

A young girl in grade 5 reads out loud in front of her class, Phonsivilay Primary School, Meun District, Lao PDR.

Credit: GPE/Kelley Lynch



CHAPTER

**3**

## Sector Planning, Monitoring and Policy Dialogue

# RESULTS AT A GLANCE

COUNTRY-LEVEL

## OBJECTIVE 1

Strengthen education sector planning and policy implementation

### #16a

Proportion of education plans that meet quality standards.

-

### #16c

Proportion of education plans with equity strategies that meet quality standards.

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### #16b

Proportion of education plans with teaching and learning strategies that meet quality standards.

-

### #16d

Proportion of education plans with strategies to improve efficiency that meet quality standards.

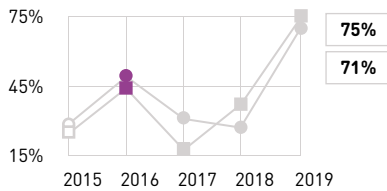
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## OBJECTIVE 2

Support mutual accountability through effective and inclusive sector policy dialogue and monitoring

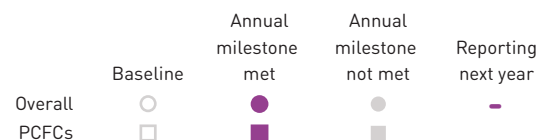
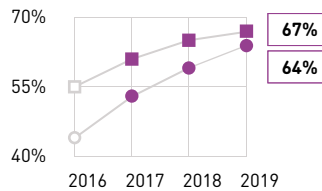
### #18

71% of joint sector reviews met quality standards.



### #19

64% of local education groups include civil society and teacher organizations.



## KEY FINDINGS

> An interim update on the quality of education sector plans (ESPs) shows that **all 13 ESPs reviewed in 2018 and 2019 met minimum required quality standards. The “achievable” quality standard still lags behind the rest, met by 62 percent of these plans.**

> **The proportion of quality joint sector reviews (JSRs) increased substantially**, with 71 percent meeting quality standards in 2019 versus 27 percent in 2018. About half of partner countries held a JSR in 2019.

> **Local education groups (LEGs) are more inclusive**, with increased participation of civil

society organizations (CSOs) and teacher organizations (TOs): Sixty-four percent of LEGs included both, up from 59 percent in 2018. Teacher organizations are more likely to be left out: Sixty-six percent of LEGs included TOs in 2019, while 89 percent included CSOs.

> Country-level evaluations underscore the need for **stronger sector monitoring data collection and use**, and for **sustaining sector dialogue during the implementation stage.**

## Sector Planning, Monitoring and Policy Dialogue

Strengthening sector planning and policy implementation are at the heart of the GPE 2020 strategic plan and operational model, as reflected by GPE's country-level objectives and funding model. Education plans are a cornerstone of GPE's theory of change, as the main vehicle by which the partnership supports sector planning at the country level. The next formal report on indicators that monitor the quality of education plans<sup>51</sup> will appear in the *Results Report 2021*, but this chapter provides an interim update. It also provides reporting on indicators related to mutual accountability and the inclusiveness of country-level policy dialogue.

### 3.1. Toward better education plans

Because of the central importance of education sector plans in GPE's theory of change, GPE supports partner countries in the development of quality education sector analyses and plans notably through its education sector plan development grant, which provides both technical and financial support. Since the inception of the ESPDG in 2012 through December 2019, GPE has granted US\$32.3 million to partner countries to support the planning process. For example, an ESPDG supported a strong education sector analysis in The Gambia that enabled better integration of population data, analysis of learning outcomes, and regional and national education data into its education plan.<sup>52</sup> And in Senegal, ESPDG support facilitated broader, more inclusive public consultations, while the independent appraisal from the new quality assurance review process helped improve the consistency and credibility of the financial simulation and framework in its ESP.<sup>53</sup> In addition to these findings, a multiyear evaluation of GPE's support to sector plan development has just been completed.<sup>54</sup>

#### UPDATES ON THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION PLANS

In 2019, four endorsed ESPs were submitted to the Secretariat for assessment: Honduras, Kenya, Mali and Sudan.<sup>55</sup> Given the small number of ESPs, the 2018 and 2019 ESPs were combined for the analysis. As with the 2016-2017 cohort, all ESPs in the 2018-2019 cohort (N = 13) met the GPE benchmark of

five out of seven quality standards met, suggesting consistency in improvement of the quality of ESPs in recent years. This is further confirmed with the data on most quality standards met (Figure 3.1).

Looking across the 2014-2015, 2016-2017 and 2018-2019 cohorts, all ESPs met the quality standards "evidence-based" and "attentive to disparities." For other standards, the progress is limited and the results are somewhat mixed. ESPs in the 2016-2017 and 2018-2019 cohorts also met the standard "overall vision." Even though not all plans met the "holistic" standard in 2018-19, this result likely reflects the fact that some countries prefer to prepare subsector plans for different line ministries. These countries also usually have plans for the other subsectors even if they are not shared with the Secretariat for the assessment. There is also some progress on meeting the "strategic" and "sensitive to context" standards. A higher proportion of ESPs in the 2018-2019 cohort met these standards than in previous years. As a reminder, the *Results Report 2019* found that "strategic" and "achievable" were the most challenging standards to meet. This result is therefore positive as it reflects some progress on meeting the "strategic" quality standard.

