nepal	Lab Raj Oli	Executive Director	M
Plan International Nepal	Prem Aryal		

ORGANIZATION	FIRST NAME LAST NAME	TITLE (AND DEPARTMENT)	M/F
Search for Common Ground	Dr Bhola Dahal	Country Director	M
Khagendra Nava Jivan Kendra, Special school for children with disabilities, Jorpati	Krishna Gurung - Teacher	Teacher	M
Khagendra Nava Jivan Kendra, Special school for children with disabilities, Jorpati	Kul P Neupane - Teacher	Teacher	M
Khagendra Nava Jivan Kendra, Special school for children with disabilities, Jorpati	Madhav Poudel	Guardian	M
Khagendra Nava Jivan Kendra, Special school for children with disabilities, Jorpati	Ngma Dorji Sherpa	SMC member	M
Khagendra Nava Jivan Kendra, Special school for children with disabilities, Jorpati	Pushpa Joshi	Teacher	M
Khagendra Nava Jivan Kendra, Special school for children with disabilities, Jorpati	Sofia Gurung - Teacher	Teacher	F
UNESCO	Aagat Awasthi	Project Coordinator	M
UNICEF	Dr. Marilyn Hoar	Chief of Education	F
UNICEF	Jimi Oostrum	Education Specialist; SWAp Coordinator	M
UNICEF	Purushottam Acharya	Education Specialist (policy)	M
USAID	Jannie Kwok	Deputy Director of Education	F
VSO Nepal	Freya Perry	Education Research Policy Adviser	F
WFP	Umesh Choudhari		M
World Bank	Dr Mohan Aryal	Senior Operations Officer	M
World Education	Helen Sherpa	Country Director	F

Annex J   Additional Country Data

1.   This annex includes the following additional country data:

- Annex Table 11   Education Expenditure
- Annex Table 12   Total National Budget Allocation in FY 2016-17
- Annex Table 13   Total Allocation in Education Budget and Actual Expenditure for FY 2016-17
- Annex Table 14   Share of Sub-Sector Budget Allocation in Education, FY (2013-/4–2016-17)
- Annex Figure 5   Share of education budget by sub-sector in FY 2016-2017
- Annex Table 15   Pupil-to-Teacher ratio in pre-primary and primary education
- Annex Table 16   Education system in Nepal
- Annex Table 17   Number of out-of-school children
- Annex Table 18   Illiteracy
- Annex Table 19   Literacy
- Annex Table 20   Education indicators in primary education
- Annex Figure 6   Grade 1 progression
- Annex Figure 7   Enrolment rates in ECD/PPEs
- Annex Table 21   Targets of Teacher Professional Development and Management against Indicators
- Annex Table 22   Basic education indicators and targets
- Annex Table 23   Year-wise targets for SSDP programme basic education (including ECED/PPE & NFE) programme activities
- Annex Figure 8   Sample districts for NASA 2015

Annex Table 11.   *Education Expenditure*

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Government expenditure on education								
as percent of GDP	3.81	4.66	3.63	3.84	3.76	3.47	3.99	3.7
as percent of total government expenditure	22.11	19.85	16.02	17.98	17.44	17.57	18.28	16.99
Government expenditure per student (in PPP$)								
Primary education	233.64	288.97	204.58	222.4	236.75	246.35	304	310.58
Secondary education	173.48	216.66	203.78	225.47	221.21	212.49	261.42	262.67
Tertiary education	781.55	909.03	608.74	616.94	...	489.24	622.78	607.17

Source: UIS data, http://uis.unesco.org/en/country/np

168. In financial year 2016/2017, the total national budget allocated was NPR 929.11 billion. Annex Table 12 below details the total national budget. Out of this budget, the share of the education

sector budget was NPR 116.36 billion, or 12.52 percent. It would be important in due course to look separately at the recurrent budget share and the capital budget share.

Annex Table 12.   *Total National Budget Allocation in FY 2016-17*

SN	Description	Total Budget Allocated in Red Book	Source of Budget NPR 000		
			Nepal Government	Foreign DPs grant	Foreign DPs loan
1	Total national budget	929,110,454	675,583,242	104,173,311	149,353,901
2	Recurrent costs	617,164,129	523,629,156	45,892,262	38,642,711
3	Capital costs	311,946,325	151,954,086	49,281,049	110,711,190
4	Share of education budget	116,360,649	78,279,641	7,700,040	30,380,968

Source: Table 1 in SSDP Status Report 2016-2017 (DoE, 2017b)

169. The total education budget for fiscal year 2016/2017 is detailed in Annex Table 13 below. The total education budget of NPR 116,360,649 equals approximately US$ 1,115,900. The table also shows the actual allocation of the budget and actual expenditure.

Annex Table 13.   *Total Allocation in Education Budget and Actual Expenditure for FY 2016-17*

Budget Head	Head Name	Budget Allocated in Red Book	Actual Allocation of Budget	Actual Expenditure	Progress %
350	Total Education Budget	116,360,649.00	119,830,847.51	108,852,361.22	90.82
	Recurrent costs	108,506,433.00	119,529,773.51	102,284,596.19	90.89
	Capital cost	226,451.00	302,746.00	188,624.71	62.30

Source: Table 3 in SSDP Status Report 2016-2017 (DoE, 2017b)

170. Annex Table 14 below shows the trend of the education budget allocation on different sub-sectors from fiscal year 2013-2014 to fiscal year 2016-2017.

Annex Table 14.   *Share of Sub-Sector Budget Allocation in Education, FY (2013-/4–2016-17)*

SN	Education sub-sector	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
1	ECED	-	1.49	1.47	2.33
2	Basic Education	60.31	54.41	54.09	51.16
3	Secondary Education	18.95	21.08	20.99	22.60
4	TVET	3.61	4.68	4	3.26
5	Tertiary Education	9.09	7.69	8.19	8.55
6	Education Management and Administration	2.48	2.8	2.29	2.32
7	Literacy and Lifelong Learning	-	1.45	0.4	0.79
8	Teacher Pension and Retirement Facilities	-	5.89	8.47	8.67
9	Other	5.56	0.41	0.1	0.31
Total		100	100	100	100

Source: Table 5 in SSDP Status Report 2016-2017 (DoE, 2017b)

171. Annex Figure 5 below shows the percentage of the education budget allocated to the various sub-sectors in fiscal year 2016-2017, indicating that a little over 50 percent of the education budget is allocated to Basic Education.

Annex Figure 5.   Share of education budget by sub-sector in FY 2016-2017
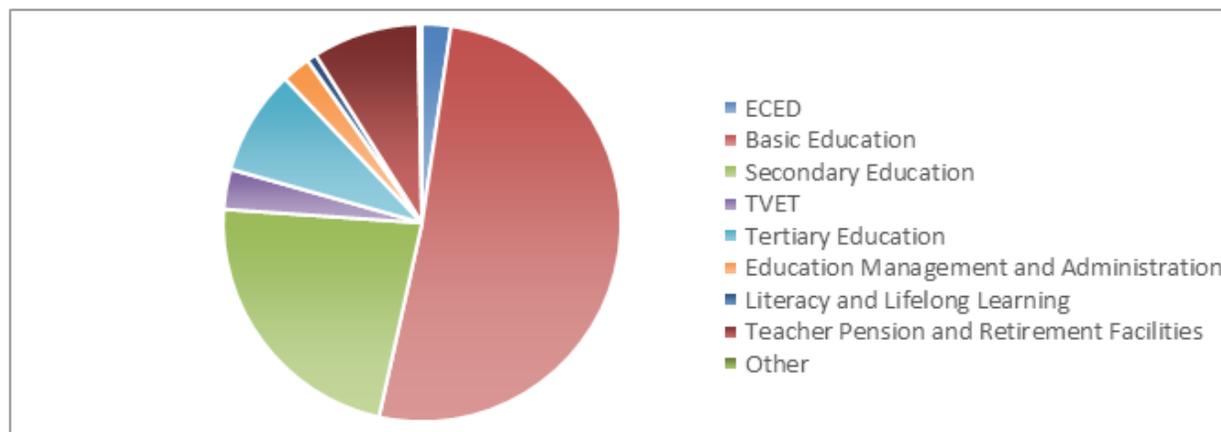
Source: Figure 1 in SSDP Status Report 2016-2017 (DoE, 2017b)

Annex Table 15.   Pupil-to-Teacher ratio in pre-primary and primary education

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Pre-primary education										
Pupil/teacher ratio	37.82	33.31	31.92	29.61	27.53	25.63	23.93	23.1	22.42	20.91
Primary education										
Pupil/teacher ratio	41.29	38.2	24.89	24.85	23.43	23.11	22.68	22.05	20.76	20.36

Source: UIS statistics (http://uis.unesco.org/en/country/np)

172. The SSDP includes teachers' professional development as one of the keys to improving the quality of education. The National Centre for Educational Development (NCED) is responsible for the implementation of teacher professional development based on the teacher training framework. At district level 29 Education Training Centres (ETCs) and 1,053 Lead Resource Centres (LRCs) aim to support teachers in their professional development.[146]

The targets that have been set for the professional development and management of teachers are shown in Annex Table 21, which indicates the baseline values from 2015/2016 and the targets for Year 1 (of the SSDP) and Year 5. It also shows which of the indicators are DLIs.

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[146] SSDP 2016-2023, p. 95 (MoE, 2016f)

Annex Table 16.   *Education system in Nepal*

Education level	Age	School-age population by education level
Pre-primary	3-4	1,132,677
Primary	5-9	3,083,235
Secondary	10-16	4,685,683
Tertiary	17-21	3,059,989

Source: UIS data: http://uis.unesco.org/en/country/np

Annex Table 17.   *Number of out-of-school children*

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Out-of-school children										
Total				53,049	13,939		185,343	103,664	101,859	159,211
Female				37,187			101,173	62,658	55,712	99,251
Male				15,862			84,170	41,006	46,147	59,960
Out-of-school adolescents										
Total									237,547	222,237
Female									82,289	77,722
Male									155,258	144,515

Source: UIS statistics (http://uis.unesco.org/en/country/np)

Annex Table 18.   *Illiteracy*

	Total	Female	Male	Year
Illiterate population 15-24 years	823,462	565,807	257,655	2011
Illiterate population 15 years + older	6,988,539	4,680,420	2,308,119	2011

Source: UIS statistics (http://uis.unesco.org/en/country/np)

Annex Table 19.   *Literacy*

	Total	Female	Male	Year
Literate population 15-24 years	84.76	80.21	89.88	2011
Literate population 15 and older	59.63	48.84	71.71	2011
Literate population 65 years and older	20.78	6.03	35.64	2011

Source: UIS statistics (http://uis.unesco.org/en/country/np)

Annex Table 20.   *Education indicators in primary education*

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Primary education										
Gross intake ratio into the first grade of primary (%)										
Total	129.63	151.98	159.52	171.07	158.06	156.86	150.25	149.17	141.72	142.34
Female	131.54	155.51	164.83	178.31	162.77	161.89	154.89	153.82	145.42	144.33
Male	127.86	148.68	154.54	164.29	153.62	152.09	145.8	144.71	138.18	140.44
Survival to the last grade of primary (%)										
Total					55.26	60.36	70.1	76.85	73.55	
Female					55.91	61.89	71.74	78.3	73.41	
Male					54.61	58.83	68.44	75.39	73.69	
Gross intake ratio into the last grade of primary (%)										
Total	79.29				102.13	101.78	103.78	105.37	109.78	112.76
Female	78.56				106.67	106.14	109.01	110.84	115.27	118.14
Male	79.99				97.85	97.67	98.84	100.19	104.55	107.6

Source: UIS statistics

Annex Figure 6. **Grade 1 progression**
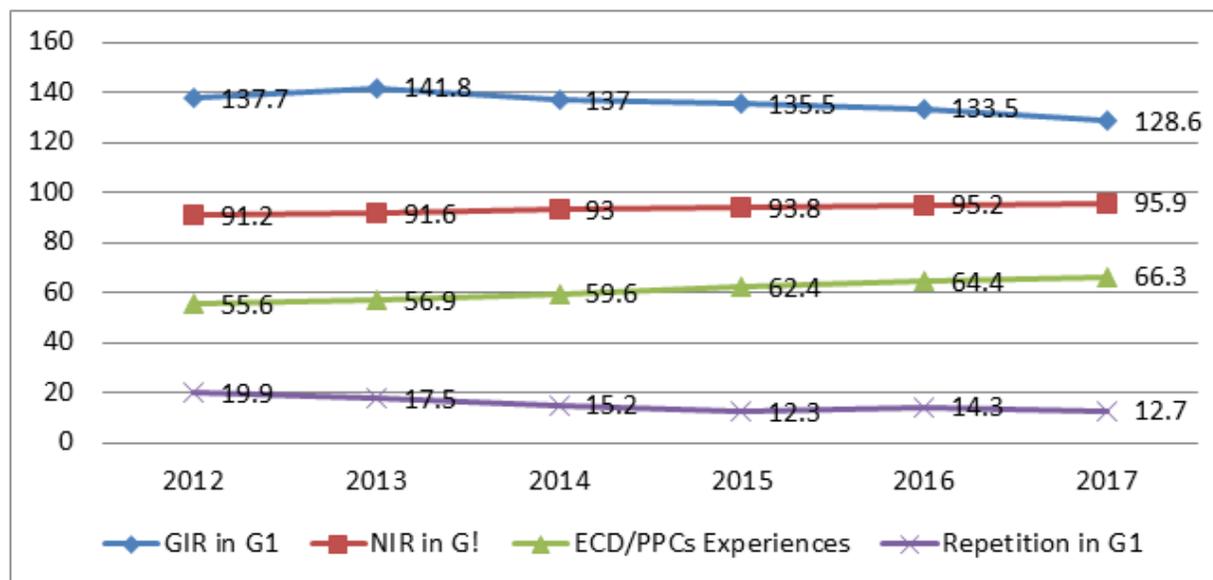
Source: Presentation on Flash II (2016/17) and Consolidated Report and Flash I Report (2017/18) (DoE, 2017a). In the legend, "NIR in G!" is a misprint in the original spreadsheet (which is not available) that was copied to the presentation reproduced here. It should read "NIR in G1".

