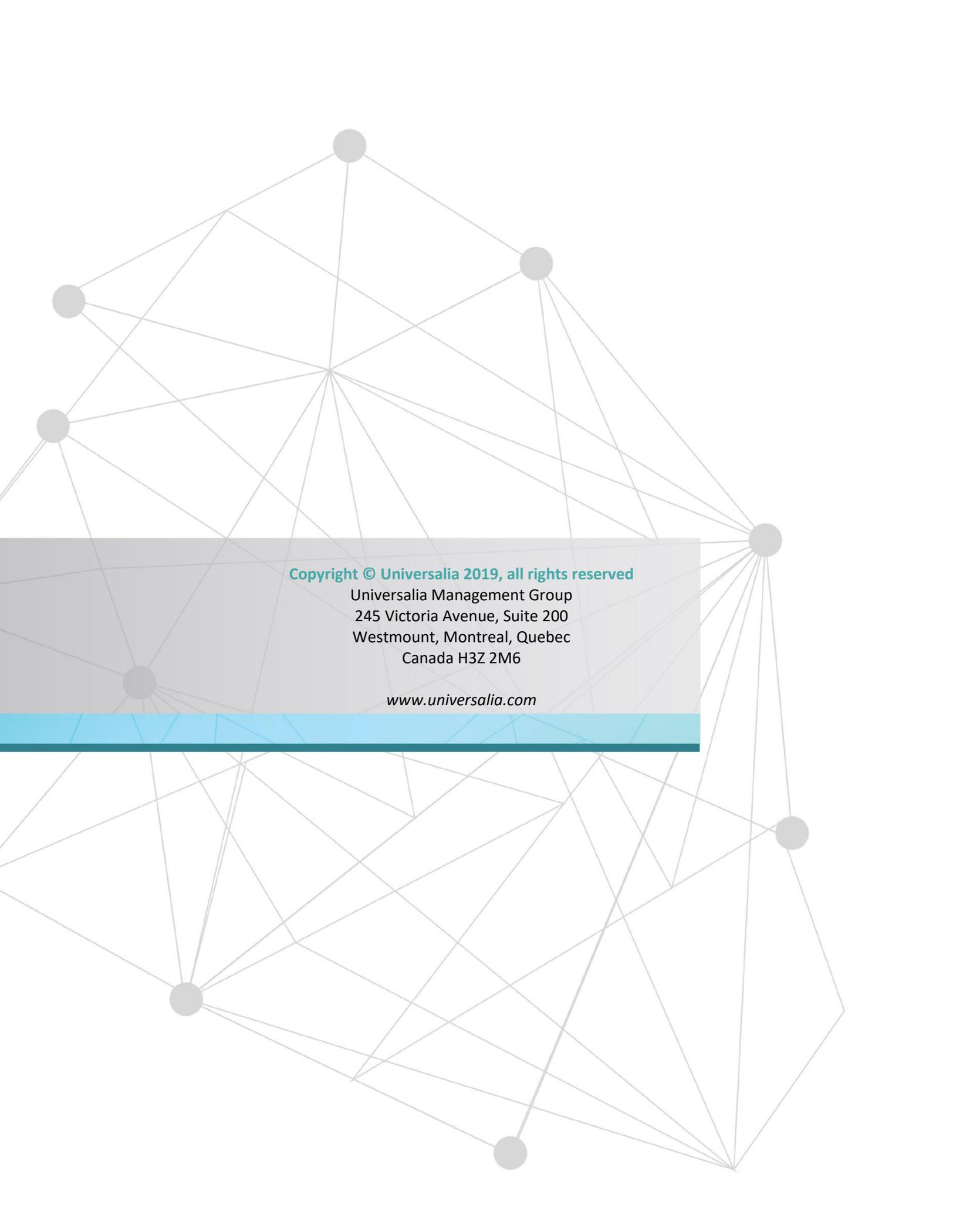


Summative GPE Country Program Evaluation

Batch 5, Country 14: Kingdom of Cambodia

FINAL REPORT | AUGUST 2019





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Executive Summary

Evaluation purpose and approach

This evaluation is part of a larger study of the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) that comprises 30 country level evaluations (CLEs). The overall study runs from 2017 until 2020. It aims to assess (i) GPE contributions to strengthening national education systems and, ultimately, education results related to learning, equity, equality and inclusion; and hence (ii) the relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of GPE's theory of change (ToC) and country-level operational model. The assessment is based on a theory-based, mixed social science research methodology known as contribution analysis.

This study was conducted between April and August 2019 and covered GPE support from 2014 to 2019. It draws on document, database and literature review, as well as on consultations with a total of 74 governmental, multilateral, bilateral and non-governmental stakeholders in Cambodia.

Education in Cambodia

The Kingdom of Cambodia is a Southeast Asian country that gained its independence in 1953. Its total population in 2016 was approximately 15.6 million, a figure which is expected to increase to 18 million by 2028. Cambodia reached lower middle-income status in 2015, with the percentage of its population living below the national poverty line declining from 48.7 percent in 2007 to 13.5 percent in 2014.

The bulk of the management of the education sector falls under the purview the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS), which is in charge of pre-primary through to higher education, as well as non-formal education and teacher training. Technical and Vocational

Education and Training (TVET), the only sub-sector that does not fall under MoEYS supervision, is managed by the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training (MoLVT).

Cambodia's formal education system is organized into pre-primary, primary, lower secondary, upper secondary and higher education. Education is nominally free for primary and lower secondary levels. The official language of instruction is Khmer. In 2018, there were a total of 3.2 million children enrolled in public schools from pre-primary to upper secondary levels (50.9 percent girls).

There was a total of 1,367 private schools in Cambodia in 2018, largely falling under one of three categories: (i) schools in which the language of instruction is Khmer and run parallel to public education; (ii) non-Khmer language schools; and (iii) religious schools (including Islamic religious schools and Buddhist monastic schools).

Over the course of the past decade, Cambodia has developed four Education Strategic Plans (ESPs), covering the periods 2006-2010, 2009-2013, 2014-2018 and 2019-2023. **This evaluation focuses on the ESP 2014-2018 and the Mid-Term Review (MTR) 2016 report, which served as an updated sector plan for the remainder of the ESP policy cycle, as well as the transition to the ESP 2019-2023.**

GPE in Cambodia

Cambodia joined GPE in 2006 and has received seven grants: two Education Sector Plan Development Grants (ESPDGs), three Education Sector Plan Implementation Grants (ESPIGs), and two Program Development Grants (PDGs). This evaluation focuses on the period of the GPE2 ESPIG (2014-2017), which provided \$38.5m for the Second Education Sector Support Project (SESSP) with the World Bank as Grant Agent (GA). The evaluation also covers the transition to

the GPE3 ESPIG (2018-2021), which provides a total of \$20.6m of grant funding, of which \$14.4m falls under the fixed tranche of the ESPIG (for the Strengthening Teacher Education Program in Cambodia [STEPCam]) and \$6.2m under the variable tranche (VT). The GA for the GPE3 fixed tranche is UNESCO, while the GA for the VT is UNICEF. The VT is funded through the Capacity Development Partnership Fund (CDPF), a multi-donor pooled funding mechanism that is managed by UNICEF.

GPE contributions to sector planning

State of sector planning in Cambodia, 2014–2019

Cambodia has a long history of sector planning and has made important progress with regard to strengthening its education sector planning during the period 2014-2019. Both the ESP 2014-2018 and the MTR 2016 update were of good quality as per GPE quality standards for Education Sector Plans.

The ESP-MTR enhanced the credibility of the ESP 2014-2018. The MTR process not only reviewed progress in the implementation of the ESP 2014-2018, but the MTR report also served as an updated ESP for the remainder of the policy cycle. Changes made to the ESP, as part of the MTR update, include: consolidation of policy areas (from three to two); more in-depth examination of educational achievement; provision of updated implementation strategies; realignment of program/sub-program indicators and targets with newly emerged MoEYS priorities; and alignment of the ESP with SDG 4 by adding inclusion and lifelong learning to its overarching policies. Furthermore, the MTR update improved on the ESP 2014-2018 in adjusting the financial costing of the ESP to more conservative estimates of financial resources available.

Increased MoEYS ownership of the ESP 2019-2023 planning process and product stood as the overarching change between the 2014-2018 and 2019-2023 planning cycles, with the potential to foster greater commitment to implementation of planned activities. The quality of the final ESP 2019-2023 also improved, reflecting MoEYS efforts to address recommendations raised by an independent appraisal of the ESP conducted on an earlier draft of the plan. The final draft of the ESP reduced the number of strategies, included more analysis of sector trends on internal efficiency and primary completion, and added financial projections.

During the review period, the MoEYS continued efforts to strengthen sector planning capacities with the support of DPs through its guiding framework for capacity development, the Master Plan for Capacity Development (MPCD) 2014-2018, which aims to facilitate coordinated approaches to capacity development in support of ESP implementation. Progress in sector planning capacity development during the review period is especially noted in the increased quality of provincial-level Annual Operational Plans (AOPs). Nevertheless, key challenges in sector planning remain in aligning budgets to plans and strengthening operational planning at national and sub-national levels.

GPE contributions

GPE2 ESPIG funding requirements for a credible sector plan was the principal reason for using the MTR process to not only review progress in the implementation of the ESP 2014-2018, but also to update the ESP and extend its validity so that Cambodia could apply for its Maximum Country Allocation (MCA) in the last years of its ESP.

GPE's ESPDG funding provided the main source of funding for the Rapid Education Sector Analysis (RESA) in 2016, which served as the evidence base, and critical piece of analytical work, for the MTR report.

GPE3 ESPIG funding requirements were also important in requiring Cambodia to engage in the sector plan QA process for the ESP 2019-

2023, as GPE3 funding was approved on the condition that the new ESP would adhere to the requirements of a credible sector plan.

Finally, **the independent appraisal of the ESP 2019-2023**, reflecting GPE's enhanced Quality Assurance process for ESPs, contributed to improvements in the final draft of the ESP. It was timed and conducted in such a way that helped galvanize stakeholder attention to finalizing the plan and provided MoEYS an opportunity to reflect on technical aspects of the ESP.

Implications for GPE

In Cambodia, GPE demonstrated flexibility in applying its funding requirements to respect locally-driven processes and country government priorities. This flexibility was seen in: (i) a small but critical ESPDG to support the RESA; (ii) considering the on-going validity of the RESA, and other existing education research, as sufficient sector analysis to inform the ESP 2019-2023; and (iii) applying the appraisal mechanism in a way that responded to concerns of both DP and government actors.

Furthermore, despite the fact that Cambodia's national planning cycle is not in sync with the GPE ESPIG cycle, GPE has still been able to use the ESPIG funding requirements as a lever to ensure sector plans undergo the necessary QA processes. In this case, the partnership has given equal value to government ownership of the content and process of sector planning as to the technical robustness of the plan.

The VT "stretch indicators" generated concerns among stakeholders in that these suggest going beyond the ambitions articulated in the ESP. Furthermore, stakeholders pointed out the different perspectives of what constituted a "stretch" within the Secretariat and among the in-country partners, which made the ESPIG design process challenging.

GPE contributions to sector dialogue and monitoring

State of sector dialogue and monitoring in Cambodia, 2014-2019

Cambodia has well-established mechanisms for sector dialogue between DPs and the MoEYS in the form of the Joint Technical Working Group (JTWG) for Education, which serves as the Local Education Group (LEG) and is attended by both MoEYS and DPs, and the Education Sector Working Group (ESWG), which serves as the country's formal coordination group for donors and NGOs. Civil society is represented in both mechanisms through the NGO Education Partnership (NEP), an umbrella organization of 152 NGOs working in education. JTWG meetings are well attended, provide a systematic opportunity for DP-government sector dialogue, and the composition of actors attending JTWG meetings has remained consistent since 2014. While the ESWG is valued particularly by NGOs, the lack of attendance of multilateral development banks since 2014 leads to missed opportunities for better harmonization of approaches and knowledge exchange.

As a whole, the JTWG and ESWG have facilitated DP alignment to ESPs over time. The mechanisms, however, have been less effective in increasing harmonization and coordination of DP efforts, with the ESWG especially noted as focusing more on information-sharing than on coordination of programming. Informal ad hoc and issue-specific meetings are often more effective for strategic dialogue and/or coordination. Examples include the CDPF Steering Committee and meetings among relevant donors aimed at strengthening coordination among donor-led initiatives in Early Grade Reading Assistance and school-based management (SBM).

Cambodia has had three mechanisms that serve the purpose of **joint sector review (JSR)** since

2014, namely the Annual Education Congress and JTWG Education Retreats, which were held annually throughout the review period, and joint government-DP Education Sector Review (ESR) missions, which were held for the period 2015-2017 and discontinued following MoEYS preference for a single JSR report in the form of the Congress report. Overall, the current combination of JSR mechanisms (Congress and Retreat) is government-owned, carried out on a regular basis, well-anchored in the policy cycle, and provide opportunities for information exchange between MoEYS and DPs. However, the mechanisms provide limited opportunity for strategic or technical policy dialogue, due to the format of Congress meetings as large events consisting of one-way presentations of sector progress or challenges, and the growing size of Retreat attendance in recent years.

With regard to data availability, **Cambodia is recognized for having a well-developed EMIS**, and has strengthened the EMIS department's ownership of the presentation and dissemination of data. Challenges remain, however, with regard to sub-national capacities to enter and use data, MoEYS capacities for data analysis, and coordination of parallel information management systems.

GPE contributions

GPE made modest contributions overall to sector dialogue and monitoring in Cambodia during the review period. **The independent appraisal of the ESP 2019-2023**, as part of GPE's QA process, helped focus the dialogue and provided a space for DPs to agree on key sector planning issues and provide coordinated feedback to the MoEYS. The independent appraisal of the ESP 2014-2018 is also noted for its contributions to MoEYS-DP policy discussions.

Joint ESR monitoring missions, which were conducted under GPE1 (2008-2011) and GPE2 (2015-2017), as per **GPE requirements for sector review**, appear to have provided a valuable forum for DP-MoEYS discussions on progress and challenges in the sector.

Implications for GPE

GPE has adapted to the operational context in Cambodia in following the government's preference for streamlining JSR approaches through the discontinuation of the joint ESR missions in 2017. Despite Secretariat advocacy efforts, GPE has not been able to influence the quality of dialogue and coordination.

GPE contributions to sector financing

State of sector financing in Cambodia, 2014–2019

Domestic public financing for education in Cambodia increased substantially, as absolute sector allocations grew by 273 percent between 2014 and 2019. Available data also suggests that substantial increases in capital expenditures since 2015 have contributed to a significant proportion of increases in MoEYS budget allocations during the review period. Despite these increases, the MoEYS budget as a share of total public expenditures remained below the 20 percent target, though allocations have risen from 9.9 percent of the total budget in 2014 to 14.2 percent in 2019.

Available data on allocations by sub-sector indicate that **allocations to primary education were close to the GPE target of 45 percent**, with actual recurrent budget allocations for primary education as a share of the total recurrent budget at 44.8 and 44.6 percent in 2014 and 2015, respectively.

Education official development assistance (ODA) to Cambodia, in nominal terms, increased overall during the review period (from US\$84m in 2014 to US\$114m in 2017) despite an initial decrease between 2014 and 2015. Similarly, the proportion of education ODA to overall ODA to Cambodia has increased overall since 2008, with some fluctuations. Support to basic education has largely not kept up pace with the observed

growth in total education ODA, due likely to increased investment from a variety of DPs in upper secondary, higher education and TVET in the past decade.

The proportion of education ODA from bilateral donors and multilateral institutions has remained the same over the period 2008-2017 (64 percent bilateral versus 36 percent multilateral). Financial contributions of DPs continue to be made in a landscape of stand-alone projects, with the exceptions of EU direct budget support, ADB mixed modality funding and the pooled funding mechanism of the CDPF. Although all DP initiatives were found to be aligned with the ESP, the current mix of funding modalities does not signal a high degree of alignment of aid and use of national public financial management (PFM) systems.

GPE Contributions

GPE does not appear to have made any detectable contributions to leveraging additional domestic financing for education in Cambodia. Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) commitments to targets outlined during GPE's 2018-2020 replenishment campaign, and ESPIG requirements for progress towards the 20 percent target of education expenditure, may have played a role in increasing domestic financing for education in Cambodia. However, stakeholders interviewed did not mention these as critical factors for the increase in domestic education financing seen since 2014.

GPE also does not appear to have contributed to increased quality of international financing, as DP contributions to Cambodia continue to be made largely as stand-alone projects. There has been little demand for increased alignment of aid with national systems, despite advocacy for such alignment on the part of the GPE Secretariat. There is insufficient evidence to indicate that the financing of the GPE3 VT through the CDPF, or GPE's participation in the pooled fund, has resulted in increased donor harmonization in education financing.

Implications for GPE

GPE's advocacy role on education sector finance has been limited in Cambodia, given the strong leadership of the MoEYS in securing budget allocations from the Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF), and the overall lack of demand from DPs and government stakeholders for increased alignment of donor funding with national PFM systems.

GPE contributions to sector plan implementation

State of sector plan implementation in Cambodia, 2014–2019

Although there is no existing comprehensive assessment of ESP implementation, the evaluation estimates that at least half of the activities of the ESP 2014-2018 were implemented as planned by the MoEYS. Targets for six out of the ESP's 10, largely outcome-level, Core Breakthrough Indicators (CBIs) were achieved by 2018, while targets for 45 of 87 sub-sector indicators were achieved.

The ESP 2014-2018 was funded adequately overall, with a total of US\$3.7 billion allocated to the MoEYS during the period 2014-2019, which was 16 percent higher than financial projections of total required resources to fund the ESP (US\$3.2 billion). Interviewed stakeholders noted specific financing gaps for certain types of activities (e.g. development/revision of textbooks, rollout of four-year teacher training in Teacher Training Centers (TTCs), and conducting school inspections) rather than an overarching, system-wide lack of financing.

Key achievements resulting from implementation of the ESP 2014-2018 include: the construction of 500 community preschools; the development of a national scholarship framework for primary education; awarding scholarships to 96,507 students in 2018;

approval of the Teacher Policy Action Plan (TPAP); adoption of a curriculum framework and subsequent syllabi development for all subjects from grades 1 to 12; and the introduction of direct bank transfers for teachers' salaries and school operational budgets (SOBs).

GPE Contributions

GPE contributions to ESP implementation were principally through its GPE2-funded project, SESSP. GPE contributions were most visible in the construction of preschools and the expansion of primary and secondary scholarships, which have been scaled-up and continued by the MoEYS. GPE2's construction of 500 community-based preschools was noted as a model for low-cost, standardized construction of community preschools in Cambodia, with the government pledging continued support to such community preschool construction and management through the passing of a national sub-decree. Furthermore, the MoEYS continued scholarships for students in Grades 4 to 9 from 2015 onwards and increased the value of individual scholarships from US\$30 to US\$60 per student.

Implications for GPE

The GPE2-funded SESSP and the GPE3 fixed tranche-funded STEPCam project differed markedly in the breadth of scope of focus areas covered, as seen in the broad scope of the SESSP, which funded activities related to construction, scholarships, learning assessments and school health, among others, and the narrower focus of the STEPCam on teacher education and training. A comparison of the two projects in the future may be informative for GPE in terms of providing potential insights on the strategic implications of having a broad versus narrow project scope, and their respective effects on depth of the effectiveness or sustainability of project-funded interventions.

Factors other than GPE contributions affecting change

Factors that positively influenced change in the above described areas included: (i) the RGC's introduction of a cross-sectoral plan to raise the salaries of civil servants, including teachers, in 2014; (ii) the MoEYS' overall orientation to reform and its ability to advocate for budget allocations from the MEF; (iii) long-standing collegial relations between government and development partners; and (iv) significant and sustained financial support by various development partners to the MoEYS.

Factors that negatively influenced change included: (i) overall lack of demand from the MoEYS for increased alignment of external financing to national PFM systems; (ii) limited capacity among MoEYS technical departments for data analysis to support decision-making; and (iii) the disconnect between structures of planning and budget documents, which partly contributes to a focus on annual planning over long-term planning.

Unintended results of GPE support

Positive unintended effects of GPE support in Cambodia during the review period included: (i) the contribution of a low-cost, standardized model for community-based school construction over the course of implementing the GPE2-funded SESSP; and (ii) the channeling of GPE funds through the CDPF, a multi-donor pooled funding mechanism, for the GPE3 VT to ensure up-front funding for planned activities as GPE grant funding would only be reimbursed following the achievement of results, as per the VT's results-based financing mechanism.

Negative unintended effects of GPE support included: (i) a particularly challenging transition between GPE2 and GPE3 experienced by stakeholders, which entailed adapting to a two-GA arrangement that has in turn added a layer of

complexity to sector coordination; and (ii) the challenging process of formulating and revising VT proposals in order to meet expectations for “stretch” indicators.

System level change

System level change

During the 2014–2019 period, Cambodia made modest improvements in expanding education access, improving equity and quality, and in enhancing sector management. Changes include:

Access

- **Mixed progress in pupil-classroom ratios across sub-sectors.** The growth in the number of public primary school classrooms kept up with growth in primary student populations (pupil-classroom ratio remained at 47:1 for 2014-2017), while lower and upper secondary population growth outpaced increases in the number of secondary classrooms (pupil-classroom ratio increased from 49:1 in 2014 to 50:1 in 2017 for both levels of secondary education).
- **Increase in the number of state and community preschools** with the number of public pre-primary classrooms having increased by 22.9 percent during the period 2014-2017 (pre-primary student to classroom ratio decreased from 35:1 in 2014 to 34:1 in 2017), and an overall increase in community preschools (500 constructed under GPE2, further net increase of 136 community preschools between 2016 and 2018).

Equity

- **MoEYS continuation of scholarships for primary and lower secondary students** through Program Budget (PB) funding and RGC commitment through a sub-decree on

criteria and procedures for the scholarships.

- **Modest improvements in inclusive education** seen mostly through the adoption of a new Policy on Inclusive Education for students with disabilities in 2018 and the development of a Multilingual Education Action Plan in 2019 for students from indigenous and ethnic minority backgrounds. Challenges remain, however, in the identification of children with disabilities, specifically in the lack of a comprehensive, harmonized screening tool with accompanying guidelines, despite MoEYS and NGO efforts to develop such a tool.
- **There does not appear to have been substantial system-level improvements in relation to gender equity** during the review period. The incorporation of the Gender Mainstreaming Strategic Plan 2016-2023 into the MTR 2016 update of the ESP is the principal change noted.

Quality

- **A comprehensive revision of curricula** was undertaken from pre-primary to upper secondary levels beginning in 2015, with final drafts of newly-developed syllabi completed by 2017. Revised textbooks for Grades 1, 2 and 3 were disseminated at the rate of three books per student annually between 2014 and 2018. Textbooks for Grades 4 to 12, however, were not revised during the review period and stakeholders point out that this is a gap in education reforms.
- **Ongoing reforms to promote teacher qualification, recruitment and training**, as per the TPAP approved in 2015. Notable areas of progress in the implementation of the TPAP include: (i) the initiation of a BA fast-track program to enable basic education teachers to earn a bachelor’s degree; (ii) the establishment of two Teacher Education Colleges (TECs) that offer four-year pre-service teacher

training; and (iii) the adoption of policies for continuous professional development in 2017 and teacher career pathways in 2018.

Sector Management

- **Some progress in conducting national learning assessments** was made during the review period, including: (i) conducting learning assessments for Grade 3 and 8 students; (ii) the introduction of Early Grade Math Assessment (EGMA); (iii) the introduction of PISA-D; and (iv) initial steps in disseminating learning results. Learning assessments are not yet systematically used by MoEYS technical departments to inform decision-making on school management or learning in classrooms, due to limited capacity in the education system to analyze and comprehend such data.
- **Introduction of inspections as a reform priority** in the MTR 2016 update of the ESP 2014-2018, with progress noted in the training of both new and existing inspectors. However, it is difficult to gauge the extent to which the inspection system is fully operational, due to a lack of data on the number of inspections delivered annually.

Likely links between sector plan implementation and system level change

System-level changes during the review period were likely due to the implementation of the ESP 2014-2018 and the MTR report. All system-level improvements highlighted in this evaluation were specifically mentioned in these strategic planning documents. Furthermore, the bulk of system-level improvements were supported by donors, with the possible exception of the revisions to the curriculum framework for pre-primary to upper secondary levels of education in 2015.

Implications for GPE

The GPE country-level ToC does not explicitly take into account the political economy of education reform, which determines the extent to which the reforms are able to achieve system-level change when implemented. Specific examples in Cambodia include the widespread negative response from students following Grade 12 examination reform in 2014, which resulted in a substantial decrease in pass rates. The potential system-wide effect from the TPAP may also be affected by the prevalent practice of private tutoring among teachers in order to supplement their income, shifts in the pedagogical approaches required in classrooms, and the inter-departmental coordination necessary to apply Teacher Education Provider Standards.

Learning outcomes and equity

Changes in learning outcomes, equity and gender equality

Cambodia has made progress across a number of indicators. However, primary enrollment decreased during the review period, and gender and rural-urban disparities widened across a number of key indicators.

- **Cambodia is close to achieving its goal of universal primary education**, despite recent decreases in primary net enrollment rates. Pre-primary and secondary enrollment rates improved during the review period.
- **Dropout rates for primary and lower secondary education decreased** during the period 2014-2017, from 8.3 percent to 4.4 percent for primary education, and 21 percent to 15.8 percent for lower secondary education.
- **Transition rates increased** from primary to lower secondary levels (from 78.7 percent

to 85.7 percent) and from lower to upper secondary levels (from 71.1 percent to 75.4 percent) between 2014 and 2018.

- **Gender equity improved in pre-primary and primary enrollment. However, gender disparities widened in favor of girls** for primary and secondary completion and enrollment rates during the review period.

There is insufficient data to compare changes in learning outcomes over time. Nevertheless, several observations can be derived from available data, including:

- **Significant learning gaps in Khmer reading and writing:** Grade 3 and Grade 8 children received significantly low scores in reading and writing, with Grade 8 Khmer test results suggesting that writing in Khmer is particularly difficult for students.
- **Low levels of performance in mathematics among early grades and Grade 8 students,** with Grade 6 students lacking capacities for conceptual understanding, despite performing better with procedural questions.
- PISA-D assessment results indicate that performance of 15-year-olds in Cambodia in reading, mathematics and science was lower than average scores for OECD and lower-middle income countries.

Likely links to observed system level changes

The decrease in primary and lower secondary dropout rates is likely linked to MoEYS efforts to expand scholarships for primary and lower secondary students, while the increase in pre-primary enrollment is likely a result of the increase in number of preschool classrooms and construction of community preschools.

Implications for GPE

It is difficult to follow the ToC all the way through to the impact level change given the complexities of achieving system-level change, the lack of sufficient data to compare learning outcomes over time, and the time lag between system-level improvements and measurable/sustainable change in key sector indicators.

Conclusions/ Overall observations

GPE contributions

Overall, GPE contributions to strengthening the education sector are modest given the many different factors contributing to its country-level objectives in different parts of the policy cycle in Cambodia.

Evidence from stakeholder consultations and documents highlight that GPE's contribution to Cambodia was modest in the following areas:

- **GPE helped strengthen sector planning in ways that were operationally relevant in the Cambodian context,** in terms of leveraging requirements for a credible, endorsed ESP and in its flexibility in applying these requirements. The development of sector plans during the review period, however, was not dependent on GPE financial support.
- **GPE contributions to mutual accountability were less tangible** due to the Cambodian context where on the one hand there are already mature mechanisms for monitoring and dialogue, on the other there are ongoing challenges for coordination.
- **GPE2 ESPIG funding covered only a small proportion of the ESP 2014-2018 (1.2 percent) but helped to finance capital expenditures where government funds alone would have been insufficient.**

Government officials highlighted the value of this contribution in filling gaps related to the construction of pre-schools and the funding of scholarships at the primary level.

GPE made limited contributions in education sector financing, as GPE advocacy did not emphasize education sector finance as much as other areas of the policy cycle. Instead, the MoEYS has been particularly effective in advocating for the increases in budget allocations for education during the review period. Furthermore, the partnership has not been successful in shifting international aid in the education sector to more collective, aligned modalities for aid delivery.

Emerging good practices

Cambodia has a master plan and funding mechanism to explicitly support capacity development in the education sector. This creates an opportunity to approach capacity-development through a demand-led process, while at the same time enabling greater aid effectiveness since the CDPF is a pooled funding mechanism.

The MoEYS is noted for its effective advocacy for increased budget allocations from the MEF. This is largely attributed to the leadership of the MoEYS and, specifically, of the Minister, and to the use of evidence to communicate results achieved in ways that resonate with the MEF.

The RGC has shown commitment to reform its PFM systems since 2005 and the MoEYS has been at the forefront of this process. Progress has been driven by the political will to increase financial accountability and budget-policy linkages. The MoEYS is one of the key ministries in the reform, especially due to its early adoption of the PB structure.

Strategic Questions for GPE

- 1) Does a Master Plan for Capacity Development (backed by pooled funding

mechanism) help support planning and implementation capacities over time? Is this something that should be advocated by GPE? How can GPE ensure that capacity development focuses on areas that the Ministry's leadership cares about? How should the concerns about technical capacities for statistical data analysis be addressed? How can GPE shift attention to this area?

- 2) How can GPE better advocate for aligned modalities of aid delivery in education in a country context where there is neither a demand nor supply for such modalities? In Cambodia, several DPs were critical of GPE's use of a project-funding modality when GPE should be setting the bar higher, thereby establishing a trend for better aid effectiveness in the education sector. Yet it was the government's decision to establish GPE2 as a stand-alone project, thus there was no demand for a different modality. Similarly, other DPs have been slow in adopting pooled funding or budget support modalities, which also raises the question about GPE advocacy with members of the partnership at the global level.
- 3) GPE's recent experience in Cambodia puts the concept of "ownership" at the forefront with regard to ESP development. In assessing credibility of an ESP, how can/should the partnership balance the degree of "ownership" in relation to GPE quality standards? What does the partnership value in terms of ownership? The concept of ownership seems to have multiple facets/dimensions that should be considered: ownership of a national planning cycle, ownership of the priorities articulated in the ESP, leadership of the planning process, drafting the content of the plan, negotiating funding for the plan, and paying attention to implementation.

1 Introduction

1.1 Background and purpose of this summative country level evaluation

1. The Global Partnership for Education (GPE) is a multilateral global partnership and funding platform established in 2002 as the Education for All/Fast Track Initiative (EFA/FTI) and renamed GPE in 2011. GPE aims to strengthen education systems in developing countries in order to ensure improved and more equitable student learning outcomes, as well as improved equity, gender equality and inclusion in education.² GPE is a partnership that brings together developing countries, donor countries, international organizations, civil society, teacher organizations, the private sector and foundations.

2. This country level evaluation (CLE) of GPE's support to the national education system of the Kingdom of Cambodia is part of a larger GPE study that comprises a total of 20 summative and eight formative CLEs. The overall study is part of GPE's monitoring and evaluation (M&E) strategy 2016-2020, which calls for a linked set of evaluation studies to explore how well GPE outputs and activities contribute to outcomes and impact at the country level.³ Cambodia was selected as one of 20 summative CLE countries based on sampling criteria described in the study's inception report.⁴ As per the inception report and the study's Terms of Reference (TOR), the objective of summative CLEs is:

- To assess GPE contributions to strengthening education systems and, ultimately, the achievement of education results within a partner developing country in the areas of learning, equity, equality and inclusion; and hence,
- To assess the relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of GPE's theory of change (ToC) and of its country-level operational model.⁵

3. The primary intended users of CLEs are members of the Global Partnership for Education, including Developing Country Partners (DCPs) and members of local education groups (LEGs) in the sampled countries, and the GPE Board of Directors. The secondary user is the Secretariat. Tertiary intended users include the wider education community at global and country levels.

² Global Partnership for Education (2016): GPE 2020. Improving learning and equity through stronger education systems. <https://www.globalpartnership.org/content/gpe-2020-strategic-plan>.

³ In the context of this assignment, the term 'impact' is aligned with the terminology used by GPE to refer to changes in sectoral learning, equity, gender equality and inclusion outcomes (reflected in Strategic Goals 1 and 2 of the GPE 2016-2020 Strategic Plan). While the CLEs examine progress towards impact in this sense, they do not constitute formal impact evaluations, which usually entail counterfactual analysis based on randomized control trials.

⁴ See final Inception Report, 2018, <https://www.globalpartnership.org/content/country-level-evaluations-final-inception-report>, and subsequent update, the Modified Approach to CLEs, 2018. www.globalpartnership.org/content/modified-approach-country-level-evaluations-fy-ii-2019-and-fy-iii-2020

⁵ For details on the model, see Global Partnership for Education (2017): How GPE works in partner countries. <https://www.globalpartnership.org/content/how-gpe-works-partner-countries>

Box 1.1. Scope of this summative country level evaluation

This summative CLE is focused on eliciting insights that can help GPE assess and, if needed, improve its overall approach to supporting partner developing countries. It does *not* set out to evaluate the performance of the Government of the Royal Government of Cambodia, or other in-country partners and stakeholders, or of specific GPE grants.

The core review period for this CLE runs from the endorsement of the Education Strategic Plan (ESP) 2014-2018 in 2013 through the MTR 2016 (which served as an updated sector plan for the remainder of the ESP policy cycle) and up to the appraisal of the ESP 2019-2023. This period therefore includes three education sector plans and two Education Sector Plan Implementation Grants (ESPIGs).

1.2 Methodology overview

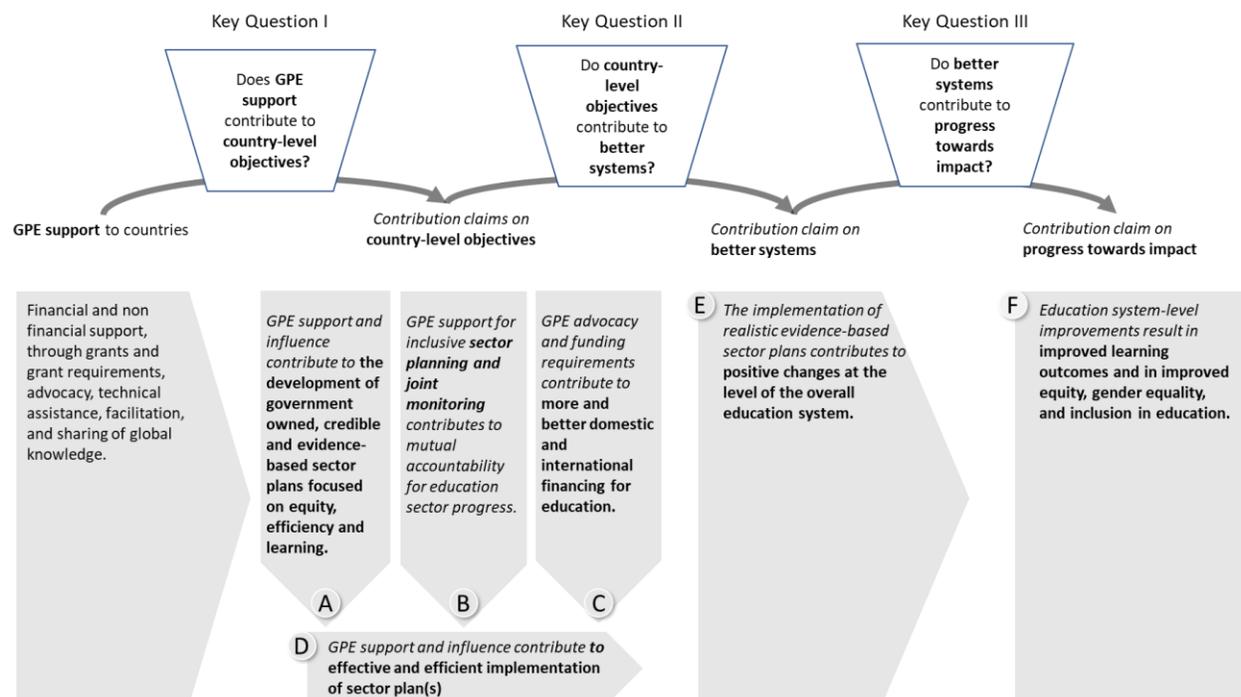
4. The guiding frameworks for the evaluation are the evaluation matrix (Appendix I) and the country-level theory of change for the Kingdom of Cambodia (Appendix II).⁶ A brief summary of the CLE methodology is provided in Appendix III of this report. For further details, please refer to the final Inception Report for the overall assignment (January 2018).

5. For the Cambodia CLE, the evaluation team consulted a total of 74 stakeholders from the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS), from a provincial office of education (POE) and a district office of education (DOE), from bilateral and multilateral donor agencies, from civil society organizations, from a teachers' union, from the GPE Secretariat, and from other backgrounds (see Appendix V for a list of consulted stakeholders). Most of these stakeholders were consulted in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, between April 22 and May 3, 2019, whilst the remainder were consulted by phone/skype shortly before or after the mission. The evaluation team also reviewed a wide range of relevant documents, databases and websites, as well as selected literature (see Appendix VI for a list of reviewed sources).

6. The report presents findings related to the three 'Key Questions' (KQs) from the evaluation matrix, which trace the contribution of GPE support to GPE country-level objectives (KQ I); of these country-level objectives to better education systems (KQ II); and of better education systems to progress towards impact-level objectives in terms of learning, equity, gender equality and inclusion (KQ III). The findings of this report are accordingly presented under three sections that each correspond to one of the KQs. In turn, each section is divided into sub-sections that address key GPE contribution claims as per GPE's ToC. The three KQs and the six contribution claims (A, B, C, D, E, F) are shown in Figure 1.1.

⁶ This country-specific ToC was adapted from the generic country-level ToC that was developed in the assignment Inception Report.

Figure 1.1 The evaluation presents findings on key evaluation questions and contribution claims



7. Throughout the report, we use tables to provide readers with broad overviews of key CLE findings on the respective issue. To facilitate quick orientation, we use a simple color-coding scheme that is based on a three-category scale in which **green** equals ‘strong/high/achieved’, **amber** equals ‘moderate/medium/partly achieved’, **red** signifies ‘low/weak/not achieved’, and **grey** indicates a lack of sufficient data to rate the issue. In each table, the respective meaning of the chosen color coding is clarified. The color coding is intended as a qualitative orientation tool to readers, rather than as a quantifiable measure.

1.3 Structure of the report

8. Following this introduction, **Section 2** gives an overview of the national context of Cambodia, with a focus on the education sector (section 2.1), and on the history of the country’s involvement with GPE (section 2.2).

9. **Section 3** presents evaluation findings related to GPE’s contributions to education sector planning; to mutual accountability in the education sector through inclusive policy dialogue and sector monitoring; to domestic and international education sector financing; and to education sector plan implementation.

10. **Section 4** discusses education system-level changes in Cambodia during the period under review (2014-2019), as well as any likely links between these changes and the four areas of changes discussed in section 3 (sectoral planning, mutual accountability, plan implementation and financing).

11. **Section 5** presents an overview of the impact-level changes in terms of equity, gender equality, inclusion and learning outcomes observable in Cambodia over the course of the 2014-2019 review period, as well as any likely links between these changes and system-level changes noted in section 4.

12. **Section 6**, finally, presents overall conclusions of the evaluation and outlines several strategic questions to GPE, with regard to the relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of GPE's country level theory of change (ToC) and of its country-level operational model.

2 Context

2.1 Overview of Cambodia

13. Cambodia, officially the Kingdom of Cambodia, is a Southeast Asian country which gained its independence in 1953 and endured decades of fragility and conflict, before fully attaining peace in 1998 following the establishment of its government headed by current Prime Minister Hun Sen. The territory of Cambodia is 181,035 square kilometers and its total population in 2016 was approximately 15.6 million, which is expected to increase to 18 million by 2028. The annual population growth rate has gradually decreased for the past two decades, from 2.12 percent in 1998 to 1.54 percent in 2008 and 1.46 percent from 2008-2013.⁷

14. In the last two decades, Cambodia has achieved strong economic growth and significant poverty reduction. Through the opening and integration of its free market economy with Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the globe, its gross domestic product (GDP) has increased approximately 7.7 percent per annum since 1995 and the country reached lower middle-income status in 2015.⁸ The percentage of the population living below the national poverty line declined from 47.8 percent in 2007 to 13.5 percent in 2014.⁹ Furthermore, Cambodia also witnessed improvements in its population's life expectancy, health and education as seen in substantial increases in its Human Development Index (HDI) score in the past two decades, from 0.4/1 in 1997 to 0.58/1 in 2017 (ranked 146th out of 189 countries).

15. As per its long-term agenda for development, Vision 2030, Cambodia has set long-term goals to become an upper-middle income country by 2030 and high-income country by 2050.¹⁰ In the medium-term, the Royal Government of Cambodia's (RGC) plans are outlined in the National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP) 2014-2018, which focuses on: (i) promotion of the agriculture sector; (ii) private sector development and enhancing employment; (iii) capacity-building and human resources development; and (iv) infrastructure development. The NSDP is based on the policy framework provided by the Rectangular Strategy, described as the five-year "blueprint" to guide the activities of all development stakeholders in Cambodia.¹¹

⁷ Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. "Final Draft Cambodia SDG4-Education 2030 Roadmap". February 2018. p. 4.

⁸ The World Bank. "The World Bank In Cambodia – Overview". No date. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/cambodia/overview> (accessed June 2019)

⁹ Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. "Final Draft Cambodia SDG4-Education 2030 Roadmap". February 2018. p.5.

¹⁰ The Royal Government of Cambodia, "Rectangular Strategy" Phase IV, 2018, p. 2.

¹¹ Phase IV of the Rectangular Strategy is comprised of four "rectangles": (i) human resource development; (ii) economic diversification; promotion of private sector development and employment; and (iv) inclusive and sustainable development (Ibid, p. 10).

2.2 The Education Sector in Cambodia

16. The right to quality education for all is stated in Article 65 of Cambodia's 1993 constitution.¹² In alignment with Article 65, the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) passed the Education Law 2007, which is aimed at establishing a comprehensive and uniform education system.¹³ The administration and management of education is divided into four levels, namely: the national or central level (the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport [MoEYS]), the provincial or municipal level (Provincial Office for Education [POE]), the district or Khan level (District Office for Education [DOE]), and the educational institution level (school).¹⁴ Based on the law, the MoEYS "shall prepare regulations and principles/guidelines for establishment and administration of public or private education institution according to their types."¹⁵

17. The structure of basic education in Cambodia comprises three levels as shown in Table 2.1. In addition, there are 6-12 years of higher education, i.e. four years for a bachelor's degree, two years for a master's degree and 3-6 years for a PhD. There is also a distinct system for teacher training, which entails two years of training at a Provincial or Regional Teacher Training College following the completion of upper secondary education. Newly-established Teacher Education Colleges (TECs), in Phnom Penh and Battambang, are currently developing a four-year bachelor's program for teacher qualification. Furthermore, in order to provide access to education for disadvantaged children and adults, non-formal education is also included in the education system, through the Department of Non-Formal Education in the MoEYS. The department provides education services related to adult literacy, post-literacy and equivalency to formal education. The bulk of the responsibility of managing the education sector falls under the MoEYS, which covers seven sub-sectors in total: early childhood education (ECE); primary education; secondary and technical education; higher education; non-formal education; youth development; and physical education and sport. The only sub-sector that does not fall under the MoEYS supervision is Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), which is managed by the Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training (MoLVT). It should be noted that certain aspects and activities of technical education are the responsibility of the MoEYS under the subsector "Secondary and Technical Education", including the provision of operational budgets to General and Technical High Schools (GTHSs), curriculum development for GTHSs, and the provision of career counselling services for secondary school students.¹⁶ One of the key differences between the responsibilities of the MoEYS and the MoLVT is that the MoEYS is not engaged in providing services related to vocational training. The full management and supervision of TVET as a stand-alone education sub-sector is under the responsibility of the MoLVT.