Despite the continuous improvement in ESP quality since 2014, achievability remains a challenge. The quality standard "achievable" raises some concern as an even lower proportion of plans met the standard in the recent 2018-2019 cohort than in 2016-2017. In 2019, of the four countries that submitted ESPs to the Secretariat, only two met this quality standard. Kenya,

51. Indicators 16a, 16b, 16c and 16d.

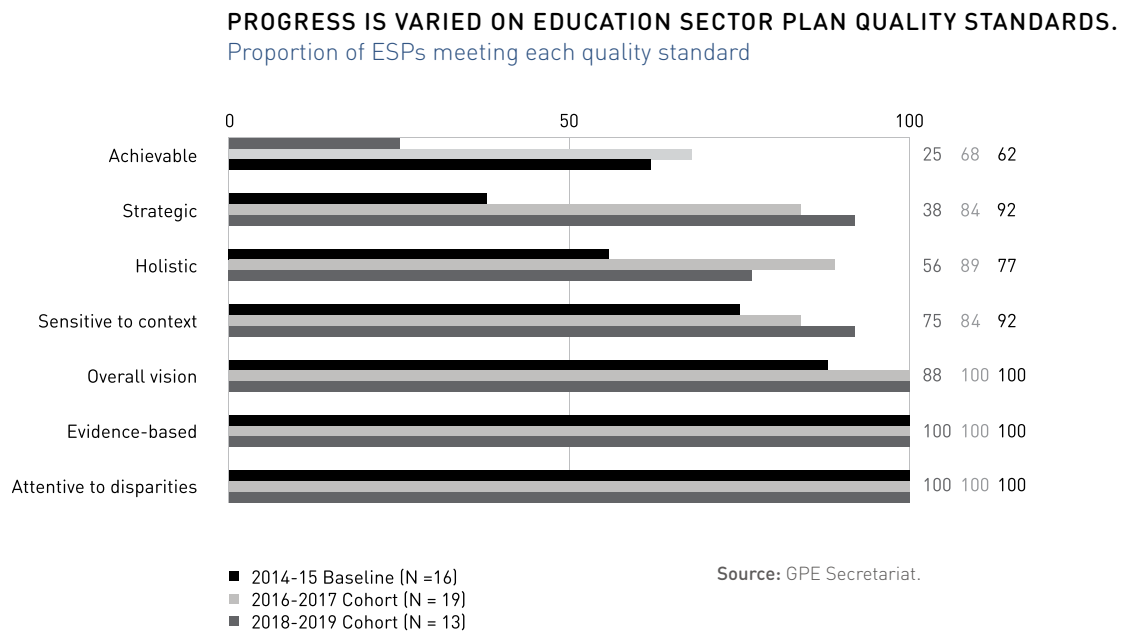
52. Universalialia, *Evaluation of the GPE's Support to Sector Plan Development: Including through Education Sector Plan Development Grants (ESPDG) in the Context of GPE 2020* (Montreal: Universalialia, 2019), <https://www.globalpartnership.org/sites/default/files/2019-05-28-gpe-evaluation-gpe-support-sector-plan-development.pdf>.

53. Universalialia, *Summative Evaluation of GPE's Country-level Support to Education: Senegal*, Final report (Montreal: Universalialia, 2019), <https://www.globalpartnership.org/sites/default/files/document/file/2019-08-summative-evaluation-gpe-country-level-support-education-for-senegal-august-2019.pdf>.

54. The multiyear evaluation will be found by June 2020 and will be found on <https://www.globalpartnership.org/results/monitoring-evaluation>.

55. Four additional ESPs could not be included as they were not yet endorsed at the time of the 2019 analysis.

FIGURE 3.1.



## BOX 3.1.

## GPE SUPPORT TO SECTOR PLANNING: RWANDA

In 2017, Rwanda received ESPDG support that enabled a more consultative process for the development of its new ESP (2018-2023) than had been undertaken for the previous one (2013-2018), which had missed two of the seven quality standards. The ESPDG, with the U.K. Department for International Development (DFID) as grant agent, also financed an education sector analysis, improving the evidence base and allowing for better targeting of the interventions planned as well as a stronger dialogue on sector priorities. GPE's updated quality assurance review, in particular the independent appraisal, also contributed to enhancing the quality of the new ESP, which meets all seven quality standards.

Source: Universalis, *Summative GPE Country Program Evaluation: Rwanda*. Final evaluation report (Montreal: Universalis, 2019), <https://www.globalpartnership.org/sites/default/files/document/file/2019-07-summative-gpe-country-program-evaluation-rwanda.pdf>.

one of the first countries submitting a second sector plan (2018-2022) during GPE's current strategic plan period (2015-2020), is one of the two plans that did not meet "achievable," because of weakness in its results framework. Although both of Kenya's ESPs met the GPE benchmark on overall quality of the plan, it is concerning that neither plan met the "achievable" quality standard. The province of Sindh in Pakistan also submitted two ESPs during GPE's current strategic plan period. The first plan did not meet the "achievable" standard (owing

to an unrealistic estimate of its funding gap), while the second plan did, likely showing an improvement in sector planning.

