

# **ADVOCACY AND SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY DESIGN BLUEPRINT**

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## Chapter 1. Overview of ASA design blueprint

The Global Partnership for Education is founded on the principle of mutual accountability among partners for the achievement of universal quality education. By convening key stakeholders in education in a collaborative effort to achieve the GPE2020 vision, GPE creates the conditions for all partners to be held accountable for their role in and responsibility to this shared mission. Partners each contribute to the GPE goals, committing their assets, expertise, political leadership and financing to achieve both global and country level objectives.

The GPE Board of Directors has identified the role of civil society advocacy and social accountability as fundamental to ensuring stronger accountability throughout the partnership. The Advocacy and Social Accountability (ASA) funding mechanism was therefore established within the GPE Financing and Funding Framework, adopted in March 2017, to resource civil society to play a stronger role in holding partners accountable for their contributions to GPE 2020 and Sustainable Development Goal 4. To contribute to GPE's goals and objectives, the Advocacy and Social Accountability mechanism will invest in enhancing civil society capacity to further GPE2020 goals in learning, equity and stronger systems, by improving their participation, advocacy and efforts to improve transparency and increased effectiveness in national educational policy and implementation processes. (See Annex 1 for more details on the ASA Theory of Change).

The ASA funding mechanism is comprised of three funding streams (Operational Components) to support work at local, national and transnational levels to (1) strengthen national civil society engagement in education planning, policy dialogue and monitoring; (2) strengthen civil society roles in promoting the transparency and accountability of national education sector policy and implementation and (3) create a stronger global and transnational enabling environment for national civil society advocacy and transparency efforts. Together, these objectives will help to amplify the voices of people in education policy debates, helping to better match citizen demand for an equitable quality education with responsive public policy solutions.

The design draws on over a year of intensive work to inform the design features. It reflects substantive inputs from consultations across the partnership with all GPE constituencies, including seven consultations with civil society practitioners, interviews with expert informants and grant-makers working in the field, as well as inputs drawn from five meetings with members of the technical advisory panel,<sup>1</sup> including an all-day face to face workshop in June on the design blueprint. The design also draws from the comparator and market analyses undertaken by Dalberg Global Development Advisors, a literature review, 2018 CSEF evaluation, and lessons learned from previous CSEF evaluations, background papers on Monitoring and Evaluation and internal consultations with GPE Secretariat teams.

This design document provides further detail on the ASA structures and processes, elaborating on: (1) the operational components of ASA including the call for proposals criteria and process; (2) the

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<sup>1</sup> The ASA Technical Advisory Panel consists of Michael Gibbons (Chair), Aicha Bah Diallo, Rakesh Rajani, Hugh McLean and Patricia Scheid.

monitoring evaluation and learning approach; (3) the fund management approach; (4) governance and risk mitigation of ASA and the implications for Secretariat resources.

**The draft ASA design blueprint is intended as a guide to the selected Grant Agent, which will be awarded the role of implementing the ASA funding mechanism. The Grant Agent will be invited to prepare a proposal to the Board for how it will implement the ASA portfolio, for review and decision in December 2018.** The ASA portfolio application should include a summary of the proposed approach to implement ASA and should reflect the following architecture put forth in this blueprint:

### **Operational Component 1: Support for national civil society coalitions**

*Operational component 1: Support for national civil society coalitions* will provide grants of between \$150,000 to \$450,000 over three years to the national education coalitions of the Global Campaign for Education (GCE) for their work to coordinate national advocacy and civic participation in education policy, building on the strengths of the Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF). This component will also make provision for the institutional support for national coalitions cross-country capacity development and advocacy work provided by the Global Campaign for Education and the regional Secretariats. It is primarily oriented towards achieving objective one to strengthen national civil society engagement in education planning, policy dialogue and monitoring.

### **Operational component 2: Social Accountability**

*Operational component 2: Social Accountability Grants* will provide grants of between \$450,000 to \$1.2 million over three to four years to diversify GPE' support for civil society by supporting the work of national organizations to experiment, test and innovate in social accountability practices that strengthen transparency and social mobilization for education. It is primarily oriented towards achieving objective two to strengthen civil society roles in promoting the transparency and accountability of national education sector policy and implementation.

### **Operational component 3: Transnational Advocacy**

*Operational component 3: Transnational Advocacy Grants* will provide grants of between \$450,000 to \$1.2 million over three to four years to support the work of transnational civil society alliances to undertake joint advocacy to influence transnational education policy agendas. It is primarily oriented towards achieving objective three to create a stronger global and transnational enabling environment for national civil society advocacy and transparency efforts.

### **Learning partners network**

Given the emphasis of the ASA goal on building civil society capacity, the Grant Agent will set aside approximately 15% percent of the overall funds for ASA specifically to strengthen capacity of grantees. This should include the provision of both direct capacity development support by the Grant Agent, capacity support from the GCE and regional Secretariats, and by contracting learning partners to support the different learning needs of grantees. The learning partner network will be made up of organizations

that provide critical capacity development, monitoring, evaluation and learning support for grantees, contracted to support, mentor and work with grantees across the whole ASA portfolio.

### **Year zero and learning-oriented monitoring and evaluation**

Before scaling up implementation of ASA activities, the ASA process includes an initial year for intensive capacity support including for the development of sound theories of change, monitoring, evaluation and learning strategies and capacity development in core areas for grantees. Grantees in need of this support will be provided a modest level of support in “*year zero*” to strengthen their proposed approaches, which will be followed by full funding for the final program of work after the initial 12-month period. The aim is to support the conditions for civil society organizations to be prepared to act adaptively to achieve their intended ASA results, while building long-term capabilities that will endure after GPE support has ended. Grantees will therefore have continued support to reflect on and adapt their approaches based on what they learn by doing, through the implementation of a *learning-oriented monitoring and evaluation approach*.

### **Adaptive design approach**

For GPE itself as it implements the new ASA funding mechanism, an adaptive design approach will be adopted. The Grant Agent is expected to provide for iterative reflection on how things are going in the process of delivering ASA, including after the first year to reflect on the basic infrastructure of ASA including the call for proposals processes, learning network and year zero support. This may include reflection on the ASA Theory of Change and its assumptions, proposal criteria, relative allocation of funds between the operational components, effectiveness of year zero, linkages with the Knowledge and Innovation Exchange mechanism and with GPE’s country operating model, among other areas.

### **Quality assurance and oversight**

As GPE moves to expand its investments in civil society through ASA, a particular focus has been made to ensure that strong quality assurance, oversight and implementation are features of the ASA design. All applications for support are expected to be competitive either against clearly defined standards of “readiness” (for coalitions) or against a pool of other applicants (in operational components 2 and 3). In contrast to past programs, the ASA program has been designed to separate roles in fund management from those of providing capacity support and advocacy and social accountability. The Grant agent will play a management and quality assurance function, for all grantees, including the Global Campaign for Education. In light of this it will be imperative that the grant agent has no conflicts of interest with those being funded under the ASA program.

### **ASA and the GPE Model**

With the development of the ASA mechanism as an integrated mechanism within the wider FFF, GPE has the opportunity to exploit mutually beneficial and reinforcing connections between operational approaches within the GPE framework. At a basic level, GPE’s support for inclusive sector dialogue at both national and global levels may benefit from the work and inputs of ASA grantees – providing space

for more diverse and representative civil society voices in both local education group and Board policy dialogues). ASA grantees may also constructively input into, influence and monitor the use of GPE financing for sector plan development, implementation, monitoring and the utilization of knowledge and innovations for education. And even beyond GPE financing, ASA grantees may develop, curate and share data, analyses and solutions with the wider public, as well as with national policy makers, to drive more responsive sector approaches. GPE Secretariat, and partners and both country and global levels should explore and systematize linkages between ASA and other modalities of support over the course of the first year of ASA implementation. (See Annex 2 for further details).

**Next steps**

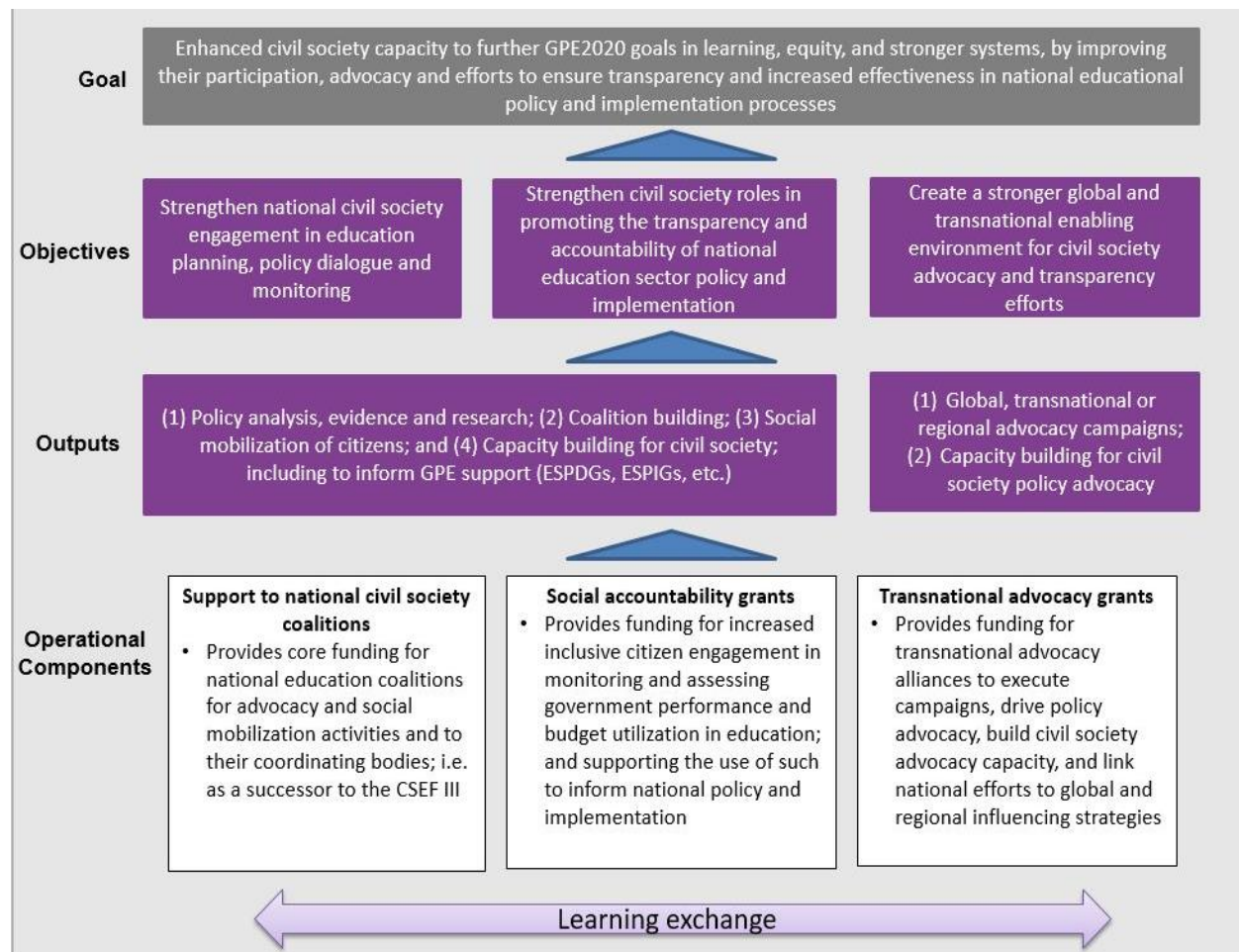
The design blueprint is meant as the primary guidance for the ASA Grant Agent, as the basis for the ASA portfolio application which will be presented for consideration by the Strategy and Impact Committee and ultimately by the GPE Board of Directors.



## Chapter 2. Overview of Cross-Cutting Design Considerations

The ASA Theory of Change includes three objectives which contribute to the ASA goal. Within ASA, the portfolio of grants is divided between three operational components: grants for national education coalitions, grants for national civil society organizations, and grants for transnational alliances. Each operational component will have a specific emphasis on either objective 1, 2 or 3, though it is understood that some proposals may contribute to a combination of all three objectives, as relevant to the particular theory of change of each applicant.

**Figure 1: Theory of Change Diagram**



### 2.1. Allocations across the three windows

The Board, reflecting the overall division of resources provided in the Financing and Funding Framework, recommended in December 2017 to retain the allocation of \$60 million across the ASA operational components as follows: 50% to support operational component 1 (including to support the role of GCE and its regional secretariats in their capacity development and cross-national advocacy), and 25% each

for operational components 2 and 3. This allocation has been retained in the ASA design blueprint, and will be subject to a review and potential adjustment after the first call for proposals has been completed to ascertain the extent and quality of demand for support in each of the operational components.

**Table 1: Operational Components**

Operational Component	Grantee eligibility	Type of support	Capacity development	Grant size
<b>1: Support for national civil society coalitions</b>	National education coalitions in GPE partner countries	Grants for coalitions to play core organizational and advocacy functions	Year zero for all coalitions that do not meet criteria for proposals	\$150,000 up to a maximum of \$450,000 over 3 years <sup>2</sup>
<b>2: Social Accountability</b>	National organizations in GPE partners countries	Grants to support experimentation and innovation in social accountability	Year zero for all	\$450,000 up to a maximum of \$1.2 million over 4 years
<b>3: Transnational advocacy</b>	Transnational civil society alliances working with national organizations in GPE partner countries	Grants to support multi-country advocacy strategies	Year zero for all	\$450,000 up to a maximum of \$1.2 million over 4 years

The allocation for operational component 1 is consistent with the current CSEF III allocation for three years (2016-2018) of US\$28.7 million. Given the findings of the CSEF evaluation that CSEF is well aligned with GPE2020’s national level objectives, has contributed to the achievement of the great majority of its targets, and that the national-regional-global program architecture should be retained, it is reasonable to continue funding the work of CSEF members at current levels. However, it should be noted that the cost structure of operational component 1 in ASA may be different than the CSEF III program, given the role and costs of a new Grant Agent, adjusted roles for the Global Campaign for Education and its regional Secretariats/Fund Management Agencies, the introduction of a year zero, and phase out of funding for coalitions which are no longer eligible for ASA grants. Nevertheless, grants ranging in size

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<sup>2</sup> Given that ASA will provide institutional support for national coalitions, there is only provision for 3 years of costs to support coalitions, whereas grantees in the other operational components will have more flexibility to undertake longer term grant activities grounded in a ‘year zero’ (see Section 6.3).

between \$150,000 and \$450,000 over three years for coalitions is consistent with the levels previously provided to enable coalitions to fulfil core advocacy functions. The rationale for this grant size is that coalitions will continue to play a central coordination role for collective advocacy efforts of their members, as opposed to directly implementing front-line accountability efforts.

Operational components 2 and 3 represent pilot areas of grant-making for GCE and given their newness in the GPE suite of financing instruments, the allocation of 25% of the ASA portfolio each should be retained pending review and adjustment after the first call for proposals and proposal selection has been completed. This allocation would allow for a maximum of approximately 22 grants (contingent upon final cost structure of Grant Agent) ranging in size between \$450,000 and \$1.2 million over 4 years to be made under each operational component, allowing for a significant enough portfolio to be able to identify gaps, demand, and potential for growth. The suggested grant sizes proposed for component 2 are an order of magnitude larger than those of operational component 1, given the expectation that these grants will support the implementation of large scale social accountability initiatives including through membership-based organizations that directly engage citizens.

The Finance and Risk Committee and Strategy and Impact Committee will review the overall allocation of resources across the operational components, and for the ASA portfolio as a whole in 2019, to determine whether these levels are commensurate with the number and quality of proposals and their potential to greatly impact GPE's strategic goals and objectives.

## 2.2. Ensuring efficiency, equity and diversity in the ASA portfolio

### Geographic efficiency

The eligibility criteria for ASA adopted by the Board in December 2017 allow funding for civil society operating in any of the 89 countries which are eligible for GPE's financing in the Financing and Funding Framework. It is recommended that eligibility initially be limited to organizations working in GPE partner countries, or those countries actively seeking to join the partnership. This will afford GPE the opportunity to most efficiently tether ASA grants to the wider family of GPE-supported activities -- sector planning, implementation and monitoring, and its support to national policy dialogue -- in a given country and explore how the full range of GPE's financial and technical support can be leveraged by ASA.<sup>3</sup> In this case, transnational advocacy alliances should be rooted in the work of civil society partners which are working in current GPE partner countries.