¹² "The State shall protect and update citizens' rights to quality education at all levels and shall take necessary steps for equal education to reach all citizens." Article 66 of further emphasizes that "The State shall establish a comprehensive and standardized educational system throughout the country that shall guarantee the principles of educational freedom and equality to ensure that all citizens have equal opportunity to earn a living."

¹³ Cambodia's Education Law 2007 – article 1: Goal

¹⁴ Cambodia's Education Law 2007 – article 7: Administrative Hierarchy and Education Management

¹⁵ Cambodia's Education Law 2007 – article 11: The formation of Educational Establishments (paragraph 2)

¹⁶ Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. "Education Strategic Plan 2014-2018. Kingdom of Cambodia". March 2014, p. 33

Table 2.1 Official formal education age, by level

LEVEL OF EDUCATION		GRADES	AGE GROUP (YEARS)
Early childhood education (preschool/pre-primary) ¹⁷		Lower step	3
		Medium step	4
		High step	5
Primary education		1-6	6-11
Secondary General Education	Lower secondary education	7-9	12-14
	Upper secondary education	10-12	15-17

Source: UNESCO/IIEP, Cambodia Rapid Education Sector Analysis (RESA), 2016.

18. Private schools in Cambodia may be characterized as falling under one of three categories: (i) schools in which the language of instruction is Khmer and are in parallel to the public education system; (ii) non-Khmer language schools that serve various international or immigrant communities, as well as portions of the Cambodian population who elect to undergo education in languages other than Khmer; and (iii) religious schools (including Islamic religious schools and Buddhist monastic schools). Available data indicates that there was a total of 1,076 private schools in Cambodia in 2017, which include 850 Khmer language schools, 52 Chinese schools, 21 Muslim schools, 151 English schools, and 2 Vietnamese schools.¹⁸

Table 2.2 Schools, Students, and Teachers in Cambodia (2018-2019)¹⁹

SCHOOLS				
	Public Schools		Private Schools	
Preschool	4,301		509	
Primary	7,228		488	
Lower secondary	1,739		223	
Upper secondary	525		147	
Total	13,793		1,367	
STUDENTS IN SCHOOL				
	Students in Public Schools		Students in Private Schools	
	Total	% Female	Total	% Female
Preschool	215,074	49.8%	39,389	49.2%

¹⁷ Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. "Education Statistics & Indicators 2013 – 2014", Kingdom of Cambodia. 2014.

¹⁸ Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. "Private Education Statistics & Indicators 2017 – 2018", Kingdom of Cambodia. 2018. As noted in Table 2.2, there 1,367 private schools in 2018. However, data on private schools disaggregated according to their respective categories was not available for 2018.

¹⁹ Institute of Technology of Cambodia. "Education Congress Report- Education, Youth and Sport for School Year 2017-2018 and Objectives for the next school year 2018-2019". March 2019.

STUDENTS IN SCHOOL				
Primary	2,040,257	48.0%	122,886	49.9%
Lower secondary	610,261	52.3%	28,451	49.7%
Upper secondary	321,145	53.4%	18,702	50.6%
Grand total	3,186,737	50.9%	209,428	49.9%
TEACHERS				
	Teachers in Public Schools		Teachers in Private Schools	
	Total	% Female	Total	% Female
Preschool	5,335	95.4%	2,740	85.3%
Primary	45,836	57%	n.d.	n.d.
Lower secondary	28,758	45.6%	n.d.	n.d.
Upper secondary	13,774	32.6%	n.d.	n.d.
Grand total	93,703	57.7%	n.d.	n.d.

19. Cambodia's history of sector planning dates from the early days of the Fast Track Initiative, with four Education Strategic Plans (ESPs) for the years 2006-2010, 2009-2013,²⁰ 2014-2018 and 2019-2023 respectively.²¹ The recent plans focus on seven sub-sectors of the Cambodian education sector, and are aligned with national development strategies, namely Vision 2030, the Rectangular Strategy Phase III and the National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP). They also respond to Ministerial Reform Agendas, which have evolved over time. Table 2.3 provides an overview of the review period and the main policies, plans and GPE grants in Cambodia between 2010 and 2020. In addition to the national-level ESPs, a series of sub-national plans have been adopted during this evaluation's period of review (2014-2019): (i) provincial-level ESPs (PESPs); (ii) annual operational plans (AOPs); and (iii) Budget Strategic Plans (BSPs) (see Finding 2 for more details).

20. The Joint Technical Working Group (JTWG) in Education,²² co-chaired by the MoEYS and development partners (DPs), was established to enhance effectiveness and partnership among education stakeholders in order to support the implementation of the ESP and Annual Operational Plans (AOPs) of MoEYS.²³ In order to work effectively within the JTWG, DPs in the field of education also established the Education Sector Working Group (ESWG), which meets on a monthly basis to promote coordination among donors and education NGOs, respond to any emerging issues related to education, and generally work as a counterpart to MoEYS. The chair position of the ESWG has been rotated between UNICEF and UNESCO, with either agency serving as chair or co-chair. Furthermore, the chair of the ESWG also acts as the co-

²⁰ The first ESP was developed in 2005 for 2006-2010. However, this ESP was not implemented until the end of the cycle as MoEYS decided to establish a new ESP for 2009-2013 in order to align with the mandate of the RGC.

²¹ The ESP 2019-2023 has not been officially approved at the time of writing. The evaluation reviewed the final draft: MoEYS, Final Draft Education Strategic Plan 2019-2023, April 2019.

²² The JTWG in Education stands as Cambodia's Local Education Group (LEG).

²³ Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. "Mid-Term Review Report in 2016 of the Education Strategic Plan 2014-2018 and Projection to 2020". Kingdom of Cambodia. November 2016.

chair of the JTWG along with the MoEYS. UNICEF is currently the chair of the ESWG, and thus also the co-chair of the JTWG.

Table 2.3 *Timeline of policies, plans and events in Cambodia's education sector, pre-2010 to post-2020*

CATEGORY	PRE 2010	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	POST 2020
Review Period						Review period for this CLE: 2014-2019							
National and Sector Policies						NSDP 2014-2018							
						Rectangular Strategy Phase III					Rectangular Strategy Phase IV		
Sector Plans	ESP 2006-2010												
	ESP 2009-2013												
						ESP 2014-2018							
								ESP-MTR 2016				ESP 2019-2023	
Joint Sector Reviews²⁴	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		
GPE grants	ESPIG 2008-2012												
					ESPDG 2013 - 2014								
				PDG 2013									
					ESPIG 2014-2017								
								ESPDG 2016					
								PDG 2016 - 2018					
										ESPIG 2018-2021			

2.3 GPE in Cambodia

21. Cambodia joined GPE in 2006 and has received seven grants from GPE: two Education Sector Plan Development Grants (ESPDG), two Program Development Grants (PDGs) and three Education Sector Plan Implementation Grants (ESPIGs). This evaluation focuses on the period 2014-2019, which includes the full period of implementation of the second ESPIG (2014-2017) used for the Second Education Support Project

²⁴ In this CLE, Joint Sector Reviews may include one or more of the following type of activities: Education Sector Reviews or Joint Monitoring Missions, the Education Congress, and the JTWG Education Retreat.

(SESSP), known as GPE2, with World Bank as grant agent (GA). It also includes the transition to the third ESPIG, known as GPE3, which has two GAs (UNESCO for the fixed tranche, UNICEF for the variable tranche). Furthermore, the period of review encompasses the period of the ESP 2014-2018, the Mid-Term Review (MTR) report in 2016 that served as an updated sector plan for the remainder of the planning cycle, and the drafting and finalization of the new ESP 2019-2023. The values of all grants are shown in Table 2.4.

Table 2.4 *GPE grants to Cambodia*²⁵

GRANT TYPE	YEARS	ALLOCATIONS (US\$)	DISBURSEMENTS AS OF 2019 (US\$)	GRANT AGENT
Education Sector Program Implementation (ESPIG)	2018-2021	\$20.6 million (\$14.4 mill fixed, \$6.2 mill variable)	\$2.4 million	UNESCO (fixed tranche); UNICEF (variable tranche)
	2014-2017	\$38.5 million	\$38.5 million	IBRD
	2008-2012	\$57.4 million	\$57.4 million	IBRD
Education Sector Plan Development (ESPDG)	2016	\$61,945	\$61,945	UNICEF
	2013-2014	\$242,550	\$139,750 ²⁶	UNESCO
Program Development (PDG)	2016-2018	\$160,325 ²⁷	\$135,858 ²⁸	UNESCO
	2013	\$200,000	\$156,216	IBRD

22. Cambodia is eligible for the GPE multiplier but has not yet utilized this financing instrument.

23. The NGO Education Partnership (NEP), an umbrella organization of civil society organizations (CSOs) engaged in education advocacy, has to date received three grants from the Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF) under CSEF I (2009-2012), CSEF II (2013-2015) and CSEF III (2016-2018).²⁹

24. As per the New Funding Model (NFM), GPE3 provides grant funding to Cambodia under both fixed and variable tranches for the period 2018-2021. The fixed tranche of the GPE3 ESPIG provided funding for the Strengthening Teacher Education Programs in Cambodia (STEPCam) project. The variable tranche was funded through the Capacity Development Partnership Fund (CDPF), a multi-donor pooled funding mechanism. A key aspect of the variable tranche (VT) within the GPE model is the utilization of a results-based financing mechanism, in which the disbursement of funding is triggered when a set of results are achieved. These funding-level targets are established through the formulation and inclusion of “stretch”

²⁵ Global Partnership for Education (GPE). “Cambodia”, www.globalpartnership.org/country/cambodia. All links in this document as of July 2019.

²⁶ According to available documentation as of March 2014.

²⁷ Includes two additional funding requests/extensions made in 2017.

²⁸ According to available documentation as of November 2017.

²⁹ There was no data on the amounts of grant funding received by the NEP under the CSEF.

indicators within the VT and is oriented towards reflecting an adequate level of ambition for sector progress.³⁰ The “stretch” indicators in GPE3 are noted below.

Table 2.5 *Variable Tranche Indicators for GPE3 (2018-2021)*³¹

INDICATOR
Equity-focused primary scholarship framework is developed and adopted by MoEYS (including grades 1-3)
Schools improve the forecasting of number of children eligible for scholarship and MoEYS ensures timely payment of primary scholarships to beneficiaries (at the beginning of school year)
Timely preparation of standardized school development plans and budgets by primary schools in the 26 target districts
Reduction in average Grade 1 repetition rate in 26 target districts
Continuous Professional Development (CPD) mentoring programme implemented in primary schools in the 21 target districts

³⁰ GPE’s guideline on the variable tranche notes that “stretch” indicators must demonstrate an “adequate level of ambition” considering the country context and must also be “realistic and achievable” (Global Partnership for Education (GPE). “Guidance Note on GPE Variable Part Financing”. March 2019)

³¹ Global Partnership for Education (GPE). “Application Form for Education Sector Program Implementation Grant – ESPIG VARIABLE PART”. April 2017. p. 42 – 45.

3 GPE contributions to sector planning, dialogue/monitoring, financing, and implementation

3.1 Introduction

25. This section summarizes findings related to Key Question I of the evaluation matrix: “Has GPE-support to Cambodia contributed to achieving country-level objectives related to sector planning, to sector dialogue and monitoring, to more/better financing for education, and to sector plan implementation? If so, then how?”³²

26. The GPE country-level theory of change, developed in the inception report and adapted to the Cambodian context (Appendix II), outlines four contribution claims related to GPE’s influence on progress towards achieving its country-level objectives (one claim per objective).

27. This section is structured around and tests the four contribution claims by answering two sub-questions for each phase of the policy cycle. First, in Cambodia, what characterized sector planning, mutual accountability, sector financing or ESP implementation respectively during the 2014-2019 period under review? And second, has GPE’s support contributed to observed changes in these dimensions and, if so, how?

3.2 GPE contributions to education sector planning

28. This section addresses the following Country Evaluation Questions (CEQs):

- What characterized the education sector plan in place during the core 2014-2019 period under review? (CEQ 1.1.b)
- Has GPE support to sector planning contributed to better (more relevant, more realistic, government-owned)? (Key Question V)³³ During the 2014-2019 review period, have there been unintended, positive or negative, consequences of GPE (financial or other) support? (CEQ 3.2)
- What factors other than GPE support are likely to have contributed to the observed changes (or lack thereof) in sector planning? (CEQ 3.1)
- What are implications of evaluation findings for GPE support to Cambodia? (Key Question IV)

³² Improved planning, dialogue/monitoring, financing, and plan implementation correspond to Country-Level Objectives (CLOs) 1, 2, 3 and 4 of GPE’s 2016-2020 Strategic Plan.

³³ In particular: To what extent has the revised Quality Assurance and Review (QAR) process for education sector plans contributed to the development of better-quality education sector plans? Why? Why not? (CEQ 9); To what extent have the revised ESPDG mechanism and/or ESPIG grant requirements (under the GPE New Funding Model launched in 2015) contributed to the development of better-quality education sector plans? Why? Why not? (CEQ 10); To what extent has GPE support to inclusive sector dialogue influenced sector planning? (CEQ 11b).

29. A high-level overview of evaluation findings on sector planning is provided in Table 3.1. These observations are elaborated on through the findings and supporting evidence presented below.

Table 3.1 Overview: CLE findings on sector planning and related GPE contributions in 2014-2019³⁴

DEGREE OF PROGRESS TOWARDS A GOVERNMENT-OWNED, ROBUST ESP	DEGREE OF GPE CONTRIBUTION ³⁵	DEGREE TO WHICH UNDERLYING ASSUMPTIONS LIKELY HELD TRUE ³⁶				
<p>Strong: Cambodia has made important progress with regard to strengthening its education sector planning system, during the period 2014-2019. All stakeholders consulted noted that the latest ESP 2019-2023 illustrates a high degree of government ownership in terms of content and process. The quality of the most recent ESP has also improved from initial draft to final version.</p>	<p>Modest: GPE funding requirements and GPE’s enhanced independent appraisal process contributed to better sector dialogue on planning and an improved plan. The Rapid Education Sector Analysis (2016), partially financed by GPE, helped strengthen the plan’s evidence base. GPE played a small, but critical role in sector planning, complementing the work of other actors.</p>	1	2	3	4	5

Characteristics of sector planning during the 2014-2019 review period

Finding 1: Cambodia’s ESP 2014-2018 and the ESP-MTR 2016 report meet most of GPE’s standards for education sector plans and reflect improvements over time, despite consistent challenges in prioritization of strategies and programs. The latest plan, ESP 2019-2023, illustrates a greater degree of MoEYS ownership in terms of content and process.

30. As noted in Section 2, **Cambodia has a long history of sector planning** from the early days of the Fast Track Initiative, with four Education Strategic Plans (ESPs) since 2006 and an ESP for the period 2019-2023 that is currently in the final stages of official approval.³⁷ The seven education sub-sectors covered by the plans remained constant across these planning cycles, and include: ECE, primary education, secondary and technical education, higher education, non-formal education, youth development, and physical education and sport. None of the ESPs have been holistic as TVET has never been included as a sub-sector

³⁴ Colors stand for ‘strong’ (green) ‘modest’ (amber), ‘minimal to not detectable’ (red) or ‘insufficient data’ (grey)”.

³⁵ The assessment is based on whether the CLE found evidence of (i) GPE support likely having influenced (parts of) sector planning; (ii) stakeholder perceptions on the relevance (relative influence) of GPE support; and (iii) existence or absence of additional or alternative factors beyond GPE support that were equally or more likely to explain (part of) the noted progress. The same assessment criteria are used for rating GPE contributions in all following sections.

³⁶ For sector planning, the five underlying assumptions in the country level ToC were: (1) country level stakeholders having the *capabilities* to jointly improve sector analysis and planning; (2) stakeholders having the *opportunities* (resources, time, conducive environment) to do so; (3) stakeholders having the *motivation* (incentives) to do so; (4) GPE having sufficient leverage within the country to influence sector planning, and (5) EMIS and LAS producing relevant and reliable data to inform sector planning.

³⁷ The ESP 2019-2023 has not been officially approved at the time of writing. The evaluation reviewed the final draft: MoEYS, Final Draft Education Strategic Plan 2019-2023, April 2019.

given that responsibilities for TVET are split between two ministries: MoEYS and the Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training (MoLVT).³⁸

31. **The most-recent planning cycle was extended and updated through an MTR process.** The ESP 2014-2018 had 10 sector outcome indicators (with annual targets), referred to as Core Breakthrough Indicators (CBIs), across the three overarching policies³⁹ of: (i) ensuring equitable access for all to education services; (ii) enhancing quality and relevance of learning; and (iii) ensuring effective leadership and management of education staff at all levels. The ESP 2014-2018 was updated during the Mid-Term Review (MTR) 2016, which enabled the sector plan to meet the GPE funding model requirements for a valid and robust ESP and allowed Cambodia to apply for GPE3. To that end, a Rapid Educational Sector Analysis (RESA) was conducted as part of the MTR in 2016, covering trends in access, equity, quality and internal efficiency of primary, lower secondary, and upper secondary levels of education, as well as sector progress in education finance, teacher recruitment and management, planning, and results-based management. The final version of the ESP-MTR report reflects sub-sector analysis which was developed through the process of producing the RESA.⁴⁰

32. **The ESP-MTR enhanced the credibility of the ESP.** The MTR report made a number of recommendations and served as an updated ESP. As such, the MTR report consolidated the policy areas (from three to two), but reiterated the long list of strategies, programs and outcomes listed in

ESP 2014-2018, and added 22 strategies and 10 outcome-level targets across the seven sub-sectors. Other adjustments included changes to some of the CBIs, particularly to reflect Ministry Reforms such as the TPAP (see

Table 3.2). At the same time, it made other changes that enhanced credibility from GPE's perspective, including: (i) more in-depth examination of educational achievement; (ii) the provision of inputs, programs, and updated implementation strategies, and making necessary updates and adjustments to achieve the policy objectives; and (iii) the realignment of program/sub-program indicators and targets

Box 3.1 Summary of key findings of Mid-Term Review (MTR) 2016

The MTR's review of the progress made during the first two years of implementation of the ESP 2014-2018 found: (i) mixed progress towards improving equitable access to education (Policy 1); (ii) low levels of learning achievements among Grade 3, 6 and 8 students based on assessments conducted (Policy 2); and (iii) positive steps taken towards progress in relation to results-based management and capacity development (Policy 3).

The MTR also identified the need for: (i) the expansion of access to ECE and secondary education; (ii) the improvement in equity of access in primary education; (iii) improvements in quality of education services from ECE to higher education; and (iv) greater capacity development in the MoEYS at both central- and sub-national levels.

³⁸ While TVET is not included as a sub-sector in the ESP 2014-2018, a TVET program is included as one of 13 priority programs of the sector plan whose aim is to "implement the national qualifications framework to improve the quality of technical and vocational education, and to institutionalize effective coordination among and between all stakeholders" (ESP 2014-2018, p. 15). This program was not included in the list of revised priority reforms of the MTR report and was not mentioned by stakeholders interviewed.

³⁹ The term "policies" is used in the ESPs and the MTR report to refer to the overarching objectives of the sector plan and does not refer to government policies in the sense of a separate document.

⁴⁰ The RESA's role as a supplement to the MTR is noted in the MTR report itself (see Global Partnership for Education. "Endorsement of Cambodia's Education Strategic Plan 2014 – 2018 Mid-Term Review for submission to the Global Partnership for Education Secretariat". Letter to Ministry of Education Youth and Sports. Washington DC, 12 December 2016. p.2).

with newly emerged or articulated priorities, notably teacher education, curriculum, personnel, policy and planning reforms. The MTR report aligned the ESP with SDG 4 by adding inclusion and lifelong learning to its overarching policies and it also reinforced programs and activities related to equity and inclusion issues in all education sub-sectors. Additionally, programs related to the provision of student scholarships, multilingual education, education for children with disabilities and accelerated learning are highlighted more clearly following the MTR report's update of the ESP for primary and secondary education sub-sectors.⁴¹

Table 3.2 Overview of policies, priority programs and sub-sectors of focus across ESPs (2014-2019)

ESP 2014 - 2018	MTR 2016	ESP 2019 – 2023 (DRAFT)
<p>Three Policies:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensuring equitable access for all to education services 2. Enhancing quality and relevance of learning 3. Ensuring effective leadership and management of education staff at all levels <p>13 priority programs, 69 strategies, 10 CBIs, 54 outcome-level targets, 51 programs, across 7 sub-sectors.</p> <p>PFM reform: 3 policy objectives, 4 strategies, 4 policy actions, 4 outcome indicators, 3 programs</p> <p>Reforms related to management and implementation of the ESP: Personnel management (4 strategies, 9 policy actions, 4 outcome indicators, 5 programs), teacher training and capacity development for management (4 strategies, 2 policy actions, 2 outcome indicators, 3 programs)</p>	<p>Two Policies:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all 2. Ensuring effective leadership and management of education staff at all levels <p>15 priority reforms, 91 strategies, 10 CBIs, 64 outcome-level targets, across 7 sub-sectors.</p>	<p>Two Policies:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all 2. Ensuring effective leadership and management of education staff at all levels <p>56 strategies, 8 CBIs, 98 outcome-level targets, across 7 sub-sectors.</p> <p>PFM reform: 2 objectives, 6 strategies</p> <p>Management and M&E reforms: Personnel management (3 strategies), teacher deployment (1 strategy), teacher capacity development (3 strategies), gender mainstreaming, Leadership and Management (2 strategies), Policy and Planning (3 strategies), EMIS enhancement (2 strategies), ICT in education (5 strategies), Inspection (2 strategies)</p>

33. **Overarching change from ESP 2014-2018 to ESP 2019-2023: increased MoEYS ownership of the planning process and product.** There was consensus among stakeholders that this is the greatest strength of the new ESP (noted by as many as 14 stakeholders interviewed, both from the MoEYS and DPs). The plan was written in Khmer by the MoEYS. Interviewed MoEYS stakeholders indicated that the development of the ESP 2019-2023 involved extensive consultation with technical departments, which was led by the Directorate of Policy and Planning and a sector plan working group chaired by the Secretary of State for Education, Youth and Sport. Although UNESCO/IIEP provided technical inputs, stakeholders noted that not all of the recommendations from the technical assistance were taken on board during the initial stages of developing the plan. The key (potential) value added of a Ministry-led plan is the greater linkage between

⁴¹ UNICEF. "Cambodia Submission (2018-2021) for the Education Sector Programme Implementation Grant 2018 - 2021 from the Global Partnership for Education". Submitted on behalf of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport, Cambodia. February 2018.

the sector plan and subsequent implementation of planned activities. Cambodia's ESP plan does not cover TVET, which in turn limits its role as a government-wide sector plan. However, TVET is covered under the Rectangular Strategy, Cambodia's government-wide, multi-sectoral development plan, to which both the ESP 2014-2018 and the ESP 2019-2023 policy cycles are aligned.⁴²

34. The ESP 2019-2023 has two limitations, one of which carries over from past planning cycles:

- **Numerous and evolving priorities:** The ESP 2014-2018, the ESP-MTR 2016 report and the ESP 2019-2023 contain a large number of strategies and activities and seven interviewed development partner (DP) stakeholders highlighted an overall lack of prioritization of these activities.⁴³ Stakeholders interviewed note, however, that positive steps have been taken by the MoEYS in reducing the number of strategies following the recommendations of the independent appraisal and comments provided by DPs (from 91 strategies in the MTR report to 56 strategies in the ESP 2019-2023, see Table 3.2). At the same time, multiple stakeholders interviewed also referred to the "Reform Agenda" of the MoEYS as the main driver of priorities for the education sector. These reforms have gone through different iterations (mostly changes in packaging and prioritization rather than in substance) during this planning period, from the 8-point reform in 2014, the 15-point reform in the MTR report, and four broad reforms in the ESP 2019-2023. In addition, Cambodia developed an SDG 4 Roadmap in 2018 that was integrated into the ESP 2019-2023. From the MoEYS perspective, the ESP represents a macro planning exercise that is meant to be ambitious.
- **Limited consultation with DPs in early stages of ESP 2019-2023 process:** The planning process was initially more inwardly focused on MoEYS technical departments and provincial level stakeholders, albeit with some consultations with key ministries such as the Ministry of Interior (Mol) and with DPs conducted in Khmer.⁴⁴ Although a draft of the ESP 2019-2023 was shared with the ESWG for DP input during the process, three interviewed ESWG stakeholders noted that this occurred at a relatively late phase of the drafting process.⁴⁵ DPs were also consulted, via the ESWG, during the development of the ESP 2014-2018. However, the extent to which that process was more or less

⁴² Phases III and IV of the Rectangular Strategy were for the periods 2014-2018 and 2019-2023, respectively.

⁴³ Of note, appraisals of both the ESP 2014-2018 and the ESP 2019-2023 recommended increased prioritization and reduction of strategies in the respective ESPs before their implementation, suggesting that lack of prioritization remains an ongoing issue (Global Partnership for Education (GPE). "Appraisal of Draft Education Strategic Plan 2014-18 (dated 24 July 2013) Cambodia". August 2013., p. 12; Begué-Aguado, A., In, S. "Appraisal of the Education Strategic Plan 2019-2023 in Cambodia". Presentation of Preliminary Findings and Recommendations to the ESWG and Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport. Phnom Penh, 8 February 2019., p. 19.)

⁴⁴ The Mol was noted by country stakeholders as a relevant ministry in the Cambodian education sector for two primary reasons: (i) it is the principal ministry which oversees matters in relation to government functions at the sub-national level, and thus implicated in the ongoing implementation of nationwide D&D reforms which the MoEYS is a part of; and (ii) its focus on promoting the rights of children in Cambodia entails a focus on ECE, and Mol was involved in the adoption of a sub-decree for the management of community preschools, in collaboration with a MoEYS-led initiative (see Finding 18, Box 3.7).

⁴⁵ The appraisal of the ESP 2019-2023 reports lower level of ownership of the plan on the part of DPs due to their overall lack of involvement in the planning process. A total of 12 days passed between the sharing of the second draft of the ESP with the ESWG, the submission of ESWG comments and the submission of a third draft of the ESP for appraisal (January 11 - 23, 2019). The appraisal posits that due to time constraints, ESWG comments were not included in the third draft (see Begué-Aguado, A., In, S. "Appraisal Report on The Education Strategic Plan 2019-2023 in Cambodia". Commissioned by UNICEF Cambodia on behalf of the Education Sector Working Group. March 2019. p. 8).

inclusive of DPs, compared to the ESP 2019-2023, is unclear.⁴⁶ DP stakeholders note that a final consultation workshop took place in May (after this evaluation's field visit to Cambodia) for DPs to bring up any remaining issues in relation to the ESP, suggesting further that the MoEYS amended the ESP in response to comments following the workshop.

35. The ESP 2014-2018 and the MTR 2016 report are of good quality, as per the GPE quality standards for Education Sector Plans (ESPs). Table 3.3 below presents an overview of the extent to which the ESP 2014-2018 and the ESP-MTR 2016 report meet GPE's quality standards for ESPs and comments on any notable changes in the ESP 2019-2023. Both ESPs 2014-2018 and 2019-2023 were independently appraised as per GPE recommendation or requirements for ESPIG funding.⁴⁷

36. GPE ratings are taken directly from GPE's results framework data, indicator 16a, 2016. The numbers in the second and third columns indicate the number of points awarded to a given plan under GPE's indicator 16a, relative to the maximum possible number of points that could have been awarded. Most items rated by GPE could be rated zero (not addressed), one (partially addressed), or two (fully addressed), though detailed rating guidelines vary.⁴⁸

Table 3.3 *ESPs in Cambodia meet quality standards, as defined by GPE*

ESP QUALITY STANDARDS ⁴⁹	GPE RESULTS FRAMEWORK (RF) SCORE ⁵⁰			CHANGE/IMPROVEMENT BETWEEN THE ESP 2014-2018, MTR 2016 AND ESP 2019-2023 (EVALUATOR ASSESSMENT BASED ON DOCUMENTS AND INTERVIEWS)
	ESP 2014-2018	MTR 2016	ESP 2019-2023	
Overall vision	1/1	1/1	n/a	Slight improvement between ESP 2014-2018 and the MTR report. Both are aligned with national development strategies, namely Vision 2030 and the National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP) 2014-2018. Additionally, the MTR report mentions its alignment with the Industrial Development Policy (IDP) 2015-2025, which was approved in March 2015. ⁵¹ The

⁴⁶ The appraisal of the ESP 2014-2018 characterizes the role of DPs in the ESP development process as "supportive and critical-constructive," further noting the ESP process as reflective of the "continued engagement of DPs in the education sector of Cambodia." (Global Partnership for Education. "Appraisal of Draft Education Strategic Plan 2014-18 (dated 24 July 2013) Cambodia". August 2013, p. 8).

⁴⁷ The ESP 2014-2018 underwent an independent appraisal in 2013 before it was finalized and endorsed by the ESWG. This was prior to the New Funding Model requirement of an independent appraisal. The draft ESP 2019-2023 was appraised in January 2019. It has not yet been approved but a final draft was made available to the evaluation team.

⁴⁸ The ESP 2019-2023 had not yet been finalized or rated by GPE Secretariat as of May 2019.

⁴⁹ The GPE Secretariat rates the quality of sector plans along seven quality standards that are incorporated in the GPE results framework. The standards and related guidelines provide guidance on what a good quality ESP/ Transitional Education Plan (TEP) looks like, and were developed in 2015 in cooperation with the UNESCO International Institute of Education Planning (IIEP). According to the Methodology Sheet for GPE Indicators (Indicator 16a), an ESP should meet five out of seven quality standards to be classified as meeting overall quality standards.

⁵⁰ Based on GPE RF data, indicator 16a. Ratings were not yet available for the ESP 2019-2023.

⁵¹ The Cambodia Industrial Development Policy 2015-2025 aims to shift the country's labor-intensive industry to skills-based industry by 2025 and to increase linkages between the country's industries and regional and global production networks. In relation to this, the MTR report notes that Cambodia's education sector will contribute to the policy's emphasis on "creating potential and added value" by focusing on creating second chances to complete secondary education via equivalency programs, strengthening education quality at both primary and secondary

ESP QUALITY STANDARDS ⁴⁹	GPE RESULTS FRAMEWORK (RF) SCORE ⁵⁰			CHANGE/IMPROVEMENT BETWEEN THE ESP 2014-2018, MTR 2016 AND ESP 2019-2023 (EVALUATOR ASSESSMENT BASED ON DOCUMENTS AND INTERVIEWS)
	ESP 2014-2018	MTR 2016	ESP 2019-2023	
				<p>revisions in the MTR report with regard to ESP policies are in line with SDG4 in the emphasis on inclusion and lifelong learning.</p> <p>No change between the MTR report and ESP 2019-2023. ESP 2019-2023 is aligned with the NSDP 2019-2023 and the IDP 2015-2025, and it integrates Cambodia's SDG4-Education 2030 roadmap, which was finalized in 2018. The wording of the vision and mission of the MoEYS is verbatim across ESPs 2014-2018 and 2019-2023.⁵²</p>
Strategic	1/7	7/7	n/a	<p>Some improvement between the ESP 2014-2018 and the MTR report. The RF score comments suggest the MTR better identified underlying causes for sector trends in relation to teachers and learning outcomes, disadvantages for marginalized groups and internal efficiency. There is an improvement in Indicators 16 b, c, and d which seems to drive the improved rating on this standard.⁵³ This evaluation, however, did not find such a significant improvement between the ESP and the MTR report, as is suggested by the increase in RF score. Improvements in identifying underlying causes for sector trends was not found across all of the ESP strategies.</p> <p>No change between the MTR report and ESP 2019-2023. While the appraisal highlighted that initial drafts of the ESP incorporated less analysis of available sector data to identify plausible underlying causes of sector trends and inform its choices of strategies and programs, the final draft of the ESP reflects MoEYS efforts to address these concerns.</p>
Holistic	3/3	3/3	n/a	<p>No change between ESP 2014-2018 and MTR report. The ESPs and the MTR report encompass the education sector, with the exception of TVET, outlining policy objectives, policy actions, strategies, outcome-level targets and programs and activities</p>

education levels, promoting enrolment in secondary education, promoting general education for at least 9 years, and improving the curriculum by including soft skills such as social communication and problem-solving skills. (Source: Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. "Mid-Term Review Report in 2016 of the Education Strategic Plan 2014-2018 and Projection to 2020". Kingdom of Cambodia. November 2016. p. 10).

⁵² See Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. "Education Strategic Plan 2014-2018. Kingdom of Cambodia". Mach 2014., p.12, and Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. "Final Draft Education Strategic Plan 2019-2023". Kingdom of Cambodia. April 2019. p. 32.

⁵³ GPE RF data, indicator 16a, for 2014 and 2018 for Cambodia did not provide coder comments, despite the differences in scoring. While it is not clear why there is a substantial difference in GPE RF scores for indicator 16a between the ESP 2014-2018 and the MTR 2016 report, there was an increase overall in the rating of indicators 16 b, c, and d from the ESP 2014-2018 to the MTR in relation to the identification of underlying causes for trends in education indicators. Coder comments for these scores suggest that the MTR to a greater extent identified underlying causes for sector trends learning outcomes, rural-urban disparities in access and education quality, reasons for increase in dropout rates, than the ESP 2014-2018.

ESP QUALITY STANDARDS ⁴⁹	GPE RESULTS FRAMEWORK (RF) SCORE ⁵⁰			CHANGE/IMPROVEMENT BETWEEN THE ESP 2014-2018, MTR 2016 AND ESP 2019-2023 (EVALUATOR ASSESSMENT BASED ON DOCUMENTS AND INTERVIEWS)
	ESP 2014-2018	MTR 2016	ESP 2019-2023	
				<p>for each of the 7 sub-sectors covered. The AOPs also include programs that correspond to each of the 7 sub-sectors.⁵⁴</p> <p>No change between MTR report and 2019-2023. ESP 2019-2023 continues to cover the same 7 sub-sectors, and remains an MoEYS-specific strategic plan. TVET is not included as a sub-sector as it does not fall within the purview of the MoEYS.</p>
Evidence Based	1/1	1/1	n/a	<p>No change between ESP 2014-2018 and the MTR report. Both were informed by education sector analyses that were considered of good quality.⁵⁵ Although the plans reference the studies and cite data, there is little further analysis of the implications for strategies and programs.</p> <p>Limited change between MTR report and ESP 2019-2023. The new ESP does not include a distinct section that identifies challenges in the education sector and proposed corresponding responses, which was previously included in the ESP 2014-2018. The final version of the ESP took on board the appraisal recommendations to include more analysis of sector trends, especially in relation to internal efficiency and primary completion rates.</p>
Achievable	8/9	9/9	n/a	<p>Some improvement between ESP 2014-2018 and MTR report. Despite an overall increase in the total financial costing of the MTR updated sector plan compared to the ESP 2014-2018,⁵⁶ improvements in the achievability of the MTR update were noted. A financial simulation exercise was undertaken in 2016 to update financing needs of the sector plan as part of the MTR.⁵⁷ Adjustments were made to the projected financial gap</p>

⁵⁴ Sub-Programme 1.1: Expansion of Early Childhood Education; Sub-Programme 1.2: Strengthening the Quality and Efficiency of Primary Education; Sub-Programme 1.3: Equitable Access, Strengthening of Quality and Efficiency of Secondary Education; Programme 4: Development of Technical Skills and Soft Skills for Youth; Programme 2: Development of Higher Education and Research; Sub-Programme 1.4: Expansion of Non-Formal Education.

⁵⁵ The ESP Appraisal 2014 rated the education sector analysis which fed into the ESP 2014-2018 as “Satisfactory”, further noting that the MTR of the ESP 2009-2013 and several sub-sectoral analyses informed the development of the strategic plan. The RESA, undertaken to provide an evidence-base for the MTR and funded via an ESPDG in 2016, is noted as having been produced in a timely manner and “with highly satisfactory level of quality” (Global Partnership for Education (GPE). “Grant Completion Report for Education Sector Plan Development Grants”. ESPDG. June 2016).

⁵⁶ One of the primary changes is that the projected financial requirements of the MTR update represent an increase from the ESP 2014-2018 due to increased investment in the Minister’s Reform Agenda. Total projected financial requirement for the ESP 2014-2018 was US\$3 billion, compared to total projected costing of the MTR of US\$4 billion for the period 2016-2020. The ESG Endorsement Letter (December 2016) notes that the Ministry’s reform agenda is the reason for the increase in the financing needs of the ESP.

⁵⁷ Updating financial needs for the MTR updated sector plan was facilitated by a simulation exercise called Cambodian Analysis and Projection (CANPRO) with the support of UNESCO Bangkok, which allowed for projections of student population from 2016 onwards. The exercise is noted as having strengthened the robustness of the plan by GPE’s

ESP QUALITY STANDARDS ⁴⁹	GPE RESULTS FRAMEWORK (RF) SCORE ⁵⁰			CHANGE/IMPROVEMENT BETWEEN THE ESP 2014-2018, MTR 2016 AND ESP 2019-2023 (EVALUATOR ASSESSMENT BASED ON DOCUMENTS AND INTERVIEWS)
	ESP 2014-2018	MTR 2016	ESP 2019-2023	
				<p>for the MTR according to projected financial resources, and included a more conservative estimate of MoEYS budget allocation as a share of total public expenditures.⁵⁸ Annual operational plans (AOPs) were developed during both the ESP 2014-2018 and MTR periods, and served as action plans for identifying timing and allocation of resources for activities.</p> <p>No change between the MTR report and the ESP 2019-2023. The financial gap identified is lower than that of the MTR and estimations of total resources available for the MoEYS, and the MoEYS budget as a share of the total public expenditure is reasonable. AOPs are likely to continue to serve as action plans for the ESP, as well as Budget Strategic Plans (BSPs) (see Finding 2, Box 3.2).</p>
Sensitive to Context	0/1	0/1	n/a	<p>No change between the ESP 2014-2018 and the MTR report, as neither clearly identify risks or mitigation strategies in relation to the implementation of their respective activities.⁵⁹</p> <p>No change between the MTR report and the ESP 2019-2023, as the ESP does not include a risk analysis.⁶⁰</p>
Attentive to Disparities	3/3	3/3	n/a	<p>No change between ESP 2014-2018 and the MTR report, however this does not mean that disparities have been sufficiently addressed in the plans. Both contain gender-disaggregated indicators and data on geographic disparities, but weaknesses in data on disability have also been carried forward. Neither the MTR report nor the ESP 2014-2018 fully address gender and regional disparities in their strategies and programs.</p> <p>No change between the MTR report and ESP 2019-2023 in that the plan continues to use gender-disaggregated indicators but lacks data on children with disabilities. However, the appraisal of the ESP 2019-2023 highlights the lack of attention</p>

quality assurance review (QAR) I in 2016 (Global Partnership for Education (GPE). “GPE Funding Model Requirements Matrix– CAMBODIA”. 2016. p. 2).

⁵⁸ The projected MoEYS budget allocation as a share of total public expenditures in 2018 was revised downwards from 25.7 percent as per the ESP 2014-2018, to 21 percent in the MTR update. Furthermore, the projected funding gap in 2018 decreased from US\$80 million in the ESP 2014-2018 to US\$54 million, as a response to a corresponding projected decrease in resources available for that year. GPE coder comments for RF 16 in 2018 raised the rating of the ESP from 1 to 2 based on this adjustment, in response to the question “Is the estimation of the size of the gap based on realistic assumptions for national resources?”

⁵⁹ The appraisal of ESP 2014-2018 noted that disaster-risk reduction was mentioned in the ESP but that there was no description of what this would entail. The evaluation was unable to find evidence that the MTR update addressed this.

⁶⁰ Begué-Aguado, A., In, S. “Appraisal of the Education Strategic Plan 2019-2023 in Cambodia”. Presentation of Preliminary Findings and Recommendations to the ESWG and Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport. Phnom Penh, 8 February 2019. p. 15

ESP QUALITY STANDARDS ⁴⁹	GPE RESULTS FRAMEWORK (RF) SCORE ⁵⁰			CHANGE/IMPROVEMENT BETWEEN THE ESP 2014-2018, MTR 2016 AND ESP 2019-2023 (EVALUATOR ASSESSMENT BASED ON DOCUMENTS AND INTERVIEWS)
	ESP 2014-2018	MTR 2016	ESP 2019-2023	
				given to recent trends in gender and rural-urban disparities. ⁶¹ The MoEYS has committed to considering inclusion of analysis of declining trends for boys at the primary and secondary school levels in the ESP. ⁶²
Overall, at least 5/7 met?	Yes (5/7)	Yes (7/7)	n/a	<p>Slight improvement from ESP 2014-2018 to MTR report. The MTR update improved on the ESP 2014-2018 in terms of its adjustment of the financial costing of the ESP to more conservative estimations of financial resources available, and the MoEYS budget as share of total public expenditures for 2016-2020.</p> <p>No change from MTR report to ESP 2019-2023: The final draft of the ESP 2019-2023 has been improved following MoEYS efforts to address recommendations raised by the appraisal.</p>

Finding 2: During the review period, the MoEYS continued to strengthen sector planning capacity with the support of development partners. Key challenges remain in aligning budgets to plans and strengthening operational planning at national and sub-national levels.

37. During the review period, the guiding framework for MoEYS capacity development in sector planning was the Master Plan for Capacity Development (MPCD) 2014-2018 (see Box 3.3). The MPCD has been an important complement to the ESP for the past two planning cycles and aims to facilitate coordinated approaches to capacity development in support of ESP implementation, in line with aid effectiveness principles. Nonetheless, some DPs see it as the exclusive domain of the Capacity Development Partnership Fund (CDPF), a pooled fund with contributions from the European Union (EU), UNICEF, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), and, more recently, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and GPE.⁶³

⁶¹ It should be noted that while gender disparities in Cambodia are relatively narrow compared to other country contexts, recent sector trends in primary completion and secondary enrolment and completion suggest a widening of these disparities, in favour of girls (see Appendix XI for impact-level data). Specifically, the appraisal of the ESP 2019-2023 noted the lack of analysis or response to trends in upper secondary completion rates, which were higher among girls than boys between 2013 and 2017. Furthermore, despite the provision of information on, and analysis of, regional disparities across a number of education sector indicators in the RESA, the appraisal notes that the ESP 2019-2023 does not include any of this information (Begué-Aguado, A., In, S. "Appraisal of the Education Strategic Plan 2019-2023 in Cambodia". Presentation of Preliminary Findings and Recommendations to the ESWG and Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport. Phnom Penh, 8 February 2019. p. 10-11).

⁶² Based on MoEYS responses to appraisal recommendation 8, "More gender-sensitive strategies and actions should be included, specifically to overcome the current trend of declining indicators for boys," and recommendation 15 in appraisal memo, "The ESP should include more analysis of the trends in the education indicators, specifically on the declining primary completion rates and declining trends for boys in primary and secondary education" (Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. "Education Strategic Plan 2019-2023 Appraisal Memo". Kingdom of Cambodia).