Further improvement has been made on the proportion of ESPs meeting the GPE benchmark for quality teaching and learning, efficiency and equity strategies. Almost all ESPs in the 2018-2019 cohort met the benchmark for learning (92 percent), equity (92 percent) and efficiency strategies (100 percent).

The overall quality of ESPs has been improving since the beginning of the current strategic plan (see [Box 3.1](#) for an example). However, recent country-level evaluations have identified important issues with regard to plan implementation and monitoring, and here GPE has a substantial opportunity to amplify its impact (see [Box 3.6](#)). Additional details on these findings are available in [Appendix D](#).

### 3.2. Sector monitoring and policy dialogue

#### A SHIFT IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION FOR JOINT SECTOR REVIEWS (Indicator 18)

A joint sector review is a government-led process bringing different stakeholders together to engage in dialogue, review status, and monitor expenditure, progress and performance in the implementation of ESPs or countries' sector implementation

frameworks. Effective JSRs take a critical look at past achievements as well as bottlenecks in plan implementation and propose forward-looking remedial actions. In 2019, 50 percent (34 out of 68,<sup>56</sup> including 21 in PCFCs) of JSRs were held. Of these, five were in countries that had not had a JSR since 2015 or 2016.<sup>57</sup>

Indicator 18 of the results framework monitors the proportion of JSRs meeting at least three out of five quality standards (listed in [Box 3.2](#)).<sup>58</sup> JSR data since 2015 have shown mixed results in JSR quality. There has been a consistent shortfall in the performance of JSRs relative to the milestones set for the indicator. However, in 2019 71 percent (20 out of 28) of the JSRs assessed met three or more quality standards, reflecting substantial improvement, though short of the milestone ([Figure 3.2](#)). The trend has been similar in PCFCs as well, with 75 percent (12 out of 16) of the countries meeting three or more quality standards in 2019.

#### BOX 3.2.

##### QUALITY STANDARDS FOR JOINT SECTOR REVIEWS

1. **Participatory and inclusive:** Includes effective and transparent participation from all education sector stakeholders.
2. **Evidence-based:** Is informed by evidence, including reliable education and financial data.
3. **Comprehensive:** Addresses all the subsectors (early childhood, primary, secondary, technical and vocational education and training [TVET], and higher education) as well as nonformal education and adult literacy.
4. **Monitorable:** Monitors sector performance and key indicators to help better identify education sector plan (ESP)/transitional education plan (TEP) implementation issues and achievements.
5. **Policymaking instrument:** Recommendations from the JSR effectively feed into addressing weaknesses in the ESP/TEP implementation.

56. Sixty-eight was the maximum number of JSRs possible in 2019. It takes into account the partner countries that hold multiple JSRs for different states as well as the fact that the four partner countries in the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) held one JSR together. It considers partner countries that were members as of January 1, 2019. Of the 34 JSRs held, 28 JSRs (16 in PCFCs) had completed the necessary documentation for assessment as of February 2020. All data presented in this section take into account those 28 with completed documentation.

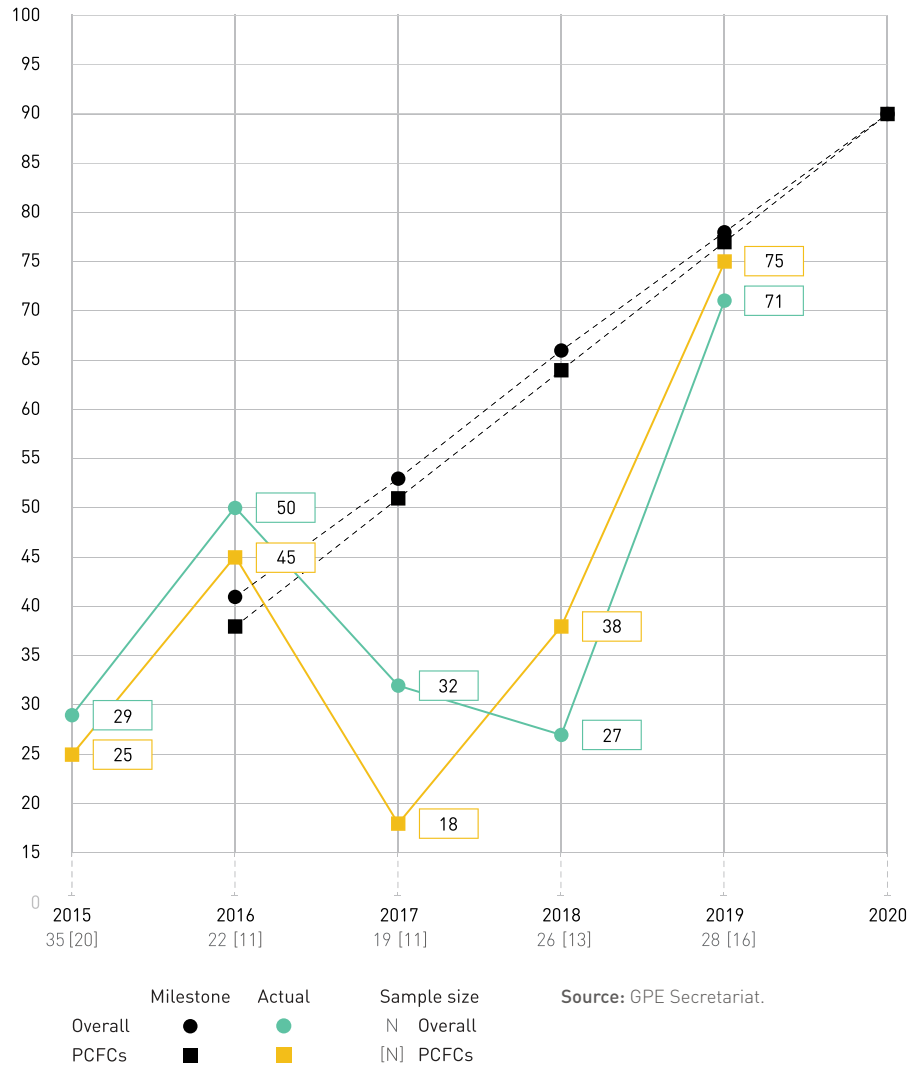
57. Central African Republic, Comoros, Djibouti, Ethiopia and Madagascar.