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<sup>3</sup> Current GPE partners eligible for funding in the FFF: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Benin, Bhutan, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Democratic Republic of Congo, Republic of Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Dominica, Eritrea, Ethiopia, The Gambia, Ghana, Grenada, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Kenya, Kiribati, Kyrgyz Republic, Lao PDR, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, FS Micronesia, Moldova, Mongolia, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Pacific Islands, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Timor-Leste, Togo, Uganda, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Vietnam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

For operational component 1, it is expected that applications will be invited from all CSEF coalitions based in GPE partner countries eligible for the FFF. Provision should therefore be made to allocate sufficient funding to support all of these coalitions, contingent upon their successful applications for ASA funding through the call for proposals process.

### **Principles to support equity and diversity**

For the solicitation, selection and evaluation of grants through operational components 2 and 3, it is important to ensure a balance in the portfolio by geography (both across and within countries), by need and equity measures, by organizational capacity, CSO legal and governance environment, e.g. organizations working in contexts of fragility or conflict, and other measures of diversity. While the competitive process for ASA applications is meant to ensure that GPE invests in proposals that show the highest degree of potential for impactful civic engagement in education, the ASA portfolio should be guided by the principle of equitable allocation (rather than equal allocation) which ensures that civic groups most in need of both support and voice are given adequate opportunity to successfully apply for ASA grants. This principle should be applied in a way that proposals are not concentrated in one country or region, a small range of types of organization or groups, or to support work on a narrow range of issues.

The ASA portfolio management should be guided by the following principle actions:

- Establish a framework to effectively monitor the portfolio for characteristics of diversity and balance, and learn iteratively from each call for proposals
- Track and monitor portfolio-wide trends related to the ASA applicants' population groups and the extent to which ASA grants benefit intended beneficiaries
- Regularly assess gaps in the portfolio in terms of both geographic/demographic balance, and neglected accountability challenges
- Adopt strategies to elicit successful proposals for ASA to address portfolio gaps (such as targeted calls for proposals, weighting certain criteria or countries, or setting caps on applications)

The ASA Grant Agent should develop a clear formula and process to achieve balance across the portfolio and consider how to manage the call for proposals process in such a way as to be able to adjust for that balance. This may require considerations for the trade-offs between the quality of proposals, sizes of different grants, and the portfolio make-up.

## Chapter 3. Operational Component 1: Support to National Education Coalitions

The first operational component of ASA aims to provide funding to support the core work of national education coalitions in the Global Campaign for Education, building on the findings of the mid-term evaluation and the strengths of the previous Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF) Programs which were implemented between 2009 and 2018. This operational component was allocated a provision of \$30 million out of \$60 million total for ASA.

### 3.1. CSEF Evaluation recommendations for ASA design

The findings and recommendations from the external evaluation of CSEF, conducted at the end of 2017, have crucial implications for making the operational architecture of ASA more robust. The evaluation addressed three main areas of the CSEF program: the relevance of CSEF for GPE and for grantees, the efficiency of CSEF and the effectiveness of CSEF investments.

**Relevance:** In terms of relevance, the evaluation found that the CSEF Theories of Change (ToC) was fit for purpose but recommended that coalitions develop more bespoke national-level ToC based on sound evidence and responsive to local context. It commended the focus on gender and social inclusion and recommended it be strengthened in further work of coalitions, and build knowledge of the types of children being targeted, and the outcomes and outputs of the coalition interventions. It was also acknowledged that advocacy work takes time and impact needs to be measured through various approaches using indicators that allow for measurement of qualitative outcomes and of progress in capacity development. Increased emphasis on capacity development – including a recognition that this takes time, was also emphasized at local, national and transnational level.

*These recommendations have been factored into the proposition of a ‘year zero’ in ASA design, which will enable an evidence-based context analysis and ToC in line with the global ASA ToC to be built into a robust proposal, along with a diverse range of indicators. There is also a strong emphasis on capacity development and shared learning in the ASA design through a proposed learning network which will complement and supplement the mentoring of regional secretariats in the current CSEF design and offer capacity and learning support that will address the dimensions of relevance, efficiency and effectiveness.*

**Efficiency:** The evaluation recommendations to improve efficiency in the program recommended the retention of the three-tiered program architecture, acknowledging that “tasks of supporting national coalitions in their advocacy and social accountability work, monitoring and evaluating coordinating learning and communication, providing not only funding but technical expertise, are formidable.” However, the evaluation also acknowledged that this architecture is not fully exploited and that inter-level communications, learning and engagement channels could be strengthened. It also identified the conflict of interest (CoI) arising out of GCE’s role as both a Grant Agent and a program implementer. It recommended a clear separation of powers, responsibilities and funding streams.

*To incorporate these recommendations, ASA design proposes that all fund management roles should be played by an independent Grant Agent with clear fiduciary accountability and oversight of all recipients of ASA funds. GCE and the regional Secretariats will be supported and held accountable by the Grant Agent for playing their appropriate roles in capacity development for coalitions and the global and regional advocacy activities of the network as a whole. Roles related to support for the call for proposals process and communication with coalitions on program requirements may be proposed as part of the wider ASA portfolio proposal of the Grant Agent, where it makes sense to capitalize on the efficiency attributed to using existing multi-tier systems of management for CSEF (for e.g. proposal development, monitoring and reporting). The Grant agent will play a management and quality assurance function, for all grantees, including the Global Campaign for Education. In light of this it will be imperative that the grant agent has no conflicts of interest with those being funded under the ASA program.*

**Effectiveness:** The recommendations on effectiveness focused on strengthening and streamlining the Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) system, capacity development of grant recipients on MEL, sector planning and policy processes, and a more fluid reporting and qualitative assessments. The evaluation also highlighted the need for facilitating stronger linkages of the coalitions with the government processes, linking with other SDG priority areas and linking national, regional and global actors.

*ASA design is factoring in those recommendations through incorporation of a learning network for ASA, linking ASA with the learning platform of Knowledge and Innovation Exchange (KIX), and proposing a more flexible MEL framework with qualitative indicators which moves beyond the previous CSEF design of primarily quantitative indicators. In terms of effectiveness at country level, ASA design is also proposing a stronger linkage with GPE's operational model emphasizing country facing approach.*

### **3.2. Operational Component 1: Support for national civil society coalitions**

ASA will continue to fund national education coalitions previously financed through the Civil Society Education Fund to support their role in achieving objective one of ASA to *strengthen national civil society engagement in education planning, policy dialogue and monitoring*. The first objective of ASA recognizes the valuable role that civil society can play in institutional education policy processes and aims to strengthen the quality of this engagement. In order for civil society to meaningfully contribute to sector dialogue processes this requires:

- (1) strong capacity of civil society groups, and in particular, those that are typically marginalized in policy dialogue and education governance, to participate effectively;
- (2) the capacity of civil society groups to formulate and contribute evidence based and policy-relevant solutions in a timely, strategic and constructive manner.

Coalitions are uniquely suited to bring civil society members together to develop common positions, coordinate their collective advocacy efforts and facilitate their participation and represent their members in institutional policy dialogue spaces. GPE has been thus investing in national education coalitions since 2009. Operational Component 1 will therefore continue to invest in coalition structures

and functions as a way to build sustainable and capable platforms to enable civil society to participate in and contribute to policy dialogue and monitoring.

In addition to the provision of three-year grants for coalitions to build capacity in the above two areas, *Operational Component 1: Support for national civil society coalitions* will also continue to support the strong infrastructure of regional and global coalitions under the Global Campaign for Education (GCE). The 2018 (and previous) evaluations of the CSEF have found that the multi-level architecture of support for civil society built over the previous two decades by the Global Campaign for Education has a proven value, and ASA will continue to provide for this architecture in Operational Component 1. The Grant Agent may therefore solicit a proposal from, contract with and oversee GCE and its regional Secretariats (ANCEFA, ASPBAE, CLADE and ACEA) for the support functions they have played in CSEF, including for coalitions' proposal development and review, capacity development (including for advocacy), M&E, learning and communication. Note that this role is distinct from the current role which GCE plays under CSEF III, acting as an intermediary by transferring funding from GPE to regional and national members of the campaign and overseeing the implementation of these grants as part of a sub-granting scheme (see section 3.6. for details). Consequently, it is expected that the Grant Agent would contract directly with national education coalitions as well as with the GCE and each Regional Secretariat under an enhanced management and accountability arrangement.

### 3.3. Eligibility

National coalition members of the Global Campaign for Education in existing GPE partner countries are eligible to apply for grants from Operational Component 1: Support for national civil society coalitions.

### 3.4. Call for proposals criteria

Coalitions provide core functions within the wider ecosystem of civic actors. As the foundational structure for national civil society to organize itself in the education sector, ASA will support Global Campaign for Education coalitions to improve their core functions for the period 2019-2021. Applications from coalitions should identify how they will build on their existing strengths, address weaknesses and undertake experimentation, innovation and learning to enhance:

#### ***Coalition core functions***

- Collective coordination and democratic consultation of members around key policy challenges and positions
- Representation and engagement of membership in formal and institutional policy spaces, particularly at the national level (including parliamentary caucuses / groups)
- Provision of an inclusive platform for consensus-building of diverse groups on policies, strategies and actions and outreach to develop links with other social movements beyond the education sector to broaden the platform and alliance for education
- Provision of opportunities for members to benefit from or strategically contribute to different local and national policy arenas



- Support for sub-national engagement with provincial/district coalitions linking with local governments
- Management of sound financial and administrative systems, including strong audit capacity
- Development of strong approaches to monitoring, evaluation and learning, including adoption of adaptive management approaches and articulation of clear learning goals related to both organizational development and advocacy work
- Development of fundraising and resource mobilization strategy to improve coalition sustainability

#### ***Coalition-led advocacy strategies***

- Development of coalition advocacy strategies based on strong analyses of political, social and economic factors within a country that provide context and rationale for a proposed pathway to advance quality equitable education
- Development of coordinated campaigns, public awareness raising and social mobilisation work by the coalition, including promotion of education issues in traditional and social media
- Development of policy positions, analyses and messages to engage public policy officials on education issues
- Regional and global engagement in key spaces where coalitions need to come together, share learning, build common analysis and plans

All coalitions are expected to strengthen their organizational leadership, deepen democratic decision-making practices and improve the core functioning of the coalition as described above, including expanding their membership to new constituencies and innovating in the use of civic engagement models. (In that regard, the role of coalitions is distinct from the role of its members, who work directly with citizens, teachers, parents, and other stakeholders at local, district or sub-national levels.) All coalition should also develop strong context analyses to guide their advocacy strategies, and demonstrate a clear understanding of the environment for advocacy and social accountability and their role in it.

### **3.5. Grant size**

The estimated grant size for coalitions to fulfil their core functions and undertake advocacy and campaigning activities would range between \$150,000 (e.g. in small countries) and \$450,000 (e.g. in federal states) over three years.

### **3.6. Grant support for GCE and Regional Secretariats**

#### ***GCE grant for implementation and capacity support***

Funded through the allocation to Operational Component 1, the Global Campaign for Education will submit a proposal to the Grant Agent for their support role in the implementation of operational component 1, given their extensive experience managing the CSEF program and the opportunity to build on the effective processes which have been put in place under CSEF III when GCE was the Grant Agent.



GCE may apply for up to \$4.5 million over three years to support national coalitions, benchmarked against the capacity support functions provided under CSEF and exclusive of Grant Agent-related costs. The Grant Agent will establish quality assurance standards against which a GCE proposal for program support would be assessed and may wish to use the technical proposal selection panels to assess the proposal.

GCE's capacity development support and support for the call for proposals should not include any roles which would put it in conflict of interest, but may include:

- **Program implementation support**
  - implementation support in relation to all sub-grantees, portfolio management and performance oversight for operational component 1 within ASA;
  - ensure operational component 1 monitoring, evaluation, and learning systems are aligned to the ASA MEL strategy;
  - support quality of proposals from coalitions;
- **Capacity development and learning support**
  - development of transnational learning capacities;
  - support to capacity development at regional levels, for adaptive management and building of the movement
  - facilitation of national-regional-global advocacy and campaign linkages,
  - cross regional capacity development
  - share learning and lessons from ASA grantees through the KIX platform and vice versa.
  - host an annual shared learning and capacity development event, aimed at fostering cross regional dialogue, as well as providing a shared platform for adaptive management and learning.

At the regional level, the Regional Secretariats may provide capacity support through activities for:

- **Capacity development and learning support**
  - review national coalition proposals to ensure alignment to ASA principles, criteria and operational guidelines,
  - support embedding the MEL at country level, and assist coalitions in monitoring and reporting against agreed indicators and expected results as determined by the new Results Framework
  - accompany national coalitions, provide tailored technical support and capacity-building and intra-regional learning and communication
  - regular communication with national coalitions about programme requirements and deadlines;
  - support to national planning and budget preparation processes;
  - provision of tailored technical support including programmatic and financial matters and accompaniment to national level;

- support adherence of coalition MEL reporting deadlines and quality control of reporting;
- facilitation of cross-country learning and communication
- secure advocacy spaces for national coalitions through real-world/learning-by-doing approaches in various advocacy platforms where coalition need to intervene not only at the national level but also at the regional and global level (e.g. UN/UNESCO SDG/SDG4 processes).

***GCE transnational advocacy grant***

Finally, the GCE and regions will submit a proposal to the Grant Agent for their cross-national advocacy work, not to exceed \$1.5 million over three years, which should draw on and align with national coalition proposals as part of the whole package of GCE-member proposals. In order to ensure alignment with national education coalition activities, this proposal may be made in parallel with or subsequent to the first call for proposals from coalitions. The Grant Agent may assess the quality of this proposal against the standards for Operational Component 3: Transnational Advocacy, using the technical proposal selection panel.

## Chapter 4. Operational Component 2: Social Accountability

Social Accountability grants will provide funding for increased inclusive citizen engagement in monitoring and assessing government performance and budget utilization in education, and supporting the use of such engagement to inform national policy and implementation. Operational component 2 aims to advance progress towards ASA objective two to strengthen civil society roles – especially at the local level - in promoting the transparency and accountability of education sector policy and implementation. This operational component was allocated a provision of \$15 million out of \$60 million total for ASA.

By investing in strengthened civic monitoring of education policy implementation and service delivery, ASA aims to help close important data gaps about the state of education. Relevant, timely and useable information and evidence is critical to ensuring accountability for the delivery of quality education for all. Information which is made available through increased transparency can be used to inform people about public services and entitlements, and help to generate increased demand for and community ownership of quality education.<sup>4</sup> This objective therefore aims to ensure that civil society groups are able to undertake strategic multi-level monitoring of education policy and budget implementation, and to use the evidence generated to formulate and act on relevant policy solutions and redress mechanisms both locally and nationally. This involves efforts to

- (1) increase the availability, sources and variety of information to advance the public interest in education, and;
- (2) increase its use by civil society to inform attitudes, behaviours and/or policy demands.

The following section outlines the eligibility criteria, the call for proposals process and the call for proposals criteria for Social Accountability grants. For this operational component, which introduces a new set of grants from GPE, all grantees are expected to undertake a year zero planning year. The two-step application process therefore requires an initial proposal to be submitted as a first step, which, if selected, will qualify applicants to enter into a year zero with modest support for institutional and planning costs for the first year. A final full proposal will be developed over the course of the year zero, to enable adjustments in scope, budget, disbursement milestones, ASA learning activities, and MEL approaches.

### 4.1. Eligibility

The second operational component aims to expand GPE's support for civil society to actors beyond the national education coalitions. GPE will accept proposals from single national organizations, or from multiple organizations working collaboratively on a joint project in one or more countries. This may include trade unions, women's groups, minority groups, school management committees etc. which are

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<sup>4</sup> For a glossary of transparency and accountability terms please see: <http://www.transparency-initiative.org/uncategorized/1179/tai-definitions/>

formally registered. Other types of civil society entities with a different or non-existent registration status must work with registered organizations if they are to access funds. Note that Operational Component 2 is not intended to fund national chapters of international NGOs or national coalitions funded through Operational Component 1.

## **4.2. Call for proposals criteria**

ASA aims to support organizations which would like to experiment with new arrangements and tactics of using information to drive change in education. Funding will be provided to support organizations that can:

- Identify and define a clear problem which they are trying to solve using tactics of increasing transparency and social mobilization
- Provide a clear pathway to change, demonstrating a developed understanding of the logic in a results-oriented “theory of change” (even if this terminology is not used to describe it) and strong rationale for why their proposed strategy will work to solve a particular functional and/or social accountability problem
- Provide clear understanding of the types of information needed and potential practices to help generate information (if it is not available), with full proposal elaborating on the choice of methodology or approach including use of social accountability tools such as social audits, public service score cards, model legislation, right to education index, accountability charters, public expenditure tracking surveys, public polling etc.
- Demonstrated ability to undertake social mobilization activities such as public awareness campaigns, public forums, civic outreach and community organizing for greater democratic accountability, transparency and social justice
- Demonstrate a willingness to learn, experiment and innovate including hypotheses of how they will implement a culture of learning and practice to investigate the success of their strategy
- Identify what kinds of partnerships can be put together, across what fields and sectors to more effectively influence policy, and how they propose to investigate the wider environment for advocacy in a given national context

## **4.3. Grant size**

The estimated grant size for Social Accountability grants would range between \$450,000 and \$1.2 million over four years.