⁶³ This perspective was shared by DPs who do not participate in the pooled fund. They do not see the MPCD as a key sector document.

38. Interviews and documents reviewed indicate that progress in developing capacities for sector planning can be seen primarily in the increased quality of Annual Operational Plans (AOPs) at the provincial level.⁶⁴

39. There are several ongoing challenges in relation to capacities in sector planning:

- **Development of AOPs at sub-national level:** Sub-national MoEYS stakeholders interviewed mentioned ongoing challenges in linking their plans to budgets. The CDPF evaluation indicated that there are persistent challenges in ensuring that AOPs are developed through consultative processes and that they are not copied from other sources or from previous years.⁶⁵

Box 3.2: Summary of national and sub-national plans in the Cambodian education sector

In addition to the national-level ESPs, a series of national and sub-national plans have been adopted during the period of review (2014-2019):

Provincial ESPs (PESPs), which outline planned activities at the provincial level according to sub-sector, as per the national ESP.

Annual operational plans (AOPs), which are formulated annually by individual MoEYS departments and outline planned department activities for the year. Individual departmental AOPs are then collectively included and reported on in Annual Education Congress meetings. Provincial AOPs were also introduced to all provinces by 2011, and the introduction of district-level AOPs is ongoing.

Budget Strategic Plans (BSPs), which are developed on a three-year rolling basis and outline the projected allocation of resources for the implementation of planned activities.

Box 3.3 Master Plan for Capacity Development (MPCD)

First introduced in 2011, the MPCD provides an overall framework guiding MoEYS and DP efforts to improve sector management and outlines MoEYS aims to develop individual and institutional capacities from the central- to sub-national levels.⁶⁶

The current MPCD 2014-2018 outlines objectives to improve capacities in policy research and dialogue, results-based planning and M&E, data collection and analysis as part of Cambodia's Education Management Information System (EMIS), financial accountability, and deployment and management of MoEYS personnel. The MPCD is aligned with the ESP (developed after ESP finalization).

The MPCD 2014-2018 set the following outcome-level targets for 2018 in relation to sector planning: (i) the development of annual sub-sector plans at sub-national levels; (ii) drafting of provincial ESPs (PESPs) in 24 provinces; (iii) structuring of AOP 2016 according to sub-sector rather than department/program; and (iv) the development of AOPs in all districts.

⁶⁴ The evaluation of the CDPF Phase I and II further notes that the process of AOP assessment from the central to district levels has generated more interest in results-based management approaches.

⁶⁵ UNICEF. "Outcome Evaluation of The Education Capacity Development Partnership Fund (CDPF) – Phase I and II: Final Report (Volume I)". March 2018. p. 28.

⁶⁶ The previous MPCD was for 2011-2015, and a MPCD 2019-2023 is currently in development.

There has been mixed progress in the extent to which these targets have been achieved: (i) there is no evidence that sub-sector plans at the sub-national level have been developed;⁶⁷ (ii) the number of provinces that have developed PESP has increased in the last 5 years, but the target of 24 provinces has not been reached;⁶⁸ (iii) documentary evidence indicates that some progress has been made in structuring AOPs according to subsector;⁶⁹ and (iv) there is no data on whether all districts have developed AOPs.⁷⁰

- Misalignment of planning and budgeting structures:** Interview and documentary evidence indicates issues in the budgeting of planned activities, due to different structures of the AOP and Budget Strategic Plan (BSP) in relation to the ESP 2014-2018. More specifically, activities and programs in the BSPs and AOPs are structured according to the various MoEYS departments and administrative units, while ESP programs and activities are structured according to sub-sectors covered by the plan. A government report notes that this poses problems for the estimation of annual budget allocations to each sub-sector and the ability to monitor expenditure against sub-sector financial projections set out in the ESP, due to budgeting of activities which cut across sub-sectors, such as teacher training and curriculum development, according to department rather than sub-sector.⁷¹ In an attempt to remedy this issue, the MoEYS developed a bridging table in 2017 to aid the alignment of departmental planning, as per the AOP and BSP with sub-sectoral planning, as per the structure of the ESP.⁷²

⁶⁷ Stakeholders interviewed did not mention the development of these plans, and documents reviewed have not reported on progress to this end. It should be noted that these proposed plans are different from the AOPs currently prepared by individual departments or administrative units, in that the preparation of such a sub-sector plan would involve all departments involved in a given sub-sector (e.g. for primary education, not only the Department of Primary Education, but other relevant departments such as Department of Education Quality Assurance (EQAD), Department of Construction, Curriculum Development Department etc.).

⁶⁸ No data suggest any hard number, but CDPF evaluation notes that not all provinces have drafted PESP (see UNICEF. "Outcome Evaluation of The Education Capacity Development Partnership Fund (CDPF) – Phase I and II: Final Report (Volume I)". March 2018).

⁶⁹ The AOP for 2017 contains an overview of the allocation of the MoEYS annual budget according to sub-sector. This section was not seen in previous AOPs.

⁷⁰ However, the DoE visited during this evaluation reported having developed an AOP. Approximately one-fifth of districts were estimated to have developed AOPs in 2014 (European Commission. "Evaluation of Budget Support in Cambodia 2011-2016 – Draft Evaluation Report". February 2018. p. 31).

⁷¹ For example, the budgeting of activities in relation to teacher training and curriculum development in the AOP does not further specify amounts of funding of these activities allocated to sub-sectors (e.g. allocations for teacher training at the primary level, or curriculum development funding allocated to ECE). As such, this poses difficulties in ascertaining the actual annual amounts of funding which are allocated to a given sub-sector as a whole, e.g. an estimation of primary education sub-sector budget which not only includes activities planned by the Department of Primary Education, but also activities planned by other technical departments which are relevant to primary education. See Supreme National Economic Council. "Report on The Development of The Bridging Tables". November 2017.

⁷² See Supreme National Economic Council. "Report on The Development of The Bridging Tables". November 2017.

GPE contributions to sector planning

Finding 3: GPE contributions have been modest, but complementary to the other factors/actors that have supported sector planning from 2014-2019. GPE ESPIG requirements and quality assurance (QA) processes keep the momentum for continuous improvements in education sector planning.

40. GPE provides a range of financial and non-financial support to sector planning. Table 3.4 provides an overview of the types of support, grouped by whether they have made a significant,⁷³ moderately significant or insignificant contribution to sector planning in Cambodia. This grouping is indicative and does not constitute a formal score. As discussed below, the Cambodian context did not necessarily warrant strong GPE investments in planning because there have been many factors supporting RGC progress in this area. Evidence from reviewed documents and consulted stakeholders suggests that GPE support made a modest contribution to strengthening sector planning during the period under review, particularly with regard to the MTR 2016 and the most recent ESP 2019-2023. (Interviewed stakeholders provided less feedback on the support provided for the 2014-2018 ESP.)

Table 3.4 GPE contributions to sector planning from 2014-2019

ESP 2014-2018 (AND THE MTR 2016)	ESP 2019-2023
SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTION TO SECTOR PLANNING	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Funding Model (Fixed Tranche requirements): GPE requirements for a credible sector plan with a costed multi-year implementation plan⁷⁴ was the principal reason for using the MTR process to not only review progress in implementing the ESP 2014-2018, but to update the ESP and extend its validity to 2020 so that it would allow Cambodia to apply for its maximum country allocation (MCA) in the last years of the ESP.⁷⁵ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Funding Model (Fixed Tranche requirements): The GPE ESPIG is not in sync with Cambodia’s planning cycle, therefore GPE3 was approved on the condition that the subsequent sector plan for 2019-2023 would adhere to the requirements of a credible sector plan. This required Cambodia to engage in the QA process for the new sector plan, including the appraisal. • QA mechanism (Independent appraisal): The 2019 appraisal of the ESP 2019-2023 provided constructive feedback to MoEYS to help address

⁷³ In this section and all sections that follow, a GPE contribution is rated ‘significant’ if it made a clear, positive and noticeable difference in an outcome of interest to GPE. This outcome of interest need not necessarily be ‘improved planning overall,’ but could be a noticeable improvement in sub-components of this desirable outcome, such as ‘improved government ownership,’ ‘improved participation,’ ‘improved results framework,’ etc. Assessments are based on evaluator judgment based on interviews and documents consulted for this CLE.

⁷⁴ As per funding requirement 1.1c, “Costed multi-year implementation plan covering at least the first 2 years of grant cycle.” The MTR report’s CBIs and sub-sector indicators were extended until 2020 based on a financial simulation (known as CANPRO) two years after the expiry of the ESP 2018-2020 and two years into the GPE3 grant cycle (2018-2021).

⁷⁵ See for example, BTOR (January 2016) and QAR Phase I (2016): Although countries having existing sector plans are not required to carry out new sector analyses, in light of the GPE requirement to have a sector analysis that is newer than three years, the Ministry decided to carry out a Rapid Education Sector Analysis (RESA) to supplement the MTR. While RESA started later than the MTR, MoEYS made sure that the main RESA findings were reflected in the MTR report as strategies/activities/targeting.

ESP 2014-2018 (AND THE MTR 2016)	ESP 2019-2023
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESPDG (for the 2016 RESA): GPE provided the main source of funding for the RESA⁷⁶ which allowed an evidence-base for the MTR report. 	<p>major shortcomings at the time of appraisal. The process also helped to focus DP feedback at a sector level (the previous round of comments were more focused on each DP's sub-sector priorities). Appraiser suggestions were integrated to some extent in a revised draft ESP; additional appraisal recommendations will be taken up in the final ESP 2019-2023.⁷⁷</p>
MODERATE CONTRIBUTION TO SECTOR PLANNING	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GPE Secretariat guidance/support: Back to Office Report (BTOR) from July 2016 shows that the country lead (CL) raised the issue of ensuring that key findings of the RESA are addressed in the MTR report through adjusted targets/strategies/activities.⁷⁸ • ESPDG (2013): GPE provided an ESPDG of US\$247,430 for technical assistance from UNESCO and CDPF to the MoEYS on planning, financial projections and quality review, and the organization of national and sub-national consultation workshops for the drafting of the ESP 2014-2018.⁷⁹ • GA (GPE2): The World Bank, in its GA role, is noted by MoEYS officials for its technical support on results-based planning. UNESCO, as GA for the ESPDG 2013 encouraged MoEYS to undertake an independent, rather than internal, appraisal of the ESP 2014-2018.⁸⁰ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • QA mechanism (Secretariat comments): Secretariat comments on the draft ESP were considered at the same time as the feedback from other DPs. No mention of a more concrete contribution of these comments to the development of the ESP. • Technical guidance / knowledge-sharing: Five consulted stakeholders indicated that they found GPE guidelines useful. Specific guidelines mentioned include: education sector plan preparation, plan appraisal and developing gender-responsive education sector plans. • CA (GPE3): The current CA, UNICEF, contributed to sector planning in its role as chair of the ESWG, facilitating DP review and input to the planning process and coordinating the independent appraisal and DP endorsement of the ESP.
LIMITED CONTRIBUTION OR LACK OF EVIDENCE ON CONTRIBUTION TO SECTOR PLANNING	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical guidance / knowledge-sharing: Consulted stakeholders did not indicate if GPE 2015 guidelines on quality ESP development were useful. • QA mechanism (appraisal): Although an appraisal was carried out, there is insufficient information available to be able to identify any effects of the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GPE advocacy: GPE advocacy through initial comments on the ESP is reflected above (QA mechanism). Back to office report (BTOR) for 2018 does not report on specific advocacy efforts by the Secretariat/CL regarding the ESP 2019-2023.

⁷⁶ An ESPDG for US\$61,945 was made in July 2016 to support the development of the RESA. According to the ESPDG application, ESPDG funds provided the primary source of funding (US\$5,000 from other DPs – most likely CDPF – for sharing costs on supporting quantitative analysis of EMIS data). Most of ESPDG funds were used to pay IIEP consultants who drafted the RESA.

⁷⁷ The Appraisal Memo explaining the MoEYS response to the appraisal was being drafted at the time of writing.

⁷⁸ The RESA was initiated later than the process of developing the MTR, and the QAR Phase I report notes that the MoEYS “made sure that the main RESA findings were reflected in the MTR report as strategies/activities/targeting.”

⁷⁹ Global Partnership for Education (GPE). “Education Plan Development Grant – Grant Completion Report”. 2014.

⁸⁰ UNESCO is noted as having “successfully convinced” the ESWG and MoEYS to undertake an independent appraisal of the ESP 2014-2018.

ESP 2014-2018 (AND THE MTR 2016)	ESP 2019-2023
<p>appraisal on the 2014-2018 ESP. The MTR 2016 update to the sector plan did not undergo an independent appraisal.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Variable tranche (VT): Key components of the VT reflect the strategies outlined in the ESP 2019-2023, especially in relation to the primary scholarship framework, SBM, and implementation of the Continuous Professional Development (CPD) policy. There is no evidence, however, of new VT indicators being incorporated into the ESP 2019-2023.⁸¹ See Appendix XIV for full list of ESP and VT indicators. • ESPDG: Given availability of CDPF resources to support planning process, in-country actors decided not to apply for an ESPDG given complexity of application requirements in relation to the amount of funding to be requested.
ELEMENTS NOT APPLICABLE TO SECTOR PLANNING IN CAMBODIA	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A

41. Most of GPE’s contribution has been through non-financial support, in particular, GPE’s continued requirement for a credible sector plan. The New Funding Model, especially Requirements 1 and 3, and the ESPIG application specify the need for ESPs to be based on evidence that has been generated within the past three years. These provided incentives for MoEYS to engage in the rapid sector analysis to help update the ESP 2014-2018 and at the same time align the ESP with SDG 4.

42. The independent appraisal for ESP 2019-2023 was completed in March 2019. Its conclusions and recommendations have helped to improve the final draft of the ESP.⁸² The appraisal, conducted by an international appraiser trained by UNESCO/IIEP and a national consultant, identified important shortcomings in the draft ESP. The timing/sequencing of the appraisal was beneficial, according to stakeholders, as it galvanized stakeholder attention to finalizing the plan. The appraisal process was conducted in two stages: a) given that the plan available at the time of appraisal field visit had many gaps in it, the consultations and debrief during the visit were used to signal critical issues that would have to be addressed in order for the plan to be “appraisable”; and b) two months later the appraisal team prepared the appraisal report based on a revised version of the ESP. For DPs, the appraisal gave a second opportunity and a more structured approach to provide feedback on the ESP, with more of a sector perspective (rather than the sub-sectoral focus some would have used in providing an initial set of comments). In addition, the constructive appraisal feedback and international experience of the independent appraiser gave additional weight to comments that had been provided by DPs during earlier phases in the planning process.

43. MoEYS interviewees leading the planning process indicated that the appraisal supported learning in the organization, providing an opportunity to reflect on technical aspects of the ESP and thus contribute to capacity development. The Appraisal Memo prepared by MoEYS (May 2019) indicates the Ministry’s

⁸¹ As noted in GPE guidelines the key criteria for VT sector alignment is that selected VT strategies are embedded in the ESP. VT indicators are noted as “ideally” embedded within the ESP, and do not represent a strict requirement (see Global Partnership for Education (GPE). “Guidance Note on GPE Variable Part Financing”. March 2019, p. 9).

⁸² Other elements of the GPE revised QA mechanism (introduced in 2016) were not yet available for the 2019-2023 ESP, such as (a) initial Secretariat comments on the draft ESP, and (b) GPE Secretariat assessment of the ESP using quality standards (RF indicator 16)

agreement with most appraisal recommendations, and outlines steps to address the 19 recommendations,⁸³ which have been contemplated in finalizing the ESP or will be further addressed in developing the multi-year action plan and subsequent AOPs.

Additional factors beyond GPE support

44. Additional **positive factors** beyond GPE support that likely contributed to sector planning during the review period include: (i) the technical assistance and training in support of education simulation modeling CANPRO (Cambodia Analysis and Projection Model, 2016 MTR) and for the 2019-2023 ESP, which were both undertaken through a partnership between UNICEF and UNESCO-IIEP with funding from CDPF Phase III; (ii) IIEP's twinning program with the National Institute of Education (NIE), the Department of Planning in the MoEYS, and the Royal University of Phnom Penh,⁸⁴ which is funded by the CDPF and provides training and coaching opportunities for senior officials in these organizations;⁸⁵ (iii) CDPF Phase 2 support for results-based planning efforts at national and sub-national levels, which has involved NGOs such as Voluntary Service Organization (VSO) and CARE; and (iv) RGC collegial relationships with development partners. In addition, capacity for education sector planning existed in MoEYS prior to 2014; this has been strengthened with each successive sector plan since 2004 through learning by doing, ongoing government reforms in public financial management (PFM), and the MoEYS vision for results-based planning and ability to finance education sector priorities: "Good Planning, Good Money."⁸⁶ The new Minister's ambitious reform agenda has continued to fuel such efforts.

45. Additional **negative factors** include: (i) the slower than expected pace of implementation of the RGC Deconcentration & Decentralization (D&D) reforms, thus creating some challenges to the efforts to strengthen subnational capacities for planning and delivery; (ii) planning capacity limitations in the MoEYS, including with regard to skills required for analysis of data on challenges in the education sector; (iii) the disconnect between structures of planning and budget documents, which partly contributes to a focus on annual planning over long-term planning; and (iv) an evolving Ministerial reform agenda that can displace ESP priorities.

46. The evaluation did not register evidence of significant negative/unintended effects of GPE's support in terms of sector planning.

⁸³ Of the 19 recommendations included in the appraisal memo, the MoEYS agreed to the adoption of 17 recommendations. The MoEYS "partially agreed" to the adoption of two recommendations, namely: (i) inclusion of a multiyear action plan in the ESP (the MoEYS has instead chosen to develop this as a separate document following finalization of the ESP; and (ii) inclusion of analysis or strategies related to declining trends across a number of indicators in primary and secondary education for boys (the MoEYS has made a commitment to include analysis of such trends in the ESP at a later stage).

⁸⁴ UNICEF. "Outcome Evaluation of The Education Capacity Development Partnership Fund (CDPF) – Phase I and II: Annexes (Volume II)". March 2018. p. 108.

⁸⁵ This includes funding participation in IIEP's nine-month residential Advanced Training Programme (ATP) in Educational Planning and Management, in IIEP's intensive two-week Specialized Courses Programme (SCP), and master's Programs.

⁸⁶ This phrase used by MoEYS senior leadership was mentioned by interviewed DP and MoEYS stakeholders.

Implications for GPE's ToC and country-level operational model

Finding 4: Demonstrating flexibility in applying its funding requirements has allowed GPE to provide relevant support to sector planning in the Cambodian context.

47. Three of the five assumptions about sector planning underlying the GPE country-level ToC (Appendix II) **held true** in the context of Cambodia during the 2014-2019 review period. These assumptions were that country-level stakeholders have: (ii) the opportunities (resources, conducive external environment), reflected in institutionalized approach to planning and wide range of financial/non-financial support available for analysis and planning; (iii) the motivation (political will, incentives) to jointly and collaboratively improve sector analysis and planning, which is reflected in the MoEYS reform-orientation and “ownership” of the most recent sector plan; and (iv) GPE has sufficient leverage within Cambodia for GPE support to influence sector planning (an assumption that was found to hold true as it relates to GPE funding requirements and QA processes).

48. The following assumptions were found to hold only **partially true**: (i) country level stakeholders having the *capabilities* to jointly improve sector analysis and planning (there has been progress made at national level, but there are still some gaps in the planning department, technical areas and at sub-national level); and (v) that Education Management Information System (EMIS), learning assessment and reporting systems (LARS) produce relevant and reliable data that is used to inform sector planning (see Section 3.3 and Section 4). While Cambodia generates considerable data of reasonable quality on key education indicators included in the EMIS, there has been less progress in the use of learning assessment data to inform central or sub-national level decision-making, despite establishing and then improving disclosure of the results of these assessments (see Finding 21).

49. As noted above (Finding 3), GPE's most significant contributions to country-level objectives in sector planning relate to its funding requirements. GPE demonstrated flexibility in applying its requirements so that they better respect locally driven processes and DCP priorities:

- With regard to sector analysis, a small ESPDG grant supported the RESA 2016, a critical piece of analytical work that informed the mid-term review of the ESP and an updated ESP. This responded to the country's needs at the time and allowed for the meeting of the GPE ESPIG requirements for a recently endorsed ESP. The government did not use the “maximum” grant amount of US\$500,000.
- In developing the ESP 2019-2023, Cambodia decided not to apply for an ESPDG. Reasons for not requesting financial support for ESP development include: (i) the perception that the application process is complex; (ii) the availability of alternative resources for financing sector planning in-country; (iii) the government's indication that the 2016 sector analysis was still valid and that a full-fledged sector analysis was too time consuming and would delay the planning process; and iv) the relatively large amount of research on the education sector in Cambodia that could be used to supplement the 2016 sector analysis. Existing analytical work fulfilled the GPE requirement for sector analysis.
- The enhanced appraisal mechanism has been applied in such a way as to respond to the concerns of country-level actors, both DP and government.

50. The premises of the GPE country-level ToC seem to remain valid, despite the fact that Cambodia's national planning and budget cycle is not in sync with the GPE ESPIG cycle. In other words, the last implementation grant was approved before the new ESP was developed. GPE has still been able to use the ESPIG requirements as a lever for ensuring that sector plans undergo the necessary QA and meet the requirement of government-owned, credible and evidence-based sector plans focused on equity,

efficiency and learning. The government is willing to continue meeting GPE requirements for a credible sector plan in order to be able to access a future GPE grant (GPE4).

51. In Cambodia, the partnership has given equal value to government ownership of the content and sector planning process as to the technical robustness of the plan. It is particularly significant, in light of the GPE country-level Theory of Change, that the MoEYS has drafted a quality sector plan on its own, which has been strengthened by input from the appraisal process and subsequent dialogue with DPs.

52. Stakeholders also highlight the possible contradictions that the VT approach raises in relation to GPE's overall approach to support for sector planning, which includes LEG endorsement and subsequent DP alignment with the sector plan. Stakeholders note that introducing "stretch" indicators that focus on a transformative element and go beyond the ambitions articulated in the ESP does not seem to match with the premise of aligning with, and supporting, the government's ESP. Furthermore, interviewees point out that the definition of "stretch" indicators is subjective and, at the time of the VT component design, there were different perspectives on what constituted a "stretch" indicator in the Secretariat, which made the design process more challenging. The indicators in Cambodia's VT were focused primarily on outputs and processes with targets that aimed to resolve "bottlenecks" that might otherwise serve to slow down progress towards more transformative change (see Appendix XIV for full list of VT indicators/targets).

3.3 GPE contributions to mutual accountability through sector dialogue and monitoring⁸⁷

Overview

53. This section addresses the following evaluation questions:

- Have sector dialogue and monitoring changed during the review period? If so, how and why? If not, why not? (CEQ 2.1 and 2.2)
- Has GPE contributed to observed changes in sector dialogue and monitoring? If so, how and why? (CEQ 2.3) Has GPE support had any unintended effects, positive or negative? (CEQ 3.2)
- What other factors contributed to observed changes in sector dialogue and monitoring? (CEQ 3.1)
- Going forward, what are implications of findings for the GPE ToC/operational model? (CEQ 7)

54. Table 3.5 provides a high-level overview of evaluation findings on mutual accountability. These observations are elaborated on through the findings and supporting evidence presented below.

⁸⁷ This section addresses evaluation questions CEQ 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3, as well as to (cross-cutting) CEQs 3.1 and 3.2.

Table 3.5 Overview: CLE findings on sector dialogue and monitoring, and related GPE contributions

PROGRESS MADE TOWARDS MUTUAL ACCOUNTABILITY FOR SECTOR PROGRESS	DEGREE OF GPE CONTRIBUTION	DEGREE TO WHICH UNDERLYING ASSUMPTIONS LIKELY HELD TRUE ⁸⁸			
		1	2	3	4
Sector Dialogue: Steady , the LEG (JTWG - E) continues to be functional and well regarded among the 19 JTWG members in Cambodia; it has not made any notable changes to increase participation and inclusion during the 2014-2019 period.	Modest: GPE requirements have fostered more focused dialogue at certain times within the well-established sector dialogue mechanisms.	1	2	3	4
Sector Monitoring: Modest improvement , positive steps taken to improve EMIS. Yet there are still shortcomings in ESP monitoring frameworks and reports.	Modest: GPE did not contribute to improved EMIS or other ESP monitoring tools, but GPE2 did support learning assessments, which will feed into overall sector monitoring.				

Strengths and weaknesses of sector dialogue

Finding 5: Cambodia has well-established formal mechanisms for sector dialogue between DPs and the MoEYS that are valued by most stakeholders and have facilitated DP alignment to ESPs over time. These mechanisms have been less effective in increasing the degree of harmonization and coordination of DP efforts.

55. Cambodia has mature formal mechanisms for stakeholder dialogue and coordination in the education sector. Since 2004, Cambodia has had an active Joint Technical Working Group (JTWG – Education) that serves as the LEG.⁸⁹ The JTWG-E meets quarterly and constitutes the RGC’s primary mechanism for policy dialogue and mutual accountability. It is co-chaired by MoEYS and the DP agency serving as the chair of the Education Sector Working Group (ESWG), Cambodia’s formal coordination group for donor and NGO development partners. The ESWG is chaired by the DP facilitator/donor lead agency, currently UNICEF.⁹⁰ In the education sector, these coordinating bodies also exist at the provincial level.⁹¹

⁸⁸ For sector dialogue and monitoring, the four underlying assumptions in the country level ToC were: (1) GPE has sufficient *leverage* at global and country levels to influence LEG existence and functioning; (2) country level stakeholders having the *capabilities* to work together to solve education sector issues. (3) Stakeholders have the *opportunities* (resources, time, conducive environment) to do so; (4) stakeholders have the *motivation* (incentives) to do so.

⁸⁹ The sectoral TWG were established by the Cambodian Rehabilitation and Development Board of the Council for Development for Cambodia (CDC), which is the RGC’s coordinating agency and has the mandate to promote external resource mobilization and management, as well as facilitate policy dialogue with partners. Each TWG is managed independently by host Ministry, supported by DP facilitator. TWG vary in terms of form, function and level of activity. See Royal Government of Cambodia, Development Cooperation and Partnerships Strategy 2019-2023, January 2019, p. 7

⁹⁰ Interviewed stakeholders noted that the chairing of the ESWG has been rotated between UNICEF and UNESCO.

⁹¹ JTWG guidelines stipulate that the chair of the ESWG also serves as the vice-chair of the JTWG (UNICEF. “Cambodia Submission (2018-2021) for the Education Sector Programme Implementation Grant 2018 - 2021 from the Global

56. The groups comprise government as well as non-state actors; the degree of inclusion varies for different type of non-actors. NGOs are represented in both the ESWG and JTWG, primarily through the NGO Education Partnership (NEP), an umbrella organization that consists of 152 international and national NGOs working in the education sector. Some of the larger NGOs, such as CARE, VSO and VVOB,⁹² also participate separately in the ESWG and the JTWG. Teachers voices are not formally represented in the JTWG and ESWG; however, the government invites one of the (sanctioned) teacher associations to the Education Congress (an annual event, which is further discussed in Finding 6 below).⁹³

57. JTWG Meetings are well attended, appreciated by all stakeholders, and they provide a systematic opportunity for DP and government to engage in dialogue and sector monitoring throughout the year. The JTWG composition and function has remained consistent since 2014.⁹⁴ While provincial JTWGs have been established, their functionality varies across provinces.⁹⁵ In cases where they do work well, provincial MoEYS respondents indicate that they help to reduce overlap of activity among NGOs, enhance mutual accountability and enable problem solving during the implementation of the ESP.

58. As a DP forum, the ESWG is particularly valued by the NGOs that attend. While interviewed stakeholders underlined the importance of the coordinating role played by the NEP, they also highlighted that the voice and agency of CSOs has been inconsistent over the years as a result of leadership transitions in the NEP and its varying capacity to coordinate member inputs to sector dialogue. It is not clear to all stakeholders why some CSOs (outside of the NEP) are invited to participate in the ESWG and JTWG and others are not. CSO stakeholders consulted noted the need to clarify the existing TORs for NGO participation,⁹⁶ and an interviewed stakeholder highlighted that the TORs are currently being revised to this end.

59. The perspectives of donor stakeholders illustrate different needs and expectations for such coordinating groups. Several interviewees commented on changes in the participation in and function of the ESWG since 2014. With regard to participation, the most notable gap is that the multilateral development banks (World Bank [WB] and Asian Development Bank [ADB]) no longer attend the ESWG.⁹⁷ This can be attributed to several factors including their portfolio (investments in secondary and higher

Partnership for Education". Submitted on behalf of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport, Cambodia. February 2018. p. 34).

⁹² CARE and VSO participate in the ESWG as members of the NEP. VVOB participates in the ESWG in its own right.

⁹³ Indicator 19 of the GPE RF rated civil society organization representation in the LEG in Cambodia as "representation exists" for 2017-2019. With regard to teacher representation in the LEG, Cambodia was rated "no representation" in 2017, and "unsure of representation" in 2018 and 2019.

⁹⁴ The JTWG has evolved since its creation in 2004, when it "met monthly to track DP-funded project implementation". It is now described as the principle means to "collaborate and monitor" across the whole of the education sector. See Van Gerwen, Frans and Anne Bernard, et al, Outcome Evaluation of the Education Capacity Development Partnership Fund, Phase I and II, July 2017- February 2018.

⁹⁵ Specifically, the extent to which the PoE of each province is actively involved in the coordination of the provincial JTWG varies. See Van Gerwen, Frans and Anne Bernard, et al, Outcome Evaluation of the Education Capacity Development Partnership Fund, Phase I and II, July 2017- February 2018.

⁹⁶ The four key CSO participants in the ESWG appear to be NEP, CARE, VSO and VVOB. One DP stakeholder noted the importance of updating TORs for DP participation in the ESWG, as key actors in education sector such as Save the Children, an NGO with a long-running presence in Cambodia, and the Czech Republic, cited as an emerging bilateral donor in the sector, are currently "excluded" from both the ESWG and JTWG.

⁹⁷ Both of these multilateral development banks (MDBs) participated in the ESWG prior to 2016, when the World Bank was still the GA for GPE 2.

education on the part of the World Bank, and in upper secondary education on the part of the ADB), workloads,⁹⁸ and the perspective that the EWSG now focuses on basic education, with emphasis on information-sharing, and thus is less relevant to their organizations.⁹⁹ This leads to missed opportunities for better harmonization of approaches and knowledge exchange based on prior experiences in the sector.

60. The function of the ESWG is also an area of concern, especially for some donor representatives who believe that it focuses more on information-sharing than on more substantive dialogue, harmonization and coordination of programming. In part, the possibilities for more strategic dialogue/coordination is limited by the fact that both “implementing” NGOs and donors participate in the ESWG and some donors feel constrained in discussing future plans and programs in a forum that also includes those who may be competing to implement those future initiatives. Respondents noted the potential need to establish either a “donor only” group or more regular sub-sector working groups on specific topics where more intense coordination is required.

61. As a whole, these mechanisms provide the potential for greater coordination/harmonization among development partners. However, seven interviewed DP stakeholders cited the potential to further improve coordination and harmonization of donor efforts in Cambodia. The ESWG and JTWG have only partially alleviated the lack of coordination among donors, reflecting a history of stand-alone projects/programs,¹⁰⁰ with relatively few and fairly recent experiences with pooled funding arrangements such as the CDPF. While USAID and GPE recently joined the CDPF, other key bilateral and multilateral donors cited institutional constraints that prevent them from joining such a pooled funding mechanism (see Finding 14 for details).

62. Informal ad hoc and issue-specific meetings seem to be more effective in triggering strategic dialogue and/or coordination than the formal mechanisms. Efforts have been made to eliminate duplication and strengthen coordination on donor-led efforts in Early Grade Reading Assistance¹⁰¹ and school-based management (SBM). For example, in SBM, the government has requested a common approach to working with primary and secondary schools, which has led to special issue-focused meetings between the World Bank and CDPF. In the case of Early Grade Reading Assistance programs, USAID’s project, “All Children Reading-Cambodia,” was designed to harmonize approaches being used by NGOs in the sector. The project helped develop the MoEYS materials and approach to Early Grade Reading Assistance and coordinate among the different implementers.¹⁰² In addition, the CDPF Steering Committee meetings, which now includes CDPF contributors Sida, EU, UNICEF, USAID and GPE, as well as

⁹⁸ Noted in BTOR dated November 2016.

⁹⁹ On this latter point, there are perceptions about the relative emphasis of the working group based on which agency is chairing the ESWG. UNESCO is perceived to have a broader sectoral focus, while UNICEF is perceived to have a narrower focus on basic education.

¹⁰⁰ A report on education in Cambodia suggests that the relative lack of coordination of donor investments has been an issue in the sector since the 1990s. Donor support is characterized as consisting of “discrete and often unconnected donor and NGO projects” and largely delivered in “parallel implementation and management systems” (see Overseas Development Institute. “Rebuilding basic education in Cambodia: Establishing a more effective development partnership.” 2011, p. 7).

¹⁰¹ DPs and MoEYS stakeholders pointed out the use of distinct, yet similar-sounding terms, Early Grade Reading Assistance and Early Grade Reading Assessments, in the Cambodian context. The former refers to initiatives not only focused on supporting learning assessments for early grades, but also a variety of other focus areas such as teacher training, learning material development etc. Early Grade Reading Assessments, on the other hand, refer only to the learning assessments. The acronym EGRA is used by this evaluation to refer only to Early Grade Reading Assessments.

¹⁰² NGOs were using different sets of materials and the MoEYS did not have the copyright to its own official resource kit.

UNESCO as an observer (in order to facilitate coordination across GPE3 variable and fixed tranche), provide a regular point of engagement among a sub-set of donors.

Strengths and weaknesses of sector monitoring

Finding 6: Cambodia has had a multi-faceted approach to sector reviews, which has evolved since 2014. Mechanisms are, in general, well-functioning and provide a foundation for mutual accountability that could be enhanced with further opportunities for more strategic/technical engagement between DPs and MoEYS.

63. Cambodia has had three mechanisms that serve the purpose of joint sector review (JSR) since 2014, namely the Annual Education Congress (Congress), JTWG Education Retreats (Retreats) and joint government-DP Education Sector Review (ESR) missions. Congress meetings and Retreats were held annually every year during the review period (2014-2019). DP-government joint monitoring missions were

Box 3.4 Mechanisms for joint sector review in Cambodia

Annual Education Congress: Typically held in February or March every year, Congresses are attended by MoEYS officials from virtually all technical departments, and from the central to sub-national levels, as well as DPs and civil society. The purpose of the Congress is to provide an opportunity for MoEYS to present achievements of the past year, discuss education sector performance and identify challenges or areas of focus for the coming year. A key output of these events is the Congress report, which includes information on annual performance against CBIs, sub-sector outcome indicators, as well as information on the extent to which planned policy actions and activities within AOPs were completed.¹⁰³

JTWG Education Retreat: Retreats are held between October and January, prior to the Congress, and are attended by a smaller subset of senior MoEYS staff, DPs and a representative from the NEP. The Retreat is oriented towards providing an opportunity for discussion among stakeholders regarding progress made and ongoing challenges for the coming year. Interviewed MoEYS and DP stakeholders further noted that Retreats are focused on a specific topic (selected by the MoEYS every year), rather than the education sector as a whole, which in turn dictates which technical departments within the MoEYS attend each year.

Joint Government-DP ESR Missions: Referred to by DP and MoEYS stakeholders interviewed as “joint monitoring missions,” the missions reviewed performance of the education sector against outcomes specified in ESPs (i.e. CBIs, JMIs and sub-sector indicators). Findings of the joint mission were aimed at providing input into Congress meetings, positioned to provide analysis of outcome-level trends and published annually as aide memoires. Previously held in March every year (and organized with the help of the GPE GA), they were discontinued in 2018, given MoEYS preference to consolidate efforts in a single JSR report in the form of the Congress report.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰³ Provincial Education Congresses are also held one or two days prior to the national-level Annual Education Congress and are aimed at analyzing provincial-level data on performance of programs within respective Provincial ESPs.

¹⁰⁴ The GPE3 ESPIG application notes ongoing harmonization of Congress and ESR reporting towards a “high quality congress report” (see UNICEF. “Cambodia Submission (2018-2021) for the Education Sector Programme Implementation Grant 2018 - 2021 from the Global Partnership for Education”. Submitted on behalf of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport, Cambodia. February 2018. p. 36).

held annually between 2008 and 2011, before being discontinued and restarted for the period 2015-2017, under GPE2, partly to meet GPE requirements.¹⁰⁵ For a summary of these mechanisms, see Box 3.4.

64. Table 3.6 presents GPE ratings of JSRs in Cambodia and a brief overview of the evaluation team's assessment across GPE criteria. GPE rated JSRs in Cambodia in 2016, 2018 and 2019; Cambodia only met the GPE standards for JSRs in 2018. These ratings suggest both deficiencies and fluctuation between 2016 and 2019. The evaluation team's assessment considers the combination of these review mechanisms; it is not clear what GPE's ratings focused on.

Table 3.6 JSR in Cambodia and JSR quality standards as defined by GPE

JSR QUALITY STANDARDS ¹⁰⁶	GPE RF SCORE			EVALUATOR ASSESSMENT BASED ON DOCUMENTS (I.E CONGRESS REPORTS, ESR AIDE-MEMOIRES) AND CONSULTED STAKEHOLDERS ¹⁰⁷
	2016	2018	2019	
Participatory and inclusive	No	n/a ¹⁰⁸	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall, the combination of approaches includes most actors, with different degrees of participation. Congress is inclusive of government officials (including sub-national level) and is attended by other line ministries (such as the MEF). Donors are involved in all mechanisms (Congress, Retreat and joint ESR missions). NGOs attend Congress and civil society is represented in the Retreat through the NEP. Teachers are only able to attend Congress and only through one government-sanctioned teachers' association. Opportunities to participate in these mechanisms vary and may be limited by size and structure.
Evidence-based	No	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Congress and joint ESR missions used EMIS data to measure progress and challenges against outcome-level ESP targets (CBIs).

¹⁰⁵ Joint monitoring missions were conducted in line with GPE funding criteria that Grant Agents monitor and report on education sector progress through regular joint reviews. As such, the periods in which the joint missions were conducted match with the periods in which GPE1 (2008-2011) and GPE2 (2014-2017) were active in Cambodia (see UNICEF. "Cambodia Submission (2018-2021) for the Education Sector Programme Implementation Grant 2018 - 2021 from the Global Partnership for Education". Submitted on behalf of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport, Cambodia. February 2018. p. 35).

¹⁰⁶ JSR quality standards have evolved somewhat over time. The five JSR quality standards scored by GPE's RF indicator 18 are: (a) participatory and inclusive; (b) evidence-based; (c) comprehensive; (d) a monitoring instrument; and (e) anchored into effective policy cycle (Global Partnership for Education (GPE). "Results Framework Indicators: Methodological Briefs," June 2017, p. 47). The five dimensions of an effective JSR outlined in GPE's guidelines for effective JSRs are: (a) inclusive and participatory; (b) aligned with shared policy frameworks; (c) evidence-based; (d) a monitoring tool; and (e) an instrument for change embedded effectively into a policy cycle (GPE, September 2018, p. 20). Table 3.6 lists six criteria to capture both sets of standards, which overlap for all but one dimension.

¹⁰⁷ Evaluator's assessment in this table considered JSR in Cambodia as a whole, by including all mechanisms (Congress, Retreat, joint ESR missions) in the assessment.

¹⁰⁸ GPE RF data for indicator 18 in 2018 did not provide a rating for Cambodia for this criterion. There is no information provided on why this was not rated.

JSR QUALITY STANDARDS ¹⁰⁶	GPE RF SCORE			EVALUATOR ASSESSMENT BASED ON DOCUMENTS (I.E CONGRESS REPORTS, ESR AIDE-MEMOIRES) AND CONSULTED STAKEHOLDERS ¹⁰⁷
	2016	2018	2019	
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint ESR missions also included field visits to select schools at the sub-national level, undertaken both by DPs and MoEYS officials. Stakeholders note that what is lacking across these mechanisms is greater depth in the analysis and interpretation of data.
Comprehensive	No	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All seven sub-sectors included in the ESP are addressed. TVET is not covered by sector monitoring. Congress reports provide information on amounts of both planned and expended DP aid financing each year, as well as approved and requested externally financed projects.
Aligned with shared policy frameworks	n/a	n/a	n/a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Congress meetings and reports monitor the education sector's progress in the rollout of other government reforms (e.g. PFM and D&D).
A monitoring tool	No	Yes	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Congress reports and joint ESR aide memoires monitors key educational indicators (outcome-level) for ESP targets (CBIs, JMIs and sub-sector outcome indicators). Congress reports monitor the annual completion of planned policy actions and AOP activities. However, a significant proportion of activities are not measured through quantifiable indicators with targets.
An instrument for change anchored in an effective policy cycle	No	Yes	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The mechanisms are part of an effective policy cycle. Congress, Retreats and ESR monitoring missions are aimed at reviewing the ESP and AOPs, as well as feeding into the development of Budget Strategic Plans (BSPs). Action plans were published following Congress and joint ESR missions for the period 2015-2017.

65. Overall, the current combination of JSR mechanisms, i.e. the Congress and the Retreat, is government-owned, carried out on a regular basis, well-anchored in the policy cycle, and provides opportunities for the MoEYS to present achievements made in the past year, for DPs to provide updates on their financial commitments, and for education stakeholders to gain information regarding education sector progress. Congress meetings are widely attended by virtually all departments and sub-national entities of the MoEYS, as well as DPs, NGOs and the Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF). The organization of the Congress, in addition to Education Retreat, represent an important level of effort for the MoEYS.

66. Although a wide range of stakeholders attend Congress and the Retreat, several DP stakeholders indicated that such events provide limited opportunity for strategic or technical policy dialogue. Congress meetings are described as large, celebratory events oriented towards one-way presentation of sector progress or challenges by various MoEYS staff, rather than serving as opportunities for in-depth, analytical discussion among stakeholders. While the Retreats are oriented towards filling the relative gap in technical discussion by involving a smaller subset of government and DP personnel, one stakeholder noted that Retreat attendance has grown in recent years, thus reducing the ability for more strategic discussions to

take place, and four stakeholders expressed the need for the format of Retreats to allow for more interaction.

67. During the period of review, Congress reports and joint ESR aide memoires provided recommendations on specific policy actions to be undertaken the following year and included annual action plans, outlining detailed recommendations for each subsector with deadlines and corresponding responsible MoEYS departments. DPs cited Congress reports as one of the key sources for information on education sector progress (in addition to annual Education Statistics & Indicators yearbooks published by the EMIS department). However, at least four DPs interviewed identified the lack of analysis as the main limitation in these reports.

68. In order to streamline these dialogue/monitoring efforts, in 2017, MoEYS recommended to end the separate “joint monitoring missions” and their corresponding aide memoires. Some stakeholders continue to perceive a certain gap that has not been filled since these missions were discontinued. At least five interviewed stakeholders, noted the value of such missions for government-DP policy dialogue, highlighting the sector trend information and annual recommendations included in the aide memoires. The joint missions appear to have allowed stakeholders to have a more in-depth view of progress in sub-sectors, which included site visits, and more focused recommendations and follow up.¹⁰⁹

Finding 7: Education sector monitoring reports provide an abundance of data, and systematically track progress across a wide range of outcome-level indicators. However, limited output indicators affect the ability to provide annual data on the implementation of activities.