Annex Figure 7. **Enrolment rates in ECD/PPEs**
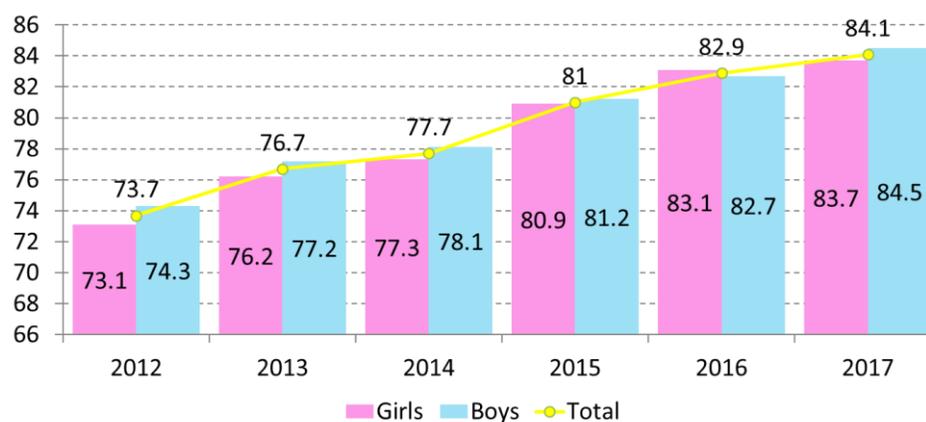
Source: Presentation on Flash II (2016/17) and Consolidated Report and Flash I Report (2017/18). (DoE, 2017a)

Annex Table 21. **Targets of Teacher Professional Development and Management against Indicators**

Indicators		Baseline (2015/16)	Year 1 (2016/17)	Year 5 (2020/21)	Indicator type/DLI
Increased provision of qualified and trained teachers					
% of trained ECED/PPE teachers	T	NA	10.0	65.0	
% of ECED/PPE teachers with required qualification	T	93.7	94.4	97.0	
	M	92.3	92.9	95.6	

Indicators			Baseline (2015/16)	Year 1 (2016/17)	Year 5 (2020/21)	Indicator type/DLI
		F	95.1	95.8	98.5	
No of trained subject teachers for mathematics, science, and English		T	NA		13,500	DLI
No. of schools with complete set of subject teachers (Math, Science and English)	Basic (G 6-8)	T	NA		3,000	DLI
	Secondary	T	NA		1,500	
Certification training for basic teachers	Basic	T	NA	Revised certification training modules for subject teachers in grades 6-8 & 9-12 developed	7,400	
		M	NA		4,764	
		F	NA		1,697	
	Secondary	T	NA		1,500	
		M	NA		1,293	
		F	NA		178	
No. of teachers trained in ICT and e-resources		T	NA	0	1,000	
		M	NA	0	770	
		F	NA	0	230	
% of female teachers	Basic		38.8 %	40	45	
	Secondary		15.1%	16	20	
Strengthened teacher management and accountability						
No of schools with separate fulltime HT positions			-	6,165	6,165	
Teacher rationalization				Rationalization plan for each district and district incentive scheme approved.	All operationally feasible schools have full set of teachers in basic level.	
Number of districts in which teacher performance incentive scheme is rolled out				Teacher incentives scheme approved.	75	

Source: Table 38 in SSDP Status Report 2016-2017 (DoE, 2017b)

Annex Table 22.   Basic education indicators and targets

Indicators		Baseline (2015/16)	Year 1 (2016/17)	Year 5 (2020/21)	Indicator type/DLI
1.1. Improved equitable access to basic education					
GER in ECED/PPE	•	81	82.6	89.4	
	•	81.2	82.8	89.7	
	•	80.9	82.5	89.3	
% of out of school children in basic education	•	10.6	9.6	5.0	DLI 8
	•	10.8	9.3	5.1	

Indicators		Baseline (2015/16)	Year 1 (2016/17)	Year 5 (2020/21)	Indicator type/DLI
	•	10.4	9.0	4.9	
GIR in grade 1	•	136.7	134.7	126.9	
	•	129.8	127.9	120.5	
	•	144.3	142.2	133.9	
NIR in grade 1	•	93.9	100.0	100	
	•	94	100.0	100	
	•	93.9	100.0	100	
NER in grade 1-5	•	96.6	96.9	98.3	
	•	96.9	97.2	98.6	
	•	96.3	96.6	97.9	
NER in grade 1-8	•	89.4	91.0	97.0	
	•	89.2			
	•	89.6			
GER in grade 1-5	•	135.4	134.8	115	
	•	130.2			
	•	140.8			
GER in grade 1-8	•	120.1	120.1	112.0	
	•	116.3			
	•	124.1			
Survival rate to grade 8	•	76.6	79.5	92.0	
	•	75.9	78.7	91.2	
	•	77.4	80.3	93.0	
Basic education cycle completion rate	•	69.6	72.4	85.0	
	•	68.8	71.6	84.1	
	•	70.5	73.4	86.1	
No. of districts with targeted interventions for reducing disparities in learning outcomes	District with targeted interventions	5	10	DLI 8	
No. of children who receive at least one year ECED/PPE learning by age four	•	454,757	473,206	554,799	
	•	233,417	242,887	284,767	
	•	221,340	230,320	270,033	
No. of ECED/PPE centres established		30,448	30,448	32,000	
	•	194,000	204,094	250,000	

Indicators		Baseline (2015/16)	Year 1 (2016/17)	Year 5 (2020/21)	Indicator type/DLI
No. of disadvantaged group children receiving scholarships and other targeted interventions	•	96,806	101,843	124,750	
	•	97,194	102,251	125,250	
No. of districts with targeted scholarship scheme		NA	Targeted scholarship scheme developed		DLI 9
No. of children receiving midday meal	•	648,190	653,115	673,190	
	•	323,447	325,904	335,922	
	•	324,743	327,210	337,268	
No. of integrated schools with resource classes for CwDs		380	380	380	
1.2. Improved quality of basic education					
% of grade 1 new entrants with ECED/PPE experience	T	62.4	64.4	73.0	
	B	62.5	64.5	73.2	
	G	62.3	64.3	72.9	
% of grade 3 students reading grade level text with fluency and comprehension.	T	27.2	29.2	37.2	
Student learning achievement scores (%) in grade 5	T	Maths: 48.0	49.0	56.0	
		Nepali: 46.0	48.5	59.0	
		English: 47.0	50.0	57.0	
Student learning achievement scores (%) in grade 8	T	Maths: 35	39.0	55.0	
		Nepali: 48	51.0	62.0	
		Science: 41	43.5	55.0	
No. of school ECED/PPE meeting minimum standards		-	1,500	8,000	
No. of schools implementing CB-EGRA		0	2,600	3,000	
No. districts in which NEGRP minimum package is defined and implemented				60	DLI 1
Integrated curriculum (Grades 1-3) and textbooks		-	-	-	
No. of basic schools with access to science, maths and language kits		-	Science, maths and language learning kits and teacher guides developed for grades 6-8	10,000	DLI 6
Revision of National Curriculum Framework (NCF)				Revised NCF completed	DLI 2

Source: SSDP Status Report 2016-2017, Table 28, p. 16 (DoE, 2017b)

Annex Table 23. *Year-wise targets for SSDP programme basic education (including ECED/PPE & NFE) programme activities*

Programme activities	Unit	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
ECED/PPE programme activities						
Review and update norms and guidelines	No.	1				
Develop implementation modalities (home, community, institutional and community school-based)	No.	4				
Develop and prepare ECED/PPE learning materials	No.	1				
Print and distribute new ECED/PPE learning materials	Student	667,341	672,159	676,086	679,121	678,860
One month intensive training for ECED/PPE facilitators/ teachers by ETCs	Teacher	3,500	3,500	3,500	3,500	3,500
16 days' refresher training for ECED/PPE facilitators/ teachers	Teacher	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000
Refresher training	Teacher	4,567	4,567	4,567	4,567	4,567
MToT for ECED/PPE facilitators/ teachers	Trainer	200	200	200	200	200
Development of ECED/PPE course (and textbooks and reference materials) as optional subject for grades 9 and 10	No.	1	1			
ECED/PPE materials and book corner costs	Centre	30,448	30,448	30,448	30,448	30,448
Strengthen-ing parental education	Programme	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000
Establish-ment of new centres	No.	0	0	0	1,500	1,500
Conducting ECED/PPE networking and other meetings	No.	480	480	480	480	480
Orientation programmes for local bodies	No.	2,000	2,000			
Strengthen-ed access and equity in basic education programme activities						
Develop-ment and updating of programme packages to implement consolidated equity strategy including Equity Index	No.	1	1	1	1	1
Integrated schooling (resource classes in general schools with facilities for children with disabilities)	Resource centre	365	365	365	365	365
Special schools for audibly impaired children, including operational grants for partner organizations	School	34	34	34	34	34
Targeted programmes to strengthen educational engagement of marginalized groups (Raute, Badi, Mushahar, Chepang and others)	Student	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Scholarships and incentive schemes						

Programme activities	Unit	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Provision of midday meals in targeted districts	Student	340,000	345,000	350,000	355,000	360,000
Review of basic and secondary scholarships	No.	1				
Scholarships for girls	Student	2,750,930	2,783,407	2,813,599	2,820,681	2,832,589
Scholarships for Dalit students	Student	600,000	950,614	961,270	963,770	967,972
Scholarships for Janajati students	Student	128,351	129,917	131,374	131,715	132,290
Scholarships for students with disabilities	Student	80,871	81,858	82,776	82,991	83,353
Programme for free and compulsory basic education						
Enrolment campaign for grade I	District and region	80	80	80	80	80
Out-of-school children enrolment programme	Out-of-school child	60,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000
Identification of out-of-school children, planning and orientation — database preparation plus data collection	District	23	80			
Management costs of gender education network meetings and strengthen-ing	District and region	80	80	80	80	80
Programmes to main-stream traditional and religious schools						
i. Grants to grades 1–5 traditional and religious schools	School	845	845	845	845	845
ii. Grants to grades 1—8 traditional and religious schools	School	29	29	29	29	29
iii. Training for basic level teachers in traditional and religious schools	Teacher	400	400	400	400	400
Mobile schools in remote regions	School	10	10	10	10	10
National early grade reading programme in grades 1–3, including supplement-ary EGRP materials	School	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000
Printing/ procurement of EGRA teaching learning materials	Student	1,900,000	1,900,000	1,900,000	1,900,000	1,900,000
Minimum enabling conditions						
Construction of need-based classrooms and WASH facilities	No.	1	2	10	30	50
Reconstruct-ion and repair of classrooms in earthquake-affected districts, including toilets and WASH facilities	Classroom	7,000	3,000	5,000	8,000	15,000
Post-earthquake reconstruction of school buildings with 4 classrooms	Building block	7,000	7,000	7,000		

Programme activities	Unit	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Post-earthquake minor maintenance and retrofitting	Classroom	6,500	6,500	6,500		
Retrofitting schools	School	150	150	150	150	150
Textbooks						
Grade 1	Set	843,789	826,330	814,367	804,418	795,752
Grade 2	Set	772,831	742,657	731,995	727,545	725,433
Grade 3	Set	699,404	734,106	709,873	700,728	698,258
Grade 4	Set	659,512	670,871	705,812	687,792	681,326
Grade 5	Set	622,707	629,963	641,382	675,170	660,554
Grade 6	Set	606,370	599,415	606,802	618,997	652,740
Grade 7	Set	521,019	578,789	576,233	585,188	599,236
Grade 8	Set	491,878	499,058	553,925	554,439	564,325
Strengthen-ed quality in basic education programme activities						
Formulate competence-based National Qualifications Framework	No.	1				
Equipment support for technology based curricular materials development	No.	1				
Capacity development for activity based curricular materials development	No.	1				
Language, ICT and enterprise skills textbooks preparation	No.	1				
Digitize basic and secondary curricular materials	No.	1	1			
Development of interactive pedagogical materials	No.	1				
Basic level (grade 1-3) learning materials for schools (book corners)	Student	1,698,243	1,703,927	1,703,430	1,695,652	1,661,323
Basic level (grade 6-8) learning materials for schools (book corners)	Student	1,619,267	1,677,263	1,736,960	1,758,624	1,816,301
Grants to schools to strengthen interactive and activity based pedagogical process (ICT support)	School	5,500	5,500			
Interactive pedagogical materials for children with disabilities	School	10	10	30	40	50
Multi-grade school operation costs	School	26	26	26	26	26
Materials support to existing multilingual schools	School	70	70	70	70	70
Management support for newly identified multi-grade schools	School	257	257	257	257	257
Revisit the roles of RCs and resource persons and support for the change	No.	1				
CAS implement-ation	Student	843,789	826,330	814,367	804,418	795,752
Grade 8 examinations	No.	491,878	499,058	553,925	554,439	564,325

Source: SSDP Table 8.1 (MoE, 2016f)

Annex Figure 8.   *Sample districts for NASA 2015*
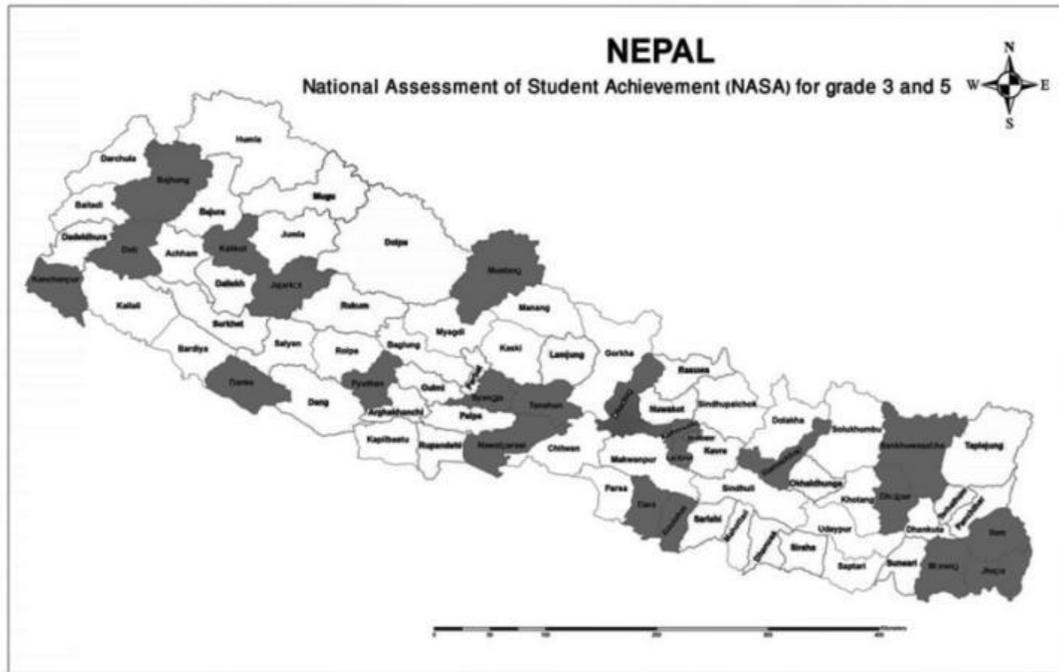
Source: NASA 2015, figure 2.1 (MoE, 2016a)

Annex K   School Sector Development Plan

1.   This annex includes more detailed information about and from the SSDP (2016-2023).

2.   The SSDP encompasses Nepal's school education sector, including non-formal education (NFE). Its three main components are a) basic education, b) secondary education and c) literacy and lifelong learning, with the following objectives:[147]

- **Basic education** aims to develop physical, socio-emotional, cognitive, spiritual, and moral potential for all 4-12-year-old children by ensuring school readiness and universal access to quality basic education and readiness for secondary education, and to promote life skills and value-based education and impart early orientation on the national economy and harmony in socio-cultural diversity.