## Chapter 5. Operational Component 3: Transnational Advocacy

The third operational component of ASA seeks to support transnational civil society alliances to undertake creative multi-country advocacy to influence transnational policy frameworks. The transnational advocacy grants will provide funding for transnational advocacy alliances to execute campaigns, drive policy advocacy, build civil society capacity for advocacy, and link national efforts to global and regional influencing strategies. It is intended that transnational alliances will spend year zero helping to build common understanding across members of the alliance, develop creative tactics for influencing, and explore potential to drive change at national level as a consequence. This operational component was allocated provision of \$15 million out of \$60 million total for ASA.

### 5.1. Eligibility

Eligibility is confined to civil society organizations based anywhere in the world, but who are working to create an enabling environment for successful national education advocacy in the 89 GPE eligible countries and is undertaken in conjunction with at least one civil society actor originating in a developing country partner. Proposals should be submitted on behalf of:

- Consortia of civil society actors working in multiple countries, including Southern-based coalitions, which must include at least one national civil society organization
- Consortia which include actors not traditionally working in education but have either education as a cross-sectoral priority or skills and tools which are scalable in education would be considered favourably.
- Consortia should reflect a diversity of approaches to advocacy which are complementary and will strengthen the wider education movement

### 5.2. Call for proposals criteria

ASA aims to address transnational problem sets which inhibit the achievement of universal quality education, and which can be addressed through multi-country efforts to improve the conditions for national education gains. Proposals should therefore:

- Identify the set of problems that can best be solved through multi-country advocacy tactics which are interconnected and mutually reinforcing, and describe why the issue is best solved at the global, regional or transnational level rather than locally or nationally.
- Describe the transnational policy frameworks or international decision-making arenas which provide the potential for supporting increase progress in education in GPE eligible countries, with a clear feedback loop to country level advocacy and change
- Clearly articulate the multi-country or transnational accountability mechanisms which will be leveraged to influence national education strategies, such as the Sustainable Development Goal monitoring architecture, regional mechanisms etc.

- Provide clear reasoning for strategic approach and potential for experimentation in the approach, including rationale for that approach and whether or how they will know if it is working
- Describe whether and how the consortia will support peer learning amongst members on advocacy approaches

### **5.3 Grant Size**

The estimated grant size for Transnational Advocacy grants would range between \$450,000 and \$1.2 million over four years.

## Chapter 6. Call for proposals process

### 6.1. Call for proposals sequence

The timeline and process for proposals to be submitted for consideration as part of calls for proposals for all three operational components is below, with further details on the technical proposal selection panels (TPSPs) and year zero in the proceeding sections of this chapter. The call for proposals will include the following sequence of steps:

1. **Development of materials, documentation and systems for call for proposals:** The Grant Agent will develop the call for proposal manual, including guidelines and proposal templates for applications for funding, any online or other tools for dissemination and proposal submission etc. These should include a clear outline of the criteria for eligibility, criteria for proposals, proposal templates and any other supporting documentation to guide applicants in the call for proposals process. For operational component 1, these may be developed in collaboration with the Global Campaign for Education and the regional GCE Secretariats, building on the processes already established under CSEF III.
2. **Launch of the call for proposals:** The Grant Agent will launch the call for proposals, to ensure widespread dissemination of the funding opportunity. This may require efforts to identify strategies to ensure that target groups are reached in GPE countries, through country offices, partners and other channels of communications. Note that the call for proposals for each operational component may be staggered as needed, to ensure sufficient capacity and effort in achieving a successful launch.
3. **Outreach to invite proposals:** The Grant Agent should implement a strategy of socialization of the ASA grant funding opportunity, including providing potential applicants with the opportunity to learn more about the proposal process through face to face meetings, webinars, teleconferences, or other means of communication. Care should be taken to share the opportunity in multiple languages, and in formats which are accessible to groups that may not traditionally learn of funding opportunities such as ASA. The Grant Agent may also explore existing events or communication channels through which the call for proposals may be shared with potential applicants. For operational component 1, the Global Campaign for Education and regional Secretariats should play a role in working with coalitions to increase understanding of ASA and to support the proposal development process.
4. **Proposal development and submission:** Applicants should prepare proposals for submission to the Grant Agent by the determined deadline. For operational component 1, coalitions should prepare detailed proposals for three years, including proposed goals, activities and budget. The regional Secretariats of the GCE may provide a cover note assessment of the proposals to inform the TPSP's evaluation. For operational components 2 and 3, applicants should prepare a lighter

proposal with an emphasis on the goals of the program with a focus on the preparatory activities of year zero (which will lead to the development of a more detailed, multi-year proposal). Proposals should be submitted to the Grant Agent directly, who will manage their distribution and review. The Grant Agent should make provisions for proposals to be submitted using varied methods (email, hard copy, video or otherwise) to enable less advantaged groups to apply.

5. **Proposal review and evaluation:** The TPSPs will each receive proposals for a shortlisting, which will be narrowed down to a list of finalists. In the case of operational component 1, the TPSPs should determine which coalition proposals are approved with a view to beginning implementation of a 3-year program of work, and which proposals will require additional support and refinement during a year zero. For operational components 2 and 3, the TPSP will approve proposals and recommend approaches to year zero for their further development, including areas for capacity development, experimentation or piloting, institutional strengthening or other preparatory activities.
6. **Grant Agent contracting:** The Grant Agent will develop contracts with applicants, and transfer funds according to its own financial procedures and requirements, and in compliance with the terms of the GPE trustee.
7. **Engagement with grantees in year zero:** The Grant Agent will also contract with learning partner organizations to address the capacity and learning needs of grantees, as well as with GCE and the regional Secretariats. A curriculum for year zero will be developed collaboratively to ensure that the wide range of grantees' identified learning needs are met, opportunities for linkages among grantees and with other partners through GPE's learning exchange platform are utilized and that emerging needs of grantees are able to be further defined in partnership with grantees and addressed iteratively over the course of year zero. TPSPs may be engaged throughout the course of the year to provide feedback on draft proposals, and to identify early on where additional efforts may be needed. For coalitions already beginning implementation, support from the Learning Partner network may be focused on building capacity in areas of implementation rather than refinement of the multi-year proposal of work.
8. **Final review and assessment:** The TPSPs will undertake a final assessment of the finalized proposal from grantees and ensure that all previous recommendations have been addressed and proposed budgets are aligned with the program of activities. All efforts should be made during year zero to address any weaknesses in the proposals so that the final review by the TPSP is a light touch confirmation of quality. However, this final review and assessment will provide a means for the TPSP to determine whether any applications are not likely to meet the standards (including from national coalitions which required year zero and still do not demonstrate readiness) and will therefore not proceed beyond year zero. All applicants will then be informed



of the outcomes of the TPSP final readiness review, and the Grant Agent may proceed to transfer funds for implementation.

## 6.2. Proposal review and selection

Proposals submitted for ASA grants will be vetted by independent, arms-length technical panels made up of 5 – 8 members who will be engaged by the Grant Agent to review and evaluate concept notes and proposals, decide on proposal approval and level of funding, and make recommendations on capacity-building support during year zero. The technical panels will also provide a portfolio-wide learning function by assessing trends and contributing to feedback loops about ASA funding for the fields of advocacy and social accountability.

Some of the potential key functions of the technical proposal selection panels will include:

- Inform and articulate the criteria for the assessment of applications for each operational component and how they should be applied to a review of applications
- Read and evaluate applications for funding with a view to assessing the extent to which they meet criteria, what types of capacity support and learning would strengthen the success of proposals, and what level of funding would be appropriate for the development of a full proposal during year zero.
- Provide feedback on the proposal development for funding applications during year zero, including advice on how to strengthen proposals and where connections between grantees might be beneficial
- Convene regularly to assess trends in the demand for funding, including the nature of applications and what they reveal about the call for proposals process, accountability gaps, emerging trends in the fields of advocacy and social accountability, areas for increased attention to capacity support, and provide regular assessments of the portfolio to the Grant Agent and other relevant ASA partners.

The Grant Agent will further develop terms of reference for the panels, including their learning function for the ASA portfolio, and will nominate the panellists for the technical proposal selection panels. The Grant Agent and Secretariat will validate and ensure that there are no conflicts of interest. No members of the panel may be involved in any of the global, regional or national organizations, coalitions or alliances applying for funding. Given the important responsibilities of the panel in determining the allocation of funds to grantees, it is mandatory that no members of the panel have any conflict of interest related to ASA and that clear protocols are in place if such a conflict arises.

The technical selection panels should review proposals in line with the operational guidelines which will accompany the call for proposals and set out the criteria by which proposals should be assessed. The Grant Agent should ensure that the criterion for the evaluation of proposals is objective, and members

of the panels should demonstrate a clear understanding of how criteria should be applied and assessed. It is expected that members of the technical selection panels will dedicate a significant amount of time to review a large volume of proposals and should be remunerated to play this role effectively.

For operational components 1 and 2, regionally based technical proposal selection panels (TPSPs) are recommended to review ASA proposals, to ensure that the evaluation is based on a deep familiarity with the specific contexts in which civil society may be working in a given region.<sup>5</sup> These regional TPSPs may include members of the CSEF regional funding committees, should they be available to participate in the newly constituted ASA technical selection panels.

For operational component 1, the ASA proposal evaluation process may benefit from the long experience of regional GCE Secretariat support for coalitions, by including a pre-assessment of the proposal with further context for its content and quality (in cover note or other format), to help inform the evaluation by the TPSP. For operational component 3, the TPSP should be comprised of experts with a range of expertise, including a geographic diversity and experience in transnational advocacy, global education governance and accountability.

Some of the qualifications of the panel members may include:

- Expertise in the fields of governance, social accountability and advocacy and the role and context for civil society work including practical experience implementing programs in the field
- Ability to provide a sound assessment of the quality, logic and potential of concept notes and full ASA proposals
- Knowledge of issues in education, including education policy, systems and research
- Experience working in or with civil society, including with marginalized groups, social or youth movements, or other civic and public interest actors
- Understanding of program design, budgeting, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, management and organizational development including adaptive management approaches
- No conflict of interest or interest in benefiting directly from ASA funds
- Ability to dedicate significant amount of time during the call for proposals process to review proposals

### 6.3. Year zero

The call for proposals process for all applicants includes an iterative and developmental pathway, allowing for coalitions and new applicants to ASA to benefit from an initial year for preparation, capacity development and planning after an initial concept note has been approved but before beginning scaled up implementation of activities (See Annex 5 for more details). This allows ASA to ensure that coalitions

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<sup>5</sup> Affirmed both by the Technical Advisory Committee for ASA and civil society consultation respondents.

and new applicants are supported by the Grant Agent, learning partners, the Global Campaign for Education and regional Secretariats during a preparatory phase to increase the probability of success in implementing their programs. Note that many coalitions which have an established foundation of work through the CSEF III program will not require a year zero and may begin immediate implementation based on the quality of their proposals. Coalitions which do not demonstrate an immediate readiness for implementation will be evaluated for the capacity support required and will be offered a year zero to bring proposals and practices up to standard.

This structure provides a one year “on-ramp” to full implementation, allowing grantees to establish stronger foundations to increase the probability of success in both project outcomes and in terms of achieving learning goals. This will also help ensure the coherence of multiple grantees working in the same country and region to address the risk of fragmented initiatives. During year zero, grantees will receive modest funding to enable them to undertake year zero activities such as:

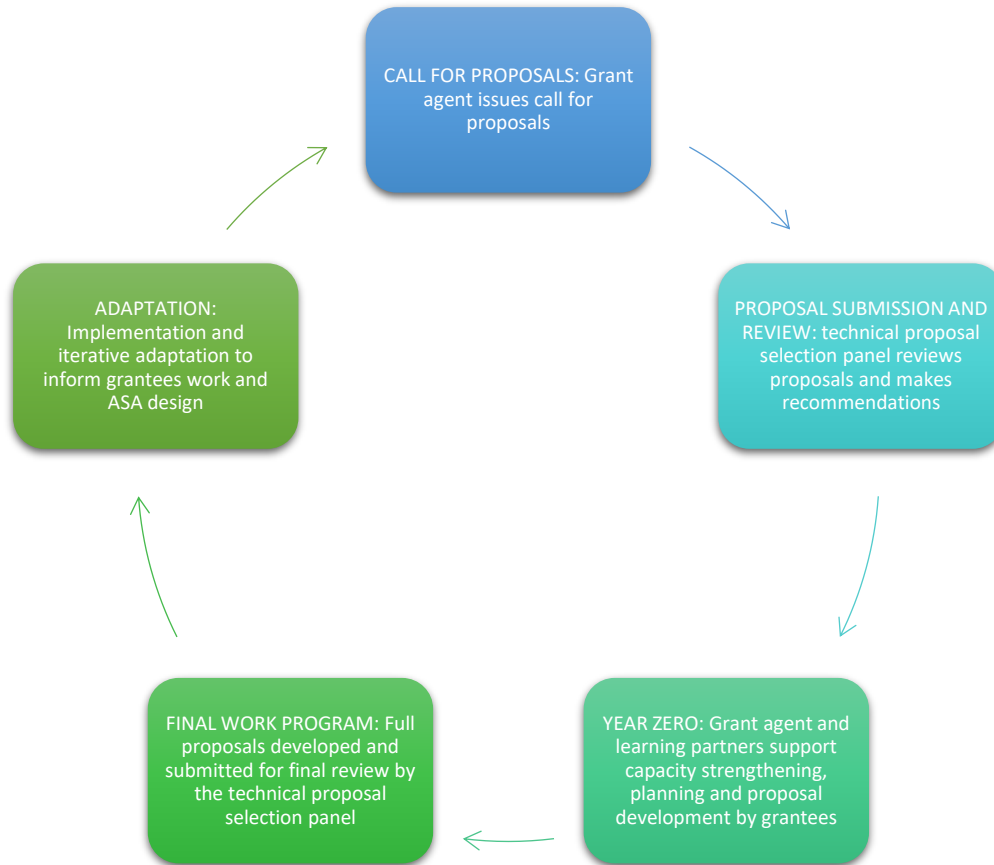
- Undertake an assessment of the environment for their work, including the governmental regulatory environment, political economy and wider civic ecosystem (and their role in it) i.e. a situation and power analysis
- Identify and build relationships with key partners and allies to enhance probability of success in their work, including between ASA grantees which may be working in the same country (e.g. coalitions and new ASA grantees)
- Develop a more fulsome and elaborated theory of change related to the problem they are proposing to address, including exploring assumptions and approaches to evaluate their success
- Develop a learning agenda for their work and potential learning partners to ensure that experimentation is coupled with methodologies to learn from and apply knowledge based on experience, and to identify the learning goals for their work
- Test approaches for ASA and finalize their program of work in a final proposal, including budget levels and activities
- Build capacity in key areas such as adaptive management and organizational effectiveness, grant management, budgeting and auditing, ASA practices and tactics, monitoring evaluation and learning, fundraising and financial sustainability, etc.

For ASA, the end of Year Zero would be a first important reflection point on the longer learning journey. Rather than spending the entire first year only on planning, it should focus on fairly rapidly getting actors onboard with an initial tranche of funding, setting incremental shorter-term goals (against longer term aspirations) and start testing different methods and how to assess and best learn from the effects. While receiving more intensive coaching and support during this period, it would help to refine activities and instruments – both for portfolio-wide MEL and MEL for individual grantees – having worked through some of the issues in practice. In the second year, the idea is that grantees will be better prepared for scaling their action strategies, based on greater ability to read and respond to the environment and use a discursive approach to ASA work that includes structured learning.

Grantees will then submit a more fulsome proposal for 3-4 years of work to the technical proposal selection panel to trigger full funding and inform second stage capacity development and support for

grantees. Grantees will then scale up implementation, with in-built monitoring and learning cycles to test theories and adjust based on learning and experimentation as appropriate.

**Figure 2. Call for proposals process cycle**



**6.4 Sustainability**

One of the key markers of success of ASA will be if it has developed the capabilities and social accountability practices of civic organizations which can endure beyond the project cycle of specific ASA grants. This requires that ASA support grantees to effectively leverage partnerships and resources to continue programs, services, and/or strategic activities that improve accountability in education beyond its initial support through ASA grants. It is therefore important that the ASA mechanism nurture and incentivize institutional sustainability of grantees. As such, ASA funding should select for institutionally healthy organizations (in terms of finance but also governance and management) and further help to build institutional capabilities in fundraising and budgeting, effective and adaptive management, building and implementing clear strategies and monitoring frameworks, etc. Approaches should also be defined in advance on how to address potential weaknesses which may arise, when organizations are not meeting minimum standards. Strategies for financial sustainability - premised on strong institutional capabilities - can be reinforced through the year zero and learning partner support, and with a

contextual analysis at the beginning which can guide the learning approach for grantees with the issue of both organizational and practice sustainability in mind.