69. MoEYS drafted an M&E framework in 2017 that describes the education sector’s reporting system, and the mechanisms for use and dissemination of M&E data.¹¹⁰ The framework was introduced towards the end of the ESP period and its effect on sector monitoring is not clear. During the period under review, sector monitoring was informed by two main types of monitoring activities and reports: annual performance reports and the MTR.

70. Annual Congress reports and joint ESR aide memoires report on annual progress on a set of indicators called Core Breakthrough Indicators (CBIs), as well as sub-sector indicators set out by the ESP 2014-2018. As noted in Table 3.7, these sector monitoring reports systematically track progress across a wide range of outcome-level indicators; most such indicators have been fully reported on since 2014. Three indicators were not reported on (i.e. marked “N/A” when reported on) in the reviewed Congress reports¹¹¹ because of the ongoing implementation of their associated activities (i.e. the rollout of pre- and

¹⁰⁹ Based on a review of Congress reports and ESR aide memoires, the value-added of ESR aide memoire documents appear to be in: (i) the provision of an analysis of outcome-level trends (in terms of providing explanations for trends where possible and appropriate); (ii) the identification of key challenges by sub-sector based on analysis of trends or available information on ESP implementation; and (iii) and the development of a detailed annual action plan with deadlines and responsible MoEYS departments. These elements are either not included, or less richly developed in Congress reports.

¹¹⁰ Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. “Monitoring and Evaluation Framework”. February 2017. The framework outlines the roles and responsibilities of various national and sub-national units in monitoring ESP implementation, including responsibility for monitoring at the input, activity, output, outcome and impact levels

¹¹¹ These indicators were: Number of pre-primary teacher received training (PRESET and INSET) with formula 12+4 each year up to 2018; “National learning assessment of students at grade 3, in Khmer (Reading) and Mathematics” (CBI 5); and “Revision of sports fields (Siem Reap Stadium).”

in-service training according to a 12+4 formula by 2018, and the conduct of national learning assessments).¹¹²

Table 3.7 Reporting on CBIs and subsector outcome indicators¹¹³

DATA AVAILABILITY (CONGRESS REPORTS AND ESR AIDE MEMOIRES)	CORE BREAKTHROUGH INDICATORS ¹¹⁴	SUBSECTOR INDICATORS ¹¹⁵
Fully reported on annually	9	64
Limited data/only available some years	0	21
Not reported on	1	2
Total (following MTR revisions)	10	87

71. In addition to annual sector monitoring reports (Congress reports and ESR aide memoires), the MTR was designed to take stock of sector progress against ESP objectives partway through a given policy cycle.¹¹⁶ The 2016 MTR served not only to assess the performance of the education sector and the MoEYS against ESP objectives, but also to revise key monitoring indicators, adjust financial projections and make recommendations for implementation as an “updated” ESP for 2016-2018. The updated ESP included new CBIs that aligned with the new Ministerial reform agenda¹¹⁷ and eliminated the ESP’s Joint Monitoring Indicators (JMIs), which had been the focus of ESR aide memoires in 2015 and 2016.¹¹⁸ Progress in all seven

¹¹² Congress reporting on indicators “Number of pre-primary teacher received training (PRESET and INSET) with formula 12+4 each year up to 2018” and “National learning assessment of students at grade 3, in Khmer (Reading) and Mathematics” (CBI 5) show “Implemented in 2018” as the only data available.

¹¹³ Based on the evaluator’s review of ESP 2014-2018, the MTR report, Congress reports (2015-2019), joint ESR aide memoires and the final draft of the ESP 2019-2023.

¹¹⁴ This includes CBIs following MTR revisions in 2016, and thus does not count CBIs which had only been included in the ESP 2014-2018 and left out following revisions. CBIs which had been introduced in 2016, but which only had data reported from 2016 onwards were nevertheless counted as fully reported annually, due to their later introduction.

¹¹⁵ The majority of these indicators report on trends at the outcome-level, e.g. repetition rates, dropout rates, enrolment rates. Some indicators provide information on the implementation of the ESP at the output-level (e.g. number of students receiving scholarships, number of school directors trained in school-based management), while others covered a variety of aspects of the education sector and the ESP (e.g. number of schools with latrines, number of General and Technical High Schools [GTHS], number of university professors with either a Masters or PhD). For full list of indicators see Appendix VII.

¹¹⁶ The MoEYS M&E Framework (2017) includes the MTR as one of the monitoring mechanisms. An MTR was also undertaken for the ESP 2009-2013.

¹¹⁷ This was through the inclusion of an indicators on teacher qualifications (CBI 7), teacher-trainer qualifications (CBI 8) and number of principals trained in results-based school management (CBI 9).

¹¹⁸ JMIs were agreed upon by DPs and the MoEYS through the JTWG in 2014 and were noted by an interviewed DP stakeholder as a mutual accountability mechanism in reporting on sector progress in relation to agreed upon targets. The JMIs included: (i) Increased percentage of five-year-old children in ECE to 66% in 2013-2014; (ii) Lower secondary gross enrollment rate (GER) increased to 66.9% in 2014-2015; (iii) survival rate to Grade 9 increased to 35% in 2014/2015; (iv) Budget allocation for basic education increased to 69.2% in 2014/2015; (v) Lower secondary dropout rate decreased to 19% in 2014/2015; (vi) Numbers of scholarships increased to 55,000 per year for lower secondary students; (vii) Results of the national assessment of student learning in Khmer and Math at Grade 3 and 6 available for policy considerations.

sub-sectors covered by the ESP 2014-2018 was assessed by the MTR, aided by the evidence-base provided by the RESA, and challenges for the sector identified by the MTR informed the revisions made to the ESP's sub-sector strategies and priority reforms.

72. One limitation of these sector monitoring reports is the lack of measurable output indicators for a significant proportion of planned activities. Congress reports systematically monitor the implementation of planned policy actions for each year, and planned activities within AOPs.¹¹⁹ This information is reflected across all Congress reports and is comprehensive in that all activities across all MoEYS departments' AOPs, and all policy actions across all subsectors, are reported on. This is commendable given the large total number of activities monitored each year.¹²⁰ However, the implementation of most activities within the AOPs was not measured through quantifiable output indicators with targets.¹²¹ Examples of output indicators provided in the AOP 2017 with a measurable target were "Provide scholarships to 56 trainers of BA holders to get MA degree" and "Training on how to generate payroll reports with the human resource management information system (HRMIS) to 25 PoEs."¹²²

Finding 8: MoEYS has strengthened the EMIS in ways that should improve data quality. Challenges remain with regard to sub-national capacities to enter and use data and MoEYS capacities for data analysis and coordination of parallel information management systems.

73. Cambodia is recognized for having a well-developed EMIS; data is collected nationally and reported in annual statistics yearbooks that cover a wide range of indicators and are comparable across time.¹²³ An evaluation of CDPF support to Cambodia suggests that significant progress has been made in EMIS department capacity development since the beginning of CDPF support in 2011. Specifically, the EMIS department is recognized for increasing its ownership of how data is presented or used and shifting the way it views its role in the education sector from a focus on data collection, to broader emphasis on the dissemination of data for use in decision-making.¹²⁴ The EMIS department is responsible for sending

¹¹⁹ Specifically, policy actions and activities in AOPs are rated as either "complete", "ongoing" or "not yet implemented." Activities or policy actions which are not completed by the target year are carried over to the next year, and rated again in the subsequent Congress report.

¹²⁰ For example, an approximate total of 875 activities across all departments' AOPs were reported on in the 2018 Congress report (see p. 113-138).

¹²¹ For example, in the AOP 2017 for the Department of Primary Education each of the following activities is reported as "completed", but there is no reference to an indicator or target that could be used to help identify the state of progress: "Operational and SIG funds," "Supporting the poor student families on income generation," "Assessing student learning achievement," and "Monitoring school management, teaching-learning". GPE RF coder assessment and comments for indicators 16 b and c (row 10) suggest that outputs are not well defined and many activities within the AOP 2016 do not have corresponding output indicators.

¹²² Institute of Technology of Cambodia. "Education Congress Report- Education, Youth and Sport for School Year 2016-2017 and Objectives for the next school year 2017-2018". March 2018.

¹²³ See the Inception Report for the Cambodia ESP Mid-Term Review and M&E Framework, prepared by Mariele Buonomo Zabaleta and Anne-Berit Kavli, IIEP/UNESCO, Paris. Additionally, the appraisal of the ESP 2014-2018 characterizes Cambodia's EMIS as "fairly mature" (p. 10).

¹²⁴ The EMIS function was carried out through a unit with the Department of Planning, before becoming its own department within the Directorate-General of Policy and Planning (DGPP). According to the CDPF evaluation, a marked behaviour change which accompanied this departmental upgrade of EMIS was the adding of roles played by the department in terms of developing strategies for data collection and data use, on top of its principal responsibility of ensuring Annual School Census forms are filled out by schools (Source: UNICEF. "Outcome Evaluation of The

data on Cambodian education to UNESCO UIS and has met related GPE criteria in 2014 and 2015, but not in 2016.¹²⁵

74. One of the EMIS department's initiatives, implemented with the support of DPs,¹²⁶ has been the rollout of a web-based system of data collection, which is articulated in the Master Plan on EMIS 2014-2018. While the web-based EMIS offers potential improvements to data quality and timely data collection, the rollout of the web-based EMIS remains a work in progress and faces challenges at the sub-national level in relation to limited resources and capacities in ICT at the school-level to input data electronically.¹²⁷

75. Two further challenges faced by EMIS:

- **Lack of capacities for data analysis:** Although quality of data is satisfactory and has improved in recent years, the analysis or interpretation of data was highlighted by eight DP and MoEYS stakeholders as an area for improvement for the department moving forward. One of the reasons for limited analysis is the lack of staff with required specialist expertise to carry out statistical analysis.
- **Lack of coordination of other information management systems:** While EMIS provides the main source of data for basic education, other management information systems fall outside the purview of the EMIS department. These include: Human Resources MIS (HRMIS), Financial MIS (FMIS), Higher Education MIS (HEMIS), and Non-Formal Education MIS (NFEMIS).¹²⁸ Four interviewed stakeholders noted a lack of coordination in data collection for these systems. Available documentary evidence indicates that the different databases do not communicate or share data with each other and that parallel requests for data from school directors are being made.¹²⁹

Education Capacity Development Partnership Fund (CDPF) – Phase I and II: Final Report (Volume I)". March 2018. p. 119).

¹²⁵ According to GPE RF indicator 14, Cambodia met the criteria of providing data to UNESCO UIS for at least 10 out of 12 indicators for 2014 and 2015, as Cambodia was found to provide data on all 12 indicators for these years. Cambodia did not meet this criteria in 2016, however, as it was found to not provide data to UNESCO UIS on: (i) public expenditure on education as percentage of GDP; (ii) public expenditure on education as percentage of public expenditure; and (iii) educational expenditure in primary education as percentage of total educational expenditure.

¹²⁶ Specifically, under CDPF support as well as an ADB project entitled, "Enhancing Education Quality Project," undertaken between 2008 and 2014.

¹²⁷ Both the RESA (p. 90), and the CDPF evaluation (p. 29) noted challenges to the rollout of the web-based at the school-level in terms of a lack of internet connectivity and the necessary skills in ICT to upload filled-out forms electronically. Of note, the CDPF evaluation found that the EMIS department effectively served as a "help-desk" for PoEs on ICT issues, adding a strain on the department's staff and time resources.

¹²⁸ HRMIS and FMIS come under the purview of the Department of Personnel and the Department of Finance of the MoEYS respectively. NFEMIS is noted as coming under the responsibility of both the NFE Department and the Ministry of Labour, while HEMIS comes under the responsibility of the Department of Higher Education (Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. "Master Plan for Capacity Development in the Education Sector, 2014-2018. Kingdom of Cambodia". January 2015.p. 11-12).

¹²⁹ As mentioned in the CDPF evaluation (UNICEF. "Outcome Evaluation of The Education Capacity Development Partnership Fund (CDPF) – Phase I and II: Annexes (Volume II)". March 2018. p. 121). Furthermore, the CDPF evaluation found that the parallel requests for information had the effect of overburdening school directors and DOEs, positing further that this affected the timeliness and quality of information inputted.

Table 3.8 EMIS Assessment in Cambodia

CRITERIA	EVALUATOR ASSESSMENT BASED ON DOCUMENTS REVIEWED AND STAKEHOLDERS CONSULTED
Data Quality	<p>Strengths:</p> <p>Key performance indicators in the education sector (CBIs and sub-sector outcome indicators) are reported on annually and considered reliable by stakeholders.</p> <p>Annual statistics yearbooks are published every year and cover a wide range of indicators.</p> <p>Data in annual statistics yearbooks are disaggregated by gender and province.</p> <p>Ongoing shift to web-based EMIS offers potential for further improvements to data quality and timeliness of collection.</p> <p>Challenges:</p> <p>Data on children with disabilities have yet to be made available to the public. Documentary evidence suggests that capacity gaps in identifying children with special needs at the classroom-level stands as a key challenge for collecting data on children with disabilities (see Finding 21).</p> <p>Incomplete data from private or non-governmental schools.¹³⁰</p>
Data Use for Decision-making	<p>Strengths:</p> <p>EMIS data is utilized by Congress meetings and reports. Congress reports are published annually, containing information on education indicators.</p> <p>EMIS data noted by interviewed DPs as the principal source of information on the education sector.</p> <p>EMIS data used for financial projections and budgeting as part of CANPRO.¹³¹</p> <p>Challenges:</p> <p>Congress reports and annual education statistics yearbooks contain limited analysis or interpretation of data.</p> <p>Unclear whether data is used in the preparation of AOPs or in follow-up meetings post-Congress.</p>
Influencing Factors	<p>Supportive:</p> <p>Significant and ongoing support from development partners, especially from the CDPF, in data collection and the development of the web-based system of data entry.</p> <p>Limiting:</p> <p>Lack of staff with capacities in statistical analysis in the EMIS department.</p> <p>Lack of coordination in data collection activities with information management systems outside of the purview of the EMIS department, i.e. HRMIS and FMIS.</p> <p>Limited ICT resources and capacities at the sub-national level.</p>

¹³⁰ Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. "Master Plan for Capacity Development in the Education Sector, 2014-2018. Kingdom of Cambodia". January 2015. p. 10.

¹³¹ Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. "Master Plan for Capacity Development in the Education Sector, 2014-2018. Kingdom of Cambodia". January 2015, p. 14.

GPE contributions to sector dialogue and monitoring

Finding 9: GPE has made modest contributions to sector dialogue and monitoring in the Cambodian context. Certain GPE requirements (such as ESP appraisal) have helped to temporarily bring a more strategic focus to sector dialogue, yet others have added complexity to these discussions.

76. The Council for Development of Cambodia (CDC) has steadily developed a system for sector dialogue and sector reviews that responds to Cambodia's needs for mutual accountability. As a few respondents noted, the education sector has been one of the most active and dynamic in using that system to encourage dialogue on sector planning and performance.

77. Table 3.9 provides an overview of the financial and non-financial mechanisms employed by GPE to support sector dialogue and monitoring. These are grouped by whether they have made a significant, moderately significant or insignificant contribution to mutual accountability in Cambodia. This grouping is indicative and does not constitute a formal score.

78. Because of the strong national systems for monitoring the sector, GPE made few observable contributions to enhancing mutual accountability. Its main contributions were in the form of providing opportunities to have more focused and strategic dialogue (e.g. through the appraisal and the ESP process and joint monitoring missions) during certain periods of time. GPE also contributed by providing funding that helped develop an evidence base for dialogue.

79. At the same time, GPE's operational model and requirements also added new complications to be taken up by sector dialogue mechanisms, particularly due to the variable tranche requirements and the capacities of different actors to manage and provide guidance on this results-based financing mechanism. Specifically, there is sentiment among stakeholders that the GPE VT introduces contradictions in the GPE model and additional demands for the different stakeholders involved in GPE (please see below under "unintended negative effects").

Table 3.9 *Observable GPE contribution to mutual accountability*

SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTION TO MUTUAL ACCOUNTABILITY

- **GPE ESP requirements (ESP QA process):** The 2019 independent appraisal helped focus the dialogue at a sector level, with emphasis on the strengths and limitation of the ESP as a whole. The process provided a space for DPs to agree on key strategic issues and provide coordinated feedback to MoEYS. The Appraiser facilitated discussions among DPs and government and was able to bring in comparative experience from other DCPs. The 2014 independent appraisal of the 2014-2018 ESP is also noted for its contributions to policy discussions between government and DP.
- **GPE requirements (joint monitoring):** Joint missions were conducted under GPE1 (2008-2011) and GPE2 (2015-2017). The missions were organized by the GA, in response to GPE requirements for sector review and GA monitoring, and appear to have provided a valuable forum for DP-government discussions on progress and challenges in the sector.

MODERATE CONTRIBUTION TO MUTUAL ACCOUNTABILITY

- **ESPDG funding (2013):** The ESPDG was used to finance the 2014 appraisal, as noted above. ESPDG funding was not used or required for the 2019 appraisal.
- **ESPDG funding (2016):** An ESPDG also financed the RESA, which was a key input for the MTR that updated the ESP 2014-2018. ESPDG funds helped to provide an evidence base for sector discussions.

MODERATE CONTRIBUTION TO MUTUAL ACCOUNTABILITY

- **ESPIG funding modality (2018):** With the most recent ESPIG (GPE3), country partners elected to utilize a multi-donor pooled funding mechanism (CDPF), which directly links GPE to sectoral funding and discussions on Capacity Development. This is a positive shift that is in line with aid effectiveness principles, and which departs from stand-alone project funding. The shift was prompted, to great extent, by the need to provide the MoEYS with up-front programming resources they would need in order to meet the targets that are part of the three Variable Tranche Indicators.
- **Coordinating Agency:** The CAs during this period (UNESCO and then UNICEF) fulfilled their roles in convening the different actors, in addition to clarifying GPE requirements and communicating with MoEYS and DPs. However, they did not have opportunities to restructure the donor coordination mechanisms.
- **CSEF funding:** The civil society umbrella organization, NEP, received three CSEF grants during the period. A 2015 evaluation of CSEF funding to NEP suggests that such funds allowed the coalition to have consistent, well-structured meetings that in turn helped shape a more strategic engagement and advocacy with policy makers, including through its participation in the ESWG and JTWG.¹³² At the ESWG suggestion, NEP acted as a proxy in consultations with the government and teacher unions on the development of the TPAP.¹³³ NEP continues to have a place at the table in sector dialogue mechanism, although it is coming out of a leadership transition period and now needs to strengthen.

LIMITED CONTRIBUTION OR LACK OF EVIDENCE ON CONTRIBUTION TO MUTUAL ACCOUNTABILITY

- **GPE Secretariat advocacy:** BTORs and interviews suggest that the CL actively participated in many events, and has advocated for increased reflection on strengthening sector dialogue and monitoring on the part of country stakeholders.¹³⁴ However, the information available does not point to particular Secretariat contributions in the area of mutual accountability.

NOT APPLICABLE FOR MUTUAL ACCOUNTABILITY IN CAMBODIA

- N/A

Additional factors

80. Additional **positive** factors beyond GPE support include: (i) the RGC has a partnership and development cooperation strategy and clearly establishes a structure and process for mutual accountability; (ii) an overall sense of collegial relationships between DPs and RGC, with MoEYS leadership that stresses the importance of that relationship; (iii) DP support for system change that influences the data available for sector monitoring and dialogue, for example, Sida's support for establishing and

¹³² Institute for Development Impact, Independent Evaluation of the Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF) Programme 2013 – 2015 for the Global Campaign for Education, Volume II, Country Case Studies.

¹³³ Ibid, p. 10

¹³⁴ See, for example, recommendations made by the CL in 2019 for the JTWG to discuss possible adjustments to joint monitoring mechanisms in Cambodia, especially in the holding of the Retreat closer to the Congress in March, and in reflecting on how current joint monitoring mechanisms can help greater coordination among DPs and the MoEYS (Global Partnership for Education (GPE). "Draft Mission Summary Report - Mission of the Global Partnership for Education to Cambodia. 21 – 27 March, 2019." March 2019, p. 4).

strengthening a system of school Inspections;¹³⁵ and (iv) CDPF support for EMIS and the rolling out of Quality Education Management Information System (QEMIS).¹³⁶

81. Additional **negative** factors that limited the basis for mutual accountability between stakeholders include the perception that DPs currently included in the ESWG and JTWG are not proactively advocating for more CSO involvement in the sector. In addition, DPs do not consistently promote aid effectiveness principles, and some prefer bilateral discussions with government to the established coordination platforms. Another factor that may enable mutual accountability (on a bilateral basis), but does not facilitate more coordinated approaches, is that the RGC has also clearly articulated desire for bilateral consultations, noting that bilateral dialogue has proven to be superior to multi-partner dialogue as it allows for a focused discussion between RGC and the DP on issues related to government “priority setting, programming, implementation and results.”¹³⁷ To some extent, this provides a supportive context for stand-alone projects.

Unintended negative/unplanned positive effects of GPE support

82. GPE processes also had unintended, more negative effects on sector dialogue and coordination in Cambodia.

83. Over the past two years, GPE business has often been the focus of sector dialogue mechanisms (JTWG and ESWG), to the point that one of the donor representatives commented that it “distracted” the actors on the ground from focusing on critical issues in the sector. This perspective may be shaped by the particularly challenging transition between GPE2 and GPE3, which entailed adapting to two Grant Agents and engaging in extensive country-level discussions about the VT indicators, for the purpose of triggering a relatively small amount of funding (US\$6.2 million out of total of US\$20.6 million ESPIG). The two-GA model has added a layer of complexity to sector coordination.

84. Stakeholders also expressed strong views on the relevance and appropriateness of the principles of the variable tranche, noting that DPs endorse and align to the ESP, with its proposed results, but then ask MoEYS to go beyond what is agreed in principle. According to stakeholders, different elements of the GPE operational model (Secretariat, (GA, CA, LEG) had limited experience with or divergent perspectives on the VT requirements, leading to many revisions of the VT indicators and proposals in order to meet expectations for “stretch” indicators.

¹³⁵ Sida facilitated a technical linkage between the Swedish School Inspectorate and the MoEYS for the development of a quality assurance system between 2011 and 2016 (see Openaid. “Education Quality Assurance 2013-2017 - Education Quality Assurance”. <https://openaid.se/activity/SE-0-SE-6-5110005401-KHM-11110> (accessed June 2019). Respondents noted that Sida provided support to inspections in general, including to the National Institute of Education (NIE).

¹³⁶ UNICEF. “Outcome Evaluation of The Education Capacity Development Partnership Fund (CDPF) – Phase I and II: Final Report (Volume I)”. March 2018, p. 29.

¹³⁷ See for example Royal Government of Cambodia, Development Cooperation and Partnerships Strategy 2019-2023, January 2019, p. 7. Furthermore, it is worth noting that according to a BTOR dated January 2018, the Minister of Education characterized the current arrangement as one in which the RGC leads the definition of overarching policies and strategies for the sector, while DPs provide direct support for the implementation of services.

Implications for GPE's ToC and Operational Model

Finding 10: GPE's operational model has been adapted to respond to national circumstances, but it has added complications to sector dialogue.

85. GPE has adapted to the operational context in Cambodia. It required the ESR, during GPE1 and 2, but now follows the government lead in defining and streamlining the approaches to be used for joint sector review and dialogue. RGC has defined the terms for “mutual accountability” and GPE has worked within those constructs.

86. Available evidence suggests that one out of the four assumptions about sector dialogue and sector monitoring underlying the GPE country-level ToC fully held in the context of Cambodia during the 2014-2019 review period. The evaluation found that country-level stakeholders have the capabilities to work together to solve education sector issues (Assumption 2), although some actors may have less voice in the sector partly due to their capabilities to coordinate and articulate positions among their membership (for example, NEP and teachers associations).

87. The remaining assumptions 1, 3 and 4 were found to hold partially true. The assumption that GPE had sufficient leverage to influence LEG existence and functioning (Assumption 1) was only partially true in Cambodia given that a strong JTWG and ESWG were already in place, and that GPE influence was not required to ensure its existence. However, the assumption about having leverage to influence LEG functioning is still applicable in this context. There are potential areas for improvement in terms of the quality of dialogue and coordination, and while the CL has advocated for increased reflection on strengthening sector dialogue and monitoring on the part of country stakeholders, GPE did not seem to have any leverage or noticeable contribution in these areas (e.g. in terms of engaging all DPs in the dialogue mechanisms, bolstering CSO involvement more consistently, identifying strategies for strengthening teacher associations, identifying options for strengthening DP coordination, including the potential for additional sub-working groups).

88. With regard to the assumption that stakeholders have opportunities to work together to solve education sector issues (Assumption 3), for the most part, stakeholders have the resources and time to engage in discussions given that there are existing and institutionalized mechanisms for discussing and monitoring the performance of the education sector. However, the overall environment has, historically, not been as favorable to coordination, and has limited the participation of some actors.

89. In relation to the assumption that stakeholders have the motivation (incentives) to work together, while donor-funded activities were aligned to the ESP, stakeholders reported a tendency for DPs to put greater emphasis on “flying their own flag” rather than working together. There are exceptions to this in the Cambodian context, notably seen in the pooled funding mechanism of the CDPF. These shortcomings illustrate areas where further GPE advocacy at global and national level may be necessary (with DPs) and where more precision is needed in GPE requirements. Interestingly, few stakeholders were aware of GPE's support for strengthening civil society (through the CSEF), suggesting that better coordination and information-sharing around civil society grants could strengthen GPE's potential contribution in this area.

90. As noted above, the GPE operational model also had unintended effects, including contributing to coordination/dialogue fatigue and introducing new challenges for coordination (such as the two-grant agent model).

3.4 GPE contributions to sector financing¹³⁸

Overview

91. This section addresses the following evaluation questions:
- Have domestic or international education financing changed during the review period, in terms of either quantity or quality? If so, how and why? (CEQ 1.5)
 - Has GPE contributed to observed changes in sector financing? If so, how and why? (CEQ 1.6) Has GPE support had any unintended effects, positive or negative? (CEQ 3.2)
 - What other factors contributed to observed changes in sector financing? (CEQ 3.1)
 - Going forward, what are implications of findings for the GPE ToC/operational model? (CEQ 7)
92. A high-level overview of evaluation findings on sector financing and related GPE contributions is provided in Table 3.10.

Table 3.10 Overview: CLE findings on sector financing and related likelihood of GPE contributions between 2014-2019

PROGRESS MADE TOWARDS MORE/BETTER EDUCATION SECTOR FINANCING					LIKELIHOOD ¹³⁹ OF GPE CONTRIBUTIONS TO: ¹⁴⁰			UNDERLYING ASSUMPTIONS APPLIED? ¹⁴¹	
Total domestic education expenditure	Education share of domestic budget	Met 20% Goal? ¹⁴²	Total intl. education financing to country	Quality of intl. financing	Share of domestic financing	Amount of intl. financing	Quality of intl. sector financing	GPE influence on domestic finance	Context permits improved domestic or official development assistance (ODA)
Increase	Increase	Progress made	Increase	Unchanged	Low	Modest	Low	1	2

¹³⁸ This section addresses evaluation questions CEQ 1.5 and 1.6, as well as (cross-cutting) CEQs 3.1 and 3.2.

¹³⁹ Note that, different from similar tables in previous chapters, the summary focuses on the 'likelihood' rather than the 'degree' of GPE contributions. This reflects the nature of the respective change processes, which make it difficult to elicit evidence on direct links between GPE support and observed changes.

¹⁴⁰ Assessment is based on: (i) existence/absence of positive change in respective area; (ii) stakeholder views on likelihood of GPE support/funding criteria having influenced domestic or international funding decisions; and (iii) absence or existence of additional factors that are as/more likely than GPE support to explain noted trends.

¹⁴¹ For sector financing, the two underlying assumptions in the country level ToC were: (1) GPE has sufficient *leverage* to influence the amount and quality of domestic education sector financing; and (2) *External (contextual) factors* permit national and international stakeholders to increase/improve the quality of sector financing.

¹⁴² One of GPE's ESPIG funding requirements is that 20% of government expenditure be invested in education, or that government expenditure on education shows an increase toward the 20% threshold.

Characteristics of sector financing during review period¹⁴³

Finding 11: Domestic education financing in Cambodia substantially increased during the review period. However, education financing relative to total government expenditures remains below the 20 percent target established by GPE.

93. Domestic public financing for education in Cambodia¹⁴⁴ increased substantially in nominal terms for the period 2014-2019. Absolute sector allocations¹⁴⁵ grew by 273 percent from 1,342 billion Riels (US\$335.5 million) to 3,661 billion Riels (US\$915.4 million) for the period.¹⁴⁶ Such a substantial increase in the MoEYS budget allocations matches the notion that the education budget in Cambodia has “tripled” in recent years, which was mentioned by several MoEYS and DP stakeholders interviewed. Budget projections suggest that domestic education budget allocations will continue to grow consistently between 2020 and 2023, albeit at a slower pace than was observed for 2014-2019 (see Appendix IX). Interview and documentary evidence indicates that the substantial increase in education sector allocations during the review period were a result of the introduction of a cross-sectoral plan to raise the salaries of civil servants, including teachers, in 2014, and the ability of the MoEYS to demonstrate results and high rates of budget execution to the Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF) to secure budget allocations (see Finding 14 for more details).

Table 3.11 MoEYS budget by expenditure type, 2017-2019 (US\$ millions)

YEAR	WAGE (% OF TOTAL BUDGET)	NON-WAGE RECURRENT (% OF TOTAL BUDGET)	CAPITAL (% OF TOTAL BUDGET)
2017	484.1 (70.7%)	111.9 (16.3%)	89.1 (13%)
2018	545.2 (63.4%)	131.2 (15.2%)	183.1 (21.3%)
2019	588.6 (64.3%)	148.8 (16.3%)	178 (19.5%)

94. Available data suggests that substantial increases in capital expenditures contributed to a significant proportion of increases in MoEYS budget allocations during the review period. According to MoEYS data, allocations for capital expenditures have increased substantially in both nominal terms and as a share of the total budget: from 2.2 percent (US\$8.75 million) in 2015 to 19.5 percent (US\$178 million)

¹⁴³ Data on domestic financing trends was taken primarily from MoEYS data (listed in spreadsheet, “1 Education Budget Implementation 2007-2018 from UNICEF”) and GPE RF data (indicator 10). This data is not adjusted for inflation. UNESCO UIS did not provide data on domestic education financing for the period 2015-2018.

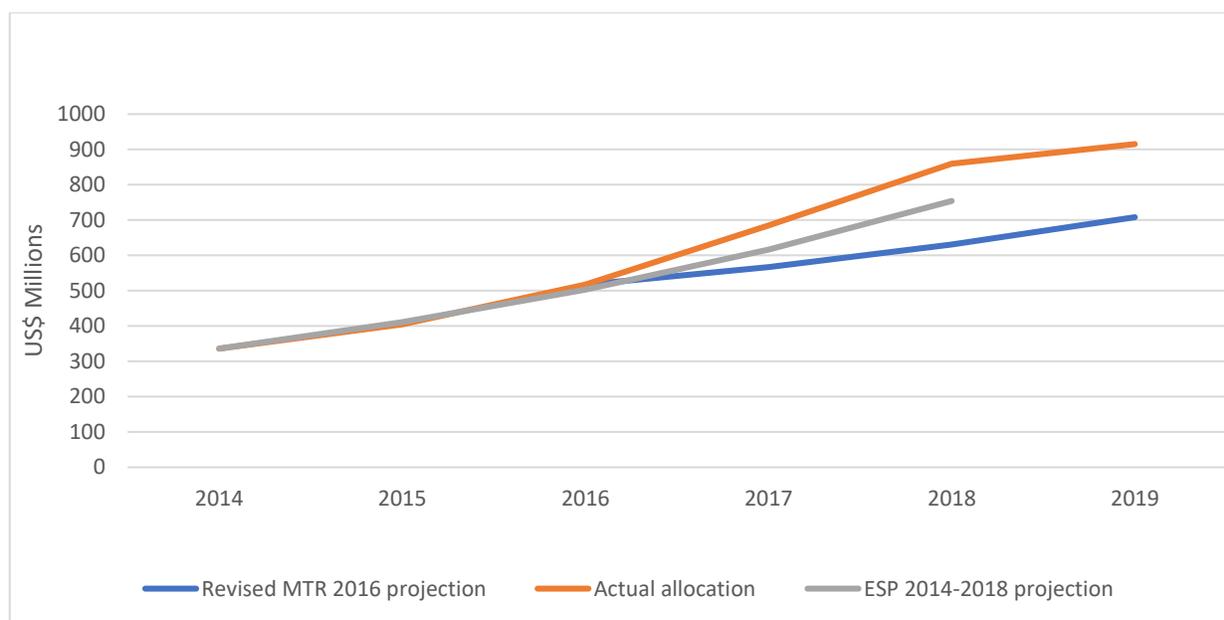
¹⁴⁴ The terms “MoEYS budget” and “government expenditures in education” were used interchangeably in financial projections of the ESP 2014-2018 and the MTR. As such, the discussion of domestic financing in this evaluation mirrors this and does not take into account budget allocations or expenditures by other line ministries which may have nonetheless been related to education. The evaluation was not able to access any data on education sector budget allocations made by other line ministries.

¹⁴⁵ The evaluation only had access to data on total education budget allocations, and there was no data available from government sources or UNESCO UIS on budget disbursements for Cambodian education for the period of review. Data on financial disbursements was only available for MoEYS recurrent expenditures for the period 2014-2016.

¹⁴⁶ There is no official country-level or UNESCO UIS data on education budget allocations in real terms for the review period. A comparison between an approximation of the MoEYS budget adjusted for inflation and nominal figures for the MoEYS does not indicate a substantial difference. See Appendix IX for more details.

in 2019, with budget allocations for recurrent expenditures declining from 97.8 percent to 80.5 percent as a result. However, consulted stakeholders did not mention substantial increases in capital allocations as the principal reason for recent increases in MoEYS budget allocations and it is relatively unclear the extent to which capital expenditures come under the direct supervision of the MoEYS.¹⁴⁷ Stakeholders instead largely referred to increases in teacher salaries as the prime reason for increases in the MoEYS in recent years. This perspective is supported by the RESA, which noted that increasing salaries were the principal driver of increased domestic education financing in Cambodia.¹⁴⁸ Between 2015-2017, the proportion of salaries relative to total MoEYS recurrent expenditures increased from 77 percent to 81.2 percent.¹⁴⁹ Data on the MoEYS budget disaggregated by expenditure type (i.e. wage, non-wage recurrent and capital) was not available for the full period of review, and as such, a detailed analysis to test the hypothesis that teacher salaries were the main reason for increases in the MoEYS budget during the review period was not possible. Available data for the period 2017-2019, however, suggests that MoEYS wage expenditures as a share of its total budget have decreased overall, despite a nominal increase, and that capital expenditures have occupied a larger share of the total MoEYS budget in recent years.

Figure 3.1 Actual MoEYS budget allocations versus ESP and MTR projections



¹⁴⁷ An evaluation of EU budget support in Cambodia indicates that capital budget allocations, which were previously funded by DPs, was taken over by the RGC in 2015. Available data is not clear on the extent to which capital expenditures come under the direct supervision of the MoEYS and what such expenditures include, with a 2017 government report suggesting that capital expenditures come under the supervision of the Prime Minister's Office, rather than the MoEYS (Source: Supreme National Economic Council. "Report on The Development of The Bridging Tables". November 2017, p. 11)

¹⁴⁸ See International Institute for Educational Planning. "Cambodia Rapid Education Sector Analysis". UNESCO. September 2016, p. 54.

¹⁴⁹ This data includes salaries to all personnel (teachers and other staff) in the education sector. According to a government report, teacher salaries accounted for approximately 73.5 percent of recurrent expenditures in 2017. Data on teachers' salaries was not available for other years of the review period.

95. Available data indicate that the ESP 2014-2018 was largely financed as intended in terms of budget allocations and fund disbursements. As noted in Section 3.2, the ESP 2014-2018 was found to have a sound financial framework, and the MTR improved on the plan through a financial simulation exercise which resulted in more conservative projections of funding requirements.¹⁵⁰ US\$3.7 billion was actually allocated to the MoEYS for the period 2014-2019, which was 16 percent higher than projections made by the ESP 2014-2018 and the 2016 MTR for total resources needed to fund the ESP (US\$3.2 billion). Actual allocations to MoEYS either met or exceeded projected budgets (as per the ESP 2014-2018 or the MTR) for every year between 2014-2018, with the exception of 2015 (see Table 3.12 for more details). Despite this evaluation's lack of data on domestic financial disbursements, the rates of budget execution were at a relatively high level (above 94% from 2015 onwards) and increased during the review period (see Finding 13).

Table 3.12 Actual MoEYS budget allocations versus ESP and MTR projections (in US\$ millions)

YEAR	ACTUAL MOEYS BUDGET ALLOCATIONS	ESP 2014-2018 PROJECTION	MTR REVISED PROJECTION
2014	336	336	n/a
2015	405	411	n/a
2016	517	503	517
2017	685	616	567
2018	860	754	631
2019	915	n/a	708

96. **In Cambodia, allocations to primary education were close to the GPE target of 45 percent throughout the review period.**¹⁵¹ Projected ESP budget requirements (including both DP and domestic funding) for basic education took up the bulk of ESP costs and the projected share of ESP requirements for primary education was above the 45 percent mark.¹⁵² Available data on actual budget allocations by sub-sector for 2014 and 2015¹⁵³ suggest that actual recurrent budget allocations for primary education remained relatively close to the 45 percent mark (44.8 percent and 44.6 percent in 2014 and 2015 respectively).

97. Projected allocation of resources (including both DP and government resources) to ECE increased slightly, with some fluctuations, from 7.21 percent in 2014 to 8.6 percent in 2018, while projected allocations to secondary and technical education declined slightly during the period, from 29.5 percent to

¹⁵⁰ The ESP planned for a financing gap (between available resources and expected costs) of US\$168 million for the 2014-2018 period.

¹⁵¹ The GPE target for domestic financing for primary education as a share of total domestic education financing of 45 percent applies only to countries which have not reached Universal Primary Education (UPE). UPE has not yet been achieved in Cambodia (see GPE, Quality Assurance Review – Phase 3, 2017, p. 4).

¹⁵² Projected allocation of resources (includes both DP and government resources) to primary education increased slightly over the review period, from 47.1 percent in 2014 to 49.6 percent in 2018 (Source: MoEYS, Education Strategic Plan 2014-2018, 2014, and MoEYS, Mid-Term Review Report, 2016).

¹⁵³ Data on the proportions of actual allocations to subsectors was only available for 2014 and 2015, in the MTR, and only for budget allocations for recurrent expenditures. There is neither UNESCO UIS data nor government data on the distribution of actual budget allocations for both recurrent and capital expenditures by sub-sector for 2016-2018.

28.1 percent in 2018.¹⁵⁴ Data on actual budget allocations record smaller-than-projected recurrent budget allocation for ECE, while the opposite was true for secondary and technical education.¹⁵⁵

98. Despite substantial increases in domestic financing to education during the review period, the MoEYS budget as a share of total public expenditures remained below the 20 percent target.¹⁵⁶ The MoEYS was allocated 9.9 percent of the national budget in 2014, and this increased to 14.2 percent in 2019.¹⁵⁷ Although domestic financing for education did not reach 20 percent of the national budget, the education sector was one of four sectors to have been allocated the highest proportion of total government investment as per the NSDP 2014-2018,¹⁵⁸ indicating a high level of prioritization of the education sector by the RGC.

Finding 12: International education financing to Cambodia increased overall in both nominal terms and as a share of total ODA in the review period, but support to basic education has declined in relation to total sector financing.

99. Education official development assistance (ODA)¹⁵⁹ to Cambodia increased overall in the past decade, with some fluctuations (see Figure 3.2). During the review period, despite an initial decrease in total education between 2014 and 2015 (US\$84 million to US\$78 million), total education ODA increased to US\$107 million and subsequently to US\$114 million in 2016 and 2017 respectively. Similarly, the proportion of education ODA to overall ODA to Cambodia has increased overall since 2008, with some fluctuations.

¹⁵⁴ For trends in projected budget allocations to other sub-sectors, see Appendix IX.

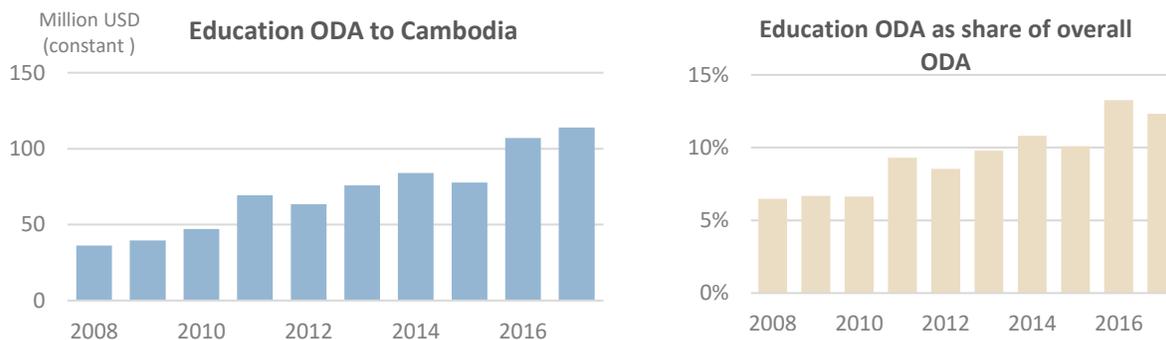
¹⁵⁵ Details on actual budget allocations for ECE and secondary and technical education outlined in Appendix IX.

¹⁵⁶ The majority of documents reviewed for this evaluation referenced budget allocations to recurrent expenditures in education as a share of the national budget (16.2 percent in 2014 and 17.8 percent in 2018) when reporting on domestic education financing in Cambodia, rather than total education expenditures as a share of total public expenditures. This was noted in the RESA, ESPIG applications and an EMIS pamphlet obtained during the country mission.

¹⁵⁷ GPE RF data shows a similar trend with minor differences: 9.4 percent in 2014, 11.2 percent in 2015 and 14.5 percent in 2016. There was no UNESCO UIS data on education expenditures as a share of total public expenditures for the period of review. Available UNESCO UIS data notes that education expenditures as a share of total public expenditures increased from 8.17 percent in 2009 to 9.6 percent in 2013.

¹⁵⁸ Along with education, the health, rural development, transportation sectors were also allocated 12 percent of the total projected costing of the NSDP 2014-2018. If we include the further four percent of the costing of the NSDP allocated to technical and vocational training (which is not included under “Education”), then the education sector received the highest projected allocation among all sectors at 16 percent (Source: Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. “National Strategic Development Plan 2014-2018”. No date. p. 209). The evaluation was not able to access data on budget allocations or expenditures during the review for other line ministries or sectors.

¹⁵⁹ Data on ODA inflows to Cambodia taken from OECD CRS data.