- **Secondary education** aims to make students ready for the world of work by developing skilled human resources, focus on access to education without compromising quality, provide options and accredited learning pathways between technical and general secondary education, strengthen institutional links and facilitate the transition to higher education.

- **Literacy and lifelong learning** aims to enhance functional literacy and cultivate reading and learning habits among youths and adults.

- **Cross-cutting themes:**
    - **Teacher professional development and management:** ensuring quality and needs-based teacher professional development and performance-based teacher management are some of the main elements in SSDP's ToC.
    - **Governance and Management:** the SSDP will introduce performance-based management and resourcing at school level.
    - **Institutional Capacity Development:** the SSDP envisions enhanced capacities, particularly of VDCs, municipalities, PTAs and SMCs, including related to their responsibilities for monitoring the performance of schools.
    - **Monitoring and Evaluation:** The Ministry of Education (MoE) and its DPs will review the sector's performance in joint annual reviews and a joint mid-term evaluation which will be conducted by an external evaluator.
    - **Examination and Assessment:** the emphasis is on making both formative and summative assessments more skills- and learner-focused rather than content-focused. More time will be spent helping teachers understand the use of formative and summative exams to target their teaching and to thereby improve learning outcomes. For this purpose, there needs to be a greater cohesion of curriculum, textbooks and assessment and a move from the assessment *of* learning to assessment *for* learning.
    - **ICT in Education:** a long-term goal of education in Nepal is to provide citizens with the knowledge and skills they need to work for the development of the country and to integrate Nepal into the global community.
    - **Disaster Risk Reduction and Recovery**: focus is on safe reconstruction, repair and retro-maintenance of schools in earthquake-affected areas and the safe construction

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[147] SSDP, p. vi-vii (MoE, 2016f)

and retrofitting of schools in non-affected areas. Safe schools cover three pillars of the comprehensive school safety framework: 1) safe infrastructure, 2) strengthened disaster risk management, and 3) strengthened resilience in communities and among stakeholders.

o **Health and Nutrition**: the SSDP takes a holistic approach in terms of children's wellbeing as an imperative for learning outcomes. It aims to increase health and nutrition services in schools. All schools should have functional water and sanitation facilities, environmentally sound and user-friendly for children, minimizing drop-outs of adolescent girls. The SSDP also aims to promote healthy behavior through skills-based health education including HIV/AIDS prevention, hygiene and nutrition.

3. The SSDP is seen as an important tool in reaching the Sustainable Development Goals. It specifically aims to achieve the following five objectives.[148]

- *Equity:* to ensure that the education system is inclusive and equitable in terms of access, participation and learning outcomes, with a special focus on reducing disparities among and between groups having the lowest levels of access, participation and learning outcomes.

- *Quality:* to increase students' learning by enhancing the relevance and quality of the learning environment, the curriculum, teaching and learning materials (including textbooks), teaching methods, assessment and examinations.

- *Efficiency:* to strengthen and reorient governance and management systems in the education sector to make them robust and accountable to local governments while assuring agreed overall minimum standards in teaching and learning processes and learning environment.

- *Governance and management:* to accommodate the political and administrative restructuring of the education sector in line with the identified needs and the federal context and to ensure sustainable financing and strong financial management by introducing a cost-sharing modality between central, provincial, and local governments.

- *Resilience:* to mainstream comprehensive school safety and disaster risk reduction in the education sector by strengthening school-level disaster management and resilience amongst schools, students and communities and to ensure that schools are protected from conflict.

4. Annex Table 24 shows the SSDP's key performance indicators.

Annex Table 24.   *SSDP key performance indicators*

Sub sector/thematic area		Baseline (2015/16)	3-year target (to 2018/19)	5-year target (to 2020/21)	7-year target (to 2022/23)
Indicators					
1. Basic education including early childhood education development/pre-primary education (ECED/PPE)					
1.1	Gross enrolment ratio (GER) in ECED/PPE	81	86	89.5	94
1.2	% of ECED/PPE teachers with required qualification	93.7	95.5	97	100
1.3	% of ECED/PPE teachers with one month training	0	30	65	100
1.4	% of grade 1 new entrants with ECED/PPE experience	62.4	68.5	73	85
1.5	Gross intake rate in grade 1	136.7	130.5	127	115

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[148] SSDP, p. v-vi. (MoE, 2016f).

	Sub sector/thematic area	Baseline (2015/16)	3-year target (to 2018/19)	5-year target (to 2020/21)	7-year target (to 2022/23)
	Indicators				
1.6	Net intake rate in grade 1	93.9	9.5	96	100
1.7	GER of basic (grades 1-5)	135.4	130.5	125.5	115
1.8	Net enrolment ratio (NER) in basic education (grades 1-5)	96.6	97.5	98.5	100
1.9	GER of basic education (grades 1-8)	120.1	118	115	112
1.10	NER of basic education (grades 1-8)	89.4	94	97	100
1.11	Gender parity index (GPI) in NER basic education (grades 1-8)	1	1	1	1
1.12	Survival rate for grade 8	76.6	86	92	97
1.13	Completion rate for basic education level	69.6	78.5	85	90
1.14	% of out of school children in basic education (age 5-12)	10.6	7.5	5	0
1.15	Students' reading proficiency (%) in grade 3	12.8	14.1	15.6	17.2
1.61.1	Students' learning achievement scores (%) in grade 5	Maths: 48	52	56	60
1.16.2		English: 47	53	57	60
1.16.3		Nepali: 46	54	59	65
1.17.1	Students' learning achievement scores (%) in grade 8	Maths: 35	48	55	60
1.17.2		Nepali: 48	52	57	62
1.17.3		Science: 41	49	55	60
2. Secondary education					
2.1	GER in grades 9-12	56.7	72	85	90
2.2	NER in grades 9-12	37.7	45	53	60
2.3	Survival rate to grade 10	37.9	50	65	75
2.4	Survival rate to grade 12	11.5	18	25	31
2.5	GPI in NER in grades 9-12	0.99	1	1	1
2.6	Number of model schools	0	340	540	1,000
2.7	Number of students enrolled in technical subjects in grades 9-12	9,750	72,540	102,600	126,600
3. Non-formal education and lifelong learning					
3.1	Literacy rate 6 years+	78	85	87	90
3.2	Literacy rate 15-24 years	88.6	92	95	98
3.3	Literacy 15+ years	57	70	75	80
4. Teacher management and professional development					
4.1	% of female teachers in basic level	38.8	42	45	50
4.2	% of female teachers in secondary level	15.1	18	20	22
5. Sector finance					
5.1	Education sector budget as % of national budget (%)	12.04	15	17	20

Source: Table 2.1, SSDP 2016/17–2022/23 (MoE, 2018b)

Annex Table 25. *SSDP's basic education outcomes, results, interventions, targets and indicators*

Outcome	Results	Major interventions	Physical targets and beneficiaries	Key performance indicators
Improved access and equity	Needs-based distribution of school-based PPE/ECED/PPE	→ Revise guidelines for establishing new ECED/PPE centres and rationalize existing provision based on need and demand → Develop and disseminate ECED/PPE orientation materials and packages for local bodies and parents → Enhance parental awareness and engagement → Need-based rationalization and expansion of school-based ECED/PPE.	→ By age four 3.6 million children receive at least one year ECED/PPE learning → 32,000 school/community-based ECED/PPE centres operational	→ Percentage of grade 1 new entrants with ECED/PPE experience → GER in ECED/PPE
	Reduced disparities in school readiness			
	Enhanced parental awareness and engagement			
	Enabling safe environments and safe schools	→ The need and criteria-based construction of classrooms, other rooms and WASH facilities (based on surveys by DEO technical personnel). → Revised scholarship schemes (targeting and amounts). → Free textbooks. → Midday meals in targeted districts. → Mainstream traditional schools, mobile schools, multi-grade schools and CwDs in special schools/resource classes. → Use the Equity Index to identify the most disadvantaged districts and to mainstream out-of-school children.	→ 38,000 additional safe classrooms established in earthquake-affected districts → 21,000 additional safe schools with at least four rooms established → Maintenance and retrofitting in 19,500 schools	→ Number of schools reconstructed → Number of schools retrofitted
	Universal enrolment at basic level (grade 1-5)		→ 4.8 million 5-year old children enrolled in grade 1	→ Grade 1 gross intake ratio (GIR) and net intake ratio (NIR) → GER and NER for basic education (grades 1-5 and 1-8)
	Increased completion of basic education			→ Survival rate for grade 8
	Reduced geographical and social disparities including for CwDs		→ 365 integrated schools with resource classes for children with disabilities → 620,0009 children receive midday meals annually in target districts and all Karnali districts → 34 special schools and eight residential schools in operation for students with hearing impairments → 10 mobile schools in operation in remote and mountain regions	→ GPI in NER in basic education (grade 1-8) → % of previously out of school children in basic level (age 5-12)

Outcome	Results	Major interventions	Physical targets and beneficiaries	Key performance indicators
	Increased % of out-of-school children (re)enrolled in formal education	→ Implement needs-based NFE programmes. → Provide tailored programme packages for out-of- school children, working youth, adolescents, CwDs. → Strengthen the transition to formal education through the accreditation and equivalence of NFE programmes.	→ 165,000 out of school children receive flexible education programme basic (1-5 and 6-8 grade equivalent), secondary level equivalent	→ Qualification framework for lifelong and non-formal education is prepared
Increased school readiness upon enrolment in grade 1	Improved quality of PPE /ECED Availability of qualified and trained ECED/PPE teachers	→ Development of minimum standards for ECED/PPE programme. → Provision of qualified and trained ECED/PPE facilitators/teachers. → Appoint teachers to ECED/PPE centres (as vacancies arise), and where needed appoint assistant teachers to match languages of students → Increase number of teachers who have completed the month-long training including on Nepali and mother tongue language skills. → Availability of ECED/PPE teaching-learning materials	→ 32,000 ECED/PPE facilitators/teachers' positions filled with trained personnel → 1,400 master training of trainers (MToT) courses run on basic training for ECED/PPE teachers → All 32,000 ECED/PPE facilitators/teachers receive ECED/PPE refresher training	→ Number of ECED/PPE teachers with required qualifications → Number of ECED/PPE teachers with one months' training
Improved teaching-learning and equitable student learning outcomes	Improved minimum enabling conditions for learning Improved curriculum (including assessment framework), textbooks and learning materials Enhanced early grade reading skills	→ Deploy and redeploy teachers based on revised norms. → Develop integrated curriculum and textbooks for early grades and revise the curriculum (including reduced subject loads in basic and secondary covering ICT, languages, Comprehensive Sex Education (CSE) and soft skills). → Phase wise implementation of the NEGRP rolled out nationally, including EGR materials development & distribution, and classroom based EGRA. → Approve and implement the Strategic Framework for Languages in Education (see Annex 4). → Provide professional development in early grade reading instruction and assessment for grade 1-3 teachers. → Develop the National Curriculum Framework (NCF),	→ 7.5 million children annually have access to a full set of textbooks and supplementary reading materials → Early Grade Reading Programme is implemented nationally → 29,000 schools have library corners and supplementary reading material in grades 1-3 → 25,000 schools implement classroom-based EGRA → 56,000 basic level (grade 1-5) teachers trained in EGR	→ Number of grade 1-3 teachers who receive training in early grade reading instruction and assessment → % of grade 3 students reading grade level texts with fluency and comprehension

Outcome	Results	Major interventions	Physical targets and beneficiaries	Key performance indicators
	Improved curriculum, textbook and learning materials	and revise the curriculum, textbooks and materials. → Revise grade 1-3 textbooks and curriculum. → Train teachers on teaching the soft skills component. → Develop standardized test items for grades 3, 5 and 8 exams and standardized exams at end of grade 8 → Carry out NASA in grades 5 and 8 → Revise and develop additional teacher professional development packages (on EGR, Nepali as second language and medium of instruction, mother tongue based multi-lingual education (MTB-MLE), interactive English, ICT, soft skills, maths and science kits, CAS and remedial education). → Implement targeted programme to improve acquisition of English by students including use of interactive methods and equipment. → Develop and distribute e-learning resources and videos.	→ Free textbooks provided to 6.1 million students in basic education annually → 11,245 basic schools supported with science and maths kits	→ % of students in basic education who receive full set of textbooks on time
	Improved student assessment and examination system			→ Students' learning achievement → (NASA) scores (%) in grade 5 and 8 in maths, English and Nepali
	Improved teacher attendance and performance		→ 48,000 basic teachers provided with one month certification training	
	Schools teaching languages and in languages appropriate for their student populations			

Source: SSDP 2016-2023, table 4.1 (MoE, 2016f)

Annex L   Findings of Previous Evaluations

1.   Evaluation reports consulted include the following (some of which have already been referenced and referred to throughout the main narrative report):

- Formative Evaluation of the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative – Nepal Report (UNGEI, 2012)
- National Assessment of Student Achievement (NASA) 2012 (Grade 3 and 5) (MoE, 2015a)
- National Assessment of Student Achievement 2013 (grade 8: Nepali, Mathematics and Science) (MoE, 2015b)
- EGRA findings Nepal 2014 (EGRA, 2014, RTI, 2014a, RTI, 2014b)
- National Assessment of Student Achievement (NASA) 2015 (Grade 3 and 5) (MoE, 2016a)
- Evaluation of Norwegian Multilateral Support to Basic Education: Nepal Case Study 2015 (USC, 2015)
- Nepal Portfolio Performance Review (NPPR) 2015 Implementation for Results – Agriculture, Education, Energy, Local Governance, Transport (MoF, 2015)
- Joint Evaluation of Nepal's School Sector Reform Plan Programme 2009-16 – March 2016 (Poyck et al., 2017)
- School Sector Development Programme. Thematic option papers and analysis 2016 (MoE, 2016e)
- Appraisal of SSDP 2016 (Juho Uusihakala Consulting, 2016) (see ¶41ff below)
- Nepal Education Sector Analysis – January 2017 (NIRT, 2017)
- Evaluation of Danish-Nepalese Development Cooperation 1991-2016 – Contribution to Education – September 2017 (FCG, 2017)

School Sector Development Programme. Thematic option papers and analysis 2016 (MoE, 2016e)

2.   The executive summary from the final report (MoE, 2016e) is reproduced here below.

3.   The School Sector Reform Plan (SSRP) implemented in Nepal since 2009 aims to expand access and equity, improve quality and relevance, and strengthen the institutional capacity of the entire school system. Funded through a pool of Development Partners (DPs)1 together with the Government of Nepal (GoN) and the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), the SSRP programme has tackled long-lasting challenges in the field of education in Nepal.