Despite strong organizational health and institutional performance, resource mobilization in low-income countries, where there is little disposable income, will be very difficult, but most urgently needed. It is therefore critical to be realistic about what is possible in these settings within the current three to five-year funding cycle of ASA, while showing progress on pathways to sustainability. As ASA seeks to diversify its grantees, particularly to civic organizations which are traditionally excluded from decision making, it will be important to manage the tension between sustainability and diversification. A variety of strategies will therefore be needed to help improve the likelihood of grantees acquiring other sources of funding, including through the use of GPE funds to leverage additional funding, incentives to reward financial diversification and coordination with other funders in the field to identify and share quality proposals.

GPE support through ASA should also be an important catalyst for building and sharing the knowledge base of effective advocacy and social accountability practices in education. In some cases, grantees may be able to sustain and continue the specific projects which have been supported under ASA. However, the uptake and scaling of social accountability practice is also an important dimension of sustainability, as ASA seeks to transform the governance landscape for education to be more publicly accountable through enhanced civic engagement. This may be reinforced by in-built efforts to help governments to adopt and continue practices that make sense via their national education systems, as part of wider efforts to create systematic mechanisms for civil engagement. Several dimensions of the GPE model might provide opportunities to explore coherence between education sector plans, GPE financing to implement those plans, and good practice identified through ASA for civic engagement.

Both types of sustainability (institutional and practice) are more difficult in environments which are fragile, have very closed spaces for civil society, suffer from fragility or poor governance. In these environments, civil society accountability work can be dangerous, and requires additional supports to ensure that the requisite safeguards and resiliency are reinforced for grantees. Several other funders (e.g. Hewlett Foundation, Ford Foundation) have experience developing strategies to adapt their support for grantees working in these contexts, from which GPE and the ASA grant agent may adopt measures appropriate to ASA.

## **6.5 Ensuring a sustainable transition for coalitions**

The proposed criteria for eligibility for ASA grants will lead to the ineligibility of several countries, in which national education coalitions were previously supported through CSEF. This requires a strategic transition support plan to ensure that GPE plays the role of a responsible funder and the coalitions are minimally affected due to this phase out.

First, a review of individual cases will help determine their transition readiness. This review, to be conducted by the regional Secretariats and GCE, will include information and analysis of:

- The life cycle of the coalition including its achievements and challenges
- Support from GPE and the degree of dependence on CSEF support
- Current state of sustainability and fund-raising strategy

Based on this review, an individually customized and time bound grant phase-out plan, including recommended levels of funding to provide for up to a 12-month transition period, will be recommended by GCE and the relevant Regional Secretariat, with final review and approval by the ASA GA. The transition support plan will be implemented with the support of appropriate learning partners, as needed, as well as with support from Regional Secretariats and GCE, working with the coalition in question.

The transition support plan will be implemented in parallel with the 'year zero' of ASA, with the objective of providing transitional support to help coalitions to develop and begin implementing a sustainability plan going forward without funding support from GPE. The sustainability plan can include an analysis of country funding environment, the possible products that the coalition can develop and offer for funding, identification of possible funders and strategies for institutional strengthening. It will also prepare the coalition for potential future eligibility for ASA mechanism in case the country becomes a GPE partner. Implementing and learning from the transition support plan for coalitions no longer eligible for financing from ASA will inform and help formulate a graduation strategy for the other ASA supported organizations.

## Chapter 7. Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Strategy

ASA MEL is designed for both accountability and learning purposes, and takes into account the findings of the CSEF mid-term evaluation on how to improve monitoring for the advocacy and accountability work of civil society. ASA MEL activities will be undertaken by all stakeholders in ASA, including the Grant Agent, grantees and learning partners. This chapter outlines the functions of ASA MEL, and how it will be operationalized.

### 7.1. Reporting responsibilities

The Grant Agent will be responsible for ensuring strong fiduciary oversight, and to set up clear monitoring and reporting systems capable of supporting good M & E across a large number of comparatively small grants for civil society.

**Grantee minimum reporting requirements:** The Grant Agent may determine the minimum reporting requirements from grantees but these are likely to include an Annual Financial Report, Procurement Plan, indicative table of disbursements and milestones, latest results framework, operational plan, deliverables that evidence achievement of milestones and change stories. Grantees will provide regular 'light touch' updates on a quarterly basis focusing on how core capabilities and principles enable them to progress in their work, and a yearly, more in-depth report which ideally would coincide with their overall organizational reporting (Annual Report) and have a broader perspective of their collective efforts to deliver on the ASA objectives with a brief analysis and explanation that links it to ASA support and relevant organizational indicators.

**Grant agent reporting requirements:** Grant agents will provide regular bi-annual progress reports on both financial and technical aspects of the ASA program. The GPE Secretariat will regularly review the Grant Agent role in terms of managing the ASA portfolio, including its capability to manage funds with fiduciary reporting responsibilities, capability to contract and manage technical selection panels for grants and Learning Partners Network, and capacity to compile regular reporting, drawing on the reports from different ASA actors (grantees, learning network partners, evaluative function, GPE Secretariat etc.) for submission to the GPE Board.

**Grant agent evaluation function:** The Grant Agent will also ensure that an evidence-base is being built i.e. facilitation and external validation around evidence is built in from the start and across the portfolio. This function would include the establishment of a baseline across grantees, regular and iterative data gathering and analysis against the overall ToC, and a mid- and end-term evaluation. Given the need for impartiality and getting an outside perspective, this function is best filled by the Grant Agent, even if the *evaluative information* (i.e. the evidence-base for the evaluation) is something that actors who are part of the change process, and ideally those who need to use it for their own decision-making (whether at community/beneficiary or policy level) are part of collecting and interpreting continuously for their own use and needs.

- Using sampling from across grantees and other Learning Partners and Learning Collaboratives as applicable, it would analyze patterns and emerging issues (technical or operational) that may need further unpacking at portfolio level.
- The evaluation function will be particularly useful for regularly assessing and, if needed, extend the boundaries of intervention (e.g. for including previously excluded groups), as well as to expose blind spots to enhance system performance and functionality against the overall objectives and ToC.
- In terms of operationalization, a staged approach should be considered so that it is responsive to information gaps that become apparent as part of the evaluative process. As in any utilization-focused evaluation process *use and usefulness of information* should guide what to focus on and what to commission to fill encountered data gaps.

## 7.2 Functions of ASA's learning-oriented monitoring and evaluation

According to OECD-DAC criteria<sup>6</sup>, evaluation has the dual function of learning and accountability, which describes the process of evaluation as the systematic and objective assessment of an ongoing or completed intervention or strand of work to improve future efforts through feedback and learning. Evaluation should also provide '*a basis for accountability, including the provision of information to the public*'.<sup>7</sup> Evaluative information systematically collected is also needed for *monitoring*, described as the process of regularly assessing progress so that learning and adjustments can be made to original plans. As such, monitoring and evaluation activities within ASA are geared both to helping the partnership understand the impact of its investments on the ASA goal and objectives, but also to support learning among grantees and partners about the practice of advocacy and social accountability efforts.

In a comprehensive learning-oriented MEL framework, learning about how and why progress towards shared objectives may or may not occur should be something that benefit all actors (rather than just for upwards accountability and control). The ASA MEL strategy will therefore combine both the accountability and learning functions of M & E, within a multi-level program to build shared objectives, define learning goals and monitor the impact of ASA investments. It is important to stress, however, that these two functions are not opposed to one another. Rather, facilitated learning should be seen as a means to reaching desired results for which grantees are being held accountable. Any MEL system should seek to help actors navigate and cooperate within the system by more openly sharing and engaging in monitoring activities and dialogue around progress and results. The ASA MEL strategy is therefore also explicitly geared to achieve the goal of ASA by helping to enhance the capacity of civil society and is designed to ensure that systematic feedback loops are built-in to ASA's processes to support grantee learning. Learning-oriented M&E needs to be geared both to capturing the outcomes of

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<sup>6</sup> OECD Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC). "Principles for Evaluation of Development Assistance", Paris, 1991, [www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/50584880.pdf](http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/50584880.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> The accountability notion of evaluation referred to here relates to the developmental results and impact of development assistance as distinct from accountability for the use of public funds in an accounting and legal sense, which usually is assigned to an audit institution.



capacity development efforts (communication activities, participatory research, learning-by-doing, trainings, skills-building etc.), and to contribute to it by continuously assessing how it affects and alters dynamics, attitudes and practices towards longer-term aspirations and shared principles.

**Table 2: Indicative Results Framework for ASA**

Dimension				Learning Indicators
Objective 1	<b>Coalition participation</b>	Coalition’s participatory engagement of members in decision-making, events, activities and capacity development opportunities	Coalition governance including democratic leadership practices, equity, diversity and transparency	Clear learning goals around improving the fulfilment of coalition functions
	<b>Strategic national engagement</b>	Context analysis, including of political/economic environment, role of coalition in that environment and identification of problems	Policy inputs developed and delivered to national decision-makers which are timely, relevant, targeted to the right decision-makers and which receive a response	Clear learning goals around strategies to influence government and evidence of adaptation
Objective 2	<b>Data availability</b>	Implementation of practices to generate information to highlight a problem set or solution set, including through citizen led monitoring exercises	Interpretation, presentation and translation of data and dissemination of data to the public	Learning goals around how to ensure that data is actionable and motivates civic action
	<b>Strategic sub national participation</b>	Mobilization and participation of citizens through targeted transparency	Citizen feedback and inputs developed and delivered in a timely and effective way to sub-national decision-makers and which	Learning goals around strategies for effective citizen mobilization and strategies to

			gets a response from government	motivate stronger government response
Objective 3	<b>Transnational alliance building</b>	Context analysis of problems to be solved through transnational actions, self-assessment of role of alliance in this context and consensus among members on approaches to solving a challenge	Development or strengthening of transnational civil society alliances using collaborative arrangements and connected tactics	Learning goals around transnational work, supported through cross-national peer exchange, support, and learning
	<b>Strategic global engagement</b>	Advocacy campaigns targeting transnational policy and normative frameworks and decision-makers	Advocacy strategy linked to national level policy action including evidence of responses from transnational and national authorities	Learning goals to explore and build stronger capacity on transnational tactics and strategies for what works to drive outcomes at national level

### 7.3 Monitoring the ASA Theory of Change

The overall purpose of the MEL strategy is to assist actors within the ASA ‘universe’ to learn, adapt and navigate unpredictable change processes towards shared objectives outlined in the ASA ToC.

These ASA ToC objectives are:

1. Strengthened national civil society engagement in education planning, policy dialogue and monitoring.
2. Strengthened civil society roles in promoting the transparency and accountability of national education sector policy and implementation, and
3. A stronger global and transnational enabling environment created for civil society advocacy and transparency efforts.

From a MEL perspective, the building of capabilities to deliver on these objectives can be seen as a function of learning. It will therefore be important to monitor and evaluate both capabilities built (from doing and learning) and results achieved (which may be on an output or outcome level). Acknowledging

that capabilities are linked and mutually reinforcing in order to build overall organizational capacity, some skills and capabilities will be more relevant than others both in relation to different functions played by grantees, coalitions and alliances and in relation to the different ASA Objectives as outlined in the overall ASA ToC. These are further highlighted below, along with key results indicators as aligned to the overall ASA ToC results framework.

As the overall goal for ASA states, the mechanism is fundamentally about *“enhanced civil society capacity to further GPE2020 goals in learning, equity and stronger systems, by improving their participation, advocacy and efforts to improve transparency and increased effectiveness in national educational policy and implementation processes.”*<sup>8</sup> ASA MEL will seek to mainstream the tracking of core capabilities as linked to the tracking of results, starting with grantees doing a capability self-assessment which will serve as a baseline going forward. Capabilities will always be contextualized and assessed in relation to the organization’s ability to achieve results against the overall ASA results framework. It will also seek to connect operational learning to the building of internal capacities. Additionally, by using the same capability tracking system across the portfolio, it will enable organizations learn both individually and collectively from each other in relation to how they contribute to the overall ASA ToC.

In addition to each grantee developing a framework for tracking these capabilities in relation to its results achievement (aligned to the ASA ToC), the Learning Network Partner in charge of cross-portfolio learning would seek to use individual grantees’ self-assessments to see where and under what conditions capabilities emerge most/less in different contexts and any reasons for this, using e.g. organizational spider diagrams or similar to enhance comparability. The five core (and inter-linked) capabilities are: (i) the capability to commit and engage, (ii) the capability to carry out technical and logistical tasks and to generate development results, (iii) the capability to relate to context and attract others, (iv) the capability to balance diversity and coherence achieve coherence, (v) the capability to adapt and self-renew. These should then be cross-tabulated with the overall results framework and adapted to the objectives and operating context of each individual grantee.

It is also proposed that the MEL strategy adopts a *‘staged adaptation approach’* so that once the aspirational goals are clearly articulated alongside the intended overall contribution by each participating entity (grantee, coalition, learning partner etc.), multiple pathways and iterative experimentation is undertaken on how to best get there. What is constant and consistently reported on, however, is how key principles are upheld, and how key capabilities are built towards those longer-term objectives.

**Objective 1: Strengthened national civil society engagement in education planning, policy dialogue and monitoring:** This outcome area seeks to strengthen civil society engagement in formal education policy processes, using the GPE partnership approach to sector planning as an important entry-point and platform. In terms of capabilities to be strengthened, it covers civil society’s ability to participate

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<sup>8</sup> Internal note, to Technical Advisory Panel Meeting, May 23, 2018. “Elaborating the ASA Theory of Change and Calls for Proposals”.

effectively in policy dialogue and governance, and to contribute evidence-based and policy relevant solutions in a timely, strategic and constructive manner. In particular, civil society coalitions supported through the Civil Society Education Fund are seen as key actors here in terms of playing a brokering role for collective positioning and information exchange among members. As ASA plans to invest in strengthening coalitions to play this role, the inclusiveness, governance of these coalitions will be important to support and monitor, using the MEL framework. The ASA MEL strategy will therefore, in the first instance, provide the framework for monitoring cross-cutting indicators across the whole portfolio, to establish the extent to which ASA has help to improve civil society participation, capacity, and strategic influence. See Annex x for an indicative results framework that should apply across the whole portfolio to monitor efforts to achieve objective 1, and which would provide the basis for a common shared understanding of the contribution of ASA as a whole.

Moreover, the objective stresses the importance for civil society groups to have the capacity to engage strategically in policy processes using evidence, clear positioning, and effective tactics of influence. The way civil society coalitions involve members and beneficiaries in building that evidence-base, using data gathering through the ongoing monitoring process will help build that evidence-base ‘from below’. Although funding under Operational Component’s results area is meant to benefit primarily the existing national coalitions, other grantees will also contribute to the monitoring of this Coalition performance from their perspective if/when they participate in coalition work.

	With which key indicators?	To be used how?
Coalitions	<p><b>Capabilities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Internal capabilities, including governance, leadership and ability to engage, adapt and renew (using 5 core capabilities framework)</li> <li>-Ability to produce and use context analysis, including political and economic analysis</li> <li>-Ability to reach and effectively engage members at the subnational level.</li> </ul> <p><b>Result indicators:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Number and examples of policy inputs developed and delivered to national decision-makers,</li> <li>-Assessed level of timeliness in relation to uptake</li> <li>-Evidenced of uptake (discourse, use) of policy inputs</li> <li>-Level of inclusiveness in gathering data, involving relevant citizens, and particularly the marginalized</li> <li>-Evidence of effective use of political context and gender analyses at regional/national levels.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Learning dialogues and exchanges with other coalitions.</li> <li>-Capability tracking, with emphasis on governance &amp; diversity</li> <li>-Results tracking and reporting</li> <li>-Learning around effectiveness of strategies in relation to level of influence using GPE supported formal mechanisms of policy engagement</li> </ul>

**Objective 2: Strengthened civil society roles in promoting the transparency and accountability of national education sector policy and implementation:** The outcome area under this objective focuses on ‘increased public access to information which is used to inform civic action for improved education in GPE countries’. Focusing efforts on improving transparency and accountability in the sector, activities under this results area include e.g. civic monitoring of education policy implementation and service delivery, closing important data gaps. Strategic multi-level monitoring, using the evidence to formulate and act on relevant policy solutions and redress mechanisms puts emphasis on increasing both the availability, sources and variety of information to advance public interest in education, and increase its use and uptake at different levels.