Figure 3.2 Education ODA to Cambodia, 2008-2017

Source: OECD CRS

100. Sources of ODA in Cambodia have comprised a mix of bilateral and multilateral support and the proportion of education ODA from bilateral donors (64 percent) and multilateral institutions (36 percent) remained the same over the period 2008-2017.¹⁶⁰ Key bilateral donors include Japan, France, Korea, Sweden and the USA; the key multilateral institutions that channel education aid to Cambodia include the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the EU, World Bank and the World Food Program (WFP). GPE financial contributions during the period 2014-2017 represented 7.5 percent of total education aid (see Finding 14). For the period 2014-2017, Japan and the ADB were the highest donors, both having contributed 14.6 percent of education ODA.¹⁶¹ A plausible reason for the increase in education ODA in 2015-2016 was the substantial increase of donor funding from the USA.¹⁶² USAID did not have education sector programming in Cambodia between 2014 and 2015, and increased its engagement in the sector in 2015 significantly through the All Children Reading-Cambodia project that began in 2017 (see Finding 17, Box 3.5).

101. Support to basic education has largely not kept pace with the observed growth in total education ODA.¹⁶³ While basic education ODA¹⁶⁴ increased in nominal terms overall from US\$16.2 million in 2008 to US\$20 million in 2017, the share of education ODA going to basic education decreased substantially from 44.7 percent to 17.5 percent between 2008 and 2017, although it increased between 2014-2017 (from US\$8.4 million to US\$20 million; 10 percent to 17.5 percent of total sector support).¹⁶⁵ This decrease in the past decade is likely due to increased investment from a variety of DPs to upper secondary education

¹⁶⁰ OECD CRS data indicates an approximate 64-36 split between bilateral and multilateral sources of funding for all education ODA for both the period of review (2014-2017) and the full period of data availability (2008-2017).

¹⁶¹ According to OECD CRS data, Japan and ADB contributions also represented the highest shares of total education ODA for the full period 2008-2017 (16.7 percent for Japan and 13.9 percent for the ADB).

¹⁶² OECD CRS data indicates that ODA funding from the USA increased from US\$1.1 million in 2015 to US\$13.4 million in 2016 and represents the most substantial increase from an individual bilateral donor during the review period.

¹⁶³ It should be noted that it is likely that OECD CRS data on education ODA inflows to Cambodia disaggregated by sub-sector are approximations, as this study notes the relatively high proportion of education ODA classified as “level unspecified.” For more details see Appendix IX.

¹⁶⁴ OECD’s definition of basic education only includes ECE, primary education and “basic life skills for youth and adults,” and as such differs from GPE’s definition of the term in that it does not include lower secondary education. OECD CRS data only provides information on secondary education as a whole and does not provided data specifically on lower secondary education.

¹⁶⁵ OECD CRS data. Basic education ODA was at its lowest, both in nominal terms and as a share of total education ODA, in 2014 throughout the period 2008-2017. The increase between 2014-2017 is possibly a result of USAID re-commencing investment in Cambodian education.

(such as the ADB), TVET (JICA, France) and higher education (KOICA, and most recently the World Bank via the Higher Education Investment Project).

102. Furthermore, documentary evidence suggests that external financing has traditionally funded the majority of capital expenditures in Cambodia, with available data on MoEYS budget allocations showing that external support was the only source of capital expenditures prior to 2015, and that MoEYS budget allocations to capital expenditures commenced in 2015 and increased during the remainder of the period of review.¹⁶⁶ Existing research suggests that there is a recurrent pattern of donor financing of pilot reforms, in which a pilot is scaled up and funded by the MoEYS following demonstrated evidence of the intervention's performance.¹⁶⁷

Finding 13: The MoEYS has engaged in efforts to improve the quality of domestic education financing, as part of broader cross-sector reforms. However, this has not been accompanied by improvements to the quality of education ODA in terms of greater aid alignment to national systems and increased harmonization of donor efforts.

103. Cambodia has engaged in a set of cross-sector Public Financial Management (PFM) reforms (see Box 3.5) and there is evidence of progress in the quality of domestic education financing in relation to increased budget execution rates and reduced leakages in fund transfers to schools:

- **Budget execution:** Despite an initial shortfall in the rate of budget execution between 2013 and 2014 (93.2 percent to 86.2 percent), MoEYS budget execution rates have increased since 2015, from 94.3 percent to 95.7 percent in 2018.¹⁶⁹ The initial decrease was likely a result of unfamiliarity with new PB procedures on the part of MoEYS personnel,¹⁷⁰ and interviews conducted

Box 3.5 Public Financial Management (PFM) Reforms in Cambodia

Introduced in 2005, PFM reforms are currently in their third phase of implementation. They represent a cross-sector effort to improve budget credibility, financial accountability, budget-policy linkages and performance-based budgeting. At the heart of the PFM reforms has been the full introduction of the Program Budget (PB) to 15 ministries, including the MoEYS. Key to the introduction of PB is the expansion of a programmatic approach to budgeting, as opposed to the previous practice of line budgeting.¹⁶⁸ As part of this reform, 39 national and 25 provincial budgeting entities were created by the MoEYS, each tasked with the preparation of their respective BSPs, to be consolidated into a national-level BSP.

¹⁶⁶ Available data on MoEYS budget allocations indicates that MoEYS allocated no resources to capital expenditures between 2011 and 2014. This is corroborated by existing research that indicates that the RGC began allocating budget for capital expenditures in 2015. Previously, capital expenditures had been funded exclusively by DPs (European Commission. "Evaluation of Budget Support in Cambodia 2011-2016 – Draft Evaluation Report". February 2018. p. 30).

¹⁶⁷ European Commission. "Evaluation of Budget Support in Cambodia 2011-2016 – Draft Evaluation Report". February 2018.p. 30

¹⁶⁸ Interviewed MoEYS stakeholders mentioned the MoEYS as having been one of 8 ministries in which the introduction of PB was piloted, and initially applied only partially, rather than to the full budget.

¹⁶⁹ Based on Congress reports 2014-2018, as well as reporting on CBIs from the final draft of the ESP 2019-2023.

¹⁷⁰ While this point was not mentioned by stakeholders interviewed for this evaluation, this was posited by an evaluation of EU budget support to Cambodia for 2011-2016, in which initial unfamiliarity with PB procedures and bureaucratic controls on the part of MoEYS personnel are cited as a key reason for the decline in budget execution

for this evaluation indicate that the introduction of PB procedures has since had an overall positive effect on budget execution.

- **Reduced leakage in, and overall increase of, fund transfers to schools:** The implementation of School Operational Budget (SOB) fund transfers via bank accounts since late 2014 has had a positive effect in creating a more streamlined process for the transfer of funds from the central to provincial level, and subsequently to school level. One central-level MoEYS staff, one PoE stakeholder and two school directors interviewed mentioned the positive effect the implementation of direct SOB transfers has had in reducing leakages caused by the previous system of physical transportation of funds from the central-level to schools.¹⁷¹ MoEYS budget allocations to SOBs increased both nominally and as a share of the allocations to recurrent expenditures between 2014 and 2019, from US\$12.7 million (2.5 percent) in 2016 to US\$32.6 million (4.4 percent) in 2019. Additionally, the average SOB per school increased between 2016 and 2019, from US\$1.02 million to US\$2.45 million.

104. Despite this progress, however, there are ongoing issues with the timely disbursement of funding to schools, and research suggests that this is due to procedural delays.¹⁷²

105. Overall, financial contributions of DPs have been made in a landscape of stand-alone projects, with the exception of direct budget support from the EU since 2011 and mixed modality funding from the ADB.¹⁷³ Another notable exception to this has been the CDPF, which stands as a multi-donor pooled fund comprised of the EU, Sida, USAID, GPE and UNICEF, and has aligned its support to Cambodia with its ESP and the CDMP. Although all DPs were found to be aligned with the ESP, the current mix of funding modalities does not signal a high degree of alignment of aid and use of national PFM systems.¹⁷⁴ A significant factor in the lack of donor alignment to national PFM systems in Cambodia is an overall lack of

between 2013 and 2014 (Source: European Commission. “Evaluation of Budget Support in Cambodia 2011-2016 – Draft Evaluation Report”. February 2018. p. 29).

¹⁷¹ This was also noted by a World Bank study on quality of Cambodian public expenditure, in which all of the PoEs and schools in the ten provinces sampled by the study reported receiving the full amount of SOB funds which were intended, indicating a significant lack of leakages in funds transferred to sampled schools (see The World Bank. “Cambodia Education Sector - Public Expenditure Tracking and Quality of Service Delivery Survey”. December 2018. p. 18-19).

¹⁷² The World Bank’s PETS study posits three reasons for delays in fund transfers to schools: (i) Ongoing familiarization with, and adjustments to, the full PB on the part of PoEs, causing delays in making funding requests to provincial treasuries; (ii) First-quarter of the year delays in budget request processes between the PoE and the MEF, as the PoE is required to wait for budget books and *prakas* from the MEF, as well as latest enrollment data from all schools in the province, before making funding requests; and (iii) Difficult and time-consuming processes for schools to make adjustments to the utilization of received SOB funds, due to rigidity in accounting of SOB allocation and the lack of allocation of funding which reflects specific school needs (e.g. schools which receive funding for electricity even if it is not connected to a grid, and the subsequent difficulty in channeling funding towards other needs).

¹⁷³ Out of the US\$46 million for ADB’s Upper Secondary Education Sector Development Program (USESDP), US\$15 million was channeled to direct budget support and US\$30 million was allocated towards a loan for project investment. The remaining US\$1 million was allocated for technical assistance (Source: Asian Development Bank. “Concept Paper - Proposed Loans and Technical Assistance Grant Cambodia: Upper Secondary Education Sector Development Program”. July 2016. p.3).

¹⁷⁴ A GPE working paper on aid effectiveness in Cambodian education in 2010 notes a substantially lower-than-median use of country PFM systems among DPs (rating of 4 percent in Cambodia versus the median result of 29 percent among GPE countries), suggesting that the low degree of alignment of education aid to national PFM systems is a long-running issue (see Global Partnership for Education. “Cambodia: Aid Effectiveness in the Education Sector”. April 2012, pp. 4-5).

demand from the MoEYS and DPs at large for a shift towards such alignment. Possible reasons for this are discussed in Finding 14.

GPE contributions to sector financing

Finding 14: GPE financial support has enabled the MoEYS to make investments in certain sub-sectors, but it has had limited effects on the overall resources available for education sector and on the quality of international finance for the sector.

106. GPE has provided a series of financial and non-financial mechanisms to contribute to the volume and quality of education sector financing. Table 3.13 provides an overview of these mechanisms, grouped by whether they have made a significant, moderately significant or insignificant contribution to sector financing in Cambodia. This grouping is indicative and does not constitute a formal score.

Table 3.13 *GPE provided significant financial resources, but did not leverage any additional financing*

SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTION TO DOMESTIC FINANCING	SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTION TO INTERNATIONAL FINANCING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> n/a 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> n/a
MODERATE CONTRIBUTION TO DOMESTIC FINANCING	MODERATE CONTRIBUTION TO INTERNATIONAL FINANCING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GPE advocacy (global-level): At the February 2018 Dakar Conference for GPE’s 2018-2020 replenishment campaign, Cambodia pledged to moderately increase domestic education financing as share of total public expenditure from 12.2 percent in 2016 to 13.8 percent in 2019 and subsequently 14.4 percent in 2020.¹⁷⁵ Although there is no evidence of a direct influence of the pledge, MoEYS data suggests that the target of 13.2 percent of education financing as a share total public expenditure in 2018 was achieved.¹⁷⁶ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ESPIG funding support financed 1.2 percent¹⁷⁷ of total ESP costs between 2014-2018,¹⁷⁸ representing 7.5 percent of all education ODA and 31.9 percent of total basic education ODA for the period 2014-2017.¹⁷⁹ However, GPE support has declined in relative terms between 2014 and 2017: ESPIG financing represented 8.4 percent of total education ODA and 48 percent of basic education ODA in 2014, decreasing consistently to 6.3 percent of total education ODA and 27.8 percent of basic education ODA in 2017.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁵ Global Partnership for Education (GPE). “GPE Replenishment Pledge for Cambodia for 2017-2020.”

¹⁷⁶ The MoEYS budget (including capital and recurrent expenditures) as a share of total public expenditure for 2018 was 14.8 percent. This does not include education-related expenditure from other line ministries, e.g. Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training.

¹⁷⁷ US\$36 million out of US\$3.12 billion

¹⁷⁸ Estimated ESPIG funding for the period 2014-2018 was calculated by using the full GPE2 ESPIG amount and a quarter of the GPE3 ESPIG (including both fixed and variable tranche amounts) to obtain an estimate for the first year of its implementation, i.e., 2018. ESP costs include the estimated ESP requirements for 2014 and 2015, as per the ESP 2014-2018, and estimates for 2016-2018, as per the MTR report.

¹⁷⁹ Data on ESPIG contributions relative to overall ODA to basic education ODA is calculated based on OECD CRS data.

¹⁸⁰ ESPIG funding as a share of ESP costs also decreased for the period 2014-2018, from 1.7 percent in 2014 to 0.65 percent in 2018.

MODERATE CONTRIBUTION TO DOMESTIC FINANCING	MODERATE CONTRIBUTION TO INTERNATIONAL FINANCING
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GPE3 funding modality (variable tranche): The variable tranche of the GPE3 ESPIG (2018-2021) was made via the CDPF as a pooled funding mechanism. This represents a positive shift in line with aid effectiveness principles, and away from stand-alone project support. Initial efforts were also made during ESPIG formulation towards funding the fixed tranche through a pooled funding mechanism, though this did not materialize.
LIMITED CONTRIBUTION OR LACK OF EVIDENCE ON CONTRIBUTION TO DOMESTIC FINANCING	LIMITED CONTRIBUTION OR LACK OF EVIDENCE ON CONTRIBUTION TO INTERNATIONAL FINANCING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESPIG funding requirements: GPE requires countries to meet or move towards meeting the 20 percent target and to commit to funding their ESP. Education sector financing as a share of total public expenditures has increased during the review period, although it remains below the 20 percent target. Interviewed stakeholders did not mention ESPIG funding requirements as an important motivation for increases in domestic education financing. • GPE support for sector planning: There are no indications that the ESP 2014-2018, or the MTR, better enabled MoEYS officials to advocate the MEF for increased funding. • CSEF grant supported the NEP, which was involved in the policy reform process with regard to direct transfer of SOB funds and teacher salaries via bank accounts.¹⁸¹ This was not brought up by MoEYS or other DP stakeholders. The CSEF grant was not aimed at advocating for additional domestic financing for education in Cambodia and had no effect in this regard. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESPIG modality did not support improved quality of international financing: ESPIGs as part of GPE1, GPE2, and the fixed tranche of GPE3, were made as stand-alone project investments.¹⁸² • GPE advocacy for donor alignment with country systems: BTORs from 2016 and 2018 note that CL meetings with minister of education raised questions about the possibility for increased alignment of external aid with national PFM systems in the future. The minister of education has expressed a preference for existing arrangement (see paragraph 110). • GPE support for sector planning: no consulted development partners indicated that the added quality in sector planning by the RESA (funded by an ESPDG in 2016) had influenced funding decisions. • GPE multiplier: GPE’s multiplier mechanism was not used in Cambodia during the review period, despite Cambodia’s eligibility. While stakeholders who were aware of the mechanism viewed it as a potential avenue for increased funding, these stakeholders also mentioned that they did not yet understand how the mechanism works.

107. GPE appears to have not made any detectable contributions to leveraging additional domestic financing in Cambodia during the review period, either through its advocacy efforts or ESPIG funding requirements. RGC commitments to targets outlined during GPE’s 2018-2020 replenishment campaign, and ESPIG requirements for progress towards the 20 percent target of education expenditure, may have played a role in increased domestic financing for education in Cambodia. However, stakeholders interviewed did not mention these as critical factors for the increase in domestic education financing seen since 2014, but instead highlighted two main reasons : (i) a cross-sectoral, government decision taken in

¹⁸¹ According to a case study of the NEP as part of an evaluation of the CSEF 2013-2015, the NEP is posited to have played a role in these reform processes through its participation in ESWG and JTWG meetings.

¹⁸² GPE’s system alignment criteria including the 10 elements of alignment captured by RF indicator 29. The GPE2 ESPIG (2014-2017) was scored as “not aligned” overall, as 5 out of the 10 elements were scored as “aligned,” below the threshold of 7 to be classified as “aligned” overall (GPE RF 2017-2019 data).

2014 to increase salaries for public sector employees, including teachers; and (ii) ability of the MoEYS to demonstrate results and high rates of budget execution to the MEF to make the case for increased budget allocations to education (more details below).

108. There is little evidence that GPE has made a contribution to increased quality of international financing, and DP financial contributions to Cambodia tend to be made as stand-alone projects; this landscape has not changed much over the years. Despite efforts by the CL to advocate for increased donor alignment with country systems, there has been little demand for such alignment from DPs and the MoEYS (see below). While the variable tranche of the ESPIG 2018-2021 is financed through the pooled funding mechanism of the CDPF, there is no evidence that GPE's participation in the CDPF has resulted in increased donor harmonization in education financing overall, and it is likely too early to assess GPE's contributions to the mechanism.

Additional factors beyond GPE support

109. Additional **positive** factors contributing to domestic financing beyond GPE support include:

- **A cross-sectoral plan to raise salaries of civil servants**, which was announced in 2014 and subsequently put into action. While education staff were but one of the categories of civil servants awarded with salary raises, an evaluation of EU budget support in Cambodia suggests that the increase in the wage bill of the MoEYS was greater than other social sectors.¹⁸³
- **The ability of the MoEYS to demonstrate results and high rates of budget execution to the MEF** was noted by five interviewed stakeholders as one of the significant advantages of the Ministry compared to other sectors in Cambodia, and there is an overall perception that the MEF is highly results-focused in its decision-making on national budget allocation. The MEF itself has highlighted the MoEYS track record in this regard.¹⁸⁴

110. Two **negative** factors which limited the quality of financing include:

- **An overall lack of demand for increased alignment of external financing to national systems**, on the part of the MoEYS and DPs, was mentioned by two interviewed stakeholders and in a 2018 back-to-office report.¹⁸⁵ One possible reason for this lack of demand is that having access to donor funding as a separate line of finance allows the MoEYS to reserve and secure capital funding, as opposed to channeling external funding through national PFM systems, which places the disbursement of education ODA under the scrutiny of the MEF. Furthermore, there are no strong preferences for certain ODA funding modality (see Box 3.6), given the significant need for programming/operational resources in ministry and the importance of external financing in this regard.

Box 3.6 “Regardless if the cat is black or white, it still catches mice.”

– MoEYS stakeholder's reflection on government preferences (or lack thereof) for one donor funding modality over another.

¹⁸³ See European Commission. “Evaluation of Budget Support in Cambodia 2011-2016 – Draft Evaluation Report”. February 2018. p. 29. A news article further suggests that teachers were the first set of civil servants to be awarded salary raises as part of the cross-sectoral plan in September 2014, and in further incremental phases between January and April 2015. Health sector wage increases were still in planning at the time of the announcement of the salary raises (See Sovuthy, “Hun Sen Announces Raises for Teachers, Nurses,” 2014).

¹⁸⁴ See MEF-MOEYS Budget Meeting Minutes, September 17 2018.

¹⁸⁵ In response to CL advocacy for increased alignment of external aid with national PFM systems, the Minister of Education expressed a preference for the existing arrangement in which the RGC leads the definition of overarching policies and strategies for the sector, while DPs provide direct support for the implementation of services.

- **DP-specific reasons for lack of strengthening aid harmonization:** Donors interviewed mostly cited their own internal regulations as reasons for not being able to participate in current pooled funding or budget support arrangements in the education sector in Cambodia.

Unintended negative/unplanned positive effects of GPE support

111. In Cambodia, the results-based financing mechanism of the variable tranche had the unplanned positive effect of compelling both the MoEYS and DPs to channel GPE funds through a pooled funding mechanism (CDPF). CDPF was the only way that they could ensure up-front funding for the MoEYS delivery of planned activities, which would then be reimbursed by GPE grant funding once results are achieved.

112. There is no evidence that GPE support displaced either domestic or international financing.

Implications for GPE's ToC and country-level operational model

Finding 15: GPE's advocacy role on education sector finance has been limited in Cambodia given the strong leadership of MoEYS, and RGC political commitment, to increase domestic funding for the sector and welcome all types of funding.

113. Only one of the two assumptions regarding sector financing underlying the GPE country-level ToC (Appendix II) held in the context of Cambodia during the 2014-2019 review period. The first assumption (1) that GPE has sufficient leverage to influence the amount and quality of *domestic* education sector financing was found to **not hold true**, as GPE had no observable leverage and little effect in supporting MoEYS' advocacy for increased domestic allocations from the MEF. Despite Cambodia's relatively low levels of education sector budget allocations as a share of national public expenditures (14.2 percent in 2019), there have been steady increases during the review period, suggesting that the country is slowly moving to the 20 percent target established by GPE.

114. The second assumption (2) that external (contextual) factors permit national and international stakeholders to increase/improve the quantity and quality of sector financing was found to be partially true. Cambodia has a track record of receiving education ODA, and the reform-orientation of the MoEYS under its current minister is likely to play an enabling role in sustained or increased volumes of education ODA in the foreseeable future. External ODA has, for most of the review period, been critical for filling the gap in available resources for capital expenditures even though domestic allocations for capital expenditures have also steadily increased since 2015.

115. As noted in Finding 14, however, the lack of demand from the MoEYS or DPs for increased alignment of donor funding with national PFM systems also limits the GPE Secretariat's ability to advocate for such alignment. Furthermore, the stand-alone project funding modality of GPE2 and the GPE3 fixed tranche has not helped to directly improve harmonization of financing among donors in Cambodia. The LEG decision to use the CDPF as the funding mechanism for the variable tranche of the most recent ESPIG, is notable, however, and represents a step towards increased harmonization of donor efforts. MoEYS gives less importance to the type of funding received (whether pooled funding, budget support or stand-alone projects) and more importance to increasing overall level of resources available to implement its reform initiatives on the ground.

3.5 GPE contributions to sector plan implementation

116. This section addresses the following evaluation questions:
- What have been the strengths and weaknesses of sector plan implementation during the review period? What are likely reasons for strong/weak sector plan implementation? (CEQ 1.3)
 - Has GPE contributed to the observed characteristics of sector plan implementation? If so, then how? If not, why? (CEQ 1.4) Has GPE support had any unintended effects, positive or negative? (CEQ 3.2)
 - What factors other than GPE support are likely to have contributed to the observed characteristics of sector plan implementation? (CEQ 3.1)
 - What are implications of evaluation findings for GPE support to Cambodia? (Key Question IV)
117. A high-level overview of evaluation findings on sector plan implementation is provided in Table 3.14. These observations are elaborated on in the findings and supporting evidence presented below.

Table 3.14 Overview: CLE findings on sector plan implementation and related GPE contributions

PROGRESS MADE TOWARDS SECTOR PLAN IMPLEMENTATION	DEGREE OF GPE CONTRIBUTION	DEGREE TO WHICH UNDERLYING ASSUMPTIONS LIKELY HELD TRUE ¹⁸⁶					
		1	2	3	4	5	6
<p>Modest. Despite the absence of a comprehensive assessment of ESP implementation, more than half of the activities of the ESP 2014-2018 were implemented as planned.</p> <p>No final assessment of the plan was undertaken.</p>	<p>Modest. GPE's ESPIG supported delivery of certain components of ESP 2014-2018. Evidence suggests that GPE contributions were concentrated in the construction of preschools and the funding of primary and lower secondary scholarships.</p>						

Strengths and weaknesses of sector plan implementation

Finding 16: While there is no comprehensive assessment of ESP implementation, this evaluation estimates that at least half of the activities of the ESP 2014-2018 were implemented as planned by MoEYS.

118. The overall lack of systematic tracking of the achievement of activity- or output-level targets, and the lack of an end-of-cycle review, limited the evaluation's ability to *comprehensively* assess which areas of the sector plan were more/less successfully achieved. As noted in Section 3.3, the monitoring arrangements of the ESP 2014-2018 track the implementation of policy actions and AOPs, as well as the education sector's implementation of ongoing, cross-sectoral PFM and D&D reforms. Information on the implementation of AOPs provided in Annual Education Congress reports shows that approximately 75

¹⁸⁶ For sector plan implementation, the six underlying assumptions in the country level ToC were: (1) Relevant government actors have the *motivation* to implement the sector plan; (2) government actors have the *opportunity* (resources, time, conducive environment) to implement the plan; (3) government actors have the technical *capabilities* to do so; (4) country level stakeholders have the motivation and opportunity to align their own activities with the priorities of the ESP; (5) country level stakeholders take part in regular, evidence based joint sector reviews and apply resulting recommendations to enhance ESP implementation; and (6) the sector plan includes provisions for strengthening EMIS and LAS to produce timely, relevant and reliable data.

percent of activities planned for each year between 2014 and 2018 were completed (with the exception of 2016, in which 84 percent were completed). There are two factors that should be considered in reviewing overall progress:

- **Lack of measurable output indicators with targets:** As mentioned in Section 3.3, the implementation of a significant proportion of activities included in the ESP 2014-2018 logframe and the AOPs was not measured through quantifiable indicators, which limits the evaluation's ability to precisely assess the extent to which the number of activities completed met their respective targets. Therefore, reporting is primarily at the activity level and does not really illustrate the state of progress. Some indicators, included as sub-sector outcome indicators in Annual Education Congress reports, however, were able to provide more specific measures of delivery of outputs and whether or not these met specified annual targets.¹⁸⁷
- **Lower rate of completion of policy actions:** Based on a review of progress in the implementation of policy actions,¹⁸⁸ as reported in Congress reports and the MTR report, across the first two years of the ESP 2014-2018 and the second two years after the MTR, 55.9 percent of the policy actions planned for 2014 and 2015 were completed by 2015, while 31.3 percent of policy actions planned for 2016 and 2017 were completed by the end of 2017.¹⁸⁹ Policy actions constituted some of the key sectoral achievements observed during the review period (e.g. the adoption of the TPAP, the development of new curriculum frameworks for pre-primary to secondary levels of education, among others), yet their rates of completion are substantially lower than the rate of completion of planned activities within the AOPs. While the evaluation did not find any definitive reasons to explain why policy actions were completed at a lower rate, plausible reasons may include that policy changes in general take time and require significant consultation across departments.

119. Based on the judgment of the evaluation team, and in light of the factors noted above, slightly more than half of the ESP's intended activities were implemented as planned. This rate of implementation is likely an indication of the ambitious nature of the sector plan, which includes numerous activities/actions that reflect reform priorities; existing limitations in implementation capacities in MoEYS technical departments (see Finding 19 for more details); and the challenges in identifying overall completion due to the lack of systematic tracking of the achievement of activity- or output-level targets.

120. There has been progress towards the intended results of the ESP. Targets for six out of 10 Core Breakthrough Indicators (CBIs) were achieved by 2018, and targets for 45 out of 87 sub-sector indicators were achieved by 2018 (see details in Appendix VII). Table 3.15 provides an overview of key planned ESP interventions that were achieved, partially achieved and not achieved in the review period, in addition to

¹⁸⁷ Examples include: the number of primary school students receiving scholarships (Primary Education sub-sector Indicator 11), number of teachers receiving CPD-guided in-service training (Primary Education sub-sector indicator 14; Secondary and Technical Education sub-sector indicator 14), number of participants who completed skill trainings (Non-Formal Education sub-sector Indicator 5), among others.

¹⁸⁸ Policy actions, as per the ESP 2014-2018, include a variety of activities related to preparation for reform (i.e. procedural changes, policy commitments, setting of policy frameworks) across all seven sub-sectors. These activities largely include the preparation of guidelines, action plans, standards, regulations, policies, and operational manuals. Some specific examples include: "Prepare a regulation and mechanism on career counseling at schools," "Prepare a guideline on regular classroom evaluation," "Develop action plan for strengthening equivalent program."

¹⁸⁹ According to the zero draft on the Education Congress report 2019 (p. 23), of the 25 policy actions planned for 2018, four were completed (16%), while 16 were ongoing (64%) and five not implemented (20%).

key achievements during the policy cycle that were aligned with ESP objectives but not explicitly included in the ESP.

Table 3.15 Review period achievements against available ESP 2014-2018 activity-level targets¹⁹⁰

EQUITABLE ACCESS (ESP 2014-2018 Policy 1: Ensuring equitable access to education services)	QUALITY (ESP 2014-2018 Policy 2: Improving quality and efficiency of educational services) ¹⁹¹	MANAGEMENT (ESP 2014-2018 Policy 3: Institutional and capacity development for educational staff for decentralization) ¹⁹²
KEY ESP ACTIVITY TARGETS THAT WERE ACHIEVED BY 2018		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy development: Approval of <i>Policy on Inclusive Education</i> (2018) • Construction (preschools): 500 community preschools constructed between 2014 and 2017;¹⁹³ Net increase of 858 state preschools for period 2014-2018 (from 3443 to 4301).¹⁹⁴ • Construction (upper secondary): Increase of 23 lycées¹⁹⁵ in 2016 (463 to 486 schools), met MTR report target of 23 constructed upper secondary schools for 2016. Total number of lycées in 2018 was 525. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development and approval of Teacher Policy Action Plan (TPAP): TPAP approved in January 2015. • Curriculum: Adoption of curriculum framework in 2016 for ECE, primary and secondary education (both lower and upper). Development of syllabi for all subjects from grade 1 to 9 by 2017; syllabi development for all subjects for grades 10 to 12 were reported as 85% achieved in 2017. • Grade 12 examination reform: Introduced in 2014 to improve the administration of Grade 12 examinations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy development: Approval of <i>Policy Framework on Teacher Career Pathways</i> and <i>Policy on Continuous Professional Development for Education Staff</i>. • PFM reforms: Direct bank transfers to pay teachers' salaries and school operational budgets (SOBs) introduced in 2015; Introduction of program budgeting (PB) in 2015. • School directors trained in School-Based Management (SBM): 948 school directors, 752 school directors, and 705 school directors received training in 2016, 2017 and 2018 respectively; annual targets of

¹⁹⁰ Data in this table was collected from Congress Reports 2015-2018, the zero draft Congress Report 2019, and the ESP Final draft 2019-2023.

¹⁹¹ Following the MTR 2016, Policies 1 and 2 of the ESP 2014-2018 were consolidated into a single policy: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

¹⁹² ESP 2014-2018 Policy 3 was re-worded in the MTR 2016 report as: Ensuring effective leadership and management of education staff at all levels.

¹⁹³ Education Congress reports for 2015 notes that the MoEYS identified the 500 locations for the construction of community preschools, while the Congress report for 2016 notes that 101 of the community preschools had been constructed by that year. The planned construction of all 500 community preschools is confirmed in the ESPIG 2013 completion report (The World Bank. "Implementation Completion and Results Report on a Global Partnership for Education Grant in the Amount of US\$38.5 Million to the Royal Government of Cambodia for the Cambodia Global Partnership for Education Second Education Support". January 2018.p. 47).

¹⁹⁴ It is not clear from Congress reports or EMIS data whether all additional state preschools were a result of construction or through the conversion of community preschools to state preschools. Information is only provided for the number of preschools per year, rather than the number of preschools constructed per year.

¹⁹⁵ According to EMIS data, lycées are in two forms: lycées that cover Grades 7-12, and lycées that cover Grades 10-12. The increase of 23 lycées noted here includes both categories.

KEY ESP ACTIVITY TARGETS THAT WERE ACHIEVED BY 2018

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|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scholarships (primary): National scholarship framework for primary education developed in 2016; Number of primary students who received scholarships increased from 75,000 to 96,507 between 2015 and 2018, meeting annual targets of 75,000. • Scholarships (secondary): Number of lower secondary students who received scholarships increased from 69,514 to 72,418 for 2016-2018, meeting annual targets of 60,000 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher Education Colleges (TECs): Transformation of 2 provincial TTCs (Phnom Penh and Battambang) into teacher education colleges. • Teacher training: 1,611 primary teachers and 2,399 secondary teachers received in-service, CPD-guided training in 2018, meeting the 2017 target of 1,500.¹⁹⁶ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 500 trained school directors met. |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

KEY ESP ACTIVITY TARGETS THAT WERE PARTIALLY, OR NOT ACHIEVED BY 2018

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|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction (primary schools): Net increase of 177 public primary schools from 2014 to 2018 (7,051 to 7,228). The increase of 45 schools in 2017 was below the MTR report target of 70 additional schools to be constructed in 2017 (no targets available for 2014-2016). • Construction (lower secondary schools): Increase of 17 public schools covering Grades 7-9 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher qualification: Training for teachers to upgrade their qualifications according to 12+4¹⁹⁷ formula is noted as 'to be implemented' in 2018, no data on progress for 2014-2017.¹⁹⁸ • Learning assessments: Program for International Student Assessment for Development (PISA-D) piloted in 56 schools; no evidence to suggest that MTR | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher deployment: 62 teachers redeployed from schools with teacher surplus to schools facing shortages in 2017, short of target of 100.¹⁹⁹ • Inspection: Total of 73 new education inspectors trained (target 32) and 89 existing inspectors trained (target 52) in 2016-2017, meeting MTR report targets. However, no data was found in relation to other MTR report targets on delivery of |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

¹⁹⁶ The number of primary and secondary teachers receiving such training each year increased from 2016 and met the annual target of 500 teachers each for that year (1492 primary teachers and 698 secondary teachers). Additionally, the number of pre-primary teachers receiving such training each year increased from 152 to 199 between 2016 and 2017, falling just short of the target of 200 teachers for both years.

¹⁹⁷ The terms 12+4 and 12+2 formulae are commonly used by education stakeholders in Cambodia and in documents to refer to the level of qualifications of teachers. 12+4 refers to 12 years of general education and a bachelor's degree, while 12+2 refers to 12 years of general education and completion of a two-year teacher training course.

¹⁹⁸ No data provided in Congress reports on sub-sector indicators for numbers of pre-primary, primary and lower secondary teachers receiving such training, except for "implemented in 2018" (see for example, Institute of Technology of Cambodia. "Education Congress Report- Education, Youth and Sport for School Year 2016-2017 and Objectives for the next school year 2017-2018". March 2018. p. 31).

¹⁹⁹ 42 and 94 teachers were redeployed from schools with a surplus of teachers to schools with shortages for 2015 and 2016 respectively. Data from Congress reports do not provide any information on targets for those years.

KEY ESP ACTIVITY TARGETS THAT WERE PARTIALLY, OR NOT ACHIEVED BY 2018		
(both colleges and lycées) ²⁰⁰ in 2017 (lower than MTR report target of 100 schools). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Learning Centers (CLCs): Despite increase from 348 to 356 CLCs between 2014 and 2018, consistently below targets for those years (target of 367 CLCs by 2018). 	report targets in relation to EGRA, EGMA, or assessments for Grades 3, 6 and 8 Khmer, math and science were met. ²⁰¹	inspections to teachers, principals and schools.
KEY ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN IN THE REVIEW PERIOD THAT WERE NOT IN THE ESP		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher Training Centre: Establishment of National Institute of Special Education (not in target) 		

121. As noted in Section 3.4, the ESP was funded adequately overall, based on an examination of the projected ESP funding requirements (as per both the ESP 2014-2018 and the MTR) in terms of actual financial resources available. Although actual annual financing gaps for the ESP were low in general, interviewed stakeholders noted specific gaps in financing, rather than an overarching, system-wide lack of financing, such as those in relation to: the development/revision of textbooks (mentioned by three stakeholders); the development and rollout of an EMIS online data collection tool (mentioned by two stakeholders); the roll-out of teacher training according to a 12+4 formula in TTCs (mentioned by three stakeholders); and conducting school inspections (mentioned by four stakeholders).

GPE contributions to sector plan implementation

Finding 17: The Second Education Sector Support Project (SESSP), known as GPE2, was aligned with the ESP 2014-2018 and largely implemented as planned, achieving almost all of its output-level and PDO targets. The extent to which its activities were subsequently continued or scaled-up by the MoEYS varies.

122. GPE's US\$38.5 million ESPIG 2014-2017 funded the Second Education Sector Support Project (SESSP/GPE2) in Cambodia. As noted in the GPE2 completion report, the project is "in line with the government's ESP,"²⁰² and the project design aligns with the three policies of the ESP 2014-2018 in its

²⁰⁰ According to EMIS data, colleges cover Grades 7-9, while lycées can cover either Grades 7-12 or Grades 10-12. The increase of 17 schools noted here includes colleges as well as lycées which cover Grades 7-12.

²⁰¹ This is due to a combination of a lack of clear, measurable targets within a timeframe set in the MTR with regard to learning assessments (see Global Partnership for Education. "Endorsement of Cambodia's Education Strategic Plan 2014 – 2018 Mid-Term Review for submission to the Global Partnership for Education Secretariat". Letter to Ministry of Education Youth and Sports. Washington DC, 12 December 2016. p. 126), and an overall lack of data on the delivery of learning assessments. CBI 5 "National learning assessment of students at grade 3, in Khmer and Math subjects" only shows data for 2014 (35.3% and 41% of grade 3 students participated in national assessments for Khmer reading and math respectively), while "Implement in SY2019-20" is noted (see Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. "Final Draft Education Strategic Plan 2019-2023". Kingdom of Cambodia. April 2019. p.2).

²⁰² The World Bank. "Implementation Completion and Results Report on a Global Partnership for Education Grant in the Amount of US\$38.5 Million to the Royal Government of Cambodia for the Cambodia Global Partnership for Education Second Education Support". January 2018.

focus on equitable access, quality and relevance of learning, and effective leadership and management.²⁰³ Additionally, the three project development objectives (PDOs)²⁰⁴ and their corresponding indicators are noted in the GPE2 completion report as designed to contribute to the achievement of the ESP's CBIs, specifically: rate of enrolment of 5 year-old children in ECE; number of provinces with lower secondary completion rate of at least 40 percent; and the delivery of national learning assessments for Grade 3 students for Khmer and mathematics. GPE2 was designed concurrently with the development of the ESP, and the project was positioned to fill projected gaps in implementation of the sector plan on the part of the MoEYS.

123. GPE2 consisted of four components (Component 1: Improving the access and educational experience of vulnerable and disadvantaged students; Component 2: Benchmarking Student Competencies; Component 3: Improving Cambodia's Teaching Force; and Component 4: System Strengthening and M&E), each with two corresponding sub-components. GPE2 is characterized by:

- **Focus areas:** GPE 2 supported the implementation of ESP activities under each of its three overarching policies, including access (through school construction and financing national primary and lower secondary scholarship programs), quality and relevance of learning (through support for administration of national assessments for grades 3, 6, 8 and 11, as well as EGRA and EGMA), and sector management (at school level through training school principals on teacher management and school planning, and at system level through support for development of a unified sub-sector monitoring system and the development of an electronic student tracking system to replace paper-based student record keeping practices). The SESSP/GPE2 also supported the expansion of Cambodia's school health program through the training for and the delivery of Grade 1 physical health check-ups, and vision and hearing screenings.
- **Budget:** GPE2 funds were disbursed mostly to Component 1 (ECE and basic education access, US\$21.5 million), followed by Component 4 (system strengthening and M&E, US\$9.9 million), then Component 2 (EGRA, EGMA and national assessments, US\$5.2 million) and, finally, Component 3 (teacher and school principal training, US\$1.8 million). At project closing, 99.7 percent of the project's budget had been disbursed.
- **Performance:** According to the GPE2 completion report, the project achieved all of its PDO targets and all except one of its intermediate targets.²⁰⁵ All targets for outputs were also met, notably: number of students receiving project-financed scholarships; number of teachers completing training on vision and hearing screening; rollout of EGMA and national assessment for Grades 3, 6, and 8; number of school principals receiving leadership training; and number of provinces implementing unified early childhood and primary education sub-sector monitoring systems. Also of note, 500 community preschools and 76 state preschools were constructed as part of GPE2. Detailed ESPIG achievements are outlined in Appendix IX.

124. Available project documentation suggests the following reasons for the project's suggested high level of performance: (i) GPE2 built on the Education Sector Support Scale-Up Action Program (ESSUAP),

²⁰³ The alignment of the SESSP/GPE2 to the ESP 2014-2018 is also outlined in the ESPIG application, p. 12.

²⁰⁴ SESSP/GPE2 PDOs were: (i) expand access to ECE for 3-5 year olds; and (ii) contribute to improved access to and quality of basic education, particularly for those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

²⁰⁵ The only intermediate target which was not achieved by the SESSP/GPE2 was the "enrollment ratio of children aged 5 in the urban and rural districts where 100 new formal and 1000 community-based preschool facilities," which was measured at 67.98 percent in 2017, short of its target of 71 percent.

which was implemented by an EFA-FTI grant (i.e. GPE1), and integrated lessons learned in the design of its activities;²⁰⁶ (ii) related to the previous point, GPE2 used the same implementation arrangements of the ESSUAP, retaining members of the Project Management Committee and the Project Management Team across both projects; and (iii) high levels of commitment and ownership of project activities on the part of MoEYS, seen especially in the full adoption of the project's scholarship program and the expansion of the project's work on community preschool construction.²⁰⁷

125. Despite the strong performance of GPE2 indicated by the project completion report, the extent to which project activities have been continued or scaled-up by the MoEYS varies. As noted in Finding 18, the evaluation found that GPE2's activities in utilizing a community construction model and in expanding primary and lower secondary scholarships were subsequently taken on by the RGC and scaled up by the MoEYS. There was less evidence that GPE2's activities in relation to learning assessments (including EGRA and EGMA), Grade 1 physical health check-ups, low vision and hearing screening tools, and sub-sectoral M&E systems were subsequently used or scaled-up by the MoEYS. While some progress has been made in conducting national learning assessments, stakeholders noted ongoing work on harmonizing various donor-supported efforts, especially for EGRA (see Section 3.3). The identification of disabilities remains a key challenge for access to education for children with disabilities, to some extent due to the continued lack of comprehensive, coherent screening tools. M&E systems developed as part of GPE2 were not subsequently used in some sub-sectors (non-formal and pre-primary), due to a lack of financial resources.²⁰⁸

Finding 18: GPE contributions to ESP implementation have principally been through GPE2 and were concentrated in the construction of preschools and the funding of primary and lower secondary scholarships.

126. GPE used financial and non-financial mechanisms to support sector plan implementation. Table 3.16 provides an overview of these mechanisms, grouped by whether they are likely to have made a significant, moderately significant or insignificant contribution to plan implementation in Cambodia. This grouping does not constitute a formal score.

²⁰⁶ As per the SESSP/GPE2's completion report (The World Bank. "Implementation Completion and Results Report on a Global Partnership for Education Grant in the Amount of US\$38.5 Million to the Royal Government of Cambodia for the Cambodia Global Partnership for Education Second Education Support". January 2018. p. 24), the SESSP/GPE2 integrated lessons learned from ESSUAP in the following ways: (i) granting of scholarships based on poverty and merit, rather than only on poverty, and the utilization of questionnaires by local scholarship support for a systematic method of selecting scholarship recipients based on experiences from ESSUAP's pilot scholarship programs; (ii) an emphasis on classroom construction in community preschools, following the ESSUAP impact evaluation finding that community preschools built were not sustainable due to continued lack of classrooms; (iii) the inclusion of a vision and hearing screening program in the SESSP/GPE2, following a study conducted as part of ESSUAP, finding that cognitive impairment was a key cause for student dropout; and (iv) the continuation of rolling out EGRA following its successful piloting under ESSUAP.