58. For details on any indicator methodology, replace X with the number of the indicator in the following link: <https://www.globalpartnership.org/content/methodology-sheet-gpe-result-indicator-X>.

FIGURE 3.2.

## JOINT SECTOR REVIEW QUALITY SHOWS IMPROVEMENT.

Proportion of joint sector reviews meeting quality standards



The positive trend observed in both quality and quantity of JSRs in 2019 may be attributed to the willingness and leadership that partner country governments have put forth in strengthening the JSR process and implementation (see Box 3.3 for an example), as well as to a heightened focus and increased advocacy across the partnership for sector monitoring. Moreover, the Secretariat enhanced its attention to JSRs, including

through its regular country engagement, dissemination of JSR guidance,<sup>59</sup> and facilitation of cross-country peer learning (Box 3.4). The Grant Performance Committee also now attends to whether JSRs are taking place.

Analysis of the performance of JSRs against each of the five quality criteria shows that there has likewise been significant

59. GPE, *Joint Sector Reviews in the Education Sector: A Practical Guide for Organizing Effective JSRs* (Washington, DC: GPE, 2018), <https://www.globalpartnership.org/content/practical-guide-effective-joint-sector-reviews-education-sector>.



**BOX 3.3.****STRONGER JOINT SECTOR REVIEWS: COTE D'IVOIRE**

The government of Cote d'Ivoire committed to results-based management in the implementation of its education sector plan (2016-2025) and has prioritized the strengthening of sector monitoring mechanisms including systems, tools and capacities at all levels. These efforts have resulted in an ESP Annual Implementation Report that is "on plan," meaning that it includes implementation information for all of the actions included in the previous year's approved sector annual action plan. The government also established a sector coordination task force that has taken the lead in continuously improving this report, which is now fully aligned with the ESP results framework in addition to the costed action plan and has become the key reference for the joint sector review. In 2019, the report was further improved with respect to the quality of the implementation information provided. The country's improved sector reporting illustrates concrete progress toward mutual accountability in action as monitoring is *joint*, covering both domestic and external resources as well as technical and financial implementation progress in an integrated manner. It has facilitated enhanced sector dialogue and introspection at the JSR, in that discussions could be based more on documented evidence. The review process now enables the government and its partners to take joint stock of progress toward targets in subsectors, analyze the use of financial resources and make recommendations for better implementation, as well as for effective monitoring.

**BOX 3.4.****CROSS-COUNTRY PEER LEARNING AROUND JOINT SECTOR REVIEWS AND MONITORING PRACTICES**

The Secretariat facilitated peer learning around JSR practices in the second half of 2019 for three groups of partner countries, 13 in total. Two ministry officials from each country, sometimes accompanied by a representative of their coordinating agency, attended the JSR in either Madagascar, Ghana or the Democratic Republic of Congo. Over several days, participants had the opportunity to observe the JSR in the host country and provide feedback; to engage and exchange with their peers from other countries around strategies for leveraging the potential of JSRs to strengthen sector planning, monitoring and policy dialogue; and to bring home key takeaways relevant for their own context and practices. These and other exchanges inspired the preparations of a new JSR in Comoros, organization of a sector-wide review in the Democratic Republic of Congo, improvements in JSR effectiveness in Chad and Madagascar, and use of the JSR assessment tool in Burundi, to name a few examples.

improvement in 2019 (Figure 3.3).<sup>60</sup> In 2019, JSRs improved across all quality standards compared with the baseline and 2018. However, "participatory and inclusive" lags behind the rest. A closer examination of the data on the former generally shows strong representation from all stakeholder categories except parents' associations.<sup>61</sup> In 2019, there was representation from parents' associations and school management