4.   The programme was developed within the framework of wider poverty concerns and has been aligned to poverty reduction strategies, both nationally and internationally. As such, the SSRP objectives are relevant to the development plans, and reflect the Education For All (EFA) goals and the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). The SSRP programme is expected to end in July 2016 and the key implementing actor is the Ministry of Education (MoE), using a Sector Wide Approach (SWAp).

5.   The evaluation at hand presents an independent assessment of the achievements, strengths and weaknesses of the different components of the programme, against the SSRP result framework. The methodology used is based on the OECD Development Assistance Committee evaluation criteria, namely relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. These criteria were used to assess the scope of action against the declared objectives. The SSRP key performance indicators (KPI) also served as a reference point. Next to reviewing relevant publications - selective study reports, aid memoires, visit reports, as well as audit and monitoring reports - field visits and interviews with key stakeholders and civil society organisations were conducted.

6.   The declared objectives of the SSRP are the following:
   -   Ensure equitable access of quality basic education for all children (aged 5-12 years);
   -   Expand access to Early Childhood Education and Development (ECED) services for children of 4 years to facilitate their holistic development and to prepare them for basic education;
   -   Enhance functional literacy and competencies among young people and adults;
   -   Increase access to, as well as equity, quality and relevance of secondary education;
   -   Equip secondary level students with soft skills based technical and vocational education;
   -   Improve the performance of the MoE service delivery system and develop capacity to implement critical reforms;
   -   Enhance teacher qualifications and professional competencies to facilitate student learning;
   -   Monitor programme inputs, processes, and outputs and evaluate the impact of education interventions;
   -   Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of aid available for the SSRP.

7.   **Relevance**. With regard to relevance, the analysis revealed that the SSRP helped address existing disparities linked to caste, ethnicity, religion and geography, but also helped avert potential conflicts and political divisions. This is explained through the programme's commitment to equity; one of the most prominent aspects of the SSRP. General awareness about the importance of education has increased during the SSRP period, which in turn has increased overall expectations. The planned budget of USD 4.4 billion for the SSRP gives an indication of the political relevance of the programme.

8.   Most strategies aimed at improving access proved to be adequate. Implementation, especially at local level, still shows substantial problems, mostly due to lacking management capacity. Additional efforts on capacity building and management are required to secure a lasting impact.

9.   One of the most important innovations of the SSRP is the restructuration of the basic education which now comprises grade 1 to 8. The longer basic education cycle also helps incorporate literacy and lifelong learning programmes in District Education Plans (DEP) and Village Education Plans (VEP) through Community Learning Centres (CLC).

10.   Recommendations linked to relevance mostly address the need to secure and adopt the 8th Amendment of the Education Act, while continuing to align the programme strategies to the changing development plans. Enhancing the dialogue between central level actors and local governance structures will help increase accountability.

11.   **Effectiveness**. The evaluation found that access and equity have increased in most levels of education, notably in ECED, primary, basic, secondary and non-formal education. Gender parity for students has been reached in primary, basic and secondary education. The percentage of female teachers decreases in the higher levels of education.

12.   Though access has increased across the board, disparities still exist. This is especially true for certain geographical areas, children with disabilities and children from specific castes or ethnic groups. Learning outcomes and student-teacher ratio have improved considerably, though there again, large disparities persist.

13.   A set of minimum enabling conditions have been designed to provide school communities with a benchmark for their operational planning. Being often too complex, they have later been reduced to 5 prioritised minimum enabling conditions.

14.   Specific projects undertaken to strengthen specific components/areas of the SSRP have had varying effects on outcome variables:

- **The Early Grade Reading Programme has potential to reduce drop-out rates.** This programme helped provide input in the curriculum development and in the elaboration of learning material for the first years of primary education, which in turn helped secure better learning outcomes and success in higher education levels.
- **Programmes fostering mother tongue education have not yet shown impact on learning outcomes.** As such and given the recognised potential of mother tongue education in multilingual countries, additional efforts in advocacy campaigns will be necessary to raise awareness among educational stakeholders and communities.
- **Non-formal education and literacy programmes have been successful and have produced high numbers of neo-literates.** These neo-literates now need supporting actions and material to avoid falling back into illiteracy. In parallel, special programmes need to be design and implemented for hard to reach groups not enrolled in school. The study found that the quality and scale of alternative non-formal education strongly varies between districts and depends on the implementing body or NGO.

15.   Next to questions related to access and equity, quality of education is another complex field. Although teacher trainings in content and method were provided under SSRP, new learning methods have not been transferred to the classrooms. Additionally to teacher training, competency-based curricula were developed and soft skills programmes were piloted. The didactical material produced by different projects still has to be documented and categorised in view of its integration into the curricula and its large-scale distribution.

16.   The timely distribution of textbooks also has a direct impact on learning achievements. To reduce delays in textbook distribution, the production process was decentralised and private companies were involved. Delays have been partially reduced, the inclusion of timely delivery of textbooks as a performance indicator of the SSRP is a positive development but tracking mechanisms to allow addressing remaining problems in the delivery need further strengthening.

17.   Relevant assessment programmes are essential to the quality development. The SSRP introduced the national assessment for student achievements (NASA) under the Education Review Office (ERO), to provide data on learning outcomes, repetition rates and drop-outs. While it did lead to important discussions on the weak impact of teacher trainings and measures for quality improvement, the District Education Offices (DEO) and the Regional Education Directorates only recently started follow-up actions.

18.   The formative evaluation instrument, on the other hand, is not yet fully understood by stakeholders, which has compromised its implementation. This approach known as the continuous assessment system (CAS) intends to replace summative evaluations by a formative evaluation approach, but the current educational environment lacks the required capacity to run such a complex approach.

19.   With regard to capacity building and governance, the evaluation found that weak teacher development and lack of intrinsic motivation due to the low social value of the teacher profession has led to high absenteeism, low performance and strong political interference. The national shortage of teachers is not addressed properly, partly due to the institutional division of labour. A proposed strategy for effectively responding to the problem is decentralising the recruitment process for temporary teachers away from the Teacher Service Commission. Currently, while schools follow rules and regulations closely, recruitment at local level is still met by substantial problems, including political interference.

20.   Supervision is quite weak within the school management system, not only in terms of the low frequency of the resource persons' (RP) school visits, but also due to the lack of pedagogical advice given to teachers. SSRP introduced decentralised planning strategies which enabled the local

stakeholders to prepare plans for the individual schools. These strategies have been useful in bringing local education stakeholders together for planning and monitoring, however, they did not succeed in linking funding to content. The introduction of School Management Committees and Parents Teacher Associations at local level, as well as the creation of the Education Policy Committee (EPC) and the ERO at central level were innovations for Nepal. In practice however, the new institutional setting still faces challenges in its implementation.

21.   Finally, the earth-quake of March/April 2015 brought new challenges, as teachers now have to teach several grades in one classroom in an environment that is still affected by infrastructural damage. Furthermore, the psychological consequences also play a role, with the disaster creating post-traumata situations in the classroom.

22.   Recommendations to increase effectiveness of the SSRP are related to transparency, tracking mechanisms, and performance-monitoring aspects. The focus away from access to equity and quality is recommended to reach better learning outcomes.

23.   **Efficiency.** Education has become a priority sector for the GoN, for which investments have steady increased. It represents around 14 percent of the government budget and public investments in education have increased from 2.9 percent of GDP in 1999 to 4.2 percent in 2014. DPs' funding share has decreased from 22 percent to 13 percent in that period.

24.   Since the SSRP was launched, public financial management (PFM) has been considered as one of the priority areas for improvement. As such, a number of measures to mitigate fiduciary risks have been taken and initiated, namely the review of the financial management improvement action plan, the fund flow tracking mechanism, the teacher development plan, the database of student and school facilities, as well as the transfer of teacher salaries to their bank accounts. These measures helped reduce ineligible expenses, such as double payment of salaries and incorrect per capital funding to schools.

25.   Unfortunately, financial record keeping has not yet been computerised across the board and this hampers the quality and timeliness of financial reports at both central and district level. However, the financial management information system (FMIS) is being developed since 2014/15 for the central level and is now continuously updated.

26.   Social audit processes have become more of a ritual rather than a true monitoring exercise and the fact that budget is being channelled through the Department of Education (DoE) has shown repercussions on the smooth implementation. Adjustments are required for a more equitable resource allocation. Schools in remote rural areas such as in the Terai generally lack sufficient funds because funding is still based on enrolment rates rather than needs. This has repercussions on teacher quotas and infrastructural facilities.

27.   The educational management information system (EMIS), especially the Flash System, has continued to improve in terms of quantity, quality and timeliness. It provides reliable and open data and has contributed to accessing information on the progress of SSRP objectives. The development of an equity index2 will provide additional information on disparities in access across districts. The NASA undertaking is the first step in the institutionalisation of a system for ongoing and disaggregated monitoring of learning achievements at different stages, across different geographic areas and along school types. NASA will allow improved targeting of resources and a more effective performance management.

28.   Recommendations for efficiency are mostly systemic, concerning, for example, the databases, the institutionalised planning processes, the education budget and its management. Simplified, harmonised and systematic financial reporting will help increase financial accountability and transparency.

29. **Impact.** In spite of good results in access and equity, the poor quality of education still produces school-leavers who have not acquired the necessary competencies to improve their economic situation. While key performance indicators show considerable progress, unless the necessary investments are made in the quality of teaching and learning, lasting impacts on learning outcomes will not be visible. Focus should be put on equity rather than access only, so that disadvantage groups and children with disabilities are more systematically included.

30. In the field of quality and relevance, actions such as the timely distribution of textbooks, the implementation of minimum enabling conditions, as well as the NASA and CAS evaluations showed considerable immediate effects. These effects have however not yet materialised in overall improved teaching and learning quality.

31. Innovative procedures and organisational set-ups have been created to increase the good governance and capacity building of institutions. However, the processes do not always work well and closer coordination with local institutions and actors is needed. At local level, an operational dialogue between governance structures and educational institutions has to be fostered, with a special attention to include religious and ethnic institutions. While school management committees and parent teacher associations have raised local power in decision-making, their impact on student achievement is not yet visible.

32. Recommendations for ensuring a higher impact concern decision-making structures and responsibilities, so as to make changes and programmes more accountable to all. Improving equity and quality management through defined strategies over longer periods of time can enhance long-term impacts.

33. **Sustainability.** The GoN progressively took over more of the funding responsibilities, but it will not be able to take over the whole funding of the SSRP once donors have withdrawn. The government will not be able to ensure free and compulsory basic education for all. Scholarships and the annual textbook distribution in a blanket approach are not financially sustainable. Next to current funding responsibilities, additional funding is still needed to guarantee some of SSRP's objectives. For instance, more investments are required to reach out to out-of-school children and pupils with disabilities, as well as to extend ECED to geographically and socially marginalised groups. Investments in teacher training, material and infrastructure are also required to increase the quality of education.

34. Although central level structures and procedures have the potential to become sustainable, there is a considerable risk of institutional memory disappearing with the transfer of personnel. The 8th Amendment of the Education Act intends to address some of these risks by backing up many of the institutional changes. It is recommended to compensate any delays in the act's adoption by formal agreements between the MoE and the concerned institutions to grant the necessary authority and independence.

35. The NASA has a high potential for social sustainability, as it triggers important analysis about learning outcomes, whereas the CAS does not show potential for sustainability, as its implementation is heavily compromised. A more systematic NASA follow-up programme to all schools in the country would be recommendable. To become sustainable, the CAS would require strong linkage with school level planning, capacity development and practical material. The CAS approach also requires a low teacher-student ratio, which is unlikely to be reached within the next years.

36. The community's involvement has been a key approach to ensure sustainability. The new local structures have helped make SSRP activities more visible to the community and create greater acceptance. The basis for local ownership is the school improvement plan (SIP), an instrument that links planning and budgeting to funding. In practice, real ownership is still weak, partly due to the fact that teachers and their unions are politicised. This may jeopardise the socio-cultural sustainability of SSRP initiatives and undermine discussions on real needs of communities.