²⁰⁷ The MoEYS is reported as having been active in mainstreaming SESSP/GPE2 activities into sector operations, making financial commitments and ensuring regulations to facilitate the implementation of SESSP/GPE2 activities were in place (Source: Project completion report, p. 25). Notably, the MoEYS formalized sub-decrees on primary and lower secondary scholarships (Sub-Decree 34) and community preschool management (Sub-Decree 245) during the ESPIG implementation period 2014-2017.

²⁰⁸ While GPE2 planned to design M&E systems for pre-primary and primary education sub-sectors, the non-formal education sub-sector was also included during project implementation.

Table 3.16 GPE contributions to sector plan implementation during the 2014-2019 review period

SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTION TO SECTOR PLAN IMPLEMENTATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESPIG support to ESP 2014-2018: The project funded by GPE's ESPIG, the SESSP/GPE2, was aligned with the ESP 2014-2018 and supported key initiatives of the plan. Both interviews and documentary evidence suggest that GPE contributions were most visible in the construction of preschools and expansion of primary and secondary scholarships, which have been scaled-up and continued by the MoEYS.
MODERATE CONTRIBUTION TO SECTOR PLAN IMPLEMENTATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESPIG share of ESP funding: GPE's US\$38.5 million ESPIG contributed approximately 1.2 percent of estimated ESP costs for the 2014-2017 period (roughly US\$3.1 billion),²⁰⁹ representing 7.5 percent of all education ODA and 31.9 percent of basic education ODA for the same period.²¹⁰ • ESPIG support to sector data: Government stakeholders highlighted the value of GPE contributions in the piloting of EGRA and EGMA in five provinces and in the implementation of learning assessments at Grades 3, 6 and 8. However, the extent to which this has been scaled-up since the completion of the SESSP/GPE2 is likely low, as seen in the continued lack of a national assessment system and ongoing efforts to harmonize various donor-supported efforts in relation to learning assessments. • ESPIG support to strengthening plan implementation capacities: Interview data suggest that the utilization of the unified M&E system for the primary and lower secondary sub-sectors (subsequently including non-formal education) developed as part of the SESSP/GPE2 was mixed, due to financial constraints following completion of the SESSP/GPE2. • Joint sector reviews: Action plans developed after annual Congress meetings and joint ESR missions outline recommendations for activities to be implemented for the following year, with deadlines and responsible MoEYS departments. ESR aide memoires also report on progress on recommendations of previous year. However, joint ESR missions were discontinued in 2017, as well as the action plans.
LIMITED CONTRIBUTION OR LACK OF EVIDENCE ON CONTRIBUTION TO SECTOR PLAN IMPLEMENTATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding requirement (LEG endorsement): There is no evidence that GPE's requirement for sector plans to be endorsed by the LEG enhanced donor support for the plan. • CA: There is no evidence that the existence of a coordinating agency contributed to plan implementation. • Secretariat visits: GPE BTORs and Mission Reports suggest that country support team/CL visits to Cambodia during the review period included sector monitoring, especially through attending JTWG and Annual Retreats, monitoring ESPIG/SESSP/GPE2 implementation, and discussing preparation of ESPIG 2018-2021. Support for plan implementation was largely through recommendations on the ESPIG/SESSP/GPE 2 progress. • CSEF fund: There is no evidence that CSEF-funded activities supported plan implementation. <p>Variable tranche: While the variable tranche mechanism has been introduced in the ESPIG 2018-2021 (GPE3 funding cycle), it is still too early to assess its possible contributions to sector plan implementation.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Overall, GPE's contributions to the implementation of the ESP 2014-2018 were seen most directly in activities funded by the ESPIG 2014-2017 and were concentrated in the construction of preschools and funding of primary and lower secondary scholarships.

²⁰⁹ Calculated from an addition of estimated funding requirements for 2014 and 2015 as per the ESP 2014-2018, and revised estimated funding requirements for 2016 and 2017 as per the MTR update.

²¹⁰ Data on ESPIG contributions relative to overall ODA, and basic education ODA, are calculated based on OECD CRS data.

- **Community preschool construction:** GPE2’s construction of 500 community-based preschools was noted as a model for low-cost, standardized construction of community preschools in Cambodia. Government stakeholders interviewed noted a lack of standards for the construction of community preschools prior to the project’s intervention, and also noted the pledging of government support to community preschool construction and management through the passing of a sub-decree (see Box 3.7).
- Box 3.7 Community construction model in Cambodia**

The construction of 500 community preschools in Cambodia as part of SESSP/GPE2 was noted by multiple stakeholders interviewed not only as having contributed significantly to preschool construction sector-wide, but also in providing a model for low-cost, standardized community preschools.

One interviewed stakeholder noted that the construction of infrastructure according to standards that provide conducive learning environments for children is a challenge in Cambodia, and that the model for community construction utilized by GPE2 is a significant contribution in addressing this challenge.

Four government stakeholders noted that schools built under the community construction model cost substantially less than those built by private contractors (US\$5,000 versus US\$9,000). The construction of community preschools continued under PB funding following the end of GPE2, with the RGC issuing of Sub-Decree no. 245 on the Management of Community Preschools,²¹¹ which stakeholders interviewed see as a demonstration of its commitment to the ongoing management and standardization of such schools. The GPE2 project completion report noted an “unexpectedly high demand from parents and communities” regarding the construction of community preschools according to the model, in which there is a high degree of involvement of the community in the construction of the preschool and of communes in monitoring the construction of schools, indicating a high level of buy-in from project beneficiaries. The community construction model was subsequently incorporated into the World Bank’s Secondary Education Improvement Project (SEIP) for the construction of secondary schools.²¹²
- **Scholarships:** Interview data and documentary evidence suggest that the scholarships funded by GPE2 have been continued by the MoEYS. GPE2 project funds provided scholarships to 142,655 students from Grades 4 to 9, and such scholarships were subsequently funded by the MoEYS in 2015/2016 and onwards.²¹³ There is also evidence that the value of individual scholarships under the government programs increased from US\$30 to US\$60

²¹¹ While an English version of the sub-decree could not be obtained by the evaluation, three interviewed MoEYS stakeholders noted its significance with regard to: (i) the extension of full state support to 600 existing preschools (i.e. the official inclusion of these schools within the state system, and thus the availability of state resources for the management of these schools); (ii) expression of commitment to add 250 more community preschools.

²¹² The World Bank. “Project Appraisal Document on A Proposed Credit in The Amount of SDR 29.5 Million (US\$40.0 Million Equivalent) to The Kingdom of Cambodia For Higher Education Improvement Project.” March 20, 2017. p. 16-17.

²¹³ This was mentioned by five interviewed stakeholders. The scholarships funded by the SESSP/GPE2 are referred to as the “one-year pilot” of the scholarships subsequently undertaken by the MoEYS under PB funding in an evaluation of CDPF support to Cambodia (European Commission. “Evaluation of Budget Support in Cambodia 2011-2016 – Draft Evaluation Report”. February 2018. P. 39). According to data from Congress reports, 77,654 primary students and 69,514 lower secondary students were provided with scholarships via PB funding in 2016, and increased to 96,507 primary students and 72,418 lower secondary students in 2018.

per student.²¹⁴ Key to the government funding of the scholarships was the positive experiences of the SESSP/GPE2 and the ESSUAP (whose lower secondary and primary pilot scholarship programs were built upon by the SESSP/GPE2) in the implementation of primary and lower secondary scholarships.

Unintended negative/unplanned positive effects of GPE support

127. GPE support for community preschool construction had a positive unintended consequence in Cambodia, seen in the contribution of a low-cost, standardized model for community-based construction of schools. The construction of preschools was initially planned to be implemented via a competitive bidding process. However, following a review of received bids, the World Bank, as GA, and the MoEYS decided to use the lower-cost alternative of community-based school construction to implement GPE2's planned construction.

Additional factors beyond GPE support

128. Additional factors beyond GPE support that **positively** supported the implementation of the ESP were, primarily, contributions from other development partners (see Box 3.8). Major donors such as the ADB, EU, WFP, World Bank and USAID contributed substantially – with financial support and technical assistance – to implement many activities aligned with the sector plan.

Box 3.8 Notable donor-funded initiatives aligned with the ESP 2014-2018

ADB: Second Upper Secondary Education Sector Development Program (USES DP 2), worth US\$53.5 million in loan funding, aims to improve upper secondary teacher quality, improve labor market relevance of upper secondary education, and strengthen institutional capacities for sector management. Approved in 2017, the program builds on the USESDP 1,²¹⁵ which was approved in 2015 and costed at US\$49 million.

EU: Direct budget support (EUR73.5 million) via the Education Sector Reform Program (ESRP) for the period 2014-2017. The program aimed to support ESP 2014-2018 activities in school-based management, results-based planning, personnel management and PFM. Apart from direct budget support, the ESRP also included activities aimed at supporting the implementation of the Master Plan for Capacity Development, whose funds were disbursed to the CDPF (EUR8.5 million for the period 2014-2017).²¹⁶

ICA: Through the **Project for Establishing Foundations for Teacher Education College (E-TEC)**, JICA supported the MoEYS in converting provincial teacher training centers (PTTCs) and regional teacher training centers (RTTCs) in Phnom Penh and Battambang province into Teacher Education Colleges (TECs) offering teacher training according to a 12+4 formula, as opposed to a 12+2 formula.

Sida: Support to **school improvement grants (SIGs)**, initially for the period 2013-2016 and subsequently extended by one year; and **technical support to MoEYS inspection reforms** through provision of technical linkages with the Swedish Inspectorate.

²¹⁴ From European Commission. "Evaluation of Budget Support in Cambodia 2011-2016 – Draft Evaluation Report". February 2018. p. 39. Data did not provide information on how often such a sum of scholarship is disbursed to students (i.e. per year or per month).

²¹⁵ Outputs regarding improvement of labour market relevance of upper secondary education and strengthening institutional capacities for implementation and management were largely similar across both programs. The notable difference between the programs was the USESDP 2's replacement of the USESDP 1's output of improving access to upper secondary education (via support for a scholarship program) with its output on improving upper secondary teacher quality.

²¹⁶ European Commission. "Evaluation of Budget Support in Cambodia 2011-2016 – Draft Evaluation Report". February 2018. p. 108.

WFP: School feeding and scholarship programs. As part of its 2011-2016 Country Program, WFP implemented a school feeding program (provision of on-site breakfasts to preschool and primary students) and a scholarship program, either in the form of a food scholarship (provision of monthly take-home rations of 10kg of rice) or a cash scholarship (20,000 Riels, piloted in 2011).²¹⁷ Interviews with relevant stakeholders and WFP documentation indicate that these programs have continued, with a further focus placed on “home-grown” school feeding.²¹⁸

World Bank: Secondary Education Improvement Project (SEIP) in 2017, worth US\$40.9 million, was made to improve lower secondary education through a focus on strengthening of school-based management, raising teacher qualifications, and the construction and rehabilitation of lower secondary schools, as well as PoE, DOE offices and Regional Teacher Training Centers (RTTCs).²¹⁹

USAID: Provision of funding to the All Children Reading-Cambodia project implemented by Research Triangle Institute (RTI) International. The objective of the project is to strengthen reading outcomes for children, and focuses on strengthening inclusive education for children with disabilities.²²⁰

CDPF Phase I (2013-2015) and II (2015-2017): Both phases of CDPF support included activities centered on four outcome areas: (i) evidence-based policies; (ii) results-based planning and practice of M&E and EMIS; (iii) financial accountability in government financing; (iv) deployment and management of MoEYS personnel; and (v) quality and equity of education service delivery.²²¹

129. Factors that **negatively** affected plan implementation beyond GPE support include:

- **Limited technical capacities in MoEYS departments:** Government stakeholders from four different MoEYS technical departments commented that ongoing limitations in technical capacities in their respective departments constrained their ability to implement activities. The capacity constraints they noted in were the lack of staff able to use ICT and the lack of staff with a specialization in statistical analysis.
- **Lack of alignment of departmental planning with the ESP:** As mentioned in Section 3.2, there is a fundamental lack of alignment of the structure of the AOPs and the ESP and at least three interviewed stakeholders highlighted this as a limiting factor for ESP implementation. Specifically, technical departments are noted to refer more often to AOPs than to the overarching ESP, in the annual planning and implementation of activities. Interviewed stakeholders note that the structuring of the AOPs according to department, rather than sub-sector, may result in a lack of inter-departmental coordination in the implementation of activities.

²¹⁷ WFP, Country Programme – Cambodia (2011-2018): Standard Project Report 2015.

²¹⁸ The “home-grown” school feeding program seeks to encourage the sourcing of produce from local farmers and suppliers to schools within the same locality. The WFP has also engaged in other activities related to literacy, health and nutrition education, capacity development with regard to information management systems (especially related to scholarships), and initiatives aimed at improving water and sanitation infrastructure (Source: WFP, Country Programme – Cambodia (2011-2018): Standard Project Report 2017, p. 6.).

²¹⁹ The World Bank. “Project Appraisal Document on A Proposed Credit in The Amount of SDR 29.5 Million (US\$40.0 Million Equivalent) to The Kingdom of Cambodia For Higher Education Improvement Project.” March 20, 2017.

²²⁰ USAID. “Cambodia Situational Analysis of the Education of Children with Disabilities in Cambodia Report”. May 2018.

²²¹ UNICEF. “Outcome Evaluation of The Education Capacity Development Partnership Fund (CDPF) – Phase I and II: Final Report (Volume I)”. March 2018.

- **Large number of evolving activities/priorities:** Also noted in Section 3.2, one of the shortcomings of the ESP 2014-2018 is its relative lack of prioritization of activities. Adding to this is that a large number of activities included in the ESP 2014-2018 have been reorganized and added to, both by the MTR and the various configurations of reform priorities throughout the period under review (the 8-point reforms, 13 priority programs, and 15 Reform Priorities).

Implications for GPE's ToC and country-level operational model

Finding 19: The assumptions underlying the GPE ToC were found to largely hold true or partially true.

130. In Cambodia, three out of six ToC assumptions were found to hold **true**, namely: the assumption that other stakeholders have the motivation and opportunity to align their activities with plan priorities (Assumption 4), the assumption that country-level stakeholders take part in regular, evidence-based JSRs (Assumption 5), and the that the sector plan includes provisions for strengthening EMIS and Learning Assessment System (LAS) (Assumption 6).

131. The assumptions that government actors have the opportunity and motivation, as well as the technical capabilities to implement the plan were found **hold partially true**. With regard to opportunity, while the ESP 2014-2018 and the MTR update were funded as intended, specific financing gaps were nonetheless reported as challenges to the implementation of planned activities. The evolving reform agenda, first introduced by the current minister and then adjusted several times during the review period, was noted by stakeholders as the main driver of priorities for the education sector, and to some extent a competing motivation for change among government actors. In relation to capabilities, capacities of individual MoEYS staff were built during the review period with the help of donor support. The formulation of the MPCD 2014-2018 in alignment with the ESP 2014-2018 provided a framework for planned capacity-building activities over the course of the policy cycle and improvements have been made. However, education service delivery capabilities and technical capabilities are still lacking, despite efforts to strengthen these areas at all levels of the system.

Finding 20: The GPE2 and the GPE3 fixed tranche funded STEPCam project differ markedly in the breadth of scope of focus areas covered by their respective objectives. The projects may potentially serve as differing models of GPE support for sector plan implementation through project grant funding.

132. While the ESPIGs for GPE2 and GPE3 were respectively aligned with the ESP 2014-2018, the breadth of scope of the ESPIG-funded projects were markedly different, as seen in the broad scope of the GPE2 project (SESSP) versus the narrower scope of the Strengthening Teacher Education Programmes in Cambodia (STEPCam) project, funded by the fixed tranche of the GPE3 ESPIG.²²²

133. The projects stand as two distinct examples of GPE-funded projects which differed in their respective breadths of scope, yet nonetheless were both aligned to, and supported the implementation of, the same sector plan. A comparison of the two projects in the future may be informative for GPE in terms of providing potential insights on the strategic implications of having a broad versus narrow project scope, and their respective effects on depth of the effectiveness or sustainability of project-funded

²²² It should be noted that the focus areas covered by the VT-funded project of GPE3 are broader than the fixed tranche, including primary scholarships, improving school capacities for planning and budgeting, and the CPD framework. Nevertheless, GPE 2 still covered a substantially wider set of activities across a range of focus areas than both the GPE3 fixed tranche and the VT combined.

interventions. GPE ESPIG completion reports may, however, provide insufficient information for making such an assessment. Furthermore, a few stakeholders interviewed perceive that there is a lack of “end-of-grant” evaluation or review,²²³ which limits opportunities for learning from GPE projects and identifying the specific contributions made by GPE to the implementation of the sector plan.

²²³ It should be noted, however, that “end-of-grant” reviews or evaluations are undertaken for ESPIGs with the World Bank as GA, but are usually finalized a significant amount of time following grant completion. In the case of Cambodia, such a review only took place after the preparation of the GPE3 ESPIG had already begun.

4 Progress towards stronger education systems

Introduction

134. This section summarizes evaluation findings related to Key Question II from the evaluation matrix: “Has sector plan implementation contributed to making the overall education system in Cambodia more effective and efficient?” Key sub-questions are:

- During the 2014-2019 period under review, how has the education system changed in relation to (a) improving access to education and equity, (b) improving education quality and relevance (quality of teaching / instruction), and (c) improving sector management? If there were no changes, then why not and with what implications? (CEQ 4)
- How has sector plan implementation contributed to observed changes at the education system level? (CEQ 5)
- What are implications of evaluation findings for GPE support to Cambodia? (Key Question IV)

135. Progress towards a stronger education system is measured by drawing on evidence of changes that go beyond specific activities or outputs, and, instead, constitute changes in the existence and functioning of relevant institutions (e.g. schools, MoEYS), as well as changes in relevant rules, norms and frameworks (e.g. standards, curricula, teaching and learning materials) that influence how actors in the education sector interact with each other.²²⁴

136. Table 4.1 summarizes related CLE findings, which are further elaborated on below.

²²⁴ See definition of ‘education systems’ in the terminology table of this report. The GPE 2020 corporate results framework defines six indicators for measuring system-level change: (a) increased public expenditure on education (RF10, covered in section 3.3 on education financing); (b) equitable allocation of teachers (RF11, covered here under Access and Equity); (c) improved ratios of pupils to trained teachers at the primary level (RF12, covered here under Quality and Relevance); (d) reduced student dropout and repetition rates (RF13, covered in section 5); (e) the proportion of key education indicators the country reports to UIS (RF14, covered here under Sector Management); and (f) the existence of a learning assessment system for basic education that meets quality standards (RF15, covered here under Quality and Relevance).

Table 4.1 Overview: CLE findings on contribution of plan implementation to systems change

IMPROVEMENTS MADE DURING THE 2014-2019 REVIEW PERIOD? ²²⁵	HAD ISSUE BEEN ADDRESSED IN THE ESP 2014-2018, OR THE MTR? ²²⁶	LIKELIHOOD THAT ESP 2014-2018 IMPLEMENTATION CONTRIBUTED TO NOTED IMPROVEMENTS ²²⁷	DEGREE TO WHICH UNDERLYING ASSUMPTIONS LIKELY HELD TRUE ²²⁸			
			1	2	3	4
Access: Modest. Preschool construction; water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) improvements	Yes. Community preschool construction included in MTR report; WASH improvements included in ESP 2014-2018 and MTR report	High. More and better quality of infrastructure planned for in ESP 2014-2018 and subsequently in MTR report.	1	2	3	4
Equity: Modest. Primary and lower secondary scholarships.	Yes. Scholarships planned for primary and secondary sub-sectors in ESP 2014-2018 results framework	High – Scholarships mentioned in ESP 2014-2018				
Quality: Modest. Curriculum framework revised but not yet rolled out. Adoption of TPAP, implementation ongoing.	Yes. Reform priorities 2, 3 and 4 listed in MTR report aligned with TPAP objectives. Revision of curricula included as planned policy action in ESP 2014-2018 results framework.	High – Improvement of quality of learning and instruction mentioned across numerous priorities in ESP 2014-2018 and MTR report.				
Management: Modest. EMIS capacity development; introduction of EGMA, conducting of Grade 8 national assessments; ongoing roll out of inspections	Yes. EMIS Master Plan identified in ESP 2014-2018; Learning assessments and inspections included as Reform Priorities 6 and 5 respectively.	High- Activities related to EMIS capacity development, learning assessment and inspections aligned to either ESP 2014-2018 or MTR report				

²²⁵ Rating options and related colour coding: Green = strong/comprehensive. Amber = modest/fragmented; Limited/in isolated areas only – red; Insufficient data – grey.

²²⁶ Green = yes, comprehensively. Amber = yes, albeit partly/with gaps. Red = no or insufficiently. Grey = unclear. Of note, the fact that an issue was addressed in an ESP does not guarantee that positive changes in this area were due to ESP implementation. This table thus has two columns, one for whether issue was addressed in the relevant ESP, and a second for whether there is evidence that improvements were due to ESP implementation (as opposed to, say, being due to a donor project that had little or no connection with the ESP).

²²⁷ Green = High. Amber = Moderate; Red = Low. Grey = Insufficient data.

²²⁸ The underlying assumptions for this contribution claim are: (1) sector plan implementation leads to improvements of previous shortcomings in sector management; (2) there is sufficient national capacity (technical capabilities, political will, resources) to analyze, report on and use data and maintain EMIS and LAS; (3) ESP implementation leads to improvements of previous shortcomings in relation to learning; and (4) it leads to improvements in relation to equity.

Progress towards a stronger education system during the review period

Finding 21: System-level improvements were made during the review period in infrastructure, scholarships, curricula, and teacher policies. Cambodia continued to make progress in strengthening aspects of sector management (such as inspections), but changes have not yet been sufficiently consolidated to constitute system change.

137. This section reviews system-level changes in the review period, based on the three overarching policies of the 2014-2018 ESP: 1) ensuring equitable access to education services; 2) improving quality and efficiency of educational services; and 3) institutional and capacity development for educational staff for decentralization.²²⁹ Progress under Policy 1 is examined in sub-sections on Access and Equity; Policy 2 in sub-section on Quality and Relevance, and Policy 3 in sub-section on Sector Management.

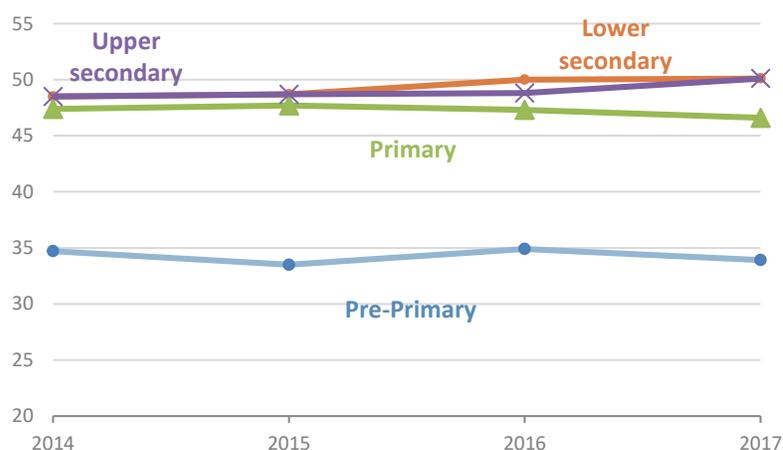
Access

138. Cambodia's Education Law of 2007 enshrines every citizen's right to nine years of free education in public schools.²³⁰

139. Efforts to increase access to basic education during the review period were seen mostly at the pre-primary and primary levels. The overall number of state-run schools and classrooms increased across pre-primary to upper secondary levels during the period 2014-2017, with the degree to which such increases kept pace with growth in student populations, however, varying across sub-sectors. The growth in number of public primary school classrooms kept up with growth in primary student populations, while lower and upper secondary population growth outpaced increases in number of lower secondary classrooms for the period 2014-2017 (see Figure 4.1).²³¹ The number of incomplete primary schools (i.e. schools that do not offer all grades) decreased during the review period, from 816 in 2014 to 464 in 2018.²³²

140. Several other supply-side interventions were undertaken to improve access to education:

Figure 4.1 Pupil to Classroom Ratio, 2014-2017



Source: EMIS, MoEYS

²²⁹ As noted in Section 3.2 (sector planning), the policies of the ESP 2014-2018 were re-worded and reconfigured to two overarching policies. Policies 1 and 2 of the ESP 2014-2018 were consolidated into a single policy: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. Policy 3 was re-worded in the MTR 2016 as: Ensuring effective leadership and management of education staff at all levels.

²³⁰ Education Law Article 31: Every citizen has the right to access qualitative education of at least 9 years in public schools free of charge. The Ministry in charge of education shall gradually prepare the policy and strategic plans to ensure that all citizens obtain qualitative education as stipulated by this law.

²³¹ For more detailed data on trends in number of classrooms and pupil-classroom ratios, see Appendix X.

²³² Institute of Technology of Cambodia. "Education Congress Report- Education, Youth and Sport for School Year and Objectives for the next school year". 2014, 2015, 2016, 107, 2018, 2019.

- Increase in number of state and community preschools:** As part of the ESP's focus on improving children's readiness for school through the expansion of access to pre-primary education, the number of public pre-primary classrooms increased by 22.9 percent during the period 2014-2017 (from 5,261 to 6,825) outpacing the growth in the pre-primary student population (pre-primary student to classroom ratio decreased from 35:1 in 2014 to 34:1 in 2017). According to Congress reports and available EMIS data, the number of community preschools increased during the review period, with 500 such preschools completed under GPE2 by 2016, and a further net increase of 136 community preschools between 2016 and 2018. As noted in Finding 18, the implementation of the GPE2's community preschool construction provided a low-cost, standardized model for community preschools that had not existed before and that has been continually utilized by the RGC as well as the World Bank in subsequent projects (see Box 3.4).
- Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH):** In alignment with the rural WASH objectives in Cambodia's National Strategic Plan for Rural Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene 2011-2025, the ESP 2014-2018 set annual targets to increase availability of latrines and clean water in schools from primary to upper secondary levels.²³³ Furthermore, the MoEYS endorsed "The Minimum Requirement Guidelines on Water, Sanitation and Hygiene in Schools" in 2016, a framework to assess school performance in providing access to clean water, latrines, handwashing facilities and hygienic school environments based on the Three-Star Approach developed by Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and UNICEF.²³⁴ MoEYS has met targets for latrines in primary and lower secondary school, but not for upper secondary schools, where in fact the percentage of schools with latrines decreased slightly from 2014 to 2018. There has been less progress in ensuring that schools at all levels have access to clean water; MoEYS did not achieve its targets for primary, lower, and upper secondary schools for the period 2014-2018 (see Appendix X for more details).

Over the period 2014-2018, it does not appear that these WASH initiatives included Menstrual Hygiene Management in schools, a gap that will be addressed with DP support during the 2019-2023 cycle.²³⁵

Equity

141. Financial costs constitute one of the most significant demand-side barriers to equitable access to education in Cambodia. While basic education is nominally free in Cambodia, the RESA indicates that household expenditures are high and increased considerably between 2004 and 2014.²³⁶

²³³ For primary schools, Congress reports additionally include indicators on the percentage of schools with handwashing facilities and first aid boxes. Data from these reports indicates that there has been improvement across both indicators during the period 2014-2018 (schools with handwashing facilities increased from 47.2 percent in 2014 to 56.7 percent in 2018; schools with first aid boxes increased from 40.2 percent in 2014 to 70.8 percent).

²³⁴ For more details on this approach see: GIZ & UNICEF, Field Guide: The Three Star Approach for WASH in Schools, 2013.

²³⁵ CDPF in collaboration with GIZ will provide assistance to the MoEYS in relation to improving Menstrual Hygiene Management in schools. See 2018 ESPIG variable tranche application, Volume 2, p. 40. It should be noted, however, that the final draft of the ESP 2019-2023 does not mention any planned improvements to this end.

²³⁶ Average annual out-of-pocket expenditures were US\$185 per child in 2014, while expenses for children in pre-school education and lower education increased by 8 and 3.6 times respectively between 2004 and 2014 (International Institute for Educational Planning. "Cambodia Rapid Education Sector Analysis". UNESCO. September 2016.p. 57).

142. **Scholarships:** The principal means by which the ESP 2014-2018 set out to reduce the financial burden for families was the continuation of scholarships for primary and lower secondary students through PB funding. The formalization of this was through the MoEYS' issuance of a sub-decree and an accompanying *prakas* as formal RGC commitments.²³⁷ As further discussed in Section 5, available data suggest that the scholarships are having an overall positive effect on keeping children in school. However, the management of the scholarship programs remains a work in progress, especially with regard to: (i) establishing better linkage between the primary and lower secondary scholarship programs to support student transition from upper primary to lower secondary levels of education;²³⁸ and (ii) establishing a better monitoring system for the programs.²³⁹ Further to this, the MoEYS is noted by stakeholders as having taken over the implementation of cash scholarships within the WFP's scholarship program, and is set to take over the food scholarship component of the program by September 2019.²⁴⁰

143. **Inclusive education:** Cambodia has made modest system-level improvements in inclusive education. The MoEYS adopted a new Policy on Inclusive Education in June 2018, and developed the Multilingual Education Action Plan 2019-2023 for students from indigenous and ethnic minority backgrounds. Additionally, the MoEYS has furthered work on training teachers with regard to teaching students with disabilities, notably through the establishment of the National Institute for Special Education in 2017.²⁴¹ Challenges remain in the identification of children with disabilities, specifically in the lack of a comprehensive, harmonized screening tool with accompanying guidelines, in spite of the efforts of the MoEYS and several NGOs to develop such a tool.²⁴² There is an overall lack of data to assess progress made during the review period in levels of enrolment and dropout rates of students with disabilities, or number

²³⁷ The RGC issued Sub-Decree no. 34 on the Provision of Scholarship to Poor Student at Primary and Secondary Schools in March 2015, which was accompanied by the MoEYS issuing a *prakas* on criteria and procedures for the provision of such scholarships (Source: Institute of Technology of Cambodia. "Education Congress Report - Education, Youth and Sport for School Year 2014-2015 and Objectives for the next school year 2015-2016". March 2016.p. 25).

²³⁸This was mentioned by one interviewed MoEYS stakeholder and in an evaluation of the scholarship programs commissioned by UNICEF (MacAuslan, I., Farhat, M., Bunly, S., Craig, R., Huy, S., and Singh, P. "Country-led Evaluation of the National Education Scholarship Programmes of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports in Cambodia (2015-2018)". May 2019. p. viii).

²³⁹ This was also mentioned by a MoEYS stakeholder interviewed and is also mentioned in the UNICEF scholarship evaluation. Monitoring processes are cited as weak in general, with a lack of data on primary and secondary scholarships at large and the lack of communication of any such data representing key ongoing challenges for the MoEYS (MacAuslan, I., Farhat, M., Bunly, S., Craig, R., Huy, S., and Singh, P. "Country-led Evaluation of the National Education Scholarship Programmes of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports in Cambodia (2015-2018)". May 2019. p. viii).

²⁴⁰ See Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. "Strategic Plan for the Implementation of the School Feeding Program". Kingdom of Cambodia.

²⁴¹ Prior to the review period, the MoEYS formulated a guide for in-service training consisting of 35 training hours on inclusive education for general education teachers in 2011, the first of its kind, subsequently creating a manual for pre-service training consisting of 25 training hours.

²⁴² One interviewed stakeholder noted the overall lack of disability screening tools in Cambodian schools, and an overall lack of harmonization of such tools where they do exist. This was echoed by an RTI-USAID study which highlighted that screening tools have yet to be used in all schools, and of the four screening tools which are currently employed in Cambodia, and implemented by the MoEYS, Save the Children, Handicap International and GIZ respectively, each had differing degrees to which mild or moderate disabilities are identified (see USAID. "Cambodia Situational Analysis of the Education of Children with Disabilities in Cambodia Report". May 2018.p. 33).

of out-of-school children with disabilities, and research suggests that this is related to ongoing challenges among teachers to identify, and correctly classify, students with disabilities in classrooms.²⁴³

144. **Gender in education:** Overall, there does not appear to have been substantial system-level improvements in relation to gender in education during the review period, and two interviewed DPs noted this as an area where more can be done. A Gender Mainstreaming Strategic Plan 2016-2020 was incorporated into the policies of the ESP-MTR 2016 “update” of the ESP 2014-2018, in line with government directives for all ministries to have a gender mainstreaming action plan.²⁴⁴ The rollout of gender mainstreaming across the ESP’s activities was not elaborated on in the MTR report, nor was it mentioned by any interviewed stakeholders.²⁴⁵ Furthermore, the ESP appraisal found that the ESP 2019-2023 overall has “weak gender-responsive strategies” and that “gender is not mainstreamed” within the plan.²⁴⁶ Documentary evidence suggests five ongoing challenges in relation to gender in education in Cambodia: (i) the lack of gender-sensitive strategies in education reforms, especially in response to declining education indicators for boys;²⁴⁷ (ii) disproportionately low representation of women in MoEYS managerial roles at both national and sub-national levels (according to ESP 2019-2023, 19.2 percent of national-level senior managers and 15.75 percent of sub-national managers were women);²⁴⁸ (iii) the lack of compulsory education, which in turn does not incentivize parents to allow girls to attend school;²⁴⁹ and (iv) the disproportionate exclusion of indigenous girls, most of whom live in remote, rural areas, from schools due to distance.²⁵⁰

²⁴³ This was noted by an RTI-USAID study which noted that despite the collection of data on children with disabilities by EMIS, such information has yet to be made publicly available. The study posits that one of the key barriers to data collection on students with disabilities in Cambodia is related to challenges in identification of students in classrooms and overall disability awareness among teachers, resulting misclassification or underreporting (see USAID. “Cambodia Situational Analysis of the Education of Children with Disabilities in Cambodia Report”. May 2018.p. 23).

²⁴⁴ The incorporation of the Gender Mainstreaming Strategic Plan to the MTR is noted in the MTR itself (see Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. “Mid-Term Review (MTR) Report 2016 of the Education Strategic Plan (ESP), 2014-2018 implementation (draft)”. Kingdom of Cambodia. September 2016., p. 76).

²⁴⁵ On the contrary, one interviewed DP stakeholder expressed skepticism that the Gender Mainstreaming Strategic Plan represents a meaningful system-level improvement in Cambodia.

²⁴⁶ Begué-Aguado, A., In, S. “Appraisal Report on The Education Strategic Plan 2019–2023 in Cambodia”. Commissioned by UNICEF Cambodia on behalf of the Education Sector Working Group. March 2019., p. 17-18.

²⁴⁷ This was noted in the independent appraisal of the ESP 2019-2023 (see p.21), and as discussed in Section 3.2, there are gender disparities in primary and secondary completion, as well as secondary enrollment, in favour of girls, in Cambodia. Notably, the Gender Mainstreaming Strategic Plan is characterized as overlooking boys in general (see Thompson, N.,A. “As Cambodia Educates more girls, boys fall through the cracks”. Article from UNDark.org published on 06.20.2018. Accessible on <https://undark.org/article/cambodia-education-boys-girls/>), and one interviewed DP stakeholder also noted the overall lack of inclusion of a focus on boys in discussions of gender on the part of the MoEYS.

²⁴⁸ In 2018, 45.7 percent of MoEYS total staff was female and 65.9 percent of these were either pre-primary or primary teachers: 3,548 of 3,644 pre-school teachers (97.4 percent), and 32,626 of 59,786 primary school teachers (54.6 percent).

²⁴⁹ The Cambodian NGO Committee on CEDAW (NGO-CEDAW). “Joint Submission by Cambodian Civil Society Organizations for the Pre-sessional Working Group for the 74th session (11-15 March 2019) of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) for the formulation of the List of Issues and Questions for the review of the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC)’s Compliance with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.” March 2019.

²⁵⁰ Ibid.

Quality and relevance of education

145. Improving the quality of learning and instruction in Cambodia is one of the key priorities of the MoEYS and is represented by a number of reforms listed in the ESP 2014-2018, reiterated in the ESP-MTR 2016 report, and further underlined in the ESP 2019-2023. Key system-level improvements during the review period include the revision of curricula from the pre-primary to upper secondary levels and the adoption of the Teacher Policy Action Plan in 2015, which set out an implementation plan for reform efforts related to teacher training, improving qualifications of teachers, teacher deployment and recruitment, the integration of teacher training centers (TTCs), and strengthening school-based management.

146. **Progress in revision of curricula:** Comprehensive revision of curricula was undertaken from pre-primary to upper secondary levels beginning in 2015 and substantial progress was made during the review period. The Curriculum Framework of General Education and Technical Education approved in 2015 focused on the development of students' core competencies in literacy and numeracy, foreign languages, ICT, communication and teamwork, creative-thinking and analysis, knowledge-application, entrepreneurship, and leadership. It covers virtually all school subjects (from Khmer language, Mathematics, Social Studies and Science, to Arts Education and Health Education among other subjects) and outlines expected learning outcomes and study hours for each subject for all non-higher education levels (including technical education). As part of the implementation of this framework, the final drafts of newly-developed syllabi from preschool to Grade 12 were completed by 2017²⁵¹ and an action plan for implementation of the curriculum framework for 2018-2023 was developed in 2018,²⁵² suggesting that the bulk of the implementation of the newly-developed curricula is yet to be rolled out.

147. **Revision of textbooks and learning materials:** Revised textbooks for Grades 1, 2 and 3 were introduced between 2011 and 2013, reflecting a change towards a phonics-based approach to Khmer instruction.²⁵³ Congress reporting on textbook dissemination suggests that the new textbooks for Grades 1-3 were distributed to students annually between 2014 and 2018, at the rate of three books per student.²⁵⁴ There has been less progress in the revision of textbooks for Grades 4 to 12. Seven stakeholders interviewed highlighted the overall lack of recent revision of textbooks as a gap in education reforms and drew attention especially to secondary school textbooks that are more than ten years old. Interviewees noted the lack of financing from the MoEYS and development partners as the main explanation for this gap.

148. **Overall, changes in pupil-teacher and pupil-qualified teacher ratios were relatively limited, indicating further efforts are required to improve recruitment, deployment and qualifications of teachers.** While the total number of teachers across pre-primary to upper secondary levels of education for the period 2014-2018 increased from 89,151 to 92,835, the pupil-teacher ratio across these levels

²⁵¹ Institute of Technology of Cambodia. "Education Congress Report- Education, Youth and Sport for School Year 2015-2016 and Objectives for the next school year 2016-2017". March 2017; Institute of Technology of Cambodia. "Education Congress Report- Education, Youth and Sport for School Year 2016-2017 and Objectives for the next school year 2017-2018". March 2018.

²⁵² Institute of Technology of Cambodia. "Education Congress Report- Education, Youth and Sport for School Year 2017-2018 and Objectives for the next school year 2018-2019". March 2019.p. 6.

²⁵³ Three interviewed MoEYS stakeholders noted that the only textbooks for Khmer reading for Grades 1-3 were revised and that textbooks for early-grade mathematics not revised.

²⁵⁴ Congress reports also noted the distribution of textbooks for Grade 4-6 students throughout the 2014-2018 period, at the rate of four textbooks per student. However, there is no evidence that new textbooks for Grades 4-6 were developed during the review period or before.

remained stagnant at 34:1.²⁵⁵ Across the sub-sectors, data illustrates a slight decline in pupil-teacher ratios at the primary level,²⁵⁶ and slight increase at the lower secondary level.²⁵⁷

149. **Substantial disparities in the distribution of primary teachers between rural and urban areas,** and the distribution of teachers across different provinces. EMIS data from 2017 indicates that, at the primary level, as many as six provinces had pupil-teacher ratios higher than 50:1 (the maximum ratio recommended by UNESCO).²⁵⁸ NEP research indicates that in 2014-2015 there were acute teacher shortages in 17 percent of primary schools with 80 or more pupils per teacher, and 10 percent of schools faced pupil-teacher ratios of 100:1 or more for 2014-2015. At the heart of these disparities is an overall lack of equitable teacher deployment, as increases in the percentage of schools between 2010 and 2014 with pupil-teacher ratios below 40:1 (from 35 percent in 2010 to 41 percent in 2014) suggest that teachers were allocated to schools with already sufficient numbers of teachers.²⁵⁹ More recent school-level data on pupil-teacher ratios was not available to inform an analysis of teacher deployment trends for the full period of review (2014-2019). However, given the relatively limited scale of implementation of the reforms in teacher deployment outlined in the TPAP thus far,²⁶⁰ it is unlikely that disparities in teacher deployment have improved substantially since research conducted by the NEP and the RESA in 2016.

150. **Teacher qualifications:** During the period 2014-2017, the ratio of pupils to qualified teachers at the primary level improved (from 45:1 to 42:1) and declined slightly at the lower secondary level (from 20:1 to 21:1).²⁶¹ A deeper analysis conducted as part of the RESA, indicates a comparatively sharper shortage of qualified teachers, with as many as 822 pupils per teacher with a bachelor's degree in 2015, compared to 61 pupils per teacher with an upper secondary certificate in the same year.²⁶² There is no more recent data on this since 2015. As noted below, reforms aimed at raising teacher qualifications have begun in the last two years and are works in progress.

²⁵⁵ Pupil-teacher ratios were higher in rural areas (which remained the same overall at 37:1 during the period 2014-2018) compared to urban areas (which increased from 24:1 in 2014 to 25:1 in 2018).

²⁵⁶ UNESCO UIS data: 45:1 in 2014 to 42:1 in 2017; EMIS data: 45:1 in 2014 to 44:1 in 2017.

²⁵⁷ Both UNESCO and EMIS data notes that the pupil-teacher ratio increased from 20:1 in 2014 to 21:1 in 2017 for lower secondary education.

²⁵⁸ The pupil-teacher ratio recommended by UNESCO is 40:1. A total 14 out of the 24 provinces in Cambodia had pupil-teacher ratios which were higher than this in 2017.

²⁵⁹ This was found by the NEP study on teacher deployment, which also notes that 43 percent of primary school teachers who were either newly deployed or redeployed were allocated to schools that did not face teacher shortages, while as many as 705 teachers were deployed to schools with a teacher surplus in 2014-2015.

²⁶⁰ Employment exercise in five provinces, which involved the redeployment of 198 teachers from schools with teacher surpluses to schools facing shortages between 2015 and 2017. (source: "Education Sector Review 2018". No author. June 2018).

²⁶¹ From UNESCO UIS data.

²⁶² See International Institute for Educational Planning. "Cambodia Rapid Education Sector Analysis". UNESCO. September 2016. p. 76. It is not exactly clear why the pupil-qualified teacher ratios, disaggregated by qualification type, cited in the RESA are markedly higher than the pupil-qualified teacher ratios without this disaggregation provided by UNESCO UIS data (2015: 46:1). It is worth noting that the RESA cites the HRMIS, as well as EMIS data, in its reporting of pupil-qualified teacher ratios, presumably to make the disaggregation by qualification type, which may account for differences in numbers.

Box 4.1: Teacher Policy Action Plan (TPAP)

Approved and published in 2015, the TPAP is the implementation plan for the Teacher Policy adopted in 2013. The plan has been cited as one of the top priorities for the MoEYS and is founded in the notion that improving teacher quality is the key step towards improving education outcomes in Cambodia. The plan focuses on addressing challenges related to the recruitment of high-quality teacher candidates, improving teacher training (both in terms of improving frameworks for in-service training and raising teacher qualifications), raising the status of teaching as a profession, and reforming teacher practices through the encouragement of active pedagogies.