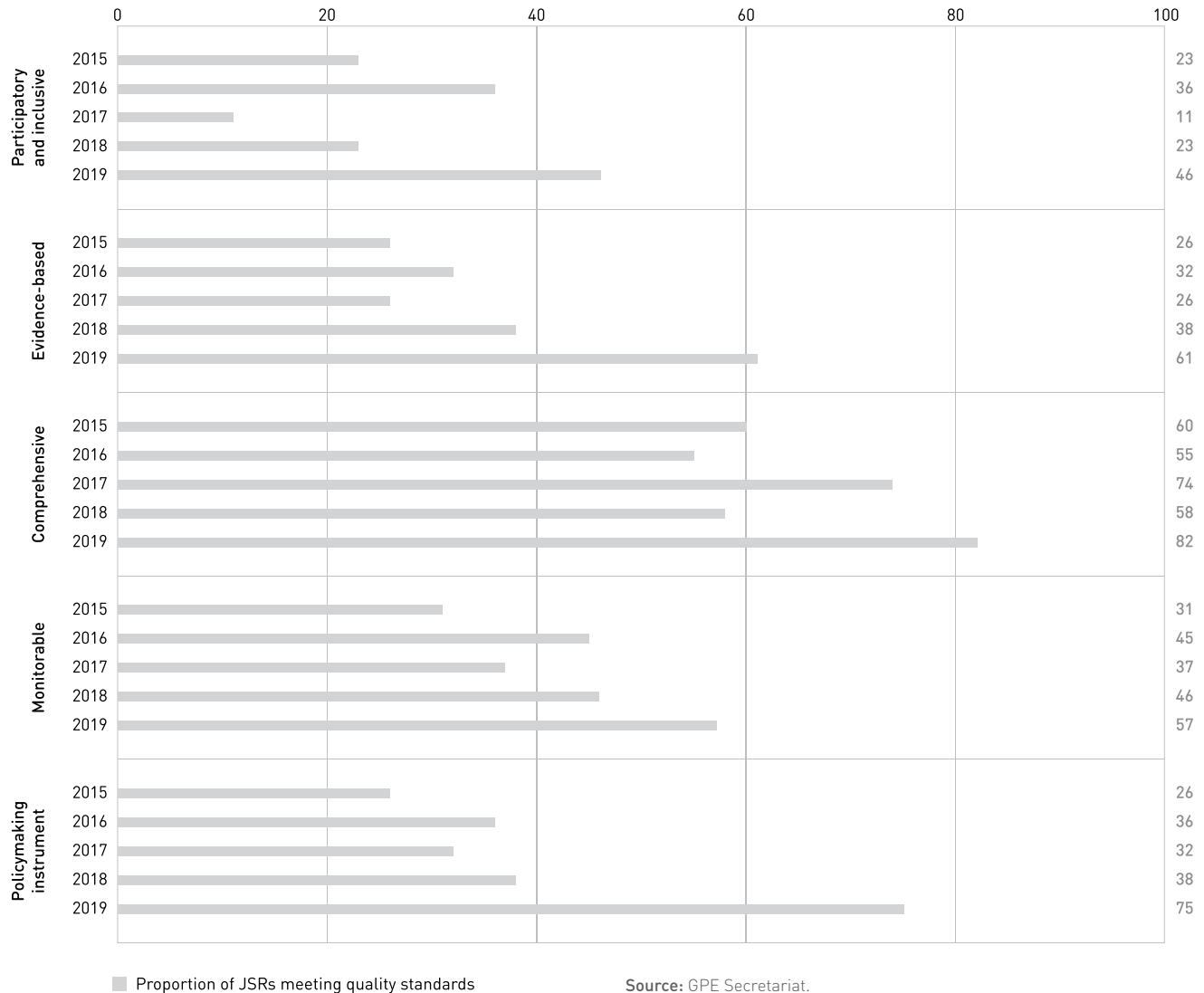
committees on 64 percent of the JSRs, which is an improvement from the baseline (29 percent). There has also been a high level of inclusion of national and international CSOs (international NGOs were present in 100 percent of JSRs and local CSOs were present in 93 percent of JSRs), and a jump in the attendance of teacher organizations (89 percent, up from 48 percent in the baseline).

60. The GPE JSR assessment assesses JSRs against questions directly mapped to the five JSR standards. Certain of the criteria identified as necessary all need to be met for a JSR to meet a given standard. According to the assessment methodology, this means that one criterion, if not met, may disqualify a JSR to meet a certain standard even if the other necessary criteria are met. Thus, a JSR may have seen improvements from one year to the next, which are reflected in its detailed assessment but not necessarily captured in its overall score. Performance on each standard is derived based on information available in the JSR documentation. If insufficient core JSR documentation is made available to assess a JSR on a fair basis, the JSR is not assessed.

61. Stakeholder categories: ministry/ministries in charge of education at the national level, ministry of education at the regional/district level and/or regional authorities in charge of education, development partners (multilateral and bilateral agencies), international and local CSOs, parents' associations, and teachers unions.

FIGURE 3.3.

**JOINT SECTOR REVIEWS IMPROVED ON EVERY QUALITY STANDARD IN 2019.**  
Proportion of joint sector reviews meeting quality standards, 2015-2019



Note: The "comprehensive" quality standard result from 2015 has been updated to ensure consistency after a slight modification to the JSR assessment.

The quality improvement across all criteria is due to 16 countries meeting more quality standards in 2019 than in their previous JSR assessment.<sup>62</sup> Meanwhile another 7 countries met fewer than three quality standards in 2019 and also had not improved on this since their previous assessment, despite some of them having a regular JSR. With regard to frequency, 21 countries had a JSR in both 2018 and 2019, while 6 countries

with a JSR in 2018 did not have one in 2019. Since 2015, the number of countries meeting three quality standards or more has doubled (from 10 to 20), and 15 countries have had a JSR at least four of the past five years.<sup>63</sup>

The JSR assessment, which is desk-based, is one measure of aligned and comprehensive sector monitoring.<sup>64</sup> The Board

62. Burundi, Cambodia, Chad, Comoros, Cote d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Ghana, Guinea, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritania, Rwanda, Senegal, Somalia-FGS, Uganda and Zimbabwe.