37.   The golden handshake programme for the temporary teachers has the potential to respond effectively to the lack of teachers. The success of this intervention however depends on the recruitment process at local level, whether it is well managed by DEO and whether political interferences in the decision-making processes are minimised.

38.   Producing didactical material is essential to ensure longevity of projects' impact. The national early grade reading programme, for instance, developed a classroom based early grade reading assessment tool which is based on defined reading skills. Prepared formats for monitoring and evaluation or formats for planning have proven to be helpful in implementation.

39.   The major factors which influence the achievement of sustainability seem to be the lack of institutional and individual capacity to ensure the 5 prioritised minimum enabling conditions. The earthquake demonstrated that there is a strong and urgent need for safe and disaster-resilient school construction and school retrofitting, combined with disaster risk reduction measures. Many community ECED centres and primary schools have been destroyed.

40.   Recommendations related to sustainability focus on institutional capacity building and memory, as well as on the continuous assessment of needs and relevance of programmes. Reaching out to excluded groups, and ensuring local ownership will increase sustainability of the SSRP.

Appraisal of SSDP 2016 (Juho Uusihakala Consulting, 2016)

41.   A 2016 appraisal of the SSDP found that "despite remarkable progress in many areas, especially in access to education, quality education for all is still an unfinished agenda in Nepal".[149] The implementation of a new federal government structure and delays in passing the Education (Ninth Amendment) Act were expected to have a major impact on education sector responsibilities and therefore the implementation of the SSDP. In the meantime, the Education (Ninth Amendment) Act was passed in August 2017, and elections took place in November 2017. The new federal government restructuring is currently under way.

42.   However, despite these changes the appraisal notes the following main ongoing challenges:[150]

- **Quality of basic education:** National Assessments of Student Achievement (NASA) revealed disappointing learning outcomes. Despite increased access to ECED, early grade reading and math competencies are still low, which is later reflected in low learning outcomes at higher grades. There is a need to ensure improved quality of inputs in terms of 1) teachers, 2) teacher-learning resources, and 3) the enabling education environment. Teachers' management and distribution are yet to be rationalized, to help ensure required teaching-learning days. There is also a need to revamp teachers' professional development to improve their subject knowledge and pedagogical practices. Most schools do not meet the priority minimum enabling conditions (PMECs) of: 1) student-teacher ratio; 2) classroom space; 3) set of textbooks per child per year; 4) separate girls' and boys' toilets plus water; and 5) book/learning corner in all classrooms.

- **Quality of secondary education:** The system focuses on memorization and knowledge recall in preparation for board exams that are not standardized and are subject to irregular evaluation with very high failure rates. There is a great need to nurture more critical thinking, analysis and creativity skills. There is a need for more teachers with better subject knowledge in mathematics, science and English. The quality and consistency of textbooks needs to be improved and they need to be available on time.

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[149] Appraisal of SSDP, p. 4 (Juho Uusihakala Consulting, 2016)

[150] Appraisal of SSDP, p. 5-6 (Juho Uusihakala Consulting, 2016)

- **Equity and Access:** Nepal is a very diverse country with diverse learning needs, challenges in access and in the appropriateness of content. The remarkable overall progress has resulted in increasing disparity between the disadvantaged and marginalized communities and the rest of the school-aged population. There is a large and persistent number of out-of-school children facing multi-dimensional barriers requiring targeted programs. Low enrolment at secondary level continues to be a problem. A strong correlation between household economic status and participation in schooling and learning outcomes at secondary and higher secondary levels has been documented. Karnali Zone and Central Terai have been identified as pockets of marginalized communities in terms of learning outcomes.

- **Efficiency:** Enforcement of government rules and regulations continues to be slow and the envisioned reforms in the institutional structure of the education system are not fully accomplished. School Management Committees (SMCs) have yet to institutionalize their role in needs-based planning and quality assurance of education. High dropout rates especially in grades 1 and 8 reduce internal efficiency. External efficiency (socioeconomic rates of return on education) continues to be low as opportunities for translating educational achievements into employment opportunities remain low, and the biggest employment opportunity is for unskilled workers abroad. Frequent changes of civil servants and duty bearers remain one of the main efficiency challenges.

- **Governance and Accountability:** Late release of funds, ineligible expenditure, reporting delays and lapses in financial record keeping by schools persist. Social and financial audits have been conducted but they have not led to the desired improvement in schools' financial management. The quality, accessibility and use of the Education Management Information System (EMIS) need to be strengthened to prevent inclusion of inflated student numbers. The availability of textbooks remains a key issue in terms of timely printing and distribution. The position of head teachers needs to be addressed as does their role in teacher performance evaluations and authority to take action against teachers. Effective implementation of school improvement plans (SIPs) is missing along with mechanisms for allocating district budgets to schools according to these plans.

- **Financing:** The number of children in basic education is decreasing and more children are moving to secondary education. Reduced pressure on enrolments should allow more expenditure per pupil. SSDP aims to ensure standardized minimum quality standards nationally while allowing flexible approaches to cater to diverse context and needs.

Annex M   Nepal Stakeholder Analysis

1.   The stakeholder analysis below (Annex Table 26) is for the prospective evaluation of GPE's work in Nepal. The table illustrates which stakeholders are active in the education role, whether or not they have a role vis-à-vis GPE, to what extent they should be rated as important with regard to this evaluation. The table also provides additional information on their involvement in the sector. Nepal is currently going through a major restructuring of its administrative systems and working out a transition process.[151] Changes are therefore expected.

Annex Table 26.   Stakeholder analysis

Stakeholder	Role in the education sector Role vis-à-vis GPE	Implications for the evaluation (Importance/Influence/Interest)
Country-level stakeholder analysis[152]		
Central government		
Ministry of Education • National Centre for Educational Development (NCED) • Non-Formal Education Center (NFEC) • Curriculum Development Center (CDC) • Higher Secondary Education Board (HSEB) • Office of the Controller of Examinations (OCE) • Education Policy Committee (EPC) • SSDP Thematic Working Group Coordinators • Foreign Coordination Section (FCS) • Human Resource Development Section (HRDS)	The Ministry of Education (MoE) was established in 1951, was renamed as the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) in 2002. It was again renamed as Ministry of Education with the decision of Cabinet in 15 Bhadra 2065 BS. The MoE as the apex body of all educational organizations is responsible for overall development of education in the country. This Ministry is responsible for formulating educational policies and plans and managing and implementing them across the country through the institutions under it. The Central Level Agencies (CLAs) under the Ministry are responsible for designing and implementing of programmes and monitoring them. Five Regional Education Directorates (REDs) are responsible for monitoring the programmes undertaken by the district level organizations. Chairs the Local Education Group. Main partner for GPE grant design and implementation.	Key informants. Will be interviewed in person during country visits. **Importance**: High. **Influence**: High. **Interest**: High

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[151] Transitional Arrangements for Implementation of SSDP in Federal Setup 2018-19 - zero draft 2018 (MoE, 2018a)

[152] The global level stakeholder analysis is identical across country case studies (Inception Report for this work, UNICEF et al., 2016) and does not need to be repeated in this table.

Stakeholder	Role in the education sector Role vis-à-vis GPE	Implications for the evaluation (Importance/Influence/Interest)
	Responsible for shaping and implementing education sector policy and managing related financing. Responsible for implementation of the School Sector Development Plan. Has a particular interest in issues related to capacity development as the direct institutional beneficiary NCED: responsible for teacher and administrative staff training NFEC: responsible for non-formation education programmes CDC: responsible for curriculum development HSEB: curriculum development, examinations, standard setting and monitoring of higher secondary programmes FCS – coordinates all DPS OCE: administration of SLC examinations	
Ministry of Finance Financial Controller General's Office (FCGO)	Responsible for budget allocations to the education sector and key informants for questions on additionality of GPE funding. Important for donor harmonization and use of mechanisms such as pooled funding. The MOF and the FCGO: responsible for the financial management of pooled government and donor funds. The FCGO provides access to its Financial Management Information System (FMIS) to the DOE for production of timely financial reports.	Key informants. **Importance**: High. **Influence**: High. **Interest**: High
Other Line Ministries involved in, or relevant for (basic) education, equity and equality issues: National Planning Commission Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development		Informants. Will be interviewed during country visits if consultation is advised by Ministry of Education, other LEG members and/or grant agent.

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Stakeholder	Role in the education sector Role vis-à-vis GPE	Implications for the evaluation (Importance/Influence/Interest)
Decentralised administration		
Local authorities (primarily rural and urban municipalities)	Under the new federal constitution of Nepal, the districts that previously had important responsibilities in the education sector have been replaced by a total of 753 local authorities, taking over those responsibilities. This is a time of massive institutional transformation in Nepal, affecting the education sector at least as much as other sectors. The first annual report will provide further discussion of this important issue.	Increasingly important under the new federal dispensation. A key task for this PE will be to track the progress of local authorities in taking on their new responsibilities in the education sector.
Resource Centres (RCs)	Main implementing agencies of the educational policies, plans and programmes at local level.	The PE should check on the continuing significance, or otherwise, of these structures.
School Management Committees	Responsibilities: (a) preparation of the budget financed through government grants and school income, and its approval and execution; (b) resource generation including income generation activities; (c) teacher management including hiring of teachers; (d) scholarship distribution; (e) planning and execution of academic calendar; (f) conducting school examinations; and (g) periodic reporting to parents' assembly. Developmental activities, among others, include: (i) school improvement planning, maintenance and rehabilitation of school infrastructure and construction of new infrastructure; (ii) addition of higher grades; and (iii) teachers' training. The school management committee reports to the parents' assembly.	Significant as a key instrument for parent/community influence in the education sector.
Education administrators at school or municipality level	While education administrators play an important role for ensuring that education sector policy is implemented on the ground, individual administrators have low influence on the overall performance of GPE support in a particular country, but are also important informants who can provide evaluators with a 'reality check' on whether and how policy change supported by GPE has affected practice.	Not highest significance, but their evolving roles should be tracked as the new federal dispensation is developed.

Stakeholder	Role in the education sector Role vis-à-vis GPE	Implications for the evaluation (Importance/Influence/Interest)
Other national stakeholders		
Non-governmental organizations: • Association of International NGOs in Nepal • National Campaign for Education Nepal (NCE-N) • National Federation of Disabled People in Nepal (NFDN)	NCE is a member of the LEG. NGOs are key stakeholders within the GPE operational model.	Significant to track the quality and comprehensiveness of these bodies' roles in education sector dialogues and, specifically, in the LEDPG – particularly in light of views in some quarters that civil society's engagement is constrained.
Local Education Group: SWAp	Chaired by UNICEF Includes: DPs: • Finland, Norway, JICA, Australia, USAID, World Bank, Asian Development Bank, UNICEF, European Delegation to Nepal, WFP, UNESCO, DFID, British Council, KOICA, Association of International Non-Governmental Organisations in Nepal (AIN) Government Representatives: • Ministry of Education Joint Secretary for Planning Division • Head of Foreign Coordination Section, Ministry of Education Responsible for leading, coordinating and guiding education sector programmes, initiatives and reforms Also acts as interface between national and provincial Government, DPs, and CSOs.	Key informants. **Importance**: High. **Influence**: High. **Interest**: High

Stakeholder	Role in the education sector Role vis-à-vis GPE	Implications for the evaluation (Importance/Influence/Interest)
Teacher Association Federation National Parent and Student Association Teacher organizations, Educational Institutions in country (e.g., textbook producers, teacher training institutions)	Should be part of the LEG, or at least otherwise engaged in sector dialogue processes. Key stakeholder group in view of ensuring quality instruction to facilitate learning outcomes.	Informants. Will be interviewed during country visits if/as feasible and relevant. If not represented on the LEG, the evaluation team will elicit suggestions from the DCP government, grant agent and (other) LEG members on what organizations/institutions and related individuals to consult with.
Private sector representatives PAPSON		Informants will be interviewed during country visits if represented on the LEG. If not members of the LEG, the evaluation team will elicit suggestions from the DCP government, grant agent and (other) LEG members to identify private sector representatives positioned and willing to be consulted.
Philanthropic Foundations	Depending on the nature and extent of their financial and non-financial support to the education sector, and their global standing and related influence.	Informants. Will be interviewed during country visits if so suggested by the Secretariat and/or LEG members and DCP government.
Education Sector stakeholders (local/school level)		
School Heads	Play a key role in any improvement in school governance and reforms to collection and management of school fees. Privileged position over schools and have a key relationship with sub-provincial Ministry staff. Linked to parents and teachers through School Management Committees (SMC).	Not high significance, but will be consulted during school visits.
Teachers	Community level stakeholders provide valuable insights on how policy changes have improved teaching and learning, and have positively affected the lives of specific individuals. At the same time, it is difficult to directly attribute individual cases to GPE support. Furthermore, conducting school visits may run the risk of implying that the country evaluations aim at assessing how well the respective country is	Teachers and education administrators will be consulted during school visits, only if the Secretariat country leads, DCP government, grant agent and coordinating agency deem this relevant for understanding and assessing GPE contributions in the respective country.

Stakeholder	Role in the education sector Role vis-à-vis GPE	Implications for the evaluation (Importance/Influence/Interest)
	implementing education sector reforms, rather than focusing on the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of GPE support. Individual teachers at the community level have low influence on the overall performance of GPE support; however, teachers as a group are key for ensuring quality instruction to facilitate learning outcomes, hence they are important informants who can provide evaluators with a 'reality check' on whether and how policy change supported by GPE has affected practice.	
Students	Students are the ultimate beneficiaries of the GPE programme.	Their views are important, however, since the scope of the evaluation does not allow time for interviews, their views will be collected through secondary sources.
Other Key Education Sector Stakeholders (national level)		
World Bank, **Grant Agent**	Key in ensuring that the GPE grants are appropriately managed and fully aligned with broader education sector developments and add value to the country level processes and results.	Key informants at country level. Will be interviewed in person during country visits. **Importance**: High **Influence**: High **Interest**: High
UNICEF, **Coordinating Agency**	Through its facilitating role, the Coordinating Agency plays a key role in ensuring harmonized support for development effectiveness, as well as mutual accountability and transparency across the partnership.	Key informants at country level. Will be interviewed in person during country visits. **Importance**: High **Influence**: High **Interest**: High
Other Development Partners: • Finland • Norway • JICA • Australia • USAID • World Bank • Asian Development Bank • European Delegation to Nepal	Participation and contributions to the LEG and to GPE grant implementation and monitoring, as well as through other development partner activities in the education sector and degree to which these are harmonized with the Education Sector Plan and implementation activities funded through the ESPIG. Donors have an interest in knowing whether their funds have been spent efficiently and whether the GPE programme has been effective and has	Will be interviewed in person during country visits. If deemed relevant to assess the notion of additionality of GPE funding in a particular country, additional telephone consultations may be held with development partner representatives at HQ level.