The plan outlines nine strategies, 34 sub-strategies and over 100 activities. Some of the key components of the TPAP include: upgrading teacher qualifications through a BA fast-track system which utilizes a system of in-school training, the creation of a 12+4 curriculum for pre-service teacher training, the implementation of a set of Teacher Education Provider Standards, the establishment of a Teacher Career Pathway framework for continuous professional development, and the continued improvement of financial remuneration of teachers.

TPAP implementation is a work in progress and some of its activities have begun to be rolled out since its adoption in 2015 (see paragraph 94).

151. While the implementation of TPAP is ongoing, notable areas of progress for the period 2015-2018 include:

- **Initiation of reforms to promote teacher qualification:** A requirement for all teachers to have at least an upper secondary certificate was introduced in 2015, representing a key initial step in the TPAP's overarching goal of establishing the requirement for all teachers to have at least a bachelor's degree by 2020. The BA fast-track program, which is part of the TPAP,²⁶³ aimed at basic education teachers currently teaching in schools to earn a bachelor's degree. This has begun to be implemented, with 906 teachers, out of a planned total of 2,700 by 2020, having completed the program in the period 2017-2018.²⁶⁴
- **Upgrading of teacher training via establishment of Teacher Education Colleges (TECs):** Regional and Provincial TTCs in Phnom Penh and Battambang province were converted to Institutes of Pedagogy (also referred to as TECs) in 2017. Key to the TTC reforms at large has been a focus on upgrading the provision of training to teachers enrolled in TTCs according to the 12+4 formula, and Congress reports indicate that this has been undertaken in the newly converted Institutes of Pedagogy.²⁶⁵ The extent to which the 12+4 formula has been rolled out to other TTCs, however, is relatively unclear, and three interviewed stakeholders noted that this remains a work in progress.²⁶⁶

²⁶³ Description of the program in the TPAP indicates that it entailed the development of an examination for selection of teacher beneficiaries and scholarships to the selected teachers. Information available does not report on whether these aspects of the program were implemented as planned.

²⁶⁴ "Education Sector Review 2018". No author. June 2018. p.6

²⁶⁵ Documents reviewed and interviews with MoEYS stakeholders indicate that there are a total of 26 TTCs in Cambodia, including two Institutes of Pedagogy (also referred to as TECs), 16 provincial TTCs (which provide training for primary school teachers), six Regional TTCs (which provide training for lower secondary teachers), one preschool TTC and the National Institute for Education (NIE), which trains upper secondary teachers (Source: ESPIG, 2017, p. 18).

²⁶⁶ Interviewed stakeholders highlighted that the majority of RTTCs and PTTCs still adhere to the 12+2 formula of pre-service teacher training, further noting that this represents significant progress from previous configurations of 7+2

- Adoption of policies for teacher career development:** The Policy Framework on Teacher Career Pathways (TCP) was adopted in 2018, as per the TPAP's objectives to improve the professional development of teachers (Sub-strategy 2.2). Related to this, though not an express intended activity of the TPAP, the Policy on Continuous Professional Development (CPD) for Education Staff was adopted in 2017, which aimed to cultivate life-long professional development of education staff through the establishment of a framework for CPD, and to ensure linkages between CPD and the TCP. The TCP and CPD frameworks have yet to be fully implemented, and it is still too early to observe any plausible changes in teacher recruitment trends that may be linked to these policies. The implementation of the CPD framework is slated to occur in 2019 and the selection of teachers for TCP is planned to take place in 2020.²⁶⁷ In-service training under the CPD framework has begun to be delivered; 1,611 primary teachers and 2,399 secondary teachers received CPD-guided in-service training in 2018.²⁶⁸

Sector Management

152. **Despite some progress made in building sector management capacities at the central level, significant capacity gaps persist, especially at the sub-national level.** First introduced in 2011, the Master Plan for Capacity Development (MPCD) provides an overall framework guiding MoEYS and DP efforts to improve sector management and outlines MoEYS aims to develop individual and institutional capacities from the central to sub-national levels.²⁶⁹ The MPCD is aligned with the ESP (developed after ESP finalization). Implementation of the plan's activities largely depends on donor funding, especially via the CDPF, although government has begun to absorb some of the costs since 2016.²⁷⁰

153. Stakeholder interviews and documents suggest that sector management improved in the following ways during the 2014-2018 period:

- Improved planning capacities:** As noted in Section 3.2, progress was made in increasing the quality of planning and increasing planning capacities of MoEYS staff at the central and provincial levels, partly attributed to the practice of formulating AOPs.
- Improved EMIS data collection capacities:** Over the review period, MoEYS collected comprehensive data on a regular basis and published annual education statistics. An evaluation of CDPF support in Cambodia found significant improvement in data collection capacities at the EMIS department (see Finding 8 for more details).

and 9+2 formulae. The Annual Congress report from 2018 notes "Upgraded the training of basic education teachers from 12+2 to 12+4" as one of the key achievements for the year in relation to the TTC priority reform. However, no information is provided on the number of TTCs this has been rolled out to.

²⁶⁷ "Policy Framework on Teacher Career Pathways". PowerPoint Presentation. No author. April 2018.p. 11-12.

²⁶⁸ Institute of Technology of Cambodia. "Education Congress Report- Education, Youth and Sport for School Year 2017-2018 and Objectives for the next school year 2018-2019". March 2019

²⁶⁹ The previous iteration of the MPCD was for the period 2011-2015, and a MPCD 2019-2023 is currently in development. See Finding 1, Box 3.3 for an outline of the objectives of the current MPCD 2014-2018.

²⁷⁰ UNICEF. "Outcome Evaluation of The Education Capacity Development Partnership Fund (CDPF) – Phase I and II: Final Report (Volume I)". March 2018.

154. **Learning assessments:**²⁷¹ Cambodia has made some progress in conducting national learning assessment tests during the review period.²⁷² Milestones include: a national test conducted on Khmer, Math and Physics for Grade 8 students in 2014; a national test on Khmer and Math for Grade 3 students in 2015; the introduction of EGMA in 2015; and the commencement of dissemination of learning results.²⁷³ Another key change during the review period was the participation of Cambodia in PISA-D. Congress reports indicate that PISA-D was piloted in 56 target schools in 2016 and there are plans to continue Cambodia's participation in the learning assessment for the 2019-2023 phase.²⁷⁴ Despite the relatively extensive work undertaken to establish such assessments, there is a lack of evidence that data from these assessments are systematically used by MoEYS technical departments at the central or sub-national level to inform decision-making and revise pedagogical approaches in order to improve school-level management or learning in classrooms.²⁷⁵ Existing research further notes that capacities to comprehend and utilize learning assessment results among technical departments and sub-national government actors remain limited.²⁷⁶ Although results are made available to local and regional stakeholders, capacity is lacking at different levels of the system to analyze the data in order to determine how and where in-service teacher training, pedagogical support and school inspection services should be prioritized. The establishment of a Quality EMIS (QEMIS) in 2014 to store inspection reports and school examination results was a notable achievement during the review period.²⁷⁷

155. **Inspections** were introduced as a reform priority as part of the ESP-MTR 2016 “update” of the ESP 2014-2018. Progress has been made in training both new and existing inspectors and in the establishment of regional inspectorates in eight provinces in 2016. Inspection reforms in Cambodia appear to be across two axes of differentiation: (i) *regular and thematic*: regular or systematic inspections focus on school performance as a whole (in terms of its administration) are to be carried out and complemented by thematic inspections (i.e. inspections focused on the delivery of lessons on specific subjects by teachers at the classroom-level and on teachers' use of curricula and guidelines); and (ii) *internal versus external*: internal inspections are undertaken by school principals (in conducting self-evaluations) and District Training and Monitoring Teams (DTMTs) comprised of DoE officials and school management committees,

²⁷¹ According to GPE RF indicator 15, Cambodia's learning assessment system overall rating increased from “Nascent” in 2017 to “Established” in 2019.

²⁷² Progress was also seen prior to 2014, notably: the establishment of the EQAD in 2009; the introduction of EGMA in 2010; national assessments in Khmer and Math for grade 3 students in 2012 and for grade 6 students in 2013.

²⁷³ Furthermore, documentary evidence suggests that national learning assessments were planned to be carried out every four years from 2017 for Grade 3, 6, 8 and 11 Khmer, Math and Science (for Grades 8 and 11 only). Congress reports from 2018 and the zero draft 2019 Congress report do not indicate that such learning assessments were conducted in 2017.

²⁷⁴ Institute of Technology of Cambodia. “Education Congress Report- Education, Youth and Sport for School Year 2017-2018 and Objectives for the next school year 2018-2019”. March 2019. p. 111.

²⁷⁵ This was also found by the RESA, see p. 91. The 2017 JSR aide memoire notes that learning assessments were “not properly conducted at school-level,” and national assessment findings were not applied to classroom learning (Source: Third Joint Government-Development Partners. “Education Sector Review Aide Memoire”. March 2017., p. 21).

²⁷⁶ An evaluation of EU budget support in Cambodia found that analysis of learning assessments for 2013-2015 disseminated by the EQAD were either not well understood by technical departments or that sub-national MoEYS staff had limited knowledge of the assessment data (Source: European Commission. “Evaluation of Budget Support in Cambodia 2011-2016 – Draft Evaluation Report”. February 2018. p. 40).

²⁷⁷ Mentioned in the ESPIG application fixed tranche, p. 13. Neither Congress reports nor ESR aide memoires, however, indicate any further significant developments or contributions of QEMIS in relation to dissemination or use of learning assessment data.

and external inspections are undertaken by the Education Quality Assurance Department (EQAD) and the General Inspectorate. However, the extent to which targets set in the ESP-MTR 2016 report on the numbers of either systematic or thematic inspections have been met is not clear, due to a lack of data. New and existing inspectors have been trained during the period of review, but stakeholders indicate that planned inspections may not take place due to insufficient funding for operational expenses. As such, it is difficult to gauge the extent to which the system is fully operational.

Did ESP implementation contribute to system-level changes?

Finding 22: System-level changes during the review period were likely due to the implementation of the ESP 2014-2018 and the MTR “update.” With possible exception of curriculum revisions in 2015, all noted system-level improvements were supported by donors.

156. Table 4.2 provides an overview of the main system-level changes identified in the previous finding, whether they were planned under the ESP 2014-2018, or in the ESP-MTR 2016 report, and whether their achievement was likely linked to the implementation of these sector plans.

Table 4.2 System-level improvements in the review period, against ESP 2014-2018

SYSTEM-LEVEL IMPROVEMENT	LIKELY DUE TO ESP IMPLEMENTATION?	IMPROVEMENT SUPPORTED BY DONORS?
ALREADY SIGNIFICANT AND LIKELY SUSTAINABLE		
More preschools: State-run preschools increased by 22.9 percent during 2014-2017; net increase of at least 636 community preschools during the same period.	Yes: Infrastructure targets included in MTR report (Reform 9).	Yes: GPE2 supported construction of community preschools.
Revised curriculum framework: Syllabi developed for pre-primary to upper secondary levels, implementation plan developed in 2018.	Yes: Noted as a planned policy action in the ESP in ECE, primary, and secondary and technical education sub-sectors.	No: There is no evidence that curriculum revisions were supported by external financing.
Primary and lower secondary scholarships: Number of recipients continually increased since 2016, funded by PB.	Yes: Included as a strategy in both primary and secondary sub-sectors. ²⁷⁸	Yes: MoEYS scholarships are a continuation of scholarships funded by SESSP (GPE2 ESPIG); WFP also continues to separately provide cash scholarships as part of school-feeding program.

²⁷⁸ Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. “Education Strategic Plan 2014-2018. Kingdom of Cambodia”. Mach 2014. p. 82 and 86.

SYSTEM-LEVEL IMPROVEMENT	LIKELY DUE TO ESP IMPLEMENTATION?	IMPROVEMENT SUPPORTED BY DONORS?
POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT IF IMPLEMENTED AND/OR STRENGTHENED FURTHER		
Promotion of teacher qualifications: Initiation of BA fast-track program; initiation of upgrading teacher training at TECs to 12+4 formula.	Yes: Teacher training center reforms included in MTR report (Reform 3), as are reforms to raise teacher qualifications (Reform 4).	Yes: JICA supported the establishment of TECs in Phnom Penh and Battambang province
Teacher career development: Adoption of policies related to CPD and TCP; delivery of CPD-linked in-service training in 2018.	Yes: Included in MTR report, Reform 15: The development of career paths and school principal trainings.	Unclear due to limited data
Learning assessments: Introduction of EGMA; Conducting of national assessments for Grade 8 students; Introduction of PISA-D	Yes: Learning assessments included as a priority reform (Reform 6: Student Assessment of learning outcomes)	Yes: GPE2, USAID, World Bank
Inspections: Regional inspectorates established, training of new and existing inspectors initiated	Yes: Inspection training included as a priority reform in the MTR report (Reform 5: Inspections)	Yes: Sida
EMIS: Master Plan on EMIS 2014-2018 formulated; establishment of QEMIS	Yes: Preparation of Master Plan on EMIS mentioned in ESP 2014-2018; ²⁷⁹ QEMIS expansion mentioned in MTR report. ²⁸⁰	Yes: CDPF provided support for development of EMIS capacities, ²⁸¹ ADB.

157. Two observations can be made regarding the information in the table. First, all system-level improvements mentioned are likely to have been driven by implementation of the ESP 2014-2018 or the ESP-MTR 2016 updated sector plan; all were specifically mentioned in either the ESP 2014-2018 results framework or in the ESP-MTR 2016 report's list of reform priorities and their corresponding target activities.

158. A second observation is that the bulk of system-level improvements made during the review period were supported by donors. As noted in Section 3.4, donor funding was crucial for financing most education sector capital expenditures. A possible exception was the revision of the curriculum framework for pre-primary to upper secondary levels of education, which was undertaken in 2015. No external financing was specifically channelled to the revision of curricula, and MoEYS stakeholders noted the low levels of external funding received by the Department of Curriculum Development in general.

²⁷⁹ Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. "Education Strategic Plan 2014-2018. Kingdom of Cambodia". Mach 2014. p. 72.

²⁸⁰ Global Partnership for Education. "Endorsement of Cambodia's Education Strategic Plan 2014 – 2018 Mid-Term Review for submission to the Global Partnership for Education Secretariat". Letter to Ministry of Education Youth and Sports. Washington DC, 12 December 2016. p. 94.

²⁸¹ Under Outcome area 2: Results-oriented planning, policy and M&E at all levels of both Phases I and II of CDPF support to Cambodia.

Implications for GPE's ToC and country-level operational model

Finding 23: In Cambodia, the GPE ToC does not explicitly consider the effect of the political economy of education reform in determining whether the implementation of the sector plan can bring its intended systemic change.

159. The assumption that sector plan implementation leads to improvements of previous shortcomings in sector management (Assumption 1) was found to **hold true**. This is seen in the ongoing progress made in introducing inspections as a sector priority and in the building of sector management capacities among central-level MoEYS personnel, with the help of donor support. The existence of a capacity development plan/framework, in the form of the MPCD, which is complementary with the ESP 2014-2018, provides potential positive effects on system-wide capacity development efforts in highlighting the importance of capacity development in the Cambodia education sector and in bolstering the technical capacities of government stakeholders to implement sector plans. Available information on progress in capacity development in Cambodia, however, suggests that substantial challenges remain. Despite some positive progress noted in the development of capacities of individual MoEYS staff, available evidence suggests the need for further efforts in building capacities at the institutional- and organizational- levels. Furthermore, as one DP stakeholder noted, DPs have their own difficulties in defining capacity as a concept and in identifying appropriate metrics to measure progress in capacity development at various levels.

160. Assumption 2, that there is sufficient national capacity (technical capabilities, political will, resources) to analyze, report on and use data and maintain EMIS and LAS, however, was found to **not hold true**. Available evidence suggests that the lack analysis of EMIS data on the part of the MoEYS is largely due to a gap in analytical capacities in the EMIS department, despite progress made in recent years in relation to data collection. With regard to learning assessments, there is an overall lack of evidence to suggest that results from learning assessments were used during the review period to inform decision-making or revisions to pedagogical approaches, and documentary evidence notes capacity gaps among government actors in comprehending and utilizing such data.

161. The assumptions that ESP implementation leads to improvements of previous shortcomings in relation to learning (Assumption 3) and that it leads to improvements in relation to equity (Assumption 4) were found to **hold partially true**. With regard to learning, a significant area of progress made during the review period was the introduction of a revised curriculum framework. Other reforms introduced in relation to improving learning, however, such as the TPAP and ongoing efforts on learning assessments, remain in-progress, though potentially significant if implemented or strengthened further. System-level improvements that follow from ESP implementation made in relation to equity during the review period include the increase in the number of preschools and the provision of primary and lower secondary scholarships by the MoEYS. Building on these areas of progress, the MoEYS scholarship framework continues to be sharpened with the current GPE3 ESPIG (variable tranche) that is focused on strengthening the framework for primary scholarships.

162. The assumptions in the ToC, however, do not explicitly take into account the political economy of education reform, which in the case of Cambodia stands as a significant underlying factor that determines the extent to which intended reforms implemented as part of the sector plan are able to achieve system-level change. The Grade 12 examination reform, one of the first significant reforms introduced by the current minister, generated widespread negative response from students when there was a decrease in exam pass rates. This example illustrates some of the latent, yet significant, constraints to system-wide

change in the Cambodian context.²⁸² Additionally, policy research suggests that the TPAP will face substantial challenges in trying to induce system change due to factors related to the political economy of teaching, especially in relation to the prevalent practice among teachers of providing private tutoring as a supplement to their income.²⁸³ Other challenges include the important shifts in pedagogical approaches that are required at the classroom level and the inter-departmental coordination that will be necessary in applying Teacher Education Provider Standards.²⁸⁴

²⁸² The Grade 12 exam reforms, introduced in 2014, consisted of measures to reduce cheating in exams (through increased searches of students for mobile phones, for example, before entering exam halls) and to ensure that exam questions were not leaked prior to the exams. As a result of the reform, the pass rate of the 2014 Grade 12 exam was in stark contrast to that of the year before (26 percent in 2014 versus 87 percent the previous year), and reportedly sparked widespread protests.

²⁸³ See UNDP Cambodia. "Curbing Private Tutoring Informal Fees and in Cambodia's Basic Education". 2014.

²⁸⁴ See Kelsall et al, *The Political Economy of Primary Education Reform in Cambodia*, 2016, p 22-23

5 Progress towards stronger equity and learning outcomes

Introduction

164. This section summarizes evaluation findings related to Key Question III from the evaluation matrix: “Have improvements at education system level contributed to progress towards impact?”²⁸⁵ Key sub-questions are:

- During the period under review, what changes have occurred in relation to (a) learning outcomes in basic education, (b) equity, gender equality and inclusion in education? (CEQ 6)
- Is there evidence to link changes in learning outcomes, equity, gender equality and inclusion to system-level changes identified under CEQ 4? (CEQ 6)
- What other factors can explain changes in learning outcomes, equity, etc.? (CEQ 6)
- Going forward, what are implications of findings for the GPE ToC/operational model? (CEQ 7)

165. The section below provides a brief overview of medium-term trends in relation to basic education learning outcomes, equity, gender equality and inclusion that occurred in Cambodia up to and during the review period. The evaluation is not attempting to establish verifiable links between specific system-level changes that occurred during the review period and impact-level trends, given that the CLE covered a relatively short timeframe and, in most cases, it is too early to expect specific changes to be reflected in impact-level trends. However, where links are plausible, these are discussed. Table 5.1 summarizes CLE findings on any such plausible links, which are further elaborated on below.

Table 5.1 Overview: CLE findings on contribution of system-level changes to impact-level changes

IMPROVEMENTS MADE DURING REVIEW PERIOD?	LIKELIHOOD THAT TRENDS WERE INFLUENCED BY SYSTEM-LEVEL CHANGES DURING REVIEW PERIOD	DEGREE TO WHICH UNDERLYING ASSUMPTIONS LIKELY HELD TRUE ²⁸⁶	
		1	2
Equity, Gender Equality and Inclusion: Modest. Improvements in terms of pre-primary education access, decreased primary and lower secondary dropout rates, and increased transition rates between primary and lower secondary, and lower and upper secondary levels.	Modest. Community preschool construction contributed to improving preschool enrollment. Expanded primary and lower secondary scholarship programs likely linked to lower dropout rates.	1	2

²⁸⁵ Key sub-questions are: CEQ 6: (i) During the period under review, what changes have occurred in relation to (a) learning outcomes in basic education, and (b) equity, gender equality and inclusion in education, (ii) Is there evidence to link changes in learning outcomes, equity, gender equality, and inclusion to system-level changes identified under CEQ 4?, (iii) What other factors can explain changes in learning outcomes, equity, etc. CEQ 7, and (iv) Going forward, what are implications of findings for the GPE ToC/operational model?

²⁸⁶ The underlying assumptions for this contribution claim are (1) changes in the education system positively affect learning outcomes and equity, and (2) country-produced data on equity, efficiency and learning allow measuring/tracking these changes.

IMPROVEMENTS MADE DURING REVIEW PERIOD?	LIKELIHOOD THAT TRENDS WERE INFLUENCED BY SYSTEM-LEVEL CHANGES DURING REVIEW PERIOD	DEGREE TO WHICH UNDERLYING ASSUMPTIONS LIKELY HELD TRUE ²⁸⁶	
Learning: Insufficient data.	Not enough data to analyze. Available evidence suggests that learning outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics are low in Cambodia, especially when compared to global averages.	1	2

Trends in learning outcomes, equity, gender equality and inclusion in the education sector in Cambodia from 2014 to 2019

Finding 24: Cambodia has made progress in increased pre-primary and secondary enrollment rates, decreased primary and lower secondary dropout rates, and increased transition rates from primary to upper secondary levels of education. Recent decreases in primary enrollment represent a relative cause for concern, and gender and rural-urban disparities across a number of key indicators widened during the review period.

Equity, Gender Equality and Inclusion in Basic Education

166. After decades of violent conflict and fragility in the Khmer Rouge era and subsequent civil war, Cambodia has made significant strides in what one stakeholder described as “building an education system from scratch.” Progress can be seen in the doubling of primary enrollment between 1990 and 2000, and substantial increases in primary and secondary enrollment during the 2000s as well.²⁸⁷ During the 2014-2019 review period, this progress largely continued, although some areas stagnated or declined. Table 5.2 provides an overview of trends in the key impact-level indicators in the evaluation matrix, grouped by whether they showed improvement, stability, deterioration, or whether available data is inconclusive. Highlights from the table include:

- Cambodia is close to achieving its goal of universal primary education, despite recent decreases in primary enrollment. Pre-primary enrollment has improved, and progress has also continued at the secondary level.
- Gender equity has improved in pre-primary and primary enrollment. However, significant gender disparities were noted for primary and secondary completion, and secondary enrollment.
- Children enrolling in basic education are more likely to remain in school, as drop-out rates have declined at primary and lower secondary levels.
- Transition rates from primary to lower secondary, and from lower to upper secondary levels have also increased.

167. Historical country-level data is available for most education indicators and is disaggregated by gender, province and by whether a locality is urban or rural, although data are not systematically

²⁸⁷ Overseas Development Institute. “Rebuilding basic education in Cambodia: Establishing a more effective development partnership”. 2011. p. 7-10.

disaggregated for household income over time.²⁸⁸ Data from MoEYS is usually considered reliable (see Section 3.3) and are reported regularly either in annual education statistics yearbooks or in Congress reports.

Table 5.2 Trends in indicators for Equity, Gender Equality and Inclusion in Basic Education²⁸⁹

INDICATORS THAT IMPROVED FROM 2014 TO 2019

- **Pre-primary enrollment:** Percentages of 3 to 5-year-olds enrolled in an ECE program increased between 2014 and 2018.²⁹⁰ Pre-primary gross enrollment rate (GER) improved from 8.7% to 10.8% from 2014-2017, as did the net enrollment rate (NER) for the same period, from 16.7% to 20.1%.
- **Secondary enrollment:** Lower secondary GER increased from 55.1% in 2014 to 59.1% in 2018, and upper secondary GER increased from 25.3% in 2014 to 29.7% in 2018. Despite these increases, enrollment at both lower and upper secondary levels of education remains low.
- **Primary and lower secondary drop-out:** From 2014-2018, the proportion of children dropping out of school declined at the primary level (from 8.3% to 4.4%) and lower secondary level (from 21% to 15.8%). Dropout rates for girls also decreased during the same period at both primary (7.2% to 3.7%) and lower secondary levels (20.3% to 14.2%).
- **Gender equity in pre-primary and primary enrollment:** Gender Parity Index (GPI) for pre-primary NER increased from 0.99 to 1.05 and from 0.98 to 1 for primary NER between 2014 and 2017.
- **Transition rate from primary to lower secondary; transition rates lower to upper secondary:**²⁹¹ Transition rate from primary to lower secondary levels for both sexes increased from 78.7% to 85.7% between 2014 and 2018. The proportion of children transitioning from lower to upper secondary also increased from 71.1% to 75.4% between 2014 and 2018 for both sexes.
- **Lower secondary completion rate:** Completion rates increased for lower secondary education, from 40.3% to 47.6% for 2014-2018.

INDICATORS THAT STAGNATED FROM 2014-2019

- **Primary completion rate (PCR):** According to country data, the nationwide PCR decreased overall from 2014-2017, from 84.1% to 79.1%, before improving in 2018 to 86.2%.²⁹² Data suggest that rural-urban disparities remained stable. However, both urban and rural PCRs decreased by approximately 5 percentage points for the period 2014-2017 (urban from 74.1% to 69.3%, and rural from 86.5% to 81.4%).

²⁸⁸ This is likely due to the fact that country-level data is sourced from EMIS and as such is school-based, and not from household surveys or census.

²⁸⁹ Data are taken primarily from Congress reports, Annual Statistics Yearbooks published by the MoEYS, with data from UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS) to fill gaps. While certain discrepancies were found between the data sets, MoEYS and UIS indicators generally showed similar trends (increase, decrease, stagnation) for the review period.

²⁹⁰ From 2014-2018, percentage of 5-year-olds enrolled: from 61.4 percent to 63.1 percent; 4-year-olds: from 29.1 percent to 39 percent; 3-year-olds: from 16.6 percent to 18.5 percent.

²⁹¹ Additionally, there have been overall improvements in survival rates to graduation at the primary level (survival rate to grade 6 increased from 65.6% to 76%), lower secondary level (survival rate to grade 9 increased from 31.1% to 42.1%), and upper secondary level (survival rate to grade 12 increased from 11% to 19.5%), between 2015-2017 (see ESR 2018, p.79).

²⁹² UNESCO UIS data show a similar downward trend for 2014-2017: PCR declining from 96.7 percent to 89.6 percent. There was no UIS data for 2018 that could corroborate the increase in PCR from 2017 to 2018 (79.1% to 86%) as reported in the zero draft of the 2019 Congress report.

INDICATORS THAT STAGNATED FROM 2014-2019

- **Upper secondary completion rate:** The upper secondary completion rate increased slightly from 20% to 22.1% during the period 2014-2017.
- **Repetition rates:** From 2014 to 2018, the share of children repeating a school level increased slightly at the primary (from 5.1% to 6.2%), lower secondary (from 6.2% to 7.3%) and upper secondary levels (from 1.3% to 3%).

INDICATORS THAT DETERIORATED FROM 2014 TO 2019

- **Primary enrollment:** While country data indicates that the primary NER increased marginally during the review period, from 97.9% in 2014 to 98% in 2017, UNESCO UIS data indicates a downward trend between 2014 and 2017, from 95% to 90%.²⁹³ The primary GER decreased between 2014 and 2017 from 116.8% to 107.8%.
- **Gender disparity in primary and secondary completion and enrollment:** Gender disparities in primary and secondary completion rates and enrollment rates widened during the review period, in favour of girls. For full details see Appendix XI.
- **Urban decreases and rural increases in lower secondary completion and secondary GER:** The urban lower secondary completion rate decreased from 49.6% to 45.6%, while the rural rate increased from 38% to 44.2%. Rural lower and upper secondary GER *increased* between 2014 and 2017 (from 52.1% to 57%, and from 19.9% to 23.6%, respectively), while urban lower and upper secondary GER *decreased* for the same period (from 58.3% to 56%, and from 40.6% to 39.3%, respectively).²⁹⁴
- **Rural-urban disparities in primary GER:** Primary urban GER decreased disproportionately between 2014 and 2017 versus rural primary GER. While rural primary GER decreased by 2.9 percentage points for the period 2014-2017 (from 115.2% to 112.3%), urban GER decreased by 4.6 percentage points (from 94.2% to 89.6%).²⁹⁵

INDICATORS FOR WHICH NO CONCLUSIVE DATA IS AVAILABLE

- **Access for children with special needs:** There was an overall lack of data on the enrollment of children with disabilities over time. Available data indicates that 54,838 children and youth with disabilities were enrolled in schools in 2017-2018; it is not clear what levels of education are covered by this measure.²⁹⁶ As noted in Section 4, an RTI-USAID study notes key barriers to data collection on the level of access for children with special needs to education in Cambodia.
- **School-life expectancy:** Data not available from country sources, UNESCO UIS statistics or in the RESA or 2018 ESR.
- **Out-of-school (OOS) rate and number of out-of-school children (OOSC):** Neither Congress reports nor MoEYS statistical yearbooks track the overall number or ratio of out-of-school children. Available UIS data shows an increase in primary OOS rate for 2014-2017, from 4.9% to 9.4%, and in the number of OOSC, from 89,849 to

²⁹³ The RESA, conducted in 2016, notes the drop in primary enrollment rates between 2014-2016 as a “wake up call,” and UNESCO UIS data suggests that enrollment rates continued to drop in 2017.

²⁹⁴ MoEYS stakeholders (three) interviewed posited that decreases in urban primary and secondary enrollment versus rural increases in enrollment were a result of increased enrollment of urban children in private schools, as opposed to public schools. This hypothesis, however, is discounted by the RESA which noted that enrollment in private lower secondary schools was only slightly higher than 3 percent in 2015, and hence is unlikely to account for the full decrease in student enrollment.

²⁹⁵ Similar to the footnote above, while stakeholders interviewed suggested that urban decreases in primary enrollment were due to a transfer of students to private schools, the RESA notes that the increase in private primary enrollment is not large enough to account for the overall decrease in primary GER.

²⁹⁶ MoEYS, Policy on Inclusive Education, 2018.

INDICATORS FOR WHICH NO CONCLUSIVE DATA IS AVAILABLE

- 184,824 for the same period. UIS data for lower secondary OOS and number of OOSC is incomplete (only available for 2014 and 2015).
- **Access for poorest:** Country-level data, the RESA and ESR 2018 do not provide any income-disaggregated data. The exception to this was data on results of national learning assessments.

Finding 25: There is insufficient data to compare changes in learning outcomes over time. Cambodian children scored low in reading, writing and mathematics in general, especially when compared to global averages. Significant disparities exist between children in rural and urban areas, as well as across socioeconomic status.

Learning Outcomes in Basic Education

168. The main source of evidence for learning outcomes is reports published by the EQAD on results of national assessments. During the review period, the MoEYS conducted national assessments in 2014 (Grade 8)²⁹⁷ and 2015 (Grade 3).²⁹⁸ As results are for different levels of education, learning outcomes could not be compared across grades. Furthermore, the EQAD cites methodological reasons for the inability to compare results from national assessments over time.²⁹⁹

Table 5.3 National assessment results, overall percentage correct

SCHOOL GRADE	2014			2015	
	KHMER	MATH	PHYSICS	KHMER	MATH
Grade 3				35.2%	41%
Grade 8	55.6%	44%	52.8%		

* Data is taken from two separate reports on Grade 3 and Grade 8 national assessment results published by the EQAD (See MoEYS, Results of Grade Three Student Achievement from the National Assessment in 2015, 2016; and MoEYS, Results of Grade Eight Student Achievement from the National Assessment in 2014, 2016). The percentage correct method of presenting learning assessment results utilized by these reports is according to a 0 to 100 scale, as opposed to scores scaled out of 500 utilized by PISA. The reports note that “most readers in Cambodia focus on the percentage correct numbers.”

169. Another source of data is a baseline assessment for an Early-Grade Mathematics Assessment (EGMA) conducted in 2015.³⁰⁰ Several observations can be derived from these sources:

- **Significant learning gaps in Khmer reading and writing:** One of the stand-out results presented in Table 5.3 is the significantly low level of performance of Grade 3 children in Khmer reading and writing (35.2 percent), indicating a key area of improvement in terms of learning outcomes. Grade 8 Khmer test results were low as well. Disaggregating Grade 8 Khmer test results according to

²⁹⁷ In 2014, 5,902 children took the Grade 8 Khmer test; 5,826 took the Mathematics test; and 5,864 took the Physics test.

²⁹⁸ In 2015, 5,851 children took the Grade 3 Khmer test; 5,788 took the Mathematics test.

²⁹⁹ Reports published by the EQAD on the results of national assessments in 2016 note the uniqueness of each individual assessment, even for the same grades, as precluding the comparability of results across years.

³⁰⁰ As mentioned in Section 3.5, the EGMA was conducted as part of the GPE2 ESPIG for 2014-2017.

content area further suggests a large difference between results in Khmer writing versus reading, suggesting that writing is a substantial challenge for students.³⁰¹ MoEYS shifted to a phonics-based curriculum for teaching Khmer in Grades 1-3 between 2011 and 2013, but there is insufficient data to comment on the effect of this change.³⁰²

- **Low levels of performance in mathematics among early grades and Grade 8 students:** The 2015 baseline for the EGMA found that only 8 percent of Grade 1 and 2 students were able to achieve the performance goals set out by the assessment, while only 2 percent of Grade 3 students were able to achieve those goals. Furthermore, the assessment observed that Grade 6 students were lacking in capacities for conceptual understanding, while performing better at procedural questions.³⁰³ As noted in Table 5.3, Grade 8 Math test results were lower than results for either Khmer or Physics in 2014.
- **Urban-rural and socio-economic disparities:** Results for both Grade 3 and 8 national learning assessments across all subjects show a consistent disparity in learning outcomes between rural and urban children and according to socio-economic status (SES). Children in urban areas scored better across all subjects and their content areas compared to their rural counterparts, with the urban-rural difference especially seen in results of the Grade 3 Khmer test.³⁰⁴ The lowest quintile of children (according to SES) consistently scored lower on average than children in the highest quintile, with this difference most pronounced in results of the Grade 3 Khmer and Mathematics tests.³⁰⁵ While national assessment reports note that such a gap in test performance is “not unusual” as per broader research in education,³⁰⁶ the RESA suggests that a possible reason for such differences is the greater likelihood that children in higher SES quintiles attend private schools, and noted the substantial gap in the performance in both Grade 3 Khmer and Math tests between public and private school children (58.7 percent of questions answered correctly among private school students, versus 35.2 percent among public school students).³⁰⁷

³⁰¹ While 55.6 percent of sampled students responded to questions correctly in the Khmer assessment overall, only 28.3 percent of students were found to respond to questions correctly in the writing components of the test, compared to 73.8 percent of students responding correctly to parts of the test which assessed students’ reading.

³⁰² A presentation on early-grade reading in Cambodia highlights the lack of textbooks, high levels of illiteracy of parents (and a corresponding lack of encouragement of reading at home), lack of libraries in schools, and the overall complexity of written Khmer, as significant difficulties faced in efforts to improve reading and writing learning outcomes (see Puthy, “Towards Reading for All: Variation in early reading assessment result between rural and urban population in Cambodia”).

³⁰³ The EGMA baseline assessment found that 83 percent of students were able to perform basic arithmetic operations, while only 58 percent could pass the “test for Number sense,” indicating lower rates of performance in relation to fractions, decimals, percentages and geometry (Analysis of EGMA for grades 1, 2, 3, and 6 in Cambodia, p.9).

³⁰⁴ The percentage of questions correct for urban Grade 3 children was 50.3 percent, compared to 31.5 percent among rural children. The difference is statistically significant and also substantially large (nearly one full standard deviation).

³⁰⁵ Percentage of questions answered correctly among the lowest quintile of Grade 3 children for Khmer was 29.9%, compared to 48.1% among children in the highest quintile. A similar difference was noted in Math test results, as percentage of questions correct among the lowest quintile of children was 36.5%, versus 56.3% among children in the highest quintile.

³⁰⁶ MoEYS, Grade 3 report, p. 13.

³⁰⁷ A caveat raised by RESA is that only 20 private schools were included in the national learning assessments sample, and as such may not be significantly representative of the private school population. (Source: RESA, 2016, p. 24).

- **Girls perform slightly better than boys:** Girls outperformed boys at both Grade 3 and 8 levels, across all subjects (Khmer, Mathematics, and Physics). Differences were most notable for both Grade 3 and 8 Khmer tests, while girls marginally outperformed boys in Grade 8 Mathematics and Physics. Neither the EQAD nor the RESA provide definitive reasons for the difference in performance.

170. PISA-D assessment results indicate that performance of 15-year-olds in Cambodia in reading, mathematics and science were lower than average scores for OECD and lower-middle income countries (see Table 5.4). Notably, the percentage of students achieving minimum levels of proficiency (level 2) in reading and mathematics were substantially lower than OECD and lower-middle income averages. Proficiencies among Cambodian 15-year-olds in reading, math and science were rated at level 1b (level 1a signifies higher proficiencies and level 1c signifies lowest), alongside Senegal and Zambia for reading and science, and Guatemala, Honduras, Paraguay and Senegal for mathematics.³⁰⁸

Table 5.4 Snapshot of performance in reading, mathematics and science, PISA-D 2018

	MEAN READING SCORE	MEAN MATH SCORE	MEAN SCIENCE SCORE	STUDENTS ACHIEVING MINIMUM LEVEL OF PROFICIENCY IN READING (%)	STUDENTS ACHIEVING MINIMUM LEVEL OF PROFICIENCY IN MATHEMATICS (%)
Cambodia	321	325	330	7.5	9.9
OECD average	493	490	493	79.9	76.6
Lower-middle income average	378	368	392	37.7	28.7

Is there evidence to link trends in learning outcomes, equity, gender equality and inclusion to system-level changes identified? What other factors can explain observed changes (or lack thereof)?

Finding 26: The decrease in primary and lower secondary dropout rates is likely linked to the expansion of scholarship programs, and increased pre-primary enrollment is likely a result of the increased number of community preschools.

171. Table 5.5 provides an overview of the main impact-level improvements identified in the two previous findings, and of the likelihood that system-level improvements identified in Chapter 4 contributed to these. As the table shows, there is evidence that the expansion of primary and lower secondary scholarships and school construction likely supported improvements in access to basic education. There is less evidence that identified system-level changes contributed to the noted improvements in survival rates to graduation (at primary, lower and upper secondary levels), and transition rates from both primary to lower secondary and lower to upper secondary levels. There is no evidence that system-level changes can likely explain the modest improvements in gender equality indices for primary education.

³⁰⁸ The level 1b rating is described in qualitative terms as: demonstration of ability to comprehend short sentences or passages, but unable to read or understand long sentences or make simple inferences (reading); demonstration of ability to follow clear instructions in text and perform the first step of a two-step math problem (mathematics); and demonstration of ability to identify simple patterns in data, recognize basic scientific terms and follow instructions to carry out a scientific procedure (see OECD, PISA for Development: Results in Focus, 2018, p. 6-7).

Table 5.5 Contributions of system-level improvements to identified impact-level improvements

IMPACT-LEVEL IMPROVEMENTS	LIKELIHOOD THAT SYSTEM-LEVEL CHANGES CONTRIBUTED TO THE IMPROVEMENT?
Primary and lower secondary drop-out Lower secondary completion	Strong: It is likely that government efforts to expand scholarships for primary and lower secondary students, combined with ongoing scholarships provided as part of WFP's school feeding program and other DPs, have contributed to the decrease in dropout rates and the increase in lower secondary completion.
Pre-primary enrollment	Strong: The increase in number of classrooms (by 22.9% between 2014 and 2017) and decrease in pupil-classroom ratio (35:1 to 34:1 for 2014-2017) likely contributed to improving overall enrollment numbers and enrollment ratio at this level. While it is likely that increases in pre-primary enrollment can be linked to the introduction of the community construction model mentioned in section 4, whether or not this model will continually contribute to increased pre-primary enrollment is less clear.
Transition rate from primary to lower secondary Transition rates from lower to upper secondary	Modest: The ESR 2018 notes that gains made in increased survival rates to graduation at the primary, lower and upper secondary levels during the review period are an indication of progress in the internal efficiency of the sub-sectors, further positing that these were likely due to improvements made by the MoEYS in expanding SOBs and introducing SIGs. ³⁰⁹
Secondary enrollment	Modest: Sector analyses and other sources of data reviewed do not provide sufficient information that would suggest a link between increases in lower and upper secondary enrollment to system-level change. ³¹⁰ A plausible explanation for this could be the increases in primary enrollment rates prior to the review period, ³¹¹ as well as recent increases in transition rates from primary to lower secondary, and from lower secondary to upper secondary.
Gender equality in pre-primary and primary enrollment	No evidence: Available evidence does not establish any clear linkages between system-level changes and moderate improvements in the gender gap for pre-primary and primary enrollment, as neither the ESP 2014-2018 nor the MTR report contain any particular strategies to address gender inequities in pre-primary or primary enrollment.

172. Two observations can be derived from this table. First, the identified system-level changes that most likely contributed to impact-level changes (expansion of primary and lower secondary scholarships, preschool construction) were interventions planned and implemented within the framework of the ESP 2014-2018.

- **Primary and lower secondary scholarships:** Existing research on the primary and lower secondary scholarship programs suggests a high likelihood that the program has kept children in school. An evaluation of the MoEYS primary and lower secondary scholarship programs conducted by UNICEF found that the programs were well implemented overall, and that scholarships were indeed spent on educational material and expenses. The sustainability of the programs was also noted as strong

³⁰⁹ "Education Sector Review 2018". No author. June 2018, p.80.

³¹⁰ Despite the increase in secondary enrollment, the increase in number of lower secondary classrooms did not keep up with the growth in student population, while the increase in number of upper secondary classrooms kept up with the growth in student population but did not outpace it.

³¹¹ The primary NER increased from 94.6 percent in 2008 to 97.4 percent in 2012 (UNESCO UIS data).

by the study given the high levels of ownership of the programs on the part of both the MoEYS and the MEF (especially seen through the use of PB funding to finance the programs).³¹² Despite the relative success of the programs, a number of barriers were also highlighted to persist in the Cambodian context.³¹³

- **Preschool construction:** While it is highly likely that increases in preschool enrollment observed during the review period were related to the increases in numbers of classrooms and schools brought about by the increase in construction of community preschools,³¹⁴ the extent to which this trend will be sustained is questionable. An impact evaluation of the community preschool construction which took place during the review period found that the increase in community preschools has *shifted* enrollment away from informal preschools, as opposed to having *increased* enrollment per se (i.e. induced higher rates of attendance from children who were previously at home),³¹⁵ further characterizing the impact of the increase in preschools as short-term.³¹⁶

173. Second, most system-level improvements related to the quality of education and sector management noted in Chapter 4 have not yet influenced impact-level improvements. This is likely due to the fact that, as noted in Chapter 4, several system-level changes have not yet been fully implemented (for example, the strategies of the TPAP with regard to raising teacher qualifications and reforming TTCs).