63. JSRs have been held every year since 2015 in Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Mozambique, Nepal, Rwanda and Togo; and four times since 2015 in Benin, Chad, Senegal, Somalia-FGS, Somalia-Somaliland and Tanzania-Mainland.

64. It is worth noting that a broader spectrum of monitoring and course-correcting mechanisms, in addition to JSRs, exist in many partner countries. But JSRs are the focal point for this indicator.

**BOX 3.5.****NEW FUNDING WINDOW TO STRENGTHEN JOINT SECTOR REVIEWS**

In December 2019, the Board approved the establishment of a window for financing joint education sector reviews within the existing education sector plan development grant. Partner countries can now apply for a maximum of US\$50,000 annually, and the application can include support for up to four years, for a total of US\$200,000. This financing may cover any costs and capacity strengthening related to the monitoring of the plan (including sector reporting), preparation of the JSR, and follow-up. It represents a new source of support for partners to conduct progress reviews to determine any necessary course corrections and ensure the plan remains relevant and valid.

approved a new funding window for JSRs in December 2019 (Box 3.5), and significant additional efforts are required to see further improvements in both the frequency and quality of JSRs.

**MORE INCLUSIVE LOCAL EDUCATION GROUPS**  
(Indicator 19)

Desirable results in education are outcomes of complex interactions between many actors working within countries.<sup>65</sup> Results rely on the recognition of shared interests and genuine desire of actors to collaborate around a shared agenda, as well as coordinated actions, the fulfillment of agreed responsibilities, and effective and efficient partnerships. At the country level, local education groups (LEGs) serve as coordination groups or partnership mechanisms.<sup>66</sup> LEGs are government led and expected to include representation from all development partners (multilateral and bilateral), national and international NGOs, CSOs, CSO coalitions, community groups, indigenous groups, parent-teacher organizations, teacher organizations (TOs) and the private sector.

The degree of stakeholder participation and inclusion in a LEG has a strong bearing on its effectiveness. Ensuring the diversity and plurality of stakeholders throughout the policy cycle can enable the dialogue to broaden in scope and break through the usual perspectives of policymakers, planners and donors, allowing for a wider net of monitoring data and evidence. To

facilitate measured progress against this objective, the GPE results framework tracks the inclusion of CSOs and TOs in LEGs (Indicator 19).

Over the last four years, GPE has been working to support partner countries in broadening stakeholder participation and inclusion in LEGs. This has resulted in a significant improvement in the proportion of LEGs having CSO and TO representation. The proportion of countries and federal states with both CSO and TO representation in their LEGs increased from 44 percent in 2016 (the baseline) to 64 percent in 2019 (Figure 3.4).<sup>67</sup> PCFCs also saw an increase in overall representation in that same time frame, from 55 percent to 67 percent.

Looking at CSO and TO participation individually since 2016, one can conclude that participation has improved consistently in both PCFCs and non-PCFCs (Figure 3.5). Though this bodes well, it is very hard to gauge the degree of their involvement as well as the willingness of partner country governments to engage with these actors effectively. The GPE country-level evaluations explored the degree of stakeholder participation and found that the thematic priorities of different CSOs varied within and across countries, and the findings do not indicate clear patterns regarding specific roles typically played by these organizations (for example, related to advocacy for certain population groups). Though not well documented, CSO and TO participation across partner countries has contributed to sector dialogue through their knowledge of everyday

65. UNESCO, *Accountability in Education: Meeting Our Commitments*, Global Education Monitoring Report 2017/18 (Paris: UNESCO, 2017), <https://en.unesco.org/gem-report/report/2017/accountability-education>.

66. "Local education group" is a generic term to describe country-led arrangements for the governance of education sector policy dialogue. Names for education groups with similar dialogue functions include education coordinating group, education consultative group, education sector development committee and joint education sector working group.

67. As with Indicator 18, this considers all LEGs in the 61 partner countries in the results framework sample who were members at the 2015 baseline. Because some of these countries (Pakistan, Somalia and Tanzania) have subnational states with their own LEGs, the resulting number is above 61.

FIGURE 3.4.

**LOCAL EDUCATION GROUP INCLUSIVENESS CONTINUES TO IMPROVE.**

Proportion of local education groups with civil society organizations and teacher organizations represented