Stakeholder	Role in the education sector Role vis-à-vis GPE	Implications for the evaluation (Importance/Influence/Interest)
• WFP • UNESCO • Association of International Non-Governmental Organisations in Nepal (AIN) • NCE-N	contributed to their strategies. They also have a specific interest in ensuring that operational performance reflects their standards and accountability requirements, as well as an interest to inform changes in project strategy, the results framework and critical assumptions.	

Annex N   Evaluation Team Composition & Roles

1.   Annex Table 27 describes the Mokoro team that has been conducting the evaluation, and specifies team members' different roles and responsibilities.

Annex Table 27.   *Roles and Responsibilities*

| NAME	ROLE	RELATED RESPONSIBILITIES
Dr. Stephen Turner	Country-level evaluation team leader	• Leads and conducts the Nepal prospective evaluation, including preparation, data collection (home-based and in the field), data analysis, and reporting. • Contributes to the annual Synthesis Reports and final report, and to the presentation and dissemination of findings and recommendations as required. • Provides quality assurance to reports drafted by other senior consultants. • Provides input on subject matter expertise as required throughout the mandate.
Yadab Chapagain	National consultant	• Supports the country evaluation team leader in the preparation and conduct of the Nepal prospective evaluation baseline, including data collection in country, analysis, reporting, and dissemination of findings and recommendations among key stakeholders. • Contributes to leveraging national capacities.
Christine Fenning	Researcher & Evaluator	• Supports the country evaluation team leader throughout the evaluation period as required. • Supports the implementation of this prospective country-level evaluation, including preparation, data collection, data analysis, and reporting. • Contributes to the baseline, annual and final reports. • Provides technical support as required throughout the mandate. • Contribute to the annual Synthesis Reports and final report, and to the presentation and dissemination of findings and recommendations as required.
Stephen Lister	Mokoro Coordinator, Senior Consultant, Quality Support	• Main Mokoro liaison with the Team Leader, Deputy Team Leader and Itad Coordinator. Responsible for the contractual relationship, management and implementation with consortium partners throughout the assignment. • Responsible for coordinating the work of Mokoro consultants throughout the assignment. • Conducts prospective evaluations. Contributes to the annual Synthesis Reports and final Synthesis Report as required and participates in the presentation and dissemination of findings as required. • Provides advice on the methodological approach during inception phase • Reviews deliverables before their submission, and advises on the relevance, credibility and practicality of the evaluation's approach and of its findings, conclusions and recommendations.
Philip Lister	Editor	• Mokoro's report editor provides proofreading, editing, and formatting attention to draft and final deliverables.

Annex O   UIS Data

1.   The figures in this annex display UIS data. As can be seen below there are significant gaps in the data.

*Annex Figure 9.   Expenditure on education as a percentage of total government expenditure (%)*
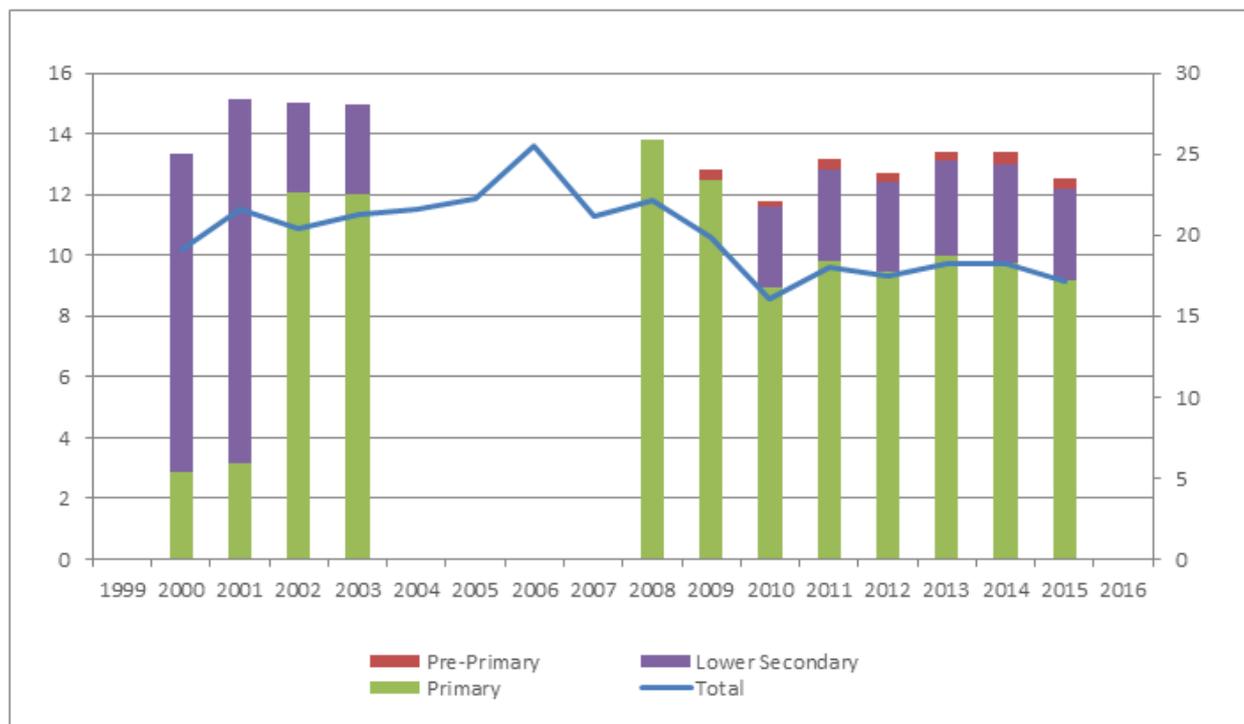
Source: UIS Statistics

*Annex Figure 10.*   *Pupil-Teacher Ratios, Pre-Primary – Nepal*
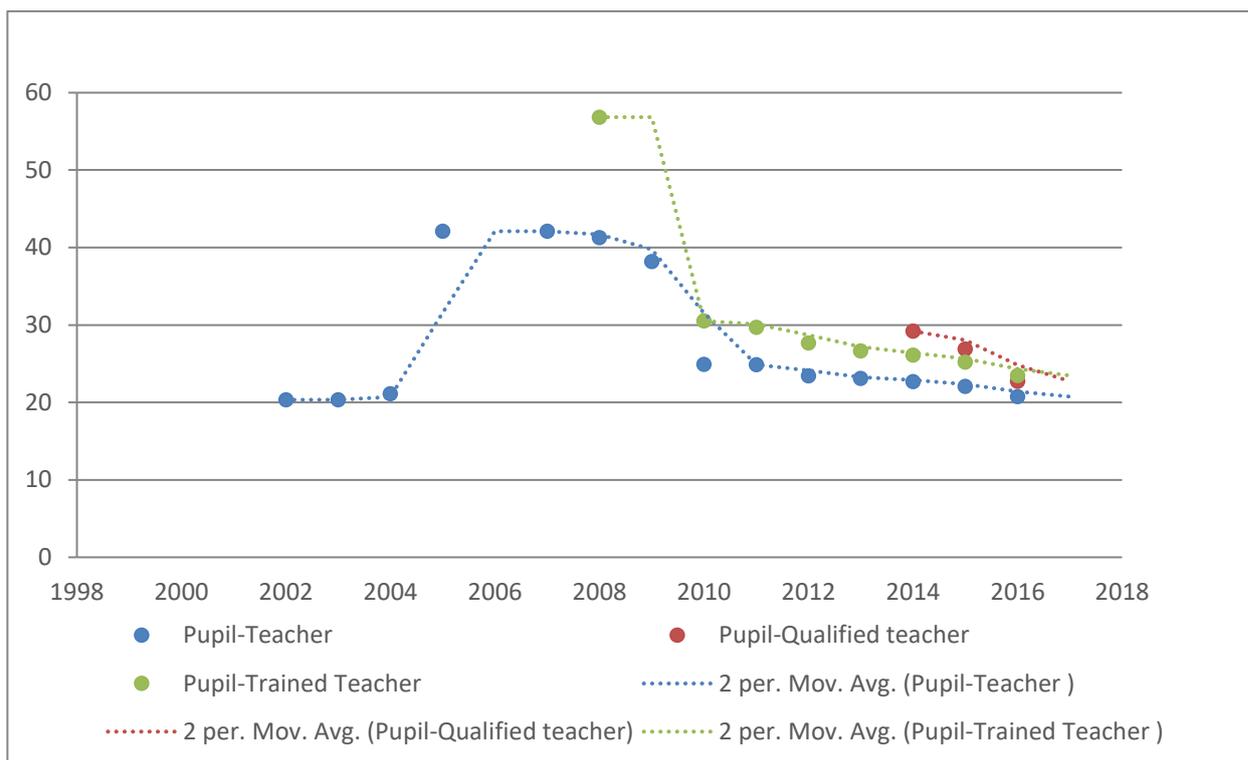
Source: UIS Statistics

*Annex Figure 11.*   *Pupil-Teacher ratios, Primary – Nepal*
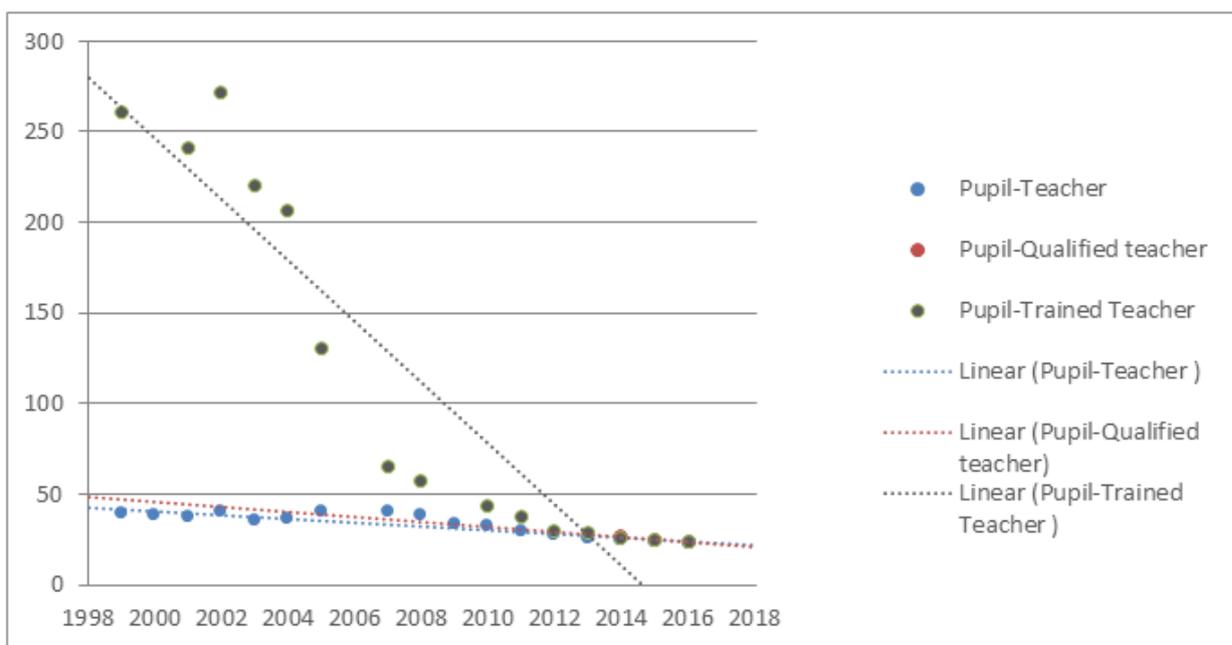
Source: UIS Statistics

Annex Figure 12. **Pre-Primary teachers trained/ qualified (%) – Nepal**
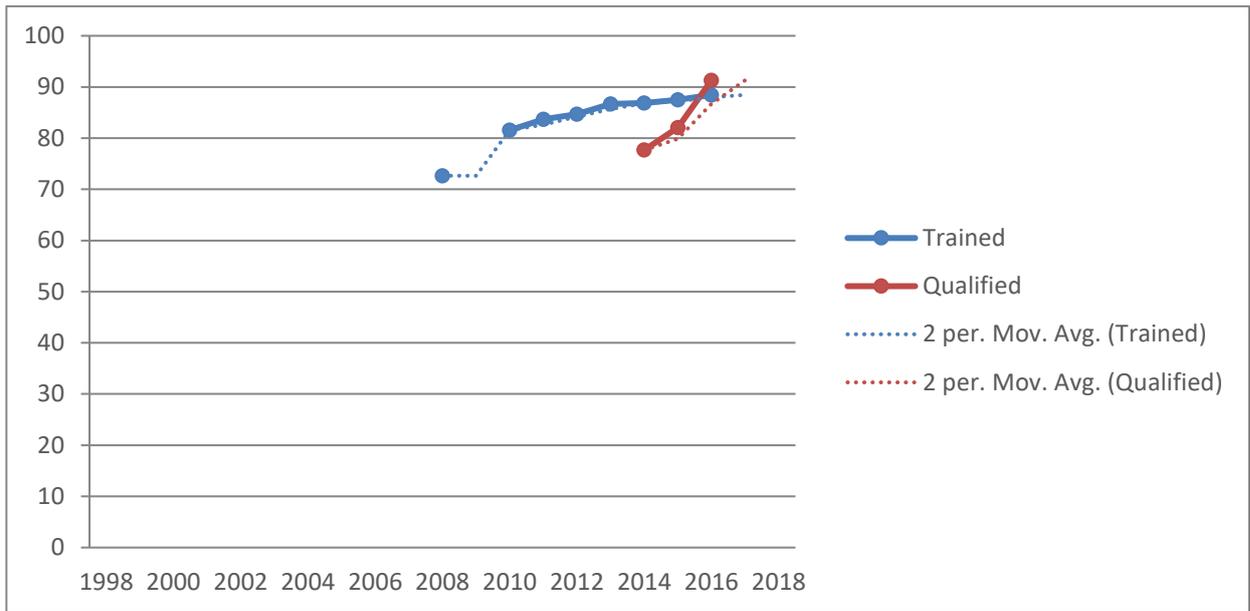
Source: UIS Statistics