The principles related to learning-oriented monitoring incorporated into this proposal will help build capacities for involving ultimate beneficiaries and rights holders in the data gathering and data interpretation processes. Using gathered evaluative information for reflection in iterative processes of learning is also meant to strengthen analytical skills in relation to strategy formulation and adaptation. Involving intended stakeholders, such as citizens, local officials, and other users in evidence-based learning opportunities will contribute to the intended outcome of increasing public access to information and also provide a good basis for advocacy for the implementing grantees.

This window of support under ASA is directed towards individual grantees who work on transparency, governance more broadly (not necessarily only in the education sector) which will help widen skills and learning across the ASA portfolio. It is therefore foreseen that a number of these grantees, based on expressed interest and demand, can form peer-to-peer ‘learning collaboratives’ aimed at specifically learning or experimenting with a certain approach or method, and that lessons from these peer-initiated learning efforts then gets shared and mainstreamed more broadly across the portfolio and in relation to strengthening the Coalitions. Grantees working with strengthening information provision and use should therefore seek to specifically monitor and regularly reflect on how their efforts of linking information to action and joint agenda setting among civil society lead to actual changes in perceptions, attitudes, discourse or behavior that aligns with longer-term education sector policy and implementation in a given context. The focus on actionable data at multiple levels also implies that efforts of gathering data and other evaluative information on a regular basis should not be extractive but have an empowering dynamic.

	<b>With which key indicators?</b>	<b>To be used how?</b>
Grantees	<p><b>Capabilities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Full self-assessment with an emphasis on ability to contribute effectively to delivering against the outcome objective at the outset (using 5 core capabilities framework)</li> <li>-Capability to empower citizens/stakeholders/rights holders to be part of data gathering, interpretation and use</li> <li>-Capability to carry out learning-oriented monitoring</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Capabilities for organizational-level learning-oriented M&amp;E that empowers citizens is built in grantee organizations, with lessons and experimentation along agreed principles for data gathering is being shared across peers.</li> <li>- While data is being regularly gathered and used, lessons on how to make it motivate social mobilization and civic action will emerge and feed into further exploration in peer-to-peer learning</li> </ul>

	With which key indicators?	To be used how?
	<p>-Increased use of gathered data for internal learning and reflection</p> <p>- Increased capability to gather evaluative information on a regular basis (to be validated and used by external evaluators) – contributing to participatory evaluation</p> <p><b>Results indicators:</b></p> <p>-Data is being used to strengthen the closing of citizen feedback loops in education sector reform given grantees’ role in involving citizen in gathering of information and feeding it into established formal engagement structures such as the national Coalitions and the broader GPE framework.</p> <p>-Public is increasingly informed about reform options based on user preferences.</p> <p>-Data on the most marginalized and ‘hard to reach’ groups (e.g. girls in risk of school drop-out) is being included in national dialogue discussions.</p> <p>-Extent to which evidence-based advocacy is empowering, not extractive, for end beneficiaries.</p>	<p>collaboratives where a sub-group of grantees engage in joint learning-by-doing on specific topics or themes.</p>

**Objective 3: A stronger global and transnational enabling environment created for civil society advocacy and transparency efforts:** This outcome area seeks to strengthen transnational, and vertically integrated<sup>9</sup> civil society alliances that are ‘able to effectively advocate for global and regional policy frameworks that enable improved education in GPE countries’. These alliances may be involved in areas that bear on GPE country level work, such as aid effectiveness, financing and cross-sectoral synergies, bringing together actors in consortia who may otherwise not come together in the education space. The purpose of the coalitions could be to engage in norm setting, providing additional leverage to policy implementation at national and local levels or to influence transnational policy regimes by grounding them real examples and work happening on the ground.

Fulfilling this objective requires on the one hand building civil society capacity to work effectively across countries to influence transnational policy frameworks, and on the other effectively leverage global and regional policy opportunities to drive improved national policy and implementation.

From a MEL perspective, it will be important to track and measure how these capabilities of working transnationally emerge among coalition members in order to link it to their increased capability to take advantage of global and regional policy opportunities over time, and how these are then translated back

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<sup>9</sup> See Fox, J. “Scaling Accountability through Vertically Integrated Civil Society Policy Monitoring & Advocacy”, Making All Voices Count and Accountability Research Center, Dec. 2016, and Fox, J., “Doing Accountability Differently – A Proposal for the Vertical Integration of Civil Society Monitoring & Advocacy”, U4 & Accountability Research Center, 2016

into operational work at their different levels of operations. While such capabilities and their effects on progressing jointly should be monitored by each participating organization, and jointly by the consortia, larger impact, particularly at transnational level can be harder to capture. This is, however, where the evaluation function (using an external team) can add value, looking at emerging consortia engagement capabilities against actual normative/policy impact using contribution analysis and process tracing.

	With which key indicators?	To be used how?
Grantees (as members or alliances)	<p><b>Capabilities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Capabilities to relate, engage and collaborate in transnational consortia structures.</li> <li>-Capabilities to understand and work in complex contexts involving multi-level structures with inherent power dynamics, drawing on comparative advantages to affect broader normative or policy frameworks.</li> <li>-Capacity to close information loops and contextualize for national/sub-national usefulness and applicability.</li> <li>-Problem-solving and consensus-building capabilities</li> </ul> <p><b>Results indicators:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Context analysis effectively used and incorporated in agreed consortia ToC, including power dimensions among different consortia members addressed</li> <li>-Extent to which ASA transnational advocacy strategies are linked to national level policy action</li> <li>-Extent to which transnational and national authorities respond to transnational advocacy efforts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Grantees – individually or as broader alliances of actors carry out their own capacity self-assessments using the framework (5 core capabilities) outlined above, with emphasis on tracking the building of capabilities to function and move policy as a consortia and multi-level alliance. These capabilities are assessed against more concrete contextualized results according to agreed objectives and ToC where actors’ complementarities are mapped out and agreed on.</li> <li>-The evaluative function would seek to validate and trace advocacy efforts to higher level policy influence.</li> </ul>

### 7.4 Learning Partner Network

Learning Partners (LPs) are expert partners selected by the Grant Agent and grantees on the basis of their ability to provide regular and ongoing support to grantees. Learning Partners should contribute to efforts to strengthen the capacity of grantees, including building and strengthening the operational evidence-base through collaborative/action research e.g. on topics that grantees are engaging in, supporting the use and uptake of relevant evidence (e.g. political economy & country context analysis or vulnerability assessments, gender analyses etc.), or by participating in collaborative learning exchange processes as facilitators or mentors. This could be within their geographic area (e.g. facilitating regional sharing of lessons) or their area of expertise (e.g. on citizen outreach, social mobilization, social

accountability, participatory monitoring, movement building for advocacy or organizational learning processes including MEL support).

Learning Partners can also help grantees deepen their learning-oriented monitoring practices, making sure beneficiaries are part of the wider ASA MEL process and that such participation is empowering.<sup>10</sup> These learning partners can both assist with the critical work in year zero, engage in ongoing mentoring and coaching, and act as a ‘critical friend’ to provide feedback and quality control to grantees both to (i) strengthen their MEL and adaptive management and organizational learning capacities in-house, and (ii) to provide some overall coherence in line with the overall MEL strategy and the guiding results framework outlined in this document. It is recommended that the Grant Agent allocate a minimum of 10-15% of the overall ASA portfolio to mount a learning partner network through transparent procurement processes. In addition, the Grant Agent should set aside an earmark of at least 5% for capacity response funds to be able to address learning needs as they arise among grantees over the course of the implementation period. This allocation is in keeping with the capacity support costs of traditional civil society grant programs, with the following considerations for how to manage a learning partner network in the context of ASA:

- Learning needs will be identified both in terms of core capacities which are required to effectively implement ASA programs, and also which are important for civil society to be able to undertake ongoing learning by doing, so learning partners should be sought to address these dual areas for learning support
- No one actor will be able to respond to the learning needs of all grantees, so the Grant Agent should be enabled to contract additional learning partners
- All learning needs are not readily identified before implementation begins, and as such Grant Agents should be enabled to respond to learning needs that are identified progressively through an allocation for such (i.e. a rapid response fund for learning needs)

### **Intermediary learning partner**

Either the Grant Agent, or one or more learning partners would need to play an *intermediary function* for the capacity development and learning efforts of the network, responding to the learning agenda defined and owned by grantees themselves. This intermediary would seek to gather and connect lessons from across the portfolio, and to engage in an intermediary ‘matching’ function:

- to match and connect actors who could benefit from each other’s expertise or experience and
- to ensure that organizationally focused learning links into broader system learning across grantees and the overall results reporting.

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<sup>10</sup> Multiple comparators (including GPSA, Wellspring Fund and Hewlett Foundation) confirmed their use of learning partners and learning strategies to enhance programmatic impact.



This intermediary function would also be responsible for synthesizing learning and make sure that the learning collaboratives' 'learning journeys' are documented, codified and shared more broadly, drawing extensively on qualitative feedback and examples. Embedding action research and external Learning Partners in/across grantees' initiatives will also help surface any delivery challenges related to partner relations, systems or context for iterative problem-solving and building the evidence-base.

### **Learning collaboratives**

The Global Campaign for Education and regional secretariats' (ASPBAE, CLADE, ANCEFA, ACEA) work to support capacity development and exchange across the CSEF network provides a foundation and model for learning collaboratives in ASA – where grantees to work together to building capacity and learning in response to emerging learning gaps. In learning collaboratives, grantees are in charge of their own monitoring of projects that are closely aligned to their overall organizational objectives and strategic priorities so that MEL support is integrated in their day-to-day operations and they build internal, evidence-based learning capabilities. Learning collaboratives are made up of implementing grantees who express a special interest in peer learning on a particular topic or theme. The grant agent may make additional funding available that will be specifically dedicated to exchanging with peers and engage in joint learning from experimentation. Grantees will be jointly responsible for initiating a Learning Collaborative on the selected theme which will also be open to others. The precise themes and number of initial collaboratives will be determined during the inception phase (Year Zero) based on a harvesting of ideas from pre-selected grantees. Each Learning Collaborative will have a Learning Partner embedded into its learning node to facilitate documentation and linking of lessons to the main learning support function.

## **7.5. Linking learning in ASA and KIX**

Within ASA, the MEL approach will help to generate learning and knowledge about the practice of ASA, for the benefit of grantees and the field of ASA more widely. While the ASA MEL strategy supports the internal knowledge exchange – including the identification of innovations and good practice - among civil society and with its learning partners in the field, KIX – and particularly the Learning Exchange - offers the gateway for this learning to be shared more widely with the partnership, and for ASA grantees to benefit from learning and innovation sourced from the partnership through KIX (See Design Blueprint for Knowledge and Innovation Exchange for more details). While the precise modalities of this engagement between KIX Learning Exchange and ASA will be refined as the blueprints become operationalized and iterated, the following touch points offer significant opportunity for cross-fertilization:

- ASA grantees participation in Evidence to Practice Networks, to contribute to thematic learning in collaboration with developing country partners'
- ASA grantees knowledge, research and data shared through the Knowledge Hub for digital collaboration and communication

- Visionary leader from the fields of advocacy and social accountability to join the Leadership Council for KIX to provide advisory support
- ASA grantees can contribute research and evidence to the evidence to practice toolkit and use it for their own learning on key issues which they work on

## Chapter 8. ASA Fund Management

### 8.1 Management arrangements

The ASA Grant Agent will manage the portfolio of grants for all operational components. The Grant Agent(s) for ASA will generally use the operational and fiduciary mechanisms with which it normally operates in the given context. A management group will be established comprised of the core leadership team from the Grant Agent and members of the GPE Secretariat to ensure regular communication and collaboration in management decisions affecting the program. Further details on the role of Grant Agent can be found in the ASA Grant Agent Terms of Reference, and the details of the management arrangements will be further elaborated in the Grant Agent ASA portfolio application.

### 8.2. Roles and responsibilities of the Grant Agent

The Grant Agent is key in ensuring that the GPE grants are appropriately managed and fully aligned with broader goals of GPE 2020 and the policies of the partnership as a whole. The Grant Agent for ASA will manage the portfolio of ASA grants for the three operational components, using appropriate operational and fiduciary mechanisms. Given the implementation timeline of up to 4 years for grants, Grant Agents should plan five years of program management support, to include the set-up of call for proposals and program infrastructure, as well as final end-of-program evaluation and reporting activities.

The Grant Agent's operational role is to create and implement an operational plan for the management of ASA funds, including how it would undertake calls for proposals, support capacity development, monitoring evaluation and learning across the portfolio, and ensure strong fiduciary oversight. The Grant Agent will have to manage both the network of Learning Partners for ASA, and work with the GPE Secretariat and KIX Grant Agent to exploit linkages between ASA and the Learning Exchange platform.

1. Support the design of grant programs for all three operational components of ASA
2. Manage award process including disbursement of GPE funds to implementing partners
3. Provide monitoring and quality assurance for a portfolio of grants
4. Provide technical support to grantees as needed and in line with the contextual needs and specific purpose of each grant
5. Work with the Secretariat to ensure integration of ASA activities into country level policy processes and to the Learning Exchange

Each of these roles is detailed in the sections below.

**Support the design of grant programs**

Following the selection of a Grant Agent, there will need to be an intensive process of developing the ASA portfolio application, including the operational plan, implementation timeline and budget for the ASA funding mechanism. The operational plan and timeline, created by the Grant Agent in collaboration with the Secretariat, will detail program objectives, processes, outcomes and schedules for all elements of the grant-making process, including the design and refinement of a call for proposals, promoting the call for proposals, managing selection by an independent technical panel, and management of a portfolio of grants with respect to approval and notification processes, implementation periods, reporting requirements, revisions, and amendments. It should also include a detailed budget, including provisions for the contracting of any agents to support the delivery of the program.

The plan will also build on the work done in this blueprint, and determine which components need to be contracted out to third parties based on institutional capacity, monitoring and adaptive approaches from learnings. The ASA portfolio application will clearly outline the Grant Agent's roles and responsibilities and the specific processes and timeframe for their implementation. It will ensure that grant and program designs are strategically aligned with the goal and objectives of ASA, relevant at the country level, technically strong and built on realistic assessments that consider the capacity of key stakeholders and what is achievable by when.

**Manage award process and disbursement of GPE funds**

The Grant Agent is responsible for managing all phases of the call for proposal process based on GPE strategy and policy, as well as industry best practices, as defined in the Grant Agent operational plan. Once a grant has been defined, these responsibilities include advertising the call for proposals, providing appropriate guidance to potential applicants, preparing submitted proposals for review, managing selection by an independent technical panel on an agreed timeline, awarding the grant, dispersing funds to implementing partners, and providing transparent and accurate reporting to GPE. Note that the Grant Agent has final authority in the grant selection process.

Additionally, the Grant Agent provides fiduciary oversight throughout the grant-making process, including the selection of implementing partners, corrective action to ensure effective implementation in accordance with the Grant Agent's own oversight policies and procedures including those related to audit, eligible expenditures, employment and supervision of consultants and the procurement of goods and works, and in accordance with GPE policies. These policies shall include an open, transparent and documented process; codified selection process and criteria; vetting by arms-length technical panel; protest process; internal and external auditing; and a whistle-blower policy. If possible, the Grant Agent should also outline how it intends to fund citizen organizations that are not legally registered, if applicable.

**Provide monitoring and quality assurance for a portfolio of grants**

Grant monitoring is critical for reporting results in a way that demonstrates that grant objectives are being met and to detect and resolve problems early. Grant reporting requirements managed by the Grant Agent require that all implementing partners report on a routine basis and share information about their activities, products and publications with the GPE Secretariat and the Partnership. The Grant Agent is responsible for monitoring the performance of the ASA grant portfolio, including all individual grants. The Grant Agent should develop a clear mechanism to monitor levels of maturity and sustainability of civil society across the portfolio that is objective and arms-length. The Grant Agent should prepare regular reports for the Secretariat using agreed standard templates, including grant progress and completion reports, financial performance reports, and mission and monitoring reports that relate to the ASA grants. The Grant Agent should also identify the risks to implementation of ASA, and propose appropriate risk mitigation measures (including and in particular for inappropriate politicization of civil society grantees). Reviews of the overall progress of the grant portfolio and individual grants within it will be delivered, as well as a program evaluation, evidence and lessons learned from administering and managing the grants will be provided at least once every six months to the Secretariat.

### **Provide technical support to grantees and manage Learning Partner network**

The Grant Agent shall offer technical resources and expertise during the grant proposal development and as relevant to the specific grant context for effective implementation of a grant. It is expected that the Grant Agent be responsive to evolving situations and ready to adapt its role according to emerging needs, if for instance a situation calls for more flexibility in terms of time and/or technical assistance. While monitoring and quality assurance activities are helpful in detecting problems early, support activities must be responsive in assisting implementing partners adjust planned activities and budgets when unforeseen circumstances, capacity gaps, or other situations arise that affect implementation.