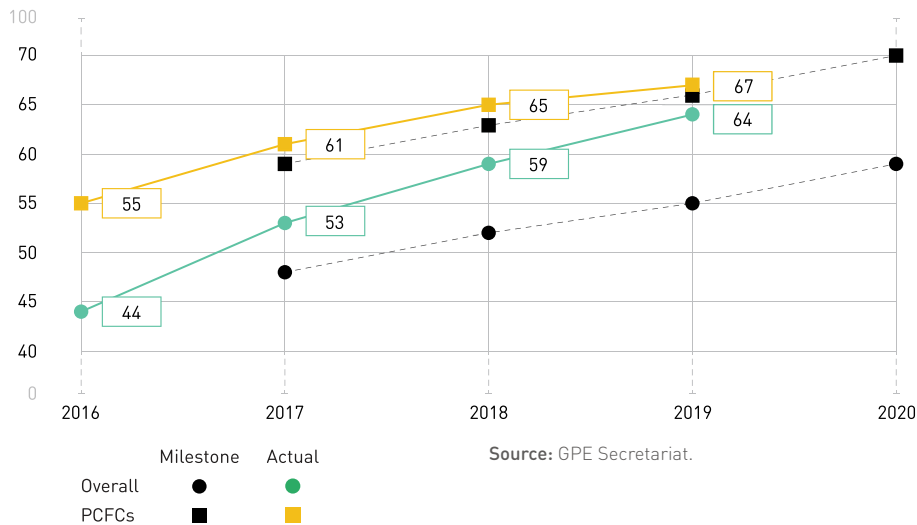
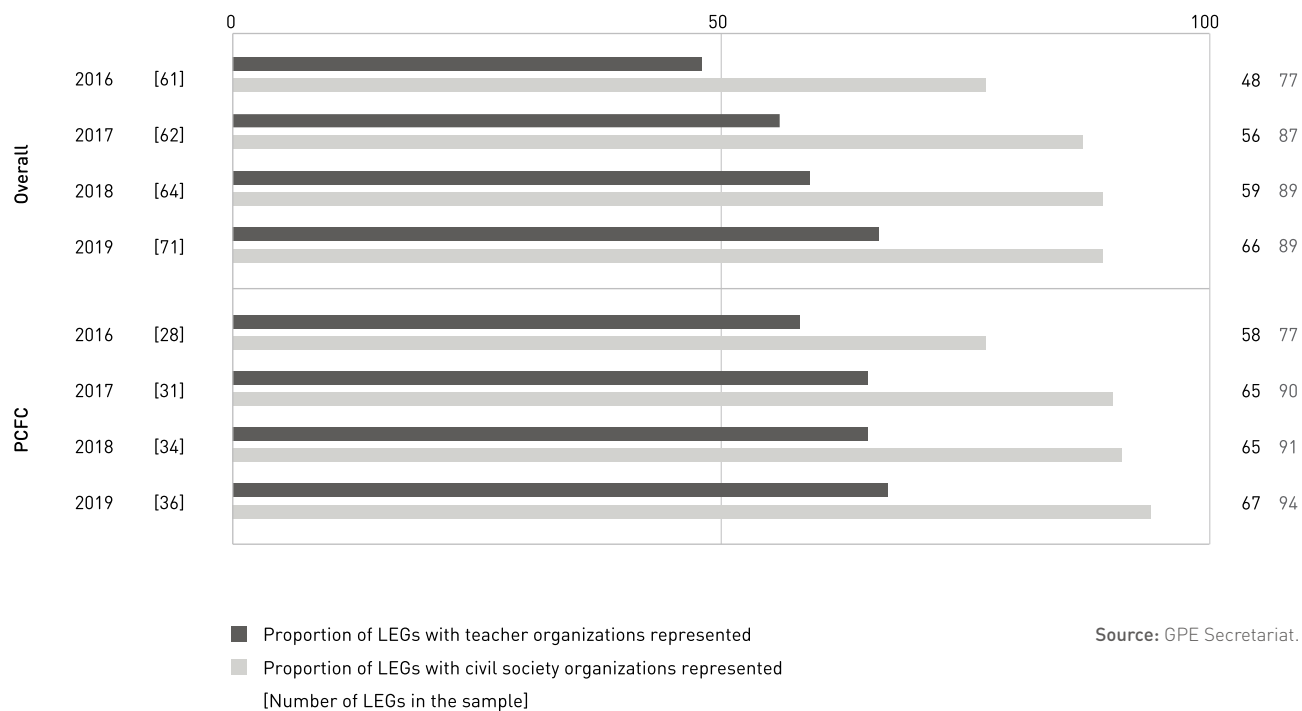


FIGURE 3.5.

**CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATION AND TEACHER ORGANIZATION REPRESENTATION IN LEGS CONTINUES TO GROW.**

Proportion of LEGs with civil society organizations or teacher organizations represented



### BOX 3.6.

#### WHAT DO THE COUNTRY-LEVEL EVALUATIONS SAY ABOUT MUTUAL ACCOUNTABILITY?

The GPE country-level evaluations examined progress toward mutual accountability through the lens of both sector monitoring and sector dialogue. Key takeaways are summarized below and described in Appendix D.