Annex Figure 13. **Primary teachers trained/ qualified (%) – Nepal**
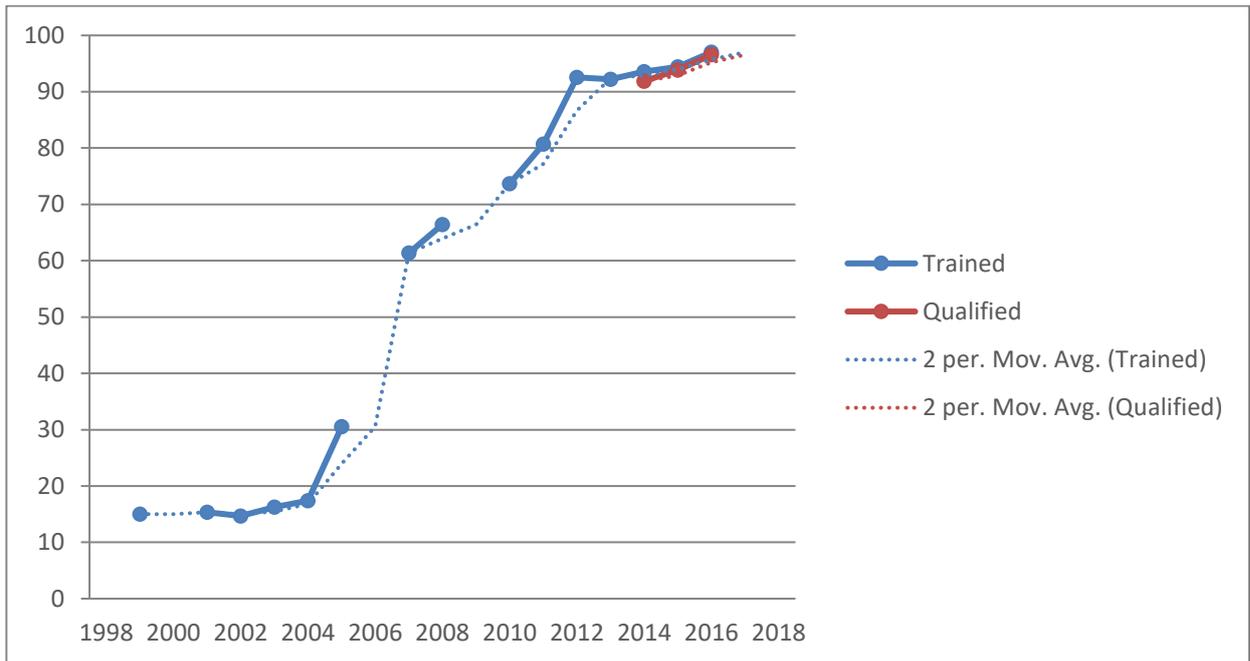

Source: UIS Statistics

Annex Figure 14.   Primary Completion Rates (%) – Nepal
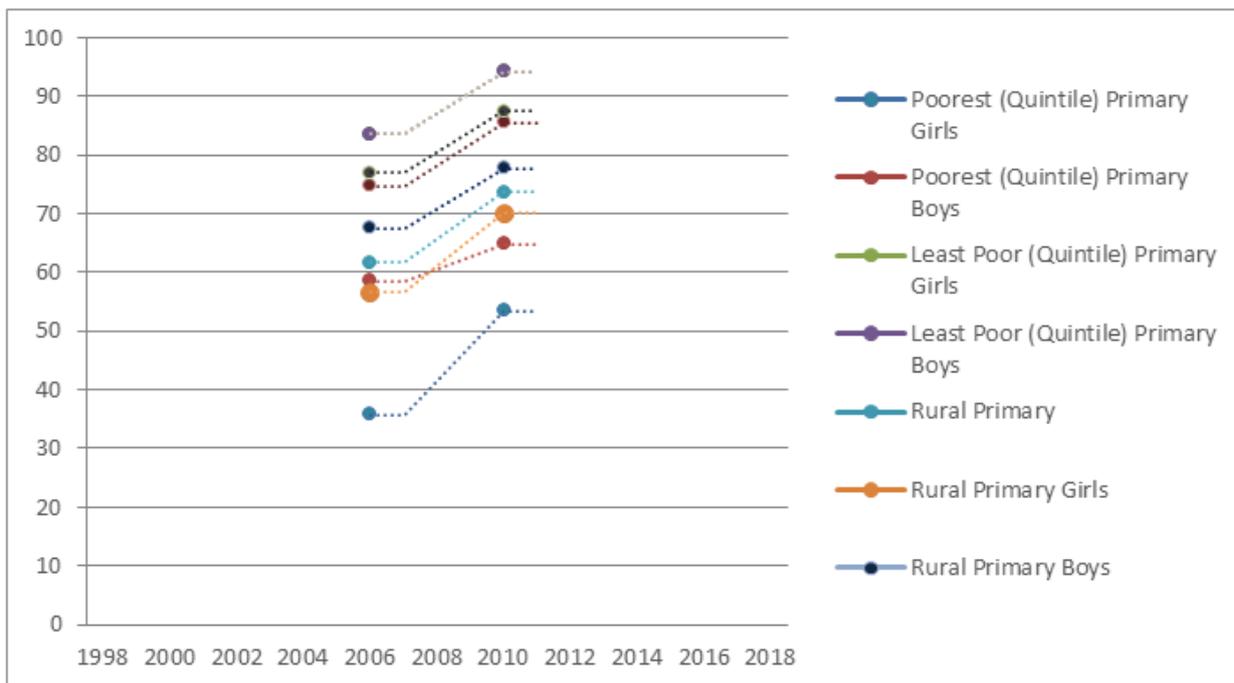

Source: UIS Statistics

Annex Figure 15.   Net Primary Attendance (%) – Nepal
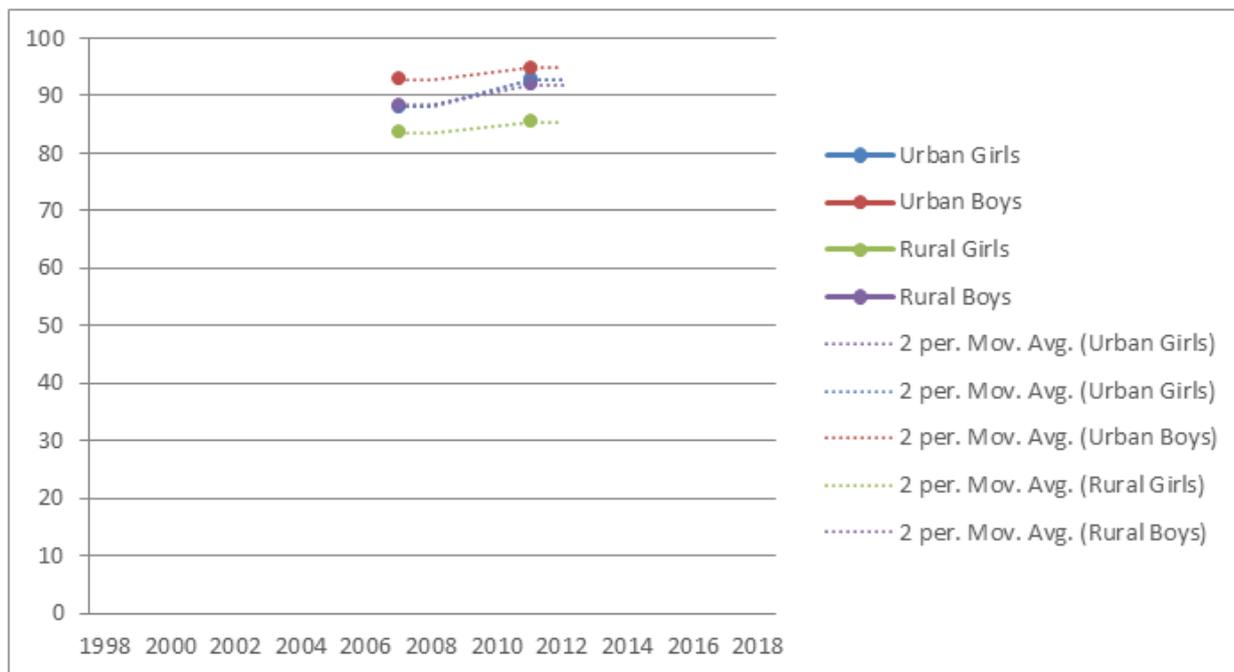

Source: UIS Statistics

*Annex Figure 16.* **Gross Enrolment Pre-Primary (%) – Nepal**
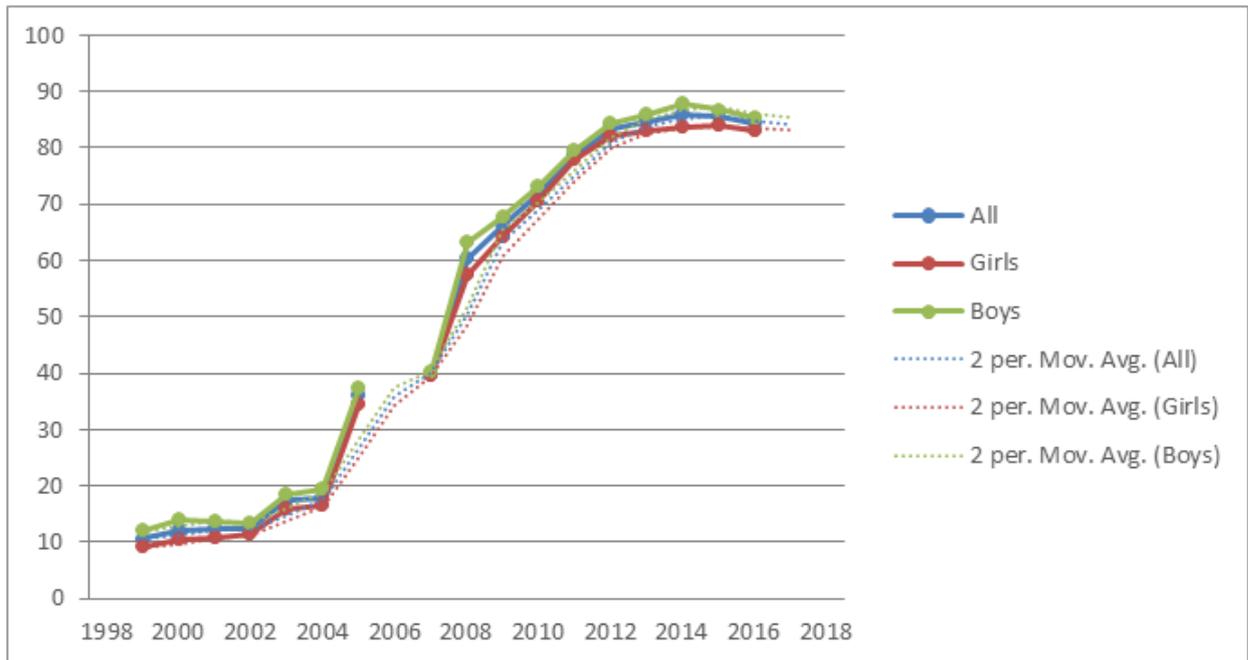
Source: UIS Statistics

*Annex Figure 17.* **Gross Enrolment Primary (%) – Nepal**
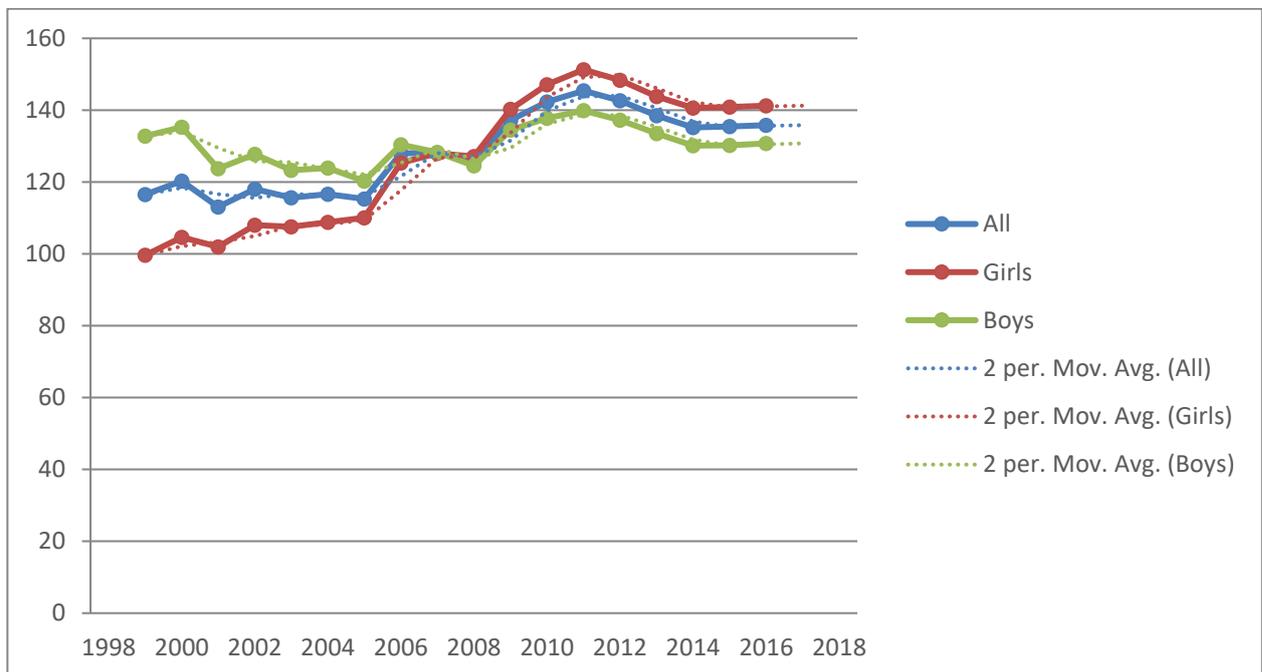
Source: UIS Statistics