It is important to note that the Grant Agent's adaptive approach must apply not just to designing a three to five-year program at the start but to designing components that will allow them to change approaches after initial results. Furthermore, it is important to note that technical support is complex and requires a trusting relationship and close collaboration with implementing partners, particularly when problems arise. In the operational plan, the Grant Agent will need to specify triggers as well as the level of support provided to mitigate risks and maximize the outcomes of ASA investments. The Grant Agent will ensure that contracted implementing partners deliver against a clearly laid out set of activities and outcomes; and will monitor and take action if the partners do not fulfil these terms.

The Grant Agent is also expected to mount the Learning Partner Network and manage the capacity development infrastructure for grantees. This includes recruiting appropriate Learning Partners to meet the needs of grantees both in year zero and as the program evolves, and to support grantees to achieve learning goals as set out in their proposals. The Grant Agent may want to set aside a reserve of funds to manage learning needs that arise in the course of implementing ASA to respond to demand for capacity support as different challenges or gaps appear in the course of implementation.

The Grant Agent's portfolio application will need to outline how it will do all of the above, associated costs in line with the estimated cost structure below, as well as the call for proposals criteria, processes, and standards for procurement of any partner with which it will work to deliver on any of the program requirements.

### 8.3. Secretariat roles and responsibilities

The Secretariat is responsible for ensuring the program is being effectively implemented by the Grant Agent, and is sufficiently supported by and integrated into the other operational tools and approaches employed by GPE. This includes the following specific responsibilities:

- Maintains regular contact with the Grant Agent to support the effective management of ASA funds, from application to programmatic and financial closing of the grant, and particularly in cases where risk action plans are agreed.
- Supports the development of the Grant Agent's ASA portfolio application, to ensure coherence with GPE's policies, standards, ASA blueprint and operating model.
- Reviews and advises on pertinent approaches to monitoring, evaluation, learning and capacity development, including acting as a key resource in the establishment and execution of the learning partner network and the Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning strategy.
- Reviews the overall progress of the grant portfolio and individual grants within it at least once every six months, and undertakes oversight missions and monitoring as needed.
- Supports the preparation of the progress and/or grant completion report(s) as required for the relevant Board and committees, and ensures adherence of the Grant Agent to GPE's reporting standards and actions including in cases of misuse of funds.
- Participates in the technical selection panel review of ASA proposals, and supports consistency and quality in the application of standards of assessment across the portfolio
- Audits technical review processes for proposal selection and capacity support strategies
- Ensures coherence, linkages and complementarity between ASA, KIX and GPE's country support operations.
- Commissions and executes midterm and end of program evaluations of ASA

### 8.4 Indicative costs

An estimate of the cost breakdown is included below, based on the CSEF cost structure, average management fees (both direct and indirect) and the allocation guidance of the Board. (For Secretariat costs please see section 9.3.) The budget will be refined as part of the development of the ASA portfolio application by the Grant Agent, so this should be considered illustrative only. Further elaboration of both the overall ASA operational cost structure, as well as the cost structure of individual grants should be included.

Table 3. Indicative Costs

<b>ASA GRANT SUPPORT</b>					
<b>Description</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>OC1: Support for national coalitions</b>					
Grants for national education coalitions	4,000,000	5,500,000	5,500,000	16,000,000	27%
Funding for GCE's cross-national advocacy	500,000	500,000	500,000	1,500,000	3%
GCE and regional capacity support for national coalitions	1,500,000	1,500,000	1,500,000	4,500,000	8%
<b>OC2: Social Accountability</b>					
Grants for social accountability	2,000,000	4,000,000	5,000,000	11,000,000	18%
<b>OC3: Transnational advocacy</b>					
Grants for transnational advocacy	2,000,000	4,000,000	5,000,000	11,000,000	18%
<b>TOTAL GRANTS</b>	<b>10,000,000</b>	<b>15,500,000</b>	<b>17,500,000</b>	<b>44,000,000</b>	<b>73%</b>

ASA MANAGEMENT AND SUPPORT COSTS							
Description	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	TOTAL	%
<b>Monitoring and Evaluation*</b>							
By grant agent for evaluation function	500,000	250,000	250,000	250,000	1,000,000	2,250,000	4%
<b>Learning partner network and capacity building</b>							
Support for capacity building, mentoring and learning exchange among grantees	1,500,000	750,000	750,000	750,000	750,000	4,500,000	8%
<b>Grant Agent Administration and management</b>							
Indirect costs (agency fees)	840,000	840,000	840,000	840,000	840,000	4,200,000	7%
Direct program management costs	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	5,000,000	8%
<b>TOTAL MANAGEMENT AND SUPPORT COSTS</b>	<b>3,840,000</b>	<b>2,840,000</b>	<b>2,840,000</b>	<b>2,840,000</b>	<b>3,590,000</b>	<b>15,950,000</b>	<b>27%</b>
<b>Total (Grants, management and support)</b>						<b>59,950,000</b>	

\*Monitoring and evaluation costs may include Secretariat administered activities.

## Chapter 9. Governance and Oversight

### 9.1 Proposed structures for oversight, monitoring and governance

At the highest level, ASA will be overseen by the GPE Board of Directors. This section sets out the illustrative roles that may be played by the actors at different levels in the governance of ASA. A more elaborate proposal for the governance arrangements (including the Secretariat role, who will have oversight of the Grant Agent, and how oversight will align with current quality assurance and oversight of Grant Agents for other funding streams) will be provided by the Secretariat alongside the final Grant Agent ASA portfolio application, but in broad terms some of the oversight roles envisioned include:

1. **GPE Board of Directors:** The GPE Board will have ultimate authority and oversight of ASA including the performance of the Grant Agent. The GPE Board will be updated at least annually on the performance of the ASA portfolio through the committee report to the Board from the Grant Agent.
2. **GPE Committee:** A delegated committee of the Board will have oversight of the ASA funding mechanism, as determined through the appropriate Board process for such matters. The GPE Board Coordinating Committee (CC), in lieu of the Governance and Ethics Committee, has taken on the role of allocating work to committees. During a Coordinating Committee call in May 2018, the committee decided that oversight of the mechanism will likely fall under the Grants and Performance Committee mandate based on the grant oversight role the committee plays. However, a final decision has yet to be made on the appropriate committee delegation for oversight of ASA. Pending this decision, further clarification will be provided on the mandate and authority of the committee vis a vis ASA governance. The selected committee will receive biannual reports on progress made implementing ASA and will deliberate on any major changes proposed for the program. In addition, per BOD/2018/06-12, the Strategy and Impact will review progress made on operationalizing ASA once the first round of call for proposals has been completed to provide a recommendation to the Board on allocating an additional \$10 million to the mechanism by June 2019.
3. **Secretariat:** The Secretariat will have day to day operational oversight of the ASA funding mechanism. The Secretariat will participate as an auditor and proposal reviewer on the technical proposal selection panels, review and provide quality assurance over the call for proposals processes and documents; and participate in events and networks related to ASA. The Secretariat will also manage any co-financing and matched funding raised using the Contributions and Safeguards Policy for ASA. Further details on the role of the Secretariat will be forthcoming in the governance arrangement paper.



9.2 Risks and Mitigation

Risks	Mitigation
<p>ASA does not address the principal design aims and is not sufficiently demand driven</p>	<p>SIC will review the blueprint presented in July and subsequent proposal from the Grant Agent in October on the extent to which it aligns with the Board mandated theory of change and design features and ensures these are met. Significant consultation has been undertaken with key stakeholders including CSOs and DCPs to ensure the final design reflects stakeholder input and demand. Inputs from experienced grant makers in the area of accountability through Technical Advisory Panel (TAP) have also been systematically sought to ensure a robust Theory of Change and operational design.</p>
<p>The Grant Agent is not sufficiently prepared to implement the program</p>	<p>Detailed Terms of Reference have been provided to Grant Agents candidate and recruitment is based on a rigorous assessment framework. The Secretariat will work closely with the Grant Agent to develop an ASA portfolio application and implementation arrangements that meet the needs of ASA. In addition, both an institutional assessment of minimum standards and a grant level assessment will be conducted prior to implementation to ensure sufficient capabilities are in place.</p>
<p>ASA design doesn't allow adaptive implementation and monitoring to inform iterative design</p>	<p>A detailed monitoring, evaluation and learning strategy will be developed to ensure close tracking of progress within each objective and their inter-relationship to ensure ongoing reflection and refinement by both grantees and the Grant Agent. Learning partners will be sought to support capacity development of the grantees so that they are able to participate in adaptive implementation. The MEL strategy will also include iterative feedback loops to adjust the design of the ASA mechanism to adjust to lessons learned from the first years of implementation.</p>
<p>CSEF III and the CSEF successor in ASA may require significant institutional changes which may delay a call for proposals from coalitions, thus putting at risk the continuity of work of education coalitions within CSEF.</p>	<p>A regular coordination mechanism has been established with GCE, who has been acting as both GA and program implementer. The design of the Operational Component 1 within ASA is done in consultation with GCE to ensure necessary reforms in line with the recommendations from the evaluation. GCE has requested for a 3 month no-cost extension to ensure that there is no gap in transition from CSEF to Operational Component 1. If a break in funding is anticipated due to delays in the operationalization of</p>

	ASA, a costed extension may be considered by GCE and the Board.
Partners do not adapt their roles and responsibilities to support the full implementation of ASA	A wide range of new civil society partners, in addition to the current CSEF partner coalitions will be coming on board in ASA. To ensure that the partner are well aware of their roles and responsibilities across local, national and transnational level, the roles will be clarified through the ASA Operational Manual, and capacity support through learning partners. Additionally, the Monitoring and Evaluation framework will include metrics on the roles of partners.
Fragmentation at country level	The introduction of a new funding stream for work at country level may increase fragmentation. Protocols will be developed to ensure that there is sufficient communication with GPE partners on the nature of the ASA funding, such as with Coordinating Agencies and Grant Agents managing other streams of GPE financing. The GPE Secretariat will also work closely with country partners to maximize the linkages between GPE’s different support mechanisms for countries, and year zero will provide an opportunity for iterative development of ASA plans which reflect national policy processes.
A Grant Agent is not secured by end of 2019, either because it is not selected, withdraws from the role, fails the institutional capacity or grant level assessments or does not have the ASA portfolio application approved by the Board	The Secretariat will put contingencies in place in case of any delays in the recruitment, selection and transfer of funds to the Grant Agent. Contingencies may include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Launching another recruitment effort to find a new Grant Agent, and delaying the launch of ASA until another Grant Agent can be secured.</li> <li>- Providing for a second review of an improved ASA portfolio application from original Grant Agent by the Board in June 2019</li> </ul>

### 9.3 Implications for Secretariat resources and capacity

A full treatment of the Secretariat resources required to support the ASA funding mechanism will be developed to accompany the final Grant Agent portfolio application. Current staffing in place to support ASA includes one full time staff (supporting oversight of CSEF) and 25% of a finance officer. In addition, 60% of one full time staff has been dedicated to supporting the design of ASA.

In order to maximize the benefits of ASA for the partnership and help to ground its work in the existing country operating model, it is expected that additional resourcing will be necessary. However, the ASA blueprint based on the selection of one Grant Agent identifies the need for additional resources to be modest. Under this scenario, the majority of responsibilities related to establishing the program

infrastructure would be delegated to the Grant Agent, for example in establishing and managing the Learning Partners Network and technical selection panels for proposal review.

Resources for the Secretariat will be required primarily to ensure that the Grant Agent is meeting its responsibilities and that ASA is contributing to and benefitting from GPE’s other core support for countries. The following scenarios are indicative only.

*Minimum resource scenario to allow for program management oversight of third party:*

- One full-time (existing) staff working to oversee the Grant Agent, which will have primary responsibility for implementation of ASA. GPE Secretariat staff would contribute to the proposal review and capacity development support to oversee ensure execution of consistent quality standards.
- One additional operational support officer would be required to ensure backend support.
- Approximate budget for mission travel, consolidation of learning from ASA and field building, direct support for country partners including advising on capacity development support could be up to \$175,000 annually

Maximum resource scenario to allow for greater connection with GPE’s other operational support at both country and global levels:

- 1 staff (additional) full-time to work with Learning Partners network and ensuring linkages with KIX, including in the use of the Learning Exchange Modalities by ASA Grantees
- 1 staff (additional) full-time ensuring linkages with country level grants, technical support and policy dialogue, with hands on support for country level engagement of ASA grantees and to oversee Grant Agent processes and standards
- 1 part-time staff for financial management to ensure timely disbursements, reporting, auditing and control mechanisms for multiple GAs.
- Approximate budget for mission travel, consolidation of learning from ASA and field building, direct support for country partners including curation of capacity development support could be up to \$250,000 annually

**9.4. Next steps and road map**

The following sequence for implementation is envisaged, once the Grant Agent has undergone a capacity assessment, developed and quality-assured the ASA portfolio applications and had the Board approve its proposal:

Year 1	Grant agent receives funds from trustee and builds program management unit
	Grant agent establishes learning network and technical selection panels
	Launch call for proposals for operational component 1, including selection of

	proposals and coalitions for year zero support (as first priority to ensure continuity of funds)
	Launch call for proposals for operational components 2 and 3, and select concept note finalists
	Launch year zero for all new grantees and coalitions in need of additional capacity support, and develop capacity strengthening, monitoring, evaluation and learning approaches
	Implementation of successful OC1 proposals begins
Year 2	Year zero grantees submit final proposals for review and selection
	Implementation of OC 2 and 3 proposals begins
	Learning partner network expanded to respond to needs identified in periodic review of implementation challenges
	Identification and distillation of initial knowledge and innovations which may be shared through KIX modalities, and ASA design adaptations
Year 3 – 5*	Learning partner network expanded to respond to needs identified in periodic review of implementation challenges
	If additional funds available, launch new round of calls for proposals based on design adaptations identified in year 2

\*Note that after all implementation is complete, the Grant Agent will need to contract an end of program evaluation for ASA, anticipated to take place in 2023.

# ANNEXES

## Annex 1: ASA Theory of Change

***GPE's Theory of Change (ToC) is based on the idea that education outcomes are more likely to be achieved when there is widespread public engagement in and demand for equitable quality education.***

It recognizes that people and particularly those from more vulnerable backgrounds (citizens, but also those who are stateless, migrant workers, and refugees), require resources – in terms of skills, time and funding – to enable their effective engagement in shaping education policy and implementation. As such, ASA intends to build the capacity of civic groups to demand and access information related to the provision of public education; participate in education policy processes; and understand, articulate and advocate for their interests with policy makers. Increasing the effective representation of civil society in institutional policy dialogue, improving the availability of relevant information to enable the development of more informed policy responses, and supporting advocacy to advance the public interest in education, all comprise important strategies to help build strong public education constituencies capable of motivating the achievement of GPE2020 goals.

### ASA Goal

***GOAL: Enhanced civil society capacity to further GPE2020 goals in learning, equity and stronger systems, by improving their participation, advocacy and efforts to improve transparency and increased effectiveness in national educational policy and implementation processes.***

ASA's main aim is to enhance civil society capabilities in areas that strengthen the ability to realize an active and interactive role in education policy setting.

### Objective 1

***Strengthen national civil society engagement in education planning, policy dialogue and monitoring.***

The first objective of ASA recognizes the valuable role that civil society can play in institutional education policy processes and aims to strengthen the quality of this engagement. GPE's inclusive partnership approach to sector planning offers several important entry points for civic participation in education policy development, implementation oversight and monitoring. In order for civil society to meaningfully contribute to sector dialogue processes, this requires:

- (1) strong capacity of civil society groups, and in particular those that are typically marginalized in policy dialogue and education governance, to participate effectively;
- (2) the capacity of civil society groups to formulate and contribute evidence based and policy-relevant solutions in a timely, strategic and constructive manner.

ASA investments aim to improve inwards accountability of governments to their publics. While the degree of "openness" to civil society participation varies from country to country, ASA can support civil society efforts to increase the legitimacy of civic groups in informing policy (and not only in service provision), strengthen citizen agency, and develop a stronger culture of collective action. Facilitated

processes to ensure equitable participation of marginalized groups is critical because the most marginalized people are often the least able to participate due to constraints in terms of time and opportunities costs, but also the norms that influence their relative power and position in society. The participation of a diverse range of civil society groups is also vital to prevent 'elite capture' of policy spaces, ensure that there is healthy debate and deliberation and to ensure that civic space is inclusive even of those traditionally lacking in institutional power.<sup>11</sup>

Civil society coalitions supported through the Civil Society Education Fund have provided an important foundation for broad civic participation in formal education policy processes, particularly at the national level.<sup>12</sup> Coalitions can act as honest brokers for collective positioning of their members, pool expertise and generate important feedback loops with sub-national members. Because coalitions play a brokering role for diverse civic groups to participate in policy dialogue processes, ASA will invest in strengthening coalitions to play this core role. It is therefore important for coalitions to use participatory practices, such as deliberative and inclusive coalition governance and agenda-setting, such that they can claim legitimacy in representing collective views in institutional settings on behalf of their members. This requires that coalitions have a heightened understanding of their members views, and also an explicit focus on enabling marginalized groups to not only inform collective coalition positions, but also to directly participate in policy processes themselves. ASA will therefore support the strengthening of coalitions as organized and inclusive civil society collectives, and strengthen their capacity to facilitate joint action of their members.