1. **Sector dialogue** has become more frequent, participatory and evidence-based, especially at the plan development stage. There is better representation from groups other than ministries and development partners, although the degree of inclusion is tied to the willingness of the governments to engage and the extent to which those groups are organized internally. As a result, LEGs have increasing relevance and influence as consultative bodies. However, governments' coordinating capacities remain uneven, and subnational-level dialogue is generally weak, with limited feedback loops. The role of the coordinating agency is valued and mostly efficacious, despite often limited capacity for this role. The quality of sector dialogue may be diminished due to relative staff stability in ministries and partner organizations; the existence of multiple dialogue forums with overlapping membership and mandates; the lack of time dedicated to trouble-shooting plan implementation issues; and the inconsistency in reviewing advancements around partners' agreed roles, owing to subpar alignment and harmonization of partner initiatives around sector goals and priorities.
2. **Sector monitoring** arrangements and systems have been established or revamped—based on the creation of results frameworks, periodic data gathering and direct dialogue with stakeholders—to track the achievement of key indicators, although these are sometimes viewed as too complex, too high-level or lacking in specificity to track progress effectively. Ministries of education often identify a lead institution and expertise for sector-monitoring duties, but these may lack the capacity for data gathering, analysis and reporting, or the authority and resources to coordinate and carry out data collection at central and decentralized levels. Joint sector reviews have become a central feature of sector monitoring in a range of countries. However, there is inconsistency in many countries' JSRs from year to year and progress is generally uneven, in part because of the lack of government commitment in certain partner countries, and concerns from stakeholders about conducting JSRs in the absence of quality data, which may not effectively support strategic dialogue and decision making.

The full synthesis report on GPE country-level evaluations for fiscal year 2019 is available at <https://www.globalpartnership.org/content/country-level-evaluations-final-synthesis-report-volume-1>.

practices in classrooms and schools, understanding of how various policies could impact teachers, and their engagement in advocating for gender equality, equity and inclusion, among other issues.

#### TOWARD A MORE EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIP

The Effective Partnership Review (EPR) launched by the Board in 2017 identified the need, across country contexts, to identify and adopt actions to make the partnership more effective.<sup>68</sup> As a result, four principles were adopted in December 2018 with the aim to (1) increase decentralized mutual accountability,

(2) drive national government ownership and increase its capacity, (3) rebalance GPE's country-level model (with greater attention to sector processes and implementation), and (4) reduce GPE processes and transaction costs. To begin to operationalize these principles, a series of clarifications and adaptations to the GPE model were adopted in mid-2019, as were two pilot initiatives focusing on strengthened LEG collaboration (see below) and coordination at the country level. EPR decisions included increased adaptation to context in the application of the funding model requirement on sector plans, as well as changes and clarifications in grant-related processes such as the selection of grant agents, quality assurance, monitoring and reporting. These have been incorporated

68. "Building an Effective Partnership Rollout," Global Partnership for Education, accessed April 2020, <https://www.globalpartnership.org/who-we-are/building-effective-partnerships>.

into relevant guidelines and are being rolled out as applicable. The EPR principles continue to guide the development of GPE's next strategic plan, GPE 2025.

The EPR led to adaptations to roles, responsibilities, authorities, accountabilities and risk ownership around country-level partnership processes. These were captured in changes to the GPE Charter, in an accountability matrix, and in revised terms of reference for key roles, including coordinating agencies, grant agents and the Secretariat's country-level role. Emphasizing that GPE is both a partnership and a fund, the accountability matrix distinguishes between accountabilities stakeholders sign up for as GPE partners and the more hard-wired accountabilities related to GPE grants. To ensure roles, responsibilities and accountabilities are well understood among stakeholders, and to build a common understanding of the partnership and how it seeks to drive better results at the country level, a *strategic communications and engagement framework for GPE at the country level* has been developed. The framework is guiding the development of communication tools to enhance clarity on GPE and related processes, roles, responsibilities and accountabilities, and more broadly, to support the work to strengthen education systems through communication tools and messaging. The framework looks beyond the core audience of local education groups to address how effective communication can reach leaders, influencers and communities to support and guide education sector strategies and impacts. To make these tools and messages available to country-level partners, a communication portal for country-level partnership is expected to be available on GPE's website in the second half of 2020.

To further strengthen country-level partnerships, the Board agreed to proliferate and support good practices on

partnership agreements and frameworks, and to pilot a user-friendly mechanism to support mutual accountability among members of an LEG, recognizing that LEG functions, structures and effectiveness differ according to country contexts, needs and capacity. In 2019, as part of the Effective Partnership Rollout, GPE launched a pilot of a diagnostic self-assessment mechanism for country-level partners to facilitate reflection and actions for optimizing the potential of education policy dialogue and sector coordination mechanisms. These tools include the LEG self-assessment and performance feedback tools,<sup>69</sup> which build on the *Principles Toward Effective Local Education Groups*.<sup>70</sup> The assessment tool was developed in 2019 based on research undertaken by the Secretariat in 2018 across a range of disciplines and fields of application on what makes multi-stakeholder coordination and partnerships effective.

## RAISING OUR AMBITIONS

Both the indicator results on joint sector reviews and local education groups and the interim update on sector plan quality show strong progress overall with room for improvement. Most notably, the quality of joint sector reviews, a point of emphasis across the partnership over the past year, increased substantially. Local education groups' inclusion of civil society and teacher organizations continues to improve, though the latter are still more likely to be left out. As the partnership contemplates new strategic directions with the goal of increasing GPE's ability to serve the individual needs of countries in a more tailored way and facilitate adaptive management, innovative approaches to sector monitoring and policy dialogue, as well as to the planning process, will be a particular area of focus.

69. GPE, *LEG Self-Assessment and Performance Feedback Tools* (Washington, DC: GPE, 2019), <https://www.globalpartnership.org/content/leg-self-assessment-and-performance-feedback-tools>.

70. GPE, *Principles Toward Effective Local Education Groups* (Washington, DC: GPE, 2020), <https://www.globalpartnership.org/content/principles-toward-effective-local-education-groups>.