*Annex Figure 18.* OOSC of Primary Age (%), by gender, Household Data – Nepal
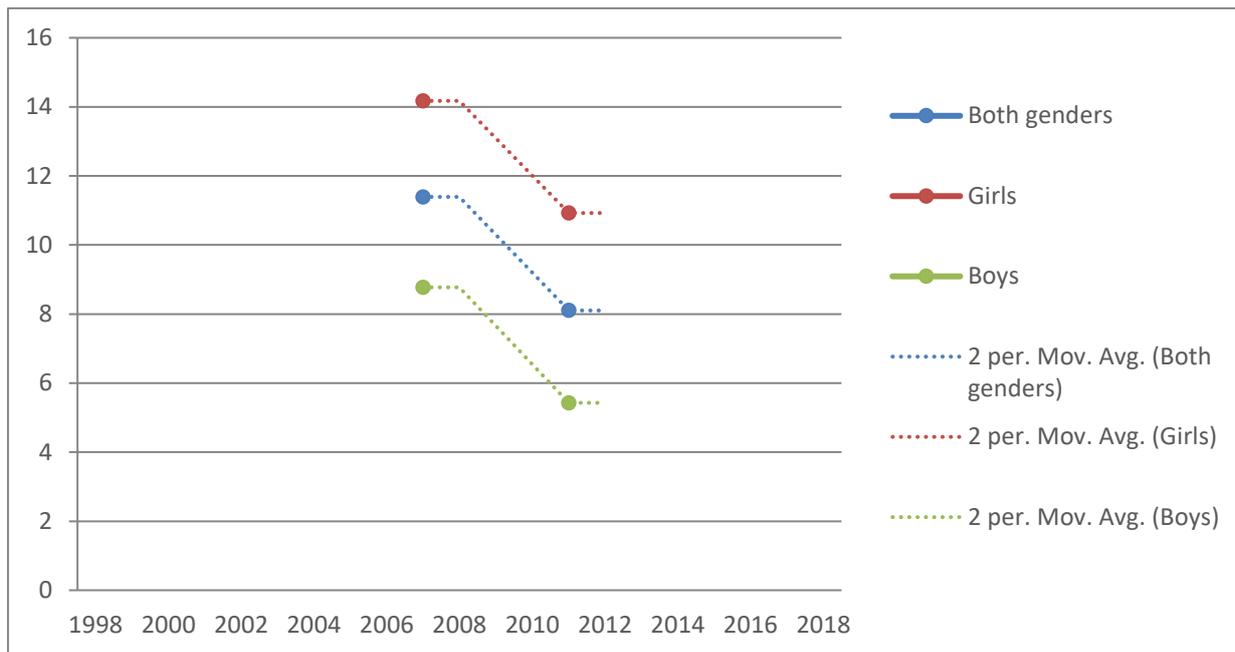
Source: UIS Statistics

*Annex Figure 19.* OOSC of Primary Age (%), by location and gender, Household Data – Nepal
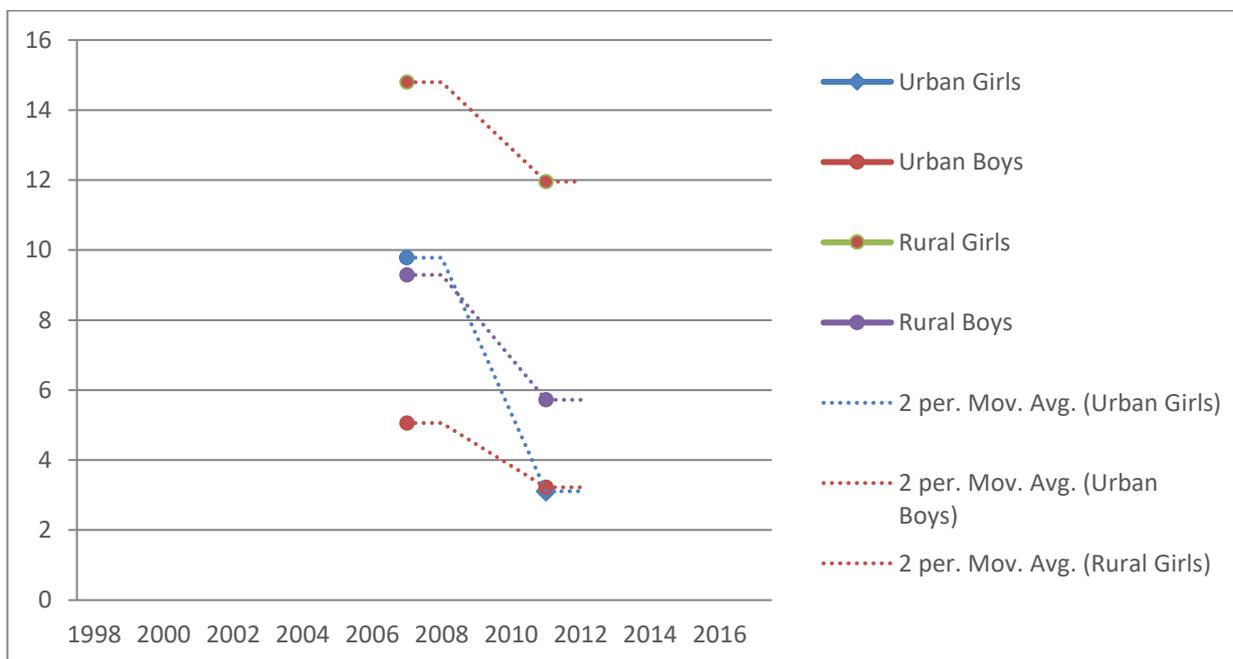
Source: UIS Statistics

Annex Figure 20. OOSC of Primary Age (%), by wealth, Household Data – Nepal
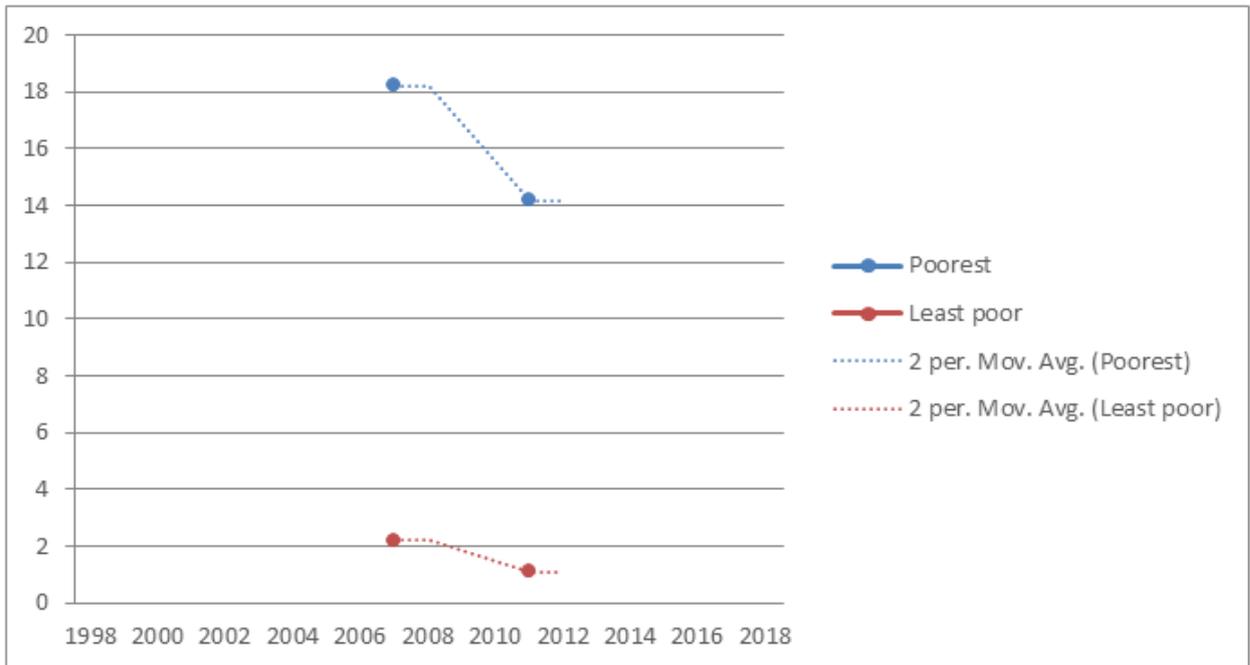

Source: UIS Statistics

Annex Figure 21. Repetition Rates (%), by school level and gender – Nepal
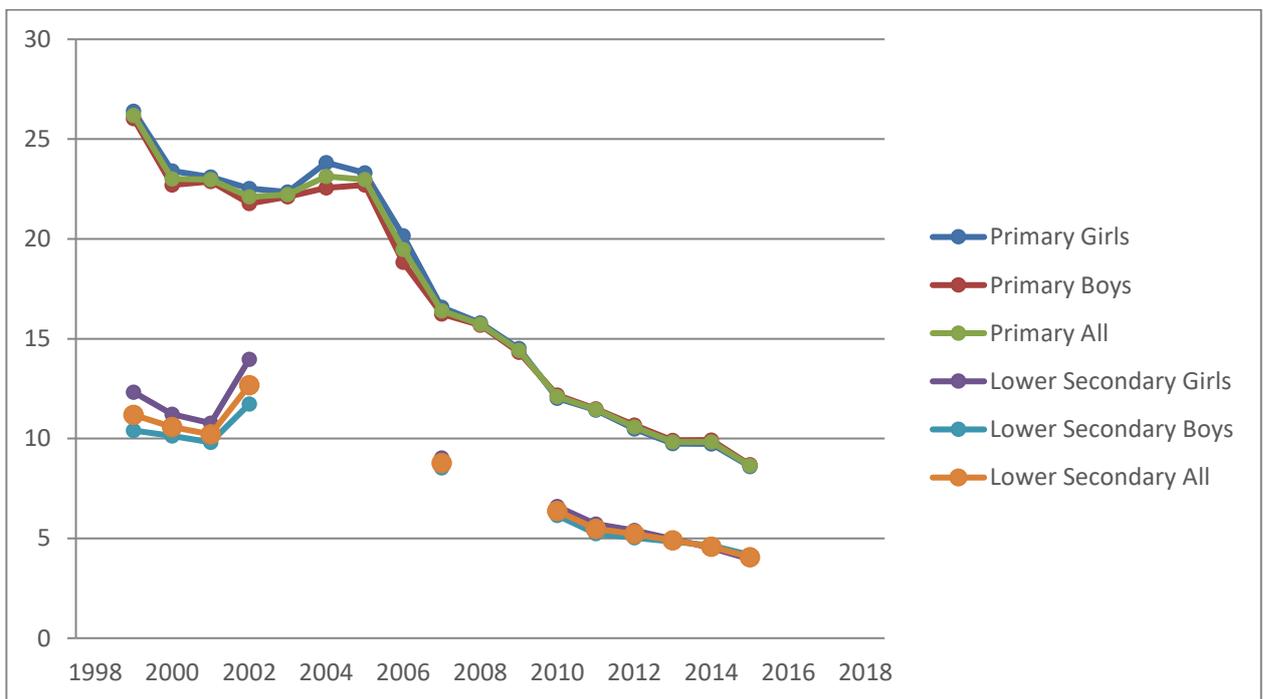
Source: UIS Statistics

Annex Figure 22. *Cumulative Dropout (%), by level and gender – Nepal*
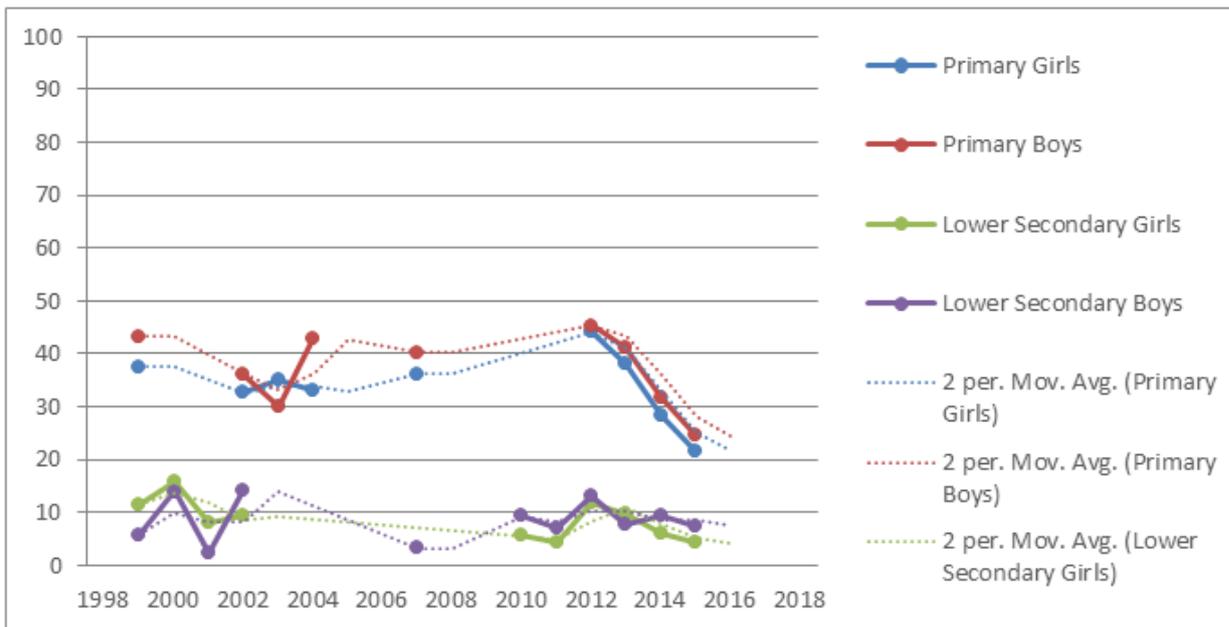
Source: UIS Statistics

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