The design of ASA also recognizes that civil society is complex. Civil society views, interests and positions are wider than the national education coalitions of the GCE network, and strengthened accountability for high quality, equitable education requires the participation of a wider set of actors in a wider set of policy processes. Groups working outside of coalition structures (e.g. working towards other mandates, in other sectors, on behalf of other public interest groups, or in different places in a given country) may also bring important experience which can be valuable in shaping public policy in favour of quality equitable education. ASA will therefore invest in the capacity of a diversified range of civic groups, especially membership based groups, to participate in policy processes at both national and sub-national levels.

Secondly, it is important that civil society groups have the capacity to engage strategically in policy processes, using evidence, clear positioning, and effective tactics of influence. This requires that civil society groups deeply understand the context in which they are working, and have both the both tacit and formal knowledge required to effectively navigate decision-making processes. For strategic advocacy and social accountability efforts to be successful, civil society must know the system, and where power lies - for example, ministries of finance, parliaments, or local district offices or school

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<sup>11</sup> World Bank. 2017. "World Development Report 2017: Governance and the Law." Washington, D.C.: World Bank. doi:10.1596/978-1-4648-0950-7. License: Creative Commons Attribution CC BY 3.0 IGO.

<sup>12</sup> See CSEF I, II, III Evaluations.

management structures may hold decision-making authority which is more important to a policy outcome than that of the ministries of education.

The pathway for influence will also matter – whether it be through engaging parliaments, think tanks, civil servants or others who may hold the key to government positioning. It is also critical for groups to understand motivations and incentives of government actors, and to have a keen sense of timing to take advantage of opportunities that come from election cycles, first term or other moments in a government’s tenure which may be ripe for a policy to be adopted.<sup>13</sup> In short, ASA will integrate a strong emphasis on understanding context; helping civil society grantees to both understand the context, their role in the mandates of decision makers (through for e.g. mandate mapping) and provide timely and relevant inputs to those processes to effectively shape the policy outcomes.

## Objective 2

### ***Strengthen civil society roles in promoting the transparency and accountability of national education sector policy and implementation***

The second objective of ASA seeks to support civil society’s efforts to improve transparency and accountability in education. By investing in strengthened civic monitoring of education policy implementation and service delivery, ASA aims to help close important data gaps. Conversely, information which is made available through increased transparency can be used to inform people about the state of affairs in terms of public services and entitlements, and help to generate increased demand for and community ownership of quality education.<sup>14</sup> This objective therefore aims to ensure that civil society groups are able to undertake strategic multi-level monitoring of education policy and budget implementation, and to use the evidence generated to formulate and act on relevant policy solutions and redress mechanisms. This involves efforts to

- (1) increase the availability, sources and variety of information to advance the public interest in education, and;
- (2) increase its use by civil society to inform attitudes, behaviours and/or policy demands.

Relevant, timely and useable information and evidence is critical to ensuring accountability for the delivery of quality education for all. Useful information for improving social accountability (identified by the Hewlett Foundation in their strategy on service delivery accountability and elaborated by Wellspring Fund)<sup>15</sup> may be:

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<sup>13</sup> Green, D. (2017) How can researchers and activists influence African governments? Advice from an insider. <https://oxfamblogs.org/fp2p/how-can-researchers-and-activists-influence-african-governments-advice-from-an-insider/> Retrieved April 16, 2019.

<sup>14</sup> For a glossary of transparency and accountability terms please see: <http://www.transparency-initiative.org/uncategorized/1179/tai-definitions/>

<sup>15</sup> Hewlett Foundation. Service Delivery Sub-Strategy. <https://www.hewlett.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/service-delivery-monitoring-ENG.pdf>



- Information about citizens' rights and government's responsibilities and commitments, and ways in which formal statements of rights, responsibilities and commitments in policy and law can be linked to local and culturally-based understandings of mutual accountability
- Information about service delivery quality, service delivery inputs (budgets and expenditures, government contracts, or timely delivery of critical inputs and supplies), facility-level performance indicators, or progress in improving development outcomes (measures of children's learning; women's use of contraceptives; maternal and child health; safe, reliable, and adequate water supply for multiple uses; etc.).
- Information about what citizens should expect in terms of coverage and service delivery standards, prices and fees for services, and what they can do when their experience differs from stated policies.
- Citizen feedback about their satisfaction with service provider performance in specific areas of concern, or on their experiences at local education offices, schools, or other points of service delivery.
- Information about practices that undermine people's access to quality services, and what they can do about them.

Groups working on transparency, governance and other sectors on behalf of the public interest may be able to contribute valuable skills, creative strategies and wider networks for collecting and disseminating information that can be used to strengthen education accountability, and ASA therefore seeks to diversify the range of actors – and the evidence base - contributing to accountability in the education sector. By supporting civil society organizations to come together in accountability ecosystems of thought and action, ASA can help to widen and deepen the civic rootedness of education ownership – including by working with membership-based civic associations that share deep cultural social norms to harmonize local norms with law and policy. Information on its own is not a driver of accountability, and therefore explicit efforts must be made to ensure that information is accompanied with support for action. It is critical that information generated through ASA investments therefore be both evidence based and responsive to local norms, and in turn be genuinely *actionable*<sup>16</sup>. It should be accompanied by mandate mapping, reflection on and options for pathways of action be they formal or informal, so that data efforts are not only extractive but have an empowering dynamic. In this, information needs to be accompanied by and trigger information utilization and action steps.<sup>17</sup>

It is critical that multi-level monitoring of education help to integrate oversight across the results chain from centralized ministries to school level. Similarly, the effective engagement of civil society in the decentralized decision-making processes of education, for e.g. at district level or school level, requires grassroots mobilization in issues affecting education. This may include parent's associations, student

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<sup>16</sup> Fox, Jonathan. (2017). "History and Language: Keywords for Health and Accountability." Institute of Development Studies. Available at [http://www.ids.ac.uk/opinion/history-and-language-keywords-for-health-and-accountability?utm\\_content=buffer1f967&utm\\_medium=social&utm\\_source=twitter.com&utm\\_campaign=buffer](http://www.ids.ac.uk/opinion/history-and-language-keywords-for-health-and-accountability?utm_content=buffer1f967&utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter.com&utm_campaign=buffer), last accessed August 28, 2017.

<sup>17</sup> Becker, J. (2017.) Campaigning for Children: Strategies for Advancing Children's Rights

unions, and teachers' organizations or other formal and informal networks which are engaged in public interest work. By creating the conditions for more informed local decision-making, communities can use information to take self-directed action to improve education. ASA can therefore support new and experimental platforms for evidence-based advocacy and strategic civic mobilization that move beyond institutionalized advocacy platforms and enable these cross-group alliances to leverage different pressure points for policy change.<sup>18</sup>

### Objective 3

#### ***Create a stronger global and transnational enabling environment for national civil society advocacy and transparency efforts***

The third objective of ASA aims to bring together consortia of civil society actors to work collaboratively and respectively on transnational initiatives or campaigns that bear on GPE country level work, particularly in the areas of aid effectiveness, financing and cross-sectoral synergies. This is critical because in the current global system, many of the enabling conditions for effective national education policy planning and implementation in low and middle-income countries remain subject to powerful influences (both helpful and harmful) generated outside the national sphere. For example, the framing of global norms for education - and the translation of such norms into the funding priorities, donor approaches and global monitoring mechanisms that directly affect partner countries' policy options - are heavily influenced by international debates and interests. Transnational agenda-setting is usually determined in closed events and processes to which the representatives of ordinary citizens are rarely invited, despite the presence of larger professionalized non-governmental organizations. To improve the responsiveness of transnational policy agendas to civic interests, while fostering more helpful enabling conditions for relevant and useful national policy setting, ASA will support the engagement of more civic representatives representing a wider range of opinions and lived realities in these transnational spaces. ASA's third objective therefore seeks to invest in transnational consortia of civil society actors working together to influence transnational policy frameworks.

Sustainable institutional change is best achieved when "civil society organizations and reformers band together into coalitions that work at the local, subnational, national, and transnational levels. Such "vertically integrated" strategies must be keenly aware of the different levels of power — from the international level to the local level — and leverage these power dynamics to drive change"<sup>19</sup> Several approaches offer the potential to open up transnational policy debates to citizen voices. One is vertical integration of membership-based networks where, for example, national civic and teacher interests are federated upward through formalized layers of national, regional and global membership representation. Another approach is the deliberate effort to find, deputize, train and provide advocacy

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<sup>18</sup> Fox, Jonathan, Joy Acheron, and Aránzazu Guillán Montero. (2016). "Doing Accountability Differently: A Proposal for the Vertical Integration of Civil Society Monitoring and Advocacy." U4 Issue no. 4 (August). Bergen: C. Michelsen Institute.

<sup>19</sup> IBID.

platforms and opportunities for cohorts of thematic or under-represented-groups who seek to provide input to policies that affect them. Examples here include “survivor groups”, “youth ambassador” networks, women’s and girls’ leadership and advocacy networks, and issue-based networks such as those working on disability or economic justice. Increasingly, independent youth organizing occurs via social media which is inherently transnational, providing a new vehicle of youth expression independent of professional CSO forms of engagement. These all allow for a wider mix of voices and influencers seeking access to the transnational spaces where pre-conditions of national policy are formed.

ASA’s third objective therefore seeks to invest in consortia involving newer, wider mixes of civil society actors working together to influence transnational policy regimes. An enabling transnational environment for civil society advocacy and transparency efforts involves three dimensions:

- (1) support for advocacy efforts of genuinely representative membership structures whose vertical integration provides a legitimate vehicle for authentic representation of civic interests in transnational policy arenas
- (2) support for advocacy efforts of under-represented-groups who seek to provide input to policies being shaped transnationally that affect them
- (3) support for efforts by civil society organizations to advocate for more inclusive transnational policy dialogue spaces which allow for more meaningful civic participation

ASA will provide the resources to significantly improve the enabling conditions for policy change at national and local levels by supporting opportunities for a wider and more diverse combination of civil society actors to work in alliances to influence transnational policy frameworks. By creating formal fora and opportunities for civil society organizations to act and interact transnationally, ASA aims to enable national civil society to become more active participants within the transnational sphere in order to influence its impact on education policy implementation at national and local levels.

## **ToC Assumptions**

The ToC include several assumptions which build on assumptions unearthed by and through the CSEF program. These assumptions are listed below and will be tested, reviewed and updated throughout the course of the implementation of ASA.

1. The state has the primary responsibility for delivering the right to education; Citizens and people must hold them to account, at many different levels; and CSOs should support this with ‘upward’ and ‘downward’ accountability approaches, to ensure effective policy and programme delivery.
2. Successful approaches to social accountability require time, work on both ‘government responsiveness’ and ‘civil society-led demand for accountability’ - which is inherently highly contextualised - and requires detailed ToC driven by the national and local contexts.
3. Global/regional policy discussions should be informed by - and inform - national and local realities. National advocacy can be amplified by supportive transnational advocacy and

campaigns that can help take action on trends in education that can promote or hinder the realisation of the right to education.

4. The Global Partnership for Education operational model provides opportunities to work with both governments and civil society actors to strengthen accountability through improve evidence, capacity and inclusive sector dialogue. By creating the conditions for GPE's country partners, including members of Local Education Groups, to work more productively with national civil society, GPE's partnership approach can help to strengthen the responsiveness of sector responses to citizen needs.
5. Shrinking CSO space for engagement and voice requires an analysis of new threats and opportunities: broad-based coalitions are more likely to survive and engage within shrinking CSO space, and with their repertoire of actions, can have impact at multiple levels. In polarized political contexts, civic groups need to take extra steps to accrue legitimacy and avoid accusations of partisanship: embedding advocacy in international or domestic law, eschewing government funding, bridging cross-partisan divisions, and not taking sides in election campaigns.
6. Civic groups gain legitimacy from who they are, their identity as societal actors. Organizations based in and led by the communities they seek to represent are often more difficult to dismiss as illegitimate than those that advocate on behalf of others.
7. Civic actors build public support by working on issues that directly affect people's lives—which may require reframing specific causes in ways that are more locally resonant rather than relying on international frameworks<sup>20</sup>.
8. Change takes time. Change is not linear, it requires testing and revising against ongoing evaluation and learning. At the same time, education advocacy is affected to a large extent by changing in-country political situations. It therefore often needs to be improvisational, unpredictable, contingent – these characteristics are very difficult to reconcile with rigid project workplans and output schemes, so planning frameworks for ASA grants need to make room for this type of iterative work.
9. Government responsiveness exists along a continuum that ranges from listening to citizen feedback, taking it into consideration, to institutionalizing feedback loops. Efforts to increase the responsiveness of governments to citizen feedback need to take into account the mandate, interests, incentives and political systems that effect the openness of government.

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<sup>20</sup> Green, D. (2015), '5 ways to build Civil Society's Legitimacy around the world', <https://oxfamblogs.org/fp2p/5-ways-to-build-civil-societys-legitimacy-around-the-world/> accessed on June 20, 2018

## Annex 2: ASA contributions to GPE2020

The ASA mechanism can and should contribute to all of the GPE 2020 objectives:

**Strategic Objective 1: Strengthen Education Sector Planning and Policy Implementation:** By financing the generation and use of social accountability data to inform education planning, ASA can help to strengthen the evidence base for education sector planning. Conversely, by supporting civil society to interpret and share information on education issues widely, ASA can enhance “country ownership” through increased public awareness and support for education.

**Strategic Objective 2: Support Mutual Accountability through Effective and Inclusive Sector Policy Dialogue and Monitoring.** By resourcing civic groups to enhance their capacity to understand, engage in and contribute to formal, technical or institutional policy processes, ASA can help to improve the inclusiveness and transparency of sector dialogue.

**Strategic Objective 3: GPE Financing Efficiently and Effectively Supports the Implementation of Sector Plans Focused on Improved Equity, Efficiency, and Learning.** By supporting the capacity of civil society groups to engage in sector dialogue, ASA can increase the probability that GPE’s grant funding is informed by and monitored in part by civic groups. The transnational CSO structures funded through ASA can also help to ensure that there is a feedback loop from local to national to global level, to inform the direction of GPE’s global policy, funding and operational decisions.

**Strategic Objective 4: Mobilize More and Better Financing.** Financial decisions reflect a prioritization process which is shaped by both evidence of what the benefits of investment are, as well as by the political leadership and support to invest in those areas. Civil society advocacy is critical to ensuring that education financing not only increases, but that it is spent in ways more likely to achieve education quality, equity and stronger systems. ASA can resource civil society to advocate for better and more transparent financing practices – in turn helping to direct the use of public funding both domestically and internationally.

**Strategic Objective 5: Build a Stronger Partnership.** ASA investments will help to ensure that a critically important and typically under-resourced constituency of civic actors can maximize their contribution to the partnership. In doing so, they can play their roles at country level more effectively, expand the partnerships advocacy role, and strengthen mutual accountability across the partnership.

ASA will most directly impact Strategic Objective Two over the course of the period through 2021. In particular, the GPE2020 Results Framework monitors Indicator 19 as a way to track the inclusiveness of sector dialogue and the capacity of civil society and teacher organizations to engage in those policy dialogues, as one important dimension of Strategic Objective Two. Specifically, indicator 19 measures the proportion of Local Education Groups (LEGs) with civil society and teacher representation. While this indicator provides a helpful binary assessment of the inclusiveness of Local Education Groups, it is only a proxy for meaningful civic participation. As an indicator, it is unable to demonstrate the extent or quality of engagement of civil society and teachers’ organizations. ASA should advance progress towards GPE2020 Strategic Objective Two by resourcing the participation of civil society in Local Education

Groups, and also potentially help to inform more meaningful ways of monitoring this aspect of GPE's Strategic Plan. If successful, the ASA mechanism will enable GPE to strengthen and help uphold the mutual accountability principles of the Partnership, strengthen the use of evidence and political will for education policy, and leverage the power of inclusive partnership at community, national, regional and global levels to help drive improved resourcing, policy, service delivery and impact in education.

## ASA and Linkages with GPE Operating Model

In order to effectively leverage the potential bidirectional synergies between ASA and the rest of the GPE technical and financial modalities of country support, GPE and the wider partnership will need to create more explicit feedback loops, procedures for collaboration and coordinated practices. While reflection is ongoing within the GPE Secretariat and expanding towards country level partnerships (Local Education groups) and ministries to elaborate the possibilities further, some initial linkages can be systematized in the following ways:

### **Build awareness of GPE-supported processes and ASA**

ASA grantees need to undertake preparatory activities including the development of national theories of change and context analysis, which would benefit from a more intentional dialogue between grantees, GPE Secretariat and Local Education Groups, as well as with ministries, to help grantees understand the institutional entry points for participation in education policy processes. This could include, where appropriate, increased discussion and capacity development with grantees about the planning cycle from the development of an education sector plan, joint sector reviews, ESPIG application, implementation and reporting cycles, to other national moments for civil society to participate in and contribute substantially to policy dialogue - providing important inputs into the development of ASA theories of change and context analyses which underpin the work of ASA grantees. Conversely, facilitated dialogues can also help development partners and ministries understand the particular expertise and contributions of civil society grantees, and thereby strengthen the potential for state-civil society alliances, and more broadly strengthen relationships between civil society, development partners, and governments. An added benefit anticipated as a consequence of ASA is a more nuanced and meaningful tracking of the quality of inclusive policy dialogue in GPE's results framework, informing future progress on and support to this area of GPE's strategic plan.

### **Coordinate and facilitate connections**

GPE Secretariat, in its role of a facilitator in a country facing approach, can play a stronger brokering role in connecting the grantees to relevant state level actors, identifying other GPE partners supporting CSOs on similar issues (e.g. Education Cannot Wait and foundations supporting accountability work, international NGOs in the Local Education Group, or NGOs being sub-contracted within ESPIG) and ensuring that there is the opportunity to harmonize efforts where appropriate. GPE Secretariat can also help establish relationship norms and practices between the CSOs and the LEG members by advising on the country level sensitivities (e.g. fragile and conflict affected countries/countries with governance and accountability challenges and with limited scope for civil society participation) and how to navigate

different systems and structures (e.g. federal vs. central systems) for effective accountability actions leading to systems strengthening and appropriate policy reforms.

### **Increase civil society capacity for strategic contributions to sector planning**

Capacity development support from the ASA learning partner network can help to strengthen the skills, practices, tools and approaches to increasing social accountability that grantees are able to deploy, based on identified needs in the sector planning and implementation cycles. For example, civil society could become effective equity monitors at the community level, helping governments to understand and report on their progress towards SDG4 targets. By providing a responsive platform to both identify sector gaps (based on experience of operational engagement at country level) and provide capacity development for those roles which civil society is well poised to play, GPE can help through ASA to leverage the role of civil society in improving accountability and transparency to benefit sector planning.

### **Amplify national demand for important education drivers**

By investing in civil society organizations that can channel citizen demand for education, ASA can help to create the climate for stronger political commitment to increase domestic investments in education, and take concrete action to address policy gaps – including the uptake and utilization of knowledge and innovation with proven impact on national education challenges. By explicitly linking ASA and the Knowledge and Innovation Exchange (KIX) platform, both ASA and KIX can benefit. On the one hand, KIX modalities can be used by ASA grantees to capacitate them in key policy areas, while also providing a way to “ground-truth” the knowledge and innovation produced from KIX funds. On the other hand, knowledge about the fields of advocacy and social accountability can be shared with the wider partnership through KIX, helping to share and spread innovations in this space across different countries and practitioners in the partnership. (More on the linkages between ASA and KIX can be found in Section x).

### **Diversify and enhance global policy engagement**

ASA can also help to strengthen civil society contributions to global policy dialogue at the Board level, bringing new grantees into the constituency, while also helping to consolidate the national level inputs through stronger vertical integration of citizen voices. By bringing a wider and more diverse range of voices into the constituency, including those from other sectors and those working directly with and on behalf of national and community stakeholders, the GPE Board can benefit from a tighter feedback loop with those most affected by its policies and approaches.

In order to fully maximize the potential for ASA to reinforce and strengthen the GPE model, the implementation of the ASA funding mechanism will be accompanied by a series of workshops and discussions to explore where and how the above synergies can be capitalized.

## Annex 3: Recommendations from Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF) Evaluation

An external evaluation of Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF) was commissioned under the M&E Strategy of GPE and was carried out by Oxford Policy Management.

The evaluation made the following recommendations in three key areas: relevance, efficiency and effectiveness.

### Recommendations on Relevance

- Implicit assumptions should be tested, formalized, and systematically built into the new programme design through a consultative, evidence-based process.
- The ToC (Theory of Change) should be reviewed and adapted, in particular, the idea of creating more bespoke national-level ToCs with common outcomes oriented to improving access to quality education for girls and boys, should be explored. ToCs should also take into account the additional issues identified above. For those NECs that have already designed their own national-level ToC, research should be carried out to assess the extent to which they are based on sound evidence.
- Any new ToC should ensure that a focus on gender and social inclusion is maintained and strengthened.
- Further research on the number of coalitions that are targeting certain types of children, and evidence of the outputs and outcomes from these interventions.
- Acknowledge, in workplans and strategic planning, that advocacy work takes time. Outcomes and impact can be measured through various approaches (such as stories of change, outcome harvesting, and so on) to measure the contribution of NECs towards influencing policy reform. For the new ASA, it will be important to allow time for building capacity in systems of citizen engagement as well.
- As part of an overhaul of planning, ToC, and results frameworks, consider revising indicators to include capacity development and qualitative indicators. The indicators in the RF should be reviewed to see if they are still relevant to a changed context and targets should also be reviewed in light of progress made so far. Ensure greater awareness raising among NECs about how these tools can be used as a guide for activities and not act as a constraint.



- A rigorous comparative analysis across the Regional Secretariats should be carried out to determine organizational capacity and level of resources vis-à-vis aims and scope. The reasons for weak capacity should be uncovered and plans to strengthen functioning should be established and actioned. This could involve support and sharing of experiences from stronger Regional Secretariats. CSEF III resources for Regional Secretariats should meet their ambitions and scope of work.
- Issue guidance to NECs to increase the participation of CSOs and teacher representatives on LEGs, and monitor the quality of engagement in these government-led groups.

**Recommendations on Efficiency**

- Retain the 60:40 benchmark but allow scope for contextual adaptation: one possibility would be to allow an established degree of leeway on either side.
- Retain the overall national-regional-global programme architecture, and where possible, ensure communications channels are clear both vertically and horizontally, and actively promote and fund engagement for learning across regions.
- Establish a clear separation of responsibilities: a conflict of interest (CoI) arose in CSEF III because the GCE Secretariat received almost all its funding from the CSEF, which it was meant to be overseeing in its fiduciary role. This situation should be avoided as we move forward to the ASA mechanism, by creating a separation of powers, responsibilities and funding stream.
- Engage in intensive capacity development among national coalitions in the area of proposal development and build auditing capacity across the programme; also scrutinise carefully all possible disbursement bottlenecks.

**Recommendations on Efficiency**

- The programme should support coalition recognition by government to enable effective participation in LEGs and other government processes.
- Establish stronger links with other SDG priority areas in terms of learning and outreach.
- Reinforce the regional and global actors 'policy dialogue by further enhancing the MEL reporting system.

## A note on the evolution from CSEF to ASA

The evolution of GPE's support for civil society reflects some of the following shifts in GPE's grant-making strategy as a result of the mid-term evaluation of CSEF, consultations with stakeholders over the past year and under the guidance of the Technical Advisory Panel:

***Improving accountability by investing in a wider set of actors and processes.*** GPE recognizes that civil society is plural, representing diverse views, interests, perspectives and strategies. It is this diversity that creates the conditions and necessity for deliberation, contestation and debate in education – which is necessary to strengthen accountability. While GPE has typically invested in education coalitions as a way to embrace that diversity, it also recognizes that there are many other civic actors outside of any one coalition that may bring important perspectives on education policy and implementation issues. Coalitions in the GCE network have been an important 'spinal column' to help organize civic participation in education, and GPE's financing is now expanding to invest in the wider civic ecosystem as well.

***Enabling more contextual and results-focused advocacy and social accountability.*** Realities differ from country to country, and even from village to village. Given the dynamic pace of change in most societies, it is important to ensure that support for civil society provides the flexibility to adapt to changing circumstances. More results-focused civil society work can also enable us to move away from formulaic approaches to advocacy and social accountability, testing what works and experimenting with new forms of civic engagement in a responsive way. In this approach, what becomes most important is a nuanced understanding of the political, social and economic environments in which social accountability work is planned, and to tailor strategies and approaches to these environments – including and particularly with attention to those that are fragile or conflict-affected. Building on priorities that have already been defined at the local and national level is important to ensure that efforts are generated by and defined by coalitions of the willing, and not imposed from outside. ASA therefore does not seek to circumscribe the specific policy areas or problems that should be addressed by proposals but rather to ask that they address the broad aims of GPE2020.

***Putting an emphasis on capacity development and learning.*** The aim of ASA is to build the capacity of civil society to further the goals of GPE 2020 in equity, quality and stronger education systems. Put this way, the most critical outcome sought by ASA is a stronger civil society. Rather than focusing only on relatively short-term outputs of civil society social accountability projects, ASA is also making an explicit investment in the capabilities of civic groups to undertake accountability work. This includes not only capacities to effectively implement social accountability initiatives but to learn by doing, using regular monitoring and evaluation to drive more creative experimentation with what works. Through a focus on adaptive management and more iterative approaches, ASA will help to build a culture of learning for grantees and for the wider field. To do this, ASA will complement the important capacity strengthening role of the GCE and its regional Secretariats by expanding the potential to work with additional learning partners and reciprocate learning opportunities with the Knowledge and Innovation Exchange platform.

***Investing explicitly in multi-level monitoring including local and transnational.*** CSEF has primarily focused its support on strengthening national level advocacy. ASA will build on this, by explicitly driving

accountability work down to sub-national and community and school levels through social accountability grants – and driving it upwards to monitor transnational policy developments through grants for transnational advocacy. In doing so, ASA recognizes that relationships of accountability are complex and operate across multiple levels of decision-making and under different governance influences. The most effective accountability strategies typically link oversight of each link in the results chain, to be able to identify where there are blockages and boomerang accountability by mobilizing authorities at different levels. While CSEF contained the seeds of this multi-level monitoring approach, ASA makes it explicit.

***Putting citizens at the center of accountability.*** Inclusive and participatory policy dialogue has always been an essential element of the partnership approach in partner countries. ASA takes this idea a step further to articulate that the purpose of this approach is to enable stronger accountability of governments to the public. As such, ASA makes inwards accountability explicit, and the design of ASA seeks to ensure that citizens have a role to play not only in informing the direction of policy but also to hear back about what has changed and be a part of an ongoing process that puts their needs – and particularly those of the most marginalized or vulnerable groups - at the center.<sup>21</sup> Global and regional partners, working together with country level civil society groups, can help to create the enabling conditions for stronger public accountability by shaping the transnational frameworks that codify development practice and set norms for sectoral efforts.

***Adopting an iterative and adaptive approach to ASA design and implementation.*** Adaptive management can be framed as an approach where “management is treated as a deliberate experiment for the purpose of learning” in an ongoing effort to find alternative ways to meet objectives and better combine codified knowledge, tacit knowledge and real-time ‘learning-by-doing’. Such experimentation is not random, and can be termed as ‘structured experiential learning’, which seeks to build ‘learning objectives into the cycle of project design, implementation, completion, and evaluation’<sup>22</sup>. It is conducted in a defined and bounded ‘universe’ (e.g. the ASA funding mechanism, nested in the broader GPE efforts), and with clearly defined end goals. At the highest level these goals relate to “the right to education by ensuring access to inclusive, equitable, quality education for all children and youth, including second chance learning” – as reflected in SDG 4 on education, which guides GPE’s Strategic Plan. ASA design therefore reflects the principle of building ASA based on iterative learning, and integrating this program philosophy into the grant making and program management features. This approach builds on the current evidence of iterative and continuous learning, that more useful than a ‘roadmap’ is the idea of a ‘compass for helping us find our way through the fog of complex systems,

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<sup>21</sup> A key concern coming out of the consultations during ASA design.

discovering a path as we go along'<sup>23</sup>. This acknowledges that 'social contexts and processes are always in flux, with emergent issues, unforeseen risks and surprises arising throughout').<sup>24</sup>

## Annex 4: ASA Design Principles

The Strategy and Impact Committee identified several principles which should underpin the design of ASA. These principles have guided the design options for ASA and are addressed through several of the design features of the ASA call for proposals process.

- ASA should link to GPE2020 goals and objectives, including by articulating how GPE's theory of change is reinforced by improvements in transparency, civil society participation and advocacy.
- ASA should be designed to be complementary, reinforcing and synergistic with country level education sector policy processes linking national and global advocacy efforts and coordinating with KIX where strategic.
- ASA should be designed to ensure greater local ownership, foster greater reflection of local level perspectives into national policies and plans, and be sensitive to the sovereignty of countries.
- ASA should be designed to ensure stronger and more diverse civil society participation in education, including through a strong focus on civil society capacity development.
- ASA should seek to support work that demonstrates inclusive policy and practice.
- ASA should seek to strengthen the equity and inclusion in education, ensuring that the voices of the most marginalized groups are represented in the policy dialogue and that policies are responsive to their needs.
- ASA should consider the issue of sustainability in its design, including how to reduce the risk of donor dependence and build structures that can sustain momentum in civil society engagement in education sector planning and implementation.
- ASA should leverage global advocacy where it can have an impact on education policy and implementation at national and local levels.

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<sup>23</sup> Green, D. (2015) 'Where Have We Got to on Theories of Change? Passing Fad or Paradigm Shift?' From Poverty to Power Blog, 16 April, <http://oxfamblogs.org/fp2p/where-have-we-got-to-on-theories-of-change-passingfad-or-paradigm-shift/>

<sup>24</sup> McGee, R. and Gaventa, J. (2010) 'Review of Impact and Effectiveness of Transparency and Accountability Initiatives'. Synthesis Report. Brighton: IDS

## Annex 5: Year Zero Timeline and Approach

### Year zero:

- Initial outsourcing of MEL functions (evaluative, action research and coaching & intermediary support) to a number of learning partners;
- Initial MEL workshops to discuss MEL principles and core capability indicators and agree on overall shared aspirational goals;
- Planning for main tools to be tested to customize and contextualize frameworks to operating environments at different levels;
- Capability self-assessment tool finalized and rolled out across ASA participating actors/entities;
- stakeholder mapping conducted;
- Ongoing support and ‘learning clinics’ where MEL issues are first harvested across grantees, then discussed at joint (online) problem-solving sessions;
- Grantees set short term MEL experimentation targets and work within or across organizations to meet them;
- Evaluative information gathered by embedded evaluation team with the identification of data gaps to be filled;
- Outcome harvesting of lessons and emerging issues to date with longer report with recommendations to the GPE Board.
- Commissioning at regional and/or country level of context analysis, mandate mapping and education planning system mapping (with clear timelines) to feed into implementing organizations strategies.

### Year one:

- Emerging lessons from first evaluability and gap analysis assessment across portfolio lead to launch of call for proposal (CfP) related to collaborative research to address and strengthen the evidence-base (against baseline determined in YO);
- MEL sessions to complete the next section of the Searchframe with reporting on internal learning from the previous phase (including design lessons/testing of assumptions etc.);
- Regional networks are coached to fill a more ongoing learning function, looking at lessons and coherence/differences in approach across the region;
- A series of 3-4 webinars (of which at least one would look at gender equality issues) out of which smaller ‘learning collaborative’ may emerge and be eligible to apply for ‘top up’ funds to co-produce learning;
- Curating of narratives and testimonials using participatory approaches with specific training on child/student-led M&E approaches to engage schools and students in locally led MEL efforts;
- Workshop with existing and potential donors and other GPE constituents on some of the ongoing issues and lessons emerging.

### Year two – three:

- Continuation of work initiated in the first phase, with emphasis on the evaluative function feeding into a 'deeper' learning session (double- triple learning mid-way through the program). The deep-dive should be learning oriented and open-ended using outcome harvesting, most significant change, principles-focused evaluation and similar methodologies that are more adapted to capturing incremental progress or changes in attitudes/behavioural patterns that could be significant for longer term advocacy.
- This would also be a good time to look again at the stakeholder maps to determine where the boundaries of the intervention (i.e. the whole ASA universe) is, who is in and who is left out, and do we need to expand the boundary to be more inclusive/get more diversity in, or contract the boundary to consolidate and focus in order to push ahead with more coherence?