Implications for GPE's ToC and country-level operational model

Finding 27: It is difficult to follow the GPE country-level ToC all the way through to the impact level change given the complexities of achieving system-level change, the lack of sufficient data to compare learning outcomes over time, and the time lag between system-level improvements and measurable/sustainable change in key sector indicators.

174. The underlying assumptions for this contribution claim are: (1) changes in the education system positively affect learning outcomes and equity; and (2) country-produced data on equity, efficiency and learning allow for the measuring/tracking of these changes.

175. Overall, Cambodia's progress towards impact-level change is difficult to trace back to system-level improvements. Establishing links to any changes in learning outcomes is also difficult, due primarily to a lack of data to compare learning outcomes over time, which ultimately poses challenges to tracing any progress made back to system-level improvements. Furthermore, the significant time lag between system-level improvements and measurable change in general poses a challenge to this end.

³¹² MacAuslan, I., Farhat, M., Bunly, S., Craig, R., Huy, S., and Singh, P. "Country-led Evaluation of the National Education Scholarship Programmes of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports in Cambodia (2015-2018)". May 2019.

³¹³ These were: Low levels of coordination in the management of primary and secondary scholarship programs, late payments of scholarships (due to a misalignment between the payment of scholarships, according to fiscal year, and the academic year), and overall opportunity costs of education, especially at the secondary level.

³¹⁴ At the village-level, children in villages with a community preschool were 7% more likely to have attended a preschool by the age of 4 or 6 (Source: Berkes, J., Bougueny, A., Filmerz, D., Fukaox, D. "Combining Supply and Demand-side Interventions: Evidence from a Large Preschool Program in Cambodia". January 2019.).

³¹⁵ It should be noted that EMIS data on preschool enrollment only provides information on state-run preschools, community preschools and private preschools. Informal preschools are not included in EMIS data.

³¹⁶ Additionally, the impact evaluation found that attending a community preschool is likely to offer only marginal increases in child development outcomes versus attending an informal preschool (Ibid).

6 Conclusions and strategic questions/issues

176. This final section of the report draws **overall conclusions** deriving from the evaluation findings and formulates several **strategic questions** that have been raised by the findings of the Cambodia evaluation. These questions are of potential relevance for GPE overall and may warrant further exploration in other upcoming country-level evaluations.

177. This section answers CEQ 7 and CEQ 8 from the evaluation matrix:

- What, if any, aspects of GPE support to Cambodia should be improved? What, if any, good practices have emerged related to how GPE supports countries? (CEQ 7)
- What, if any, good practices have emerged related to how countries address specific education sector challenges/how countries operate during different elements of the policy cycle? (CEQ 8)

6.1 Conclusions

Overall, GPE contributions to strengthening the education sector are modest given the many different factors contributing to its country-level objectives in different parts of the policy cycle in Cambodia. During the review period, these factors included: the relatively large number of other donors investing in sector planning, monitoring and ESP implementation; the MoEYS' overall orientation towards reform and its ability to advocate for budget allocations from the MEF; and contextual factors such as the long-running collegial relations between DPs and the RGC, as well as the lack of demand from the MoEYS for increased alignment of external financing to national PFM systems, among others.

178. GPE's country-level ToC outlines four country-level objectives for GPE's support. Table 6.1 recapitulates this evaluation's assessment of the degree of GPE contribution to each of these in Cambodia.

Table 6.1 Overview of GPE contribution to country-level objectives of the GPE ToC

COUNTRY-LEVEL OBJECTIVES	RATING OF DEGREE/LIKELIHOOD OF GPE CONTRIBUTION
Sector Planning	Modest
Sector Dialogue and Monitoring (Mutual Accountability)	Modest
Sector Financing	Limited
Sector Plan Implementation	Modest

179. Evidence emerging from stakeholder consultations and reviewed documents highlight how the presence of GPE in Cambodia made modest contributions in several areas.

- **GPE helped strengthen sector planning in ways that were operationally relevant³¹⁷ in the Cambodian context.** The development of the ESP 2014-2018/MTR 2016 and 2019-2023 ESP was not dependent on GPE financial support. The MoEYS had the motivation, resources and capabilities

³¹⁷ By operational relevance, we refer to alignment with the practical needs of intended beneficiaries, in this case DCP governments.

to conduct consultative sector planning and has received consistent financial contributions and technical assistance from development partners such as CDPF and UNESCO/IIEP in this endeavour.

- GPE has, however, leveraged its requirements for a credible, endorsed ESP even in a context in which the ESPIG approval process is out of sync with the national planning cycle. Its flexibility in applying these requirements (for example, using the MTR report as an updated ESP in order to apply for the ESPIG, use of the independent appraisal process in 2019 to strengthen dialogue on quality of the ESP, and not requiring another full-fledged ESA to inform the new ESP) has helped make GPE support operationally relevant to Cambodia.
- **GPE contributions to mutual accountability were less tangible due to the Cambodian context where on the one hand there are already mature mechanisms for monitoring and dialogue, on the other there are ongoing challenges for coordination.** GPE has not been able to address some of the expressed concerns about functionality and participation in different existing platforms and processes, for example, the level and type of dialogue in the ESWG or the JTWG, and the inconsistent participation of all donors, CSOs and teacher unions in sector dialogue. A strong emphasis on GPE business, including for the design of the performance-based grant component, has diminished the effectiveness/efficiency of sector dialogue mechanisms for some DP participants. In Cambodia, the principle of mutual accountability appears to be served not only through the existing formal coordinating bodies, but also through ad hoc and regular bilateral engagement between the RGC and DPs.
- **GPE implementation grant funding covered only a small proportion of the ESP but helped finance capital expenditures where government funds alone would have been insufficient.** GPE covered approximately 1.2 percent of total ESP costs between 2014-2018 during the implementation of the plan. Government officials highlighted the value of this contribution in filling gaps related to the construction of pre-schools and the funding of scholarships at the primary level. Many of the initiatives developed or rolled out under GPE2 were then integrated into the government budget, which provides a prospect of sustaining the initiatives.
- **During the review period, GPE advocacy did not emphasize education sector finance, as much as other areas of the policy cycle.** Cambodia's investment in education still falls short of 20 percent of national budget and current levels of funding for education do not allow Cambodia to meet the prevailing demands in the sector. Nonetheless, the government has incrementally increased its allocation of resources to the education sector over time. Data suggests that during this period, the partnership (including the GPE Secretariat) did not focus its advocacy on domestic sector finance. MoEYS has been particularly effective in advocating for these steady, albeit small, increases in funding for education. In international funding for education, the partnership (all actors) in Cambodia has not been successful in shifting international aid in the education sector to more collective, aligned modalities for aid delivery, although the recent expansion in membership of the CDPF is a positive step forward.
- **The design of GPE's variable tranche had a series of unplanned and unintended effects on the GPE model in Cambodia.** Although it is too early to determine the effects of the VT on implementation of the sector plan, the design of the variable tranche has had both unintended negative and unplanned positive effects on country-level processes. The VT required new ways of working, with GPE making its first contribution to a pooled fund and the GPE operational model adjusting to two grant agents. DP stakeholders expressed concern about the possible contradiction of requiring endorsement of the ESP, and aligning to the agreed ESP, and then requiring a VT component that introduces a "stretch" element, beyond commitments in the ESP. Furthermore, the definition of what constitutes a "stretch" was widely perceived to be subjective. In the absence of clear and

consistent Secretariat guidance at the time, the design process took a lot of time as stakeholders discussed and revised the nature of the VT indicators and targets. In the final ESPIG application, the VT targets focus on outputs and processes that aim to resolve “bottlenecks” that might otherwise slow down progress towards more transformative change.

- **GPE’s ToC assumes that sector plan implementation is the main factor for subsequent system-level changes.** Available evidence partly supports this assumption, but also highlights the strong effect of other factors, in particular, the overall political economy, on whether and what types of system level changes take place. While the ESP 2014-2018/MTR 2016 provided the guiding framework for investment in system-level change, direct links between implementation to the plan and system-level change are difficult to demonstrate given gaps in ESP monitoring and reporting at an output level. Moreover, the case of Cambodia also illustrates that despite delivering on policies and activities envisioned in the ESP or Reform Agenda commitments, other factors may limit system change. The ministerial efforts to change the way that the 12th grade exams were conducted, led to a decrease in the pass rates, public outcry and (potential) political repercussions for the Minister. This is but one illustration of how political economy factors affect the success of the well-intentioned reforms, particularly as Cambodia continues to move forward with an education agenda that is focused on quality, instead of access.³¹⁸ The assumptions in GPE’s ToC, however, do not explicitly take such political economy factors into account.

180. In general, 5 out of 23 assumptions of GPE’s country-level ToC held in Cambodia (35 percent). Another 11/23 (47 percent) partly held, and the remaining were found to not hold. There is no specific pattern with regards to the different types of assumptions. GPE leverage was found to be stronger in planning than in mutual accountability and finance, for example. The assumptions about the capabilities of actors on the ground vary across the different elements of the ToC.

Table 6.2 Share of GPE ToC assumptions that were found to hold, by contribution claim

Area	Proportions of Assumptions that held, partially held or did not hold		
Sector Planning	60%		40%
Sector Dialogue and Monitoring	25%	50%	25%
Sector Financing	50%		50%
Sector Plan Implementation	50%		50%
System-Level Changes	25%	50%	25%
Impact-Level Changes	100%		
Total	35%	52%	13%

³¹⁸ The challenges of introducing a quality agenda in the Cambodian education policy domain are explored in Kelsall, T and s. Khieng, C. Chantha, and T. Tek Muy, *The Political Economy of Primary Education Reform in Cambodia*, p.132-151, in Hickey, S and N. Hossain, eds, *The Politics of Education in Developing Countries: From Schooling to Learning* (Oxford University Press, 2019).

In Cambodia, applying the GPE operational model has faced various challenges during the period review.

181. Several characteristics of the GPE model that affected the transition to GPE3 in 2017/2018.
- Each GA uses different systems. After 8 years with the World Bank as GA (GPE1 and GPE2), both MoEYS and other stakeholders had to adjust to two grant agents for GPE3. Government stakeholders noted that they had already learned to use World Bank systems (e.g. for procurement) and now had to approach things differently, including through greater use of the RGC's own systems.
 - The two-GA model added coordination challenges both for the DCP and the DPs. In Cambodia, the two-GA model and the CDPF emerged as the only solution to a complex set of issues deriving from the requirements of the new funding model and the capacities of in-country actors. Most importantly, the country-level actors had to find a solution for providing MoEYS with the up-front resources to deliver programming, which would later be reimbursed by GPE once the result was achieved. MoEYS and DPs have adjusted coordination platforms, such as the composition of the CDPF steering committee (adding UNESCO as an observer), in order to ensure coordinated efforts across the fixed and variable tranches of GPE3.

6.2 Good Practices Arising from Cambodia for Other Countries

182. The following 'good practices' were noted by the evaluation team that may be of interest to other DCPs:
- **Cambodia has a master plan and funding mechanism to explicitly support capacity development in the education sector.** In principle, these two mechanisms ensure that there is a coherent plan and funding available to respond to the Ministry's demands for greater system-level capacity to implement education sector plans. Capacity development priorities are identified at both national and sub-national level. It creates an opportunity to approach capacity development through a demand-led process, while at the same time enabling greater aid effectiveness, in that the CDPF (as a funding mechanism) is not linked to one DP. MoEYS now articulates the need to use a more holistic approach to capacity development that moves away from individual capabilities to organizational capabilities.
 - **MoEYS is noted for its effective advocacy with the MEF.** Although Cambodia is not yet close to the 20% target with regard to the proportion of government expenditures allocated to education, it has been able to steadily increase budget allocations for the education sector. This is largely credited to the MoEYS, and the Minister, who have demonstrated leadership and use of evidence (results) that is communicated in ways that resonate with the MEF.
 - **The RGC has shown commitment in its reform of its public financial management systems since 2005 and the MoEYS has been at the forefront of this process.** Progress has been driven by political will to increase financial accountability and budget-policy linkages, and the MoEYS stands as one of the key ministries in the reform process, especially in the introduction of the Program Budget structure.

6.3 Strategic Questions Arising from This CLE for GPE

183. The following strategic questions arise from this CLE for GPE and may be particularly relevant in thinking about the role that GPE plays in a context like Cambodia, where relatively well-established mechanisms for planning, monitoring and implementation exist, but there is a need for sustained levels of higher investment in the sector in order to embed system-level changes, especially with regard to improving the quality and inclusiveness of the education system.

- Does a Master Plan for Capacity Development (backed by pooled funding mechanism) help support planning and implementation capacities over time? Is this something that should be advocated by GPE? How can GPE ensure that capacity development focuses on areas that the Ministry's leadership cares about? How should the concerns about technical capacities for statistical data analysis be addressed? How can GPE shift attention to this area?
- How can GPE better advocate for aligned modalities of aid delivery in education in a country context where there is neither a demand nor supply for such modalities? In Cambodia, several DPs were critical of GPE's use of a project-funding modality when GPE should be setting the bar higher, thereby establishing a trend for better aid effectiveness in the education sector. Yet it was the government's decision to establish GPE2 as a stand-alone project, thus there was no demand for a different modality. Similarly, other DPs have been slow in adopting pooled funding or budget support modalities, which also raises the question about GPE advocacy with members of the partnership at the global level.
- GPE's recent experience in Cambodia puts the concept of "ownership" at the forefront with regard to ESP development. In assessing credibility of an ESP, how can/should the partnership balance the degree of "ownership" in relation to GPE quality standards? What does the partnership value in terms of ownership? The concept of ownership seems to have multiple facets/dimensions that should be considered: ownership of a national planning cycle, ownership of the priorities articulated in the ESP, leadership of the planning process, drafting the content of the plan, negotiating funding for the plan, and paying attention to implementation.

Appendix I Revised Evaluation Matrix

A – Core evaluation questions for summative CLEs³¹⁹

MAIN EVALUATION QUESTIONS AND SUB- QUESTIONS	INDICATORS	MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION	ANALYSIS
Key question I: Has GPE support to [country] contributed to achieving country-level objectives related to sector plan implementation, sector dialogue and monitoring, and more/better financing for education?³²⁰ If so, then how?			
CEQ 1: Has GPE contributed to education sector plan implementation in [country] during the period under review?³²¹ How?			
CEQ 1.1b (summative CLE) What characterized the education sector plan in place during the core period under review?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESP/TEP objectives/envisaged results and related targets • For ESPs: Extent to which the country's sector plan met the criteria for a credible ESP as put forward in GPE/IIEP Guidelines³²² <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – ESP is guided by an overall vision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sector plan(s) for the period covered by the most recent ESPIG • GPE ESP/TEP quality assurance documents • GPE RF data (indicator 16 a-b-c-d)³²⁵ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Descriptive analysis

³¹⁹ Note: this matrix includes only questions for summative evaluations (this report), not prospective evaluations. The full matrix can be found in Appendix II of the revised approach to CLEs, available at <https://www.globalpartnership.org/download/file/fid/84353>.

³²⁰ OECD DAC evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency.

³²¹ The core period under review varies for summative and prospective evaluations. Prospective evaluations will primarily focus on the period early 2018 to early 2020 and will relate observations of change back to the baseline established at this point. The summative evaluations will focus on the period covered by the most recent ESPIG implemented in the respective country. However, where applicable, (and subject to data availability) summative evaluations will also look at the beginning of the next policy cycle, more specifically sector planning processes and related GPE support carried out during/towards the end of the period covered by the most recent ESPIG.

³²² Global Partnership for Education, UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning. Guidelines for Education Sector Plan Appraisal. Washington and Paris. 2015. Guidelines for Education Sector Plan Preparation. Available at: <https://www.globalpartnership.org/content/guidelines-education-sector-plan-preparation>

³²⁵ If the respective ESP has not been rated by GPE (i.e. if no specific information is available on indicators 16 a-d), the evaluation team will provide a broad assessment of the extent to which the ESP meets or does not meet the quality criteria. This review will be based on *existing* reviews and assessments of the sector plan, in particular, the appraisal report. To the extent possible, findings of these assessments will be 'translated' in terms of the GPE/IIEP quality standards.

MAIN EVALUATION QUESTIONS AND SUB- QUESTIONS	INDICATORS	MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION	ANALYSIS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – ESP is strategic, i.e. it identifies strategies for achieving its vision, including required human, technical and financial capacities, and sets priorities) – ESP is holistic, i.e. it covers all sub-sectors as well as non-formal education and adult literacy – ESP is evidence-based, i.e. it starts from an education sector analysis – ESP is achievable – ESP is sensitive to context – ESP pays attention to disparities (e.g. between girls/boys or between groups defined geographically, ethnically/culturally or by income) • For TEPs: Extent to which the country's sector plan met the criteria for a credible TEP as put forward in GPE/IIEP Guidelines³²³ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – TEP is shared (state-driven, developed through participatory process) – TEP is evidence-based – TEP is sensitive to context and pays attention to disparities – TEP is strategic, i.e. it identifies strategies that not only help address immediate needs but lay the foundation for realizing system's long-term vision – TEP is targeted (focused on critical education needs in the short and medium term, on system capacity development, on limited number of priorities) – TEP is operational (feasible, including implementation and monitoring frameworks) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other relevant reports or reviews that comment on the quality of the sector plan 	

³²³ Global Partnership for Education, UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning. Guidelines for Education Sector Plan Appraisal. Washington and Paris. 2016. Guidelines for Transitional Education Plan Preparation. Available at: <https://www.globalpartnership.org/content/guidelines-transitional-education-plan-preparation>

MAIN EVALUATION QUESTIONS AND SUB- QUESTIONS	INDICATORS	MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION	ANALYSIS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extent to which the ESP/TEP meets GPE quality criteria as outlined in the GPE 2020 results framework (indicators 16a, b, c and d)³²⁴ 		
CEQ 1.2b-d (summative CLE – currently in Part B of the matrix below and labelled CEQ 9-11)			
<p>CEQ 1.3 What have been strengths and weaknesses of sector plan implementation during the period under review?</p> <p>What are likely reasons for strong/weak sector plan implementation?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress made towards implementing sector plan objectives/meeting implementation targets of current/most recent sector plan within envisaged timeframe (with focus on changes relevant in view of GPE 2020 envisaged impact and outcome areas) Extent to which sector plan implementation is funded (expected and actual funding gap) Evidence of government ownership of and leadership for plan implementation (country specific).³²⁶ Government implementation capacity and management, e.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existence of clear operational/implementation plans or equivalents to guide sector plan implementation and monitoring Clear roles and responsibilities related to plan implementation and monitoring Relevant staff have required knowledge/skills/experience) Extent to which development partners who have endorsed the plan have actively supported/contributed to its implementation in an aligned manner Extent to which sector dialogue and monitoring have facilitated dynamic adaptation of sector plan implementation to respond to contextual changes (where applicable) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sector plan(s) for the period covered by the most recent (mostly) complete ESPIG DCP government ESP/TEP implementation documents including mid-term or final reviews Relevant programme or sector evaluations, including reviews preceding the period of GPE support under review JSR reports Reports or studies on ESP/TEP implementation commissioned by other development partners and/or the DCP government CSO reports Interviews DCP's plan implementation progress reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Descriptive analysis Triangulation of data deriving from document review and interviews

³²⁴ If no GPE ratings on these indicators are available, evaluation team's assessment of extent to which the ESP meets the various criteria outlined under indicator 16a-d.

³²⁶ For example, in some countries one indicator of country ownership may be the existence of measures to gradually transfer funding for specific ESP elements from GPE/development partner support to domestic funding. However, this indicator may not be applicable in all countries. Stakeholder interviews will be an important source for identifying appropriate, context-specific indicators for government ownership in each case.

MAIN EVALUATION QUESTIONS AND SUB- QUESTIONS	INDICATORS	MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION	ANALYSIS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extent to which the quality of the implementation plan in the ESP/TEP and of the plan itself is influencing the actual implementation (e.g. achievability, prioritization of objectives) Stakeholder views on reasons why plan has or has not been implemented as envisaged 		
<p>CEQ 1.4 Has GPE contributed to the observed characteristics of sector plan implementation? If so, then how? If not, why not?</p> <p>a) Through GPE EPDG, ESPIG grants-related funding requirements and the variable tranche under the New Funding Model (NFM)³²⁷</p> <p>b) Through non-financial support (advocacy, standards, quality assurance procedures, guidelines, capacity building, and facilitation, and cross-national sharing of evidence/good practice)³²⁸</p>	<p>a) Contributions through GPE EPDG and ESPIG grants, related funding requirements and variable tranche under the NFM (where applicable)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proportion of overall sector plan (both in terms of costs and key objectives) funded through GPE ESPIG Absolute amount of GPE disbursement and GPE disbursement as a share of total aid to education Evidence of GPE grants addressing gaps/needs or priorities identified by the DCP government and/or LEG Degree of alignment of ESPIG objectives with ESP objectives. Grant implementation is on time and on budget Degree of achievement of/progress toward achieving ESPIG targets (showed mapped to ESPIG objectives, and sector plan objectives) Evidence of variable tranche having influenced policy dialogue before and during sector plan implementation (where applicable) Progress made towards sector targets outlined in GPE grant agreements as triggers for variable tranche under the NFM, compared to progress made in areas without specific targets (where applicable) EPDG/ESPIG resources allocated to (implementation) capacity development Stakeholder views on GPE EPDG and ESPIG grants with focus on: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ESP implementation data including joint sector reviews GPE grant agent reports and other grant performance data Secretariat reports, e.g. country lead back to office/mission reports GPE ESP/TSP quality assurance documents Other documents on GPE advocacy/facilitation Country-specific grant applications Interviews Education sector analyses Country's poverty reduction strategy paper 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Triangulation of data deriving from document review and interviews Where applicable: Comparison of progress made towards ESPIG grant objectives linked to specific performance targets with those without targets (variable tranche under the New Funding Model)

³²⁷ Where applicable.

³²⁸ Facilitation provided primarily through the GPE Secretariat, the grant agent and coordinating agency. Advocacy – including inputs from Secretariat, grant agent, coordinating agency, LEG, and GPE at global level (e.g. Board meetings, agreed upon standards). Knowledge exchange - including cross-national/global activities related to the diffusion of evidence and best practice to improve sector planning and implementation.

MAIN EVALUATION QUESTIONS AND SUB- QUESTIONS	INDICATORS	MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION	ANALYSIS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Value added by these grants to overall sector plan implementation – the extent to which the new (2015) funding model is clear and appropriate especially in relation to the variable tranche – how well GPE grant application processes are working for in-country stakeholders (e.g. are grant requirements clear? Are they appropriate considering available grant amounts?) <p>b) Contributions through non-financial support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Types of GPE support (advocacy, facilitation, knowledge sharing) aimed at strengthening sustainable local/national capacities for plan implementation • Relevance of GPE non-financial support in light of DCP government's own capacity development plan(s) (where applicable) • Stakeholder views on relevance and effectiveness of GPE non-financial support with focus on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – GPE non-financial support contributing to strengthening sustainable local/national capacities relevant for plan implementation – GPE non-financial facilitating harmonized development partners' support to plan implementation • Possible causes for no/ limited GPE contribution to plan implementation 		
<p>CEQ 1.5 How has education sector financing evolved during the period under review?</p> <p>a) Amounts of domestic financing</p> <p>b) Amounts and sources of international financing</p> <p>c) Quality of domestic and international financing (e.g. short, medium and long-term</p>	<p>a) Amounts of domestic education sector financing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in country's public expenditures on education during period under review (absolute amounts and spending relative to total government expenditure) • Extent to which country has achieved, maintained, moved toward, or exceeded 20% of public expenditures on education during period under review • Changes in education recurrent spending as a percentage of total government recurrent spending <p>b) Amounts and sources of international financing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creditor Reporting System (CRS) by OECD-DAC • UIS data by UNESCO • National data (e.g. Education Management Information Systems, National Education Accounts, Joint Sector Reviews, public expenditure reviews) • GPE results framework indicator 29 on alignment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trend analysis for period under review • Descriptive analysis

MAIN EVALUATION QUESTIONS AND SUB- QUESTIONS	INDICATORS	MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION	ANALYSIS
<p>predictability, alignment with government systems)?</p> <p>1. If no positive changes, then why not?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in the number and types of international donors supporting the education sector • Changes in amounts of education sector funding from traditional and non-traditional donors (e.g. private foundations and non-DAC members) • Changes in percentage of capital expenditures and other education investments funded through donor contributions c) Quality of sector financing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in the quality (predictability, alignment, harmonization/modality) of international education sector financing to country • Changes in the quality of domestic education financing (e.g. predictability, frequency and timeliness of disbursements, program versus input-based funding) • Extent to which country dedicates at least 45% of its education budget to primary education (for countries where PCR is below 95%) • Changes in allocation of specific/additional funding to marginalized groups • Changes in extent to which other donors' funding/conditional budget support is tied to the education sector 		
<p>CEQ 1.6 Has GPE contributed to leveraging additional education sector financing and improving the quality of financing?</p> <p>If yes, then how? If not, then why not?</p> <p>a) Through ESPIG funding and related funding requirements?</p> <p>b) Through the GPE multiplier funding mechanisms (where applicable)?</p>	<p>a) Through ESPIG funding and related requirements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government commitment to finance the endorsed sector plan (expressed in ESPIG applications) • Extent to which GPE Program Implementation Grant-supported programs have been co-financed by other actors or are part of pooled funding mechanisms • Stakeholder views on extent to which GPE funding requirements (likely) having influenced changes in domestic education financing • Changes in relative size of GPE financial contribution in relation to other donor' contributions • Trends in external financing and domestic financing channelled through and outside of GPE, and for basic and total education, to account for any substitution by donors or the country government 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESPIG grant applications and related documents (country commitment on financing requirement) • Donor pledges and contributions to ESP implementation) • Creditor Reporting System (CRS) by OECD-DAC • UIS data by UNESCO • National data (e.g. Education Management Information Systems, National Education Accounts, Joint Sector Reviews, public expenditure reviews) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comparative analysis (GPE versus other donor contributions) • Triangulation of quantitative analysis with interview data

MAIN EVALUATION QUESTIONS AND SUB- QUESTIONS	INDICATORS	MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION	ANALYSIS
2. Through other means, including advocacy ³²⁹ at national and/or global levels?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alignment of GPE education sector program implementation grants with national systems³³⁰ • Possible reasons for non-alignment or non-harmonization of ESPIGs (if applicable) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> b) Through the GPE multiplier funding mechanism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amount received by DCP government through the GPE multiplier fund (if applicable) • Stakeholder views on clarity and efficiency of multiplier application process c) Through other means (especially advocacy) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likelihood of GPE advocacy having contributed to country meeting/approaching goal of 20% of the total national budget dedicated to education • Changes in existing dynamics between education and finance ministries that stakeholders (at least partly) attribute to GPE advocacy³³¹ (e.g. JSRs attended by senior MoF staff) • Amounts and quality of additional resources likely mobilized with contribution from GPE advocacy efforts at country or global levels • Amounts and sources of non-traditional financing (e.g. private or innovative finance) that can be linked to GPE leveraging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with national actors (e.g. Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Education, Local Education Groups/ Development partner groups) 	
CEQ 2 Has GPE contributed to strengthening mutual accountability for the education sector during the period under review? If so, then how?			
CEQ 2.1 Has sector dialogue changed during the period under review? If so, then how and why? If not, why not?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Composition of the country's LEG (in particular civil society and teacher association representation), and changes in this composition during period under review; other dialogue mechanisms in place (if any) and dynamics between those mechanisms • Frequency of LEG meetings, and changes in frequency during period under review • LEG members consulted for ESPIG application 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LEG meeting notes • Joint sector reviews or equivalents from before and during most recent ESPIG period • GPE sector review assessments • ESP/TSP, and documents illustrating process of their development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-post comparison • Triangulate results of document review and interviews • Stakeholder analysis and mapping

³²⁹ Through the Secretariat at country and global levels, and/or GPE board members (global level, influencing country-specific approaches of individual donors)

³³⁰ GPE's system alignment criteria including the 10 elements of alignment and the elements of harmonization captured by RF indicators 29, 30 respectively.

³³¹ This advocacy can have taken place in the context of GPE support to education sector planning, sector dialogue, and/or plan implementation

MAIN EVALUATION QUESTIONS AND SUB- QUESTIONS	INDICATORS	MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION	ANALYSIS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholder views on changes in sector dialogue in terms of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Degree to which different actors lead, contribute to, or facilitate dialogue – Inclusiveness – Consistency, clarity of roles and responsibilities – Meaningfulness (i.e. perceptions on whether, when and how stakeholder input is taken into account for decision making) – Quality (evidence-based, transparent) – Likely causes for no/limited (changes in) sector dialogue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Back to office reports/memos from Secretariat • ESPIG grant applications (section V – information on stakeholder consultations) • Interviews 	
<p>CEQ 2.2 Has sector monitoring changed? If so, then how and why? If not, why not?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent to which plan implementation is being monitored (e.g. results framework with targets, performance review meetings, annual progress reports... and actual use of these monitoring tools) • Frequency of joint sector reviews conducted, and changes in frequency during period under review; nature of JSR meetings held; and any other monitoring events at country level (e.g., DP meetings...) • Extent to which joint sector reviews conducted during period of most recent ESPIG met GPE quality standards (if data is available: compared to JSRs conducted prior to this period) • Evidence deriving from JSRs is reflected in DCP government decisions (e.g. adjustments to sector plan implementation) and sector planning • Stakeholder views on changes in JSRs in terms of them being: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Inclusive and participatory, involving the right number and types of stakeholders – Aligned to existing sector plan and/or policy framework – Evidence based – Used for learning/informing decision-making – Embedded in the policy cycle (timing of JSR appropriate to inform decision making; processes in place to follow up on 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LEG and JSR meeting notes • Joint sector review reports/aide memoires or equivalents from before and during most recent ESPIG period • GPE sector review assessments • Grant agent reports • Back to office reports/memos from Secretariat • Interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-post comparison • Triangulate the results of document review and interviews

MAIN EVALUATION QUESTIONS AND SUB- QUESTIONS	INDICATORS	MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION	ANALYSIS
	<p>JRS recommendations)³³² and recommendations are acted upon and implemented</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder views on extent to which current practices of sector dialogue and monitoring amount to 'mutual accountability' for the education sector Likely causes for no/ limited (changes in) sector monitoring 		
<p>CEQ 2.3 Has GPE contributed to observed changes in sector dialogue and monitoring? If so, then how? If not, why not?</p> <p>a) Through GPE grants and funding requirements³³³</p> <p>b) Through other support (capacity development, advocacy, standards, quality assurance, guidelines, facilitation, cross-national sharing of evidence/good practice)³³⁴</p>	<p>a) Grants and funding requirements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proportion of total costs for sector dialogue mechanisms (and/or related specific events) funded through GPE grants Proportion of total costs for sector monitoring mechanisms (e.g. JSR) funded through GPE grants Stakeholder views on extent to which GPE funding process (e.g. selection of grant agent, development of program document, grant application) and grant requirements positively or negatively influenced the existence and functioning of mechanisms for sector dialogue and/or monitoring <p>b) Non-grant related support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support is aimed at strengthening local/national capacities for conducting inclusive and evidence-based sector dialogue and monitoring Support is targeted at gaps/weaknesses of sector dialogue/monitoring identified by DCP government and/or LEG 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LEG meeting notes Joint sector reviews or equivalents from before and during most recent ESPIG period GPE sector review assessments Grant agent reports Back to office reports/memos from Secretariat Interviews CSEF, KIX documents etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Triangulate the results of document review and interviews

³³² Criteria adapted from: Global Partnership for Education. Effective Joint Sector Reviews as (Mutual) Accountability Platforms. GPE Working Paper #1. Washington. June 2017. Available at: <https://www.globalpartnership.org/blog/helping-partners-make-best-use-joint-sector-reviews>

³³³ All relevant GPE grants to country/actors in country, including CSEF and KIX, where applicable.

³³⁴ Capacity development and facilitation primarily through Secretariat, coordinating agency (especially in relation to sector dialogue) and grant agent (especially in relation to sector monitoring). Advocacy through Secretariat (country lead), CA, as well as (possibly) GPE at the global level (e.g. Board meetings, agreed upon standards). Knowledge exchange includes cross-national/global activities organized by the Secretariat, as well as the sharing and use of insights derived from GRA and KIX grant-supported interventions. Knowledge sharing also possible through other GPE partners at country level (e.g. other donors/LEG members) if provided primarily in their role as GPE partners.

MAIN EVALUATION QUESTIONS AND SUB- QUESTIONS	INDICATORS	MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION	ANALYSIS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for strengthening sector dialogue/monitoring is adapted to meet the technical and cultural requirements of the specific context in [country] a) and b) • Stakeholder view on relevance and appropriateness of GPE grants and related funding process and requirements, and of other support in relation to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Addressing existing needs/priorities – Respecting characteristics of the national context – Adding value to country-driven processes (e.g. around JSRs) • Possible causes for no/ limited GPE contributions to dialogue/monitoring 		
CEQ 3: Has GPE support had unintended/unplanned effects? What factors other than GPE support have contributed to observed changes in sector planning, sector plan implementation, sector financing and monitoring?			
CEQ 3.1 What factors other than GPE support are likely to have contributed to the observed changes (or lack thereof) in sector planning, financing, plan implementation, and in sector dialogue and monitoring?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in nature and extent of financial/non-financial support to the education sector provided by development partners/donors (traditional/non-traditional donors including foundations) • Contributions (or lack thereof) to sector plan implementation, sector dialogue or monitoring made by actors other than GPE • Changes/events in national or regional context(s) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Political context (e.g. changes in government/leadership) – Economic context – Social/environmental contexts (e.g. natural disasters, conflict, health crises) – Other (context-specific) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documents illustrating changes in priorities pursued by (traditional/non-traditional) donors related implications for [country] • Relevant studies/reports commissioned by other education sector actors (e.g. donors, multilateral agencies) regarding nature/changes in their contributions and related results • Government and other (e.g. media) reports on changes in relevant national contexts and implications for the education sector • Interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Triangulate the results of document review and interviews
CEQ 3.2 During the period under review, have there been unintended, positive or negative, consequences of GPE financial and non-financial support?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Types of unintended, positive and negative, effects on sector planning, financing, sector plan implementation, sector dialogue and monitoring deriving from GPE grants and funding requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All data sources outlined for CEQs 1 and 2 above • Interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Triangulate the results of document review and interviews

MAIN EVALUATION QUESTIONS AND SUB- QUESTIONS	INDICATORS	MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION	ANALYSIS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Types of unintended, positive and negative, effects deriving from other GPE support 		
Key question II: Has sector plan implementation contributed to making the overall education system in [country] more effective and efficient?			
<p>CEQ 4 During the period under review, how has the education system changed in relation to:</p> <p>a) Improving access to education and equity?</p> <p>b) Enhancing education quality and relevance (quality of teaching/instruction)?</p> <p>c) Sector Management?³³⁵</p> <p>If there were no changes in the education system, then why not and with what implications?³³⁶</p>	<p>a) Improving education access and equity - focus on extent to which DCP meets its own performance indicators, where available, e.g. related to:³³⁷</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes in number of schools relative to children Changes in the average distance to schools Changes in costs of education to families Changes in the availability of programs to improve children's' readiness for school) New/expanded measures put in place to ensure meeting the educational needs of children with special needs and of learners from disadvantaged groups New/expanded measures put in place to ensure gender equality in education <p>b) Enhancing education quality and relevance (Quality of teaching/instruction) – focus on extent to which DCP meets its own performance indicators, e.g. related to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes in pupil/trained teacher ratio during period under review Changes in equitable allocation of teachers (measured by relationship between number of teachers and number of pupils per school) Changes in relevance and clarity of (basic education) curricula Changes in the quality and availability of teaching and learning materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education Management Information System (EMIS) UIS data World Bank data Household survey data ASER/UWEZO other citizen-led surveys Grant agent progress reports Implementing partner progress reports Mid-term Evaluation reports GPE annual Results Report Appraisal Reports Public expenditure reports CSO reports SABER database Education financing studies Literature on good practices in education system domains addressed in country's sector plan Interviews ESPIG grant applications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre-post comparison of statistical data for periods under review Triangulate the results of document review with statistical data, interviews and literature on 'good practice' in specific areas of systems strengthening

³³⁵ The sub-questions reflect indicators under Strategic Goal #3 as outlined in the GPE results framework as well as country-specific indicators for system-level change and elements (such as institutional strengthening) of particular interest to the Secretariat.

³³⁶ Implications for education access and equity, quality and relevance, and sector management, as well as likely implications for progress towards learning outcomes and gender equality/equity.

³³⁷ The noted indicators are examples of relevant measures to indicate removal of barriers to education access. Applicability may vary across countries. Where no country specific indicators and/or data are available, the CLE will draw upon UIS (and other) data on the described indicators.

MAIN EVALUATION QUESTIONS AND SUB- QUESTIONS	INDICATORS	MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION	ANALYSIS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes in teacher pre-service and in-service training Changes in incentives for schools/teachers <p>c) Sector Management – focus on extent to which DCP meets its own performance indicators, e.g. related to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes in the institutional capacity of key ministries and/or other relevant government agencies (e.g. staffing, structure, organizational culture, funding) Changes in whether country has and how it uses EMIS data to inform policy dialogue, decision making and sector monitoring If no functioning EMIS is in place, existence of a realistic remedial strategy in place Changes in whether country has and how it uses quality learning assessment system within the basic education cycle during period under review <p>(a-c):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Likely causes for no/ limited changes at system level (based on literature review and stakeholder views) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relevant documents/reports illustrating changes in key ministries' institutional capacity (e.g. on restructuring, internal resource allocation) 	
<p>CEQ 5 How has sector plan implementation contributed to observed changes at education system level?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The specific measures put in place as part of sector plan implementation address previously identified bottlenecks at system level Alternative explanations for observed changes at system level (e.g. changes due to external factors, continuation of trend that was already present before current/most recent policy cycle, targeted efforts outside of the education sector plan) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sources as shown for CEQ 4 Literature on good practices in education system domains addressed in country's sector plan Education sector analyses Country's poverty reduction strategy paper 	
<p>Key question III: Have improvements at education system level contributed to progress towards impact?</p>			
<p>CEQ 6 During the period under review, what changes have occurred in relation to:</p> <p>a) Learning outcomes (basic education)?</p> <p>b) Equity, gender equality and inclusion in education?</p> <p>Is there evidence to link changes in learning outcomes, equity, gender equality, and inclusion to system-</p>	<p>Changes/trends in DCP's core indicators related to learning/equity as outlined in current sector plan and disaggregated (if data is available). For example:</p> <p>a) Learning outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes/trends in learning outcomes (basic education) during period under review (by gender, by socio-economic group, by rural/urban locations) <p>b) Equity, gender equality, and inclusion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sector performance data available from GPE, UIS, DCP government and other reliable sources Teacher Development Information System (TDIS) Education Management Information System (EMIS) National examination data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre-post comparison of available education sector data (examination of trends) during and up to 5 years before core period under review Triangulation of statistical data with

MAIN EVALUATION QUESTIONS AND SUB- QUESTIONS	INDICATORS	MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION	ANALYSIS
<p>level changes identified under CEQ 4?</p> <p>What other factors can explain changes in learning outcomes, equity, etc.?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in gross and net enrollment rates (basic education) during review period (by gender, by socio-economic group, by rural/urban) • Changes in proportion of children (girls/boys) who complete (i) primary, (ii) lower-secondary education • Changes in transition rates from primary to lower secondary education (by gender, by socio-economic group) • Changes in out of school rate for (i) primary, (ii) lower-secondary education (by gender, socio-economic group, rural/urban location) • Changes in dropout and/or repetition rates (depending on data availability) for (i) primary, (ii) lower-secondary education • Changes in the distribution of out of school children (girls/boys; children with/without disability; ethnic, geographic and/or economic backgrounds) • Plausible links between changes in country's change trajectory related to learning outcomes, equity, gender equality, and inclusion during period under review on the one hand, and specific system-level changes put in place during the same period • Additional explanations for observed changes in learning outcomes, equity, gender equality, and inclusion other than system-level changes noted under CEQ 4 and 5 • Likely reasons for impact-level changes during period under review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International and regional learning assessment data • EGRA/EGMA data • ASER/UWEZO other citizen-led surveys • Grant agent and Implementing partner progress reports • Mid-term Evaluation reports • GPE annual Results Report • Studies/evaluation reports on education (sub)sector(s) in country commissioned by the DCP government or other development partners (where available) • Literature on key factors affecting learning outcomes, equity, equality, and inclusion in comparable settings 	<p>qualitative document analysis</p>
<p>Key question IV: What are implications of evaluation findings for GPE support to [country]?</p>			
<p>CEQ 7 What, if any, aspects of GPE support to [country] should be improved? What, if any, good practices have emerged related to how GPE supports countries? ³³⁸</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insights deriving from answering evaluation questions above e.g. in relation to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Clarity and relevance of the roles and responsibilities of key GPE actors at the country level (Secretariat, GA, CA, DCP government, other actors) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All of the above as well as (for summative evaluations) sources applied for CEQs 9, 10 and 11 (part B below) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Triangulation of data collected, and analysis conducted for other evaluation questions

³³⁸ For both questions CEQ 7 and 8 the notion of 'good practice' refers to acknowledging processes, mechanisms, ways of working etc. that the CLE found to work well and/or that were innovative in that specific context. The intention is not to try and identify globally relevant benchmarks or universally 'good practice'.

MAIN EVALUATION QUESTIONS AND SUB- QUESTIONS	INDICATORS	MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION	ANALYSIS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Strengths and weaknesses of how and whether GPE key country-level actors fulfill their roles (both separately and jointly i.e. through a partnership approach) – The relative influence/benefits deriving from GPE financial and non-financial support respectively (with focus on the NFM, where applicable) – Extent to which logical links in the GPE theory of change are, or are not, supported by evidence – Extent to which originally formulated underlying assumptions of the ToC appear to apply/not apply and why – Extent to which different elements in the theory of change appear to mutually enforce/support each other (e.g. relationship sector dialogue and sector planning) – Stakeholder satisfaction with GPE support 		
<p>CEQ 8 What, if any, good practices have emerged related to how countries address specific education sector challenges/how countries operate during different elements of the policy cycle?³³⁹</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insights deriving from answering evaluation questions above e.g. in relation to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Effectiveness of approaches taken in the respective country to ensure effective sector planning, sector dialogue and monitoring, sector financing, sector plan implementation – Successful, promising, and/or contextually innovative approaches taken as part of sector plan implementation to address specific sector challenges³⁴⁰ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All of the above as well as (for summative evaluations) sources applied for CEQs 9, 10 and 11 (part B below) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Triangulation of data collected, and analysis conducted for other evaluation questions

³³⁹ This could mean, for example, highlighting strengths of existing mechanisms for sector planning that either reflect related GPE/IEEP guidelines and quality criteria or that introduce alternative/slightly different approaches that appear to work well in the respective context.

³⁴⁰ For example, highlighting promising approaches taken by the respective government and development partners to try and reach out of school children. Please note that ‘innovative’ means ‘innovative/new in the respective context’, not necessarily globally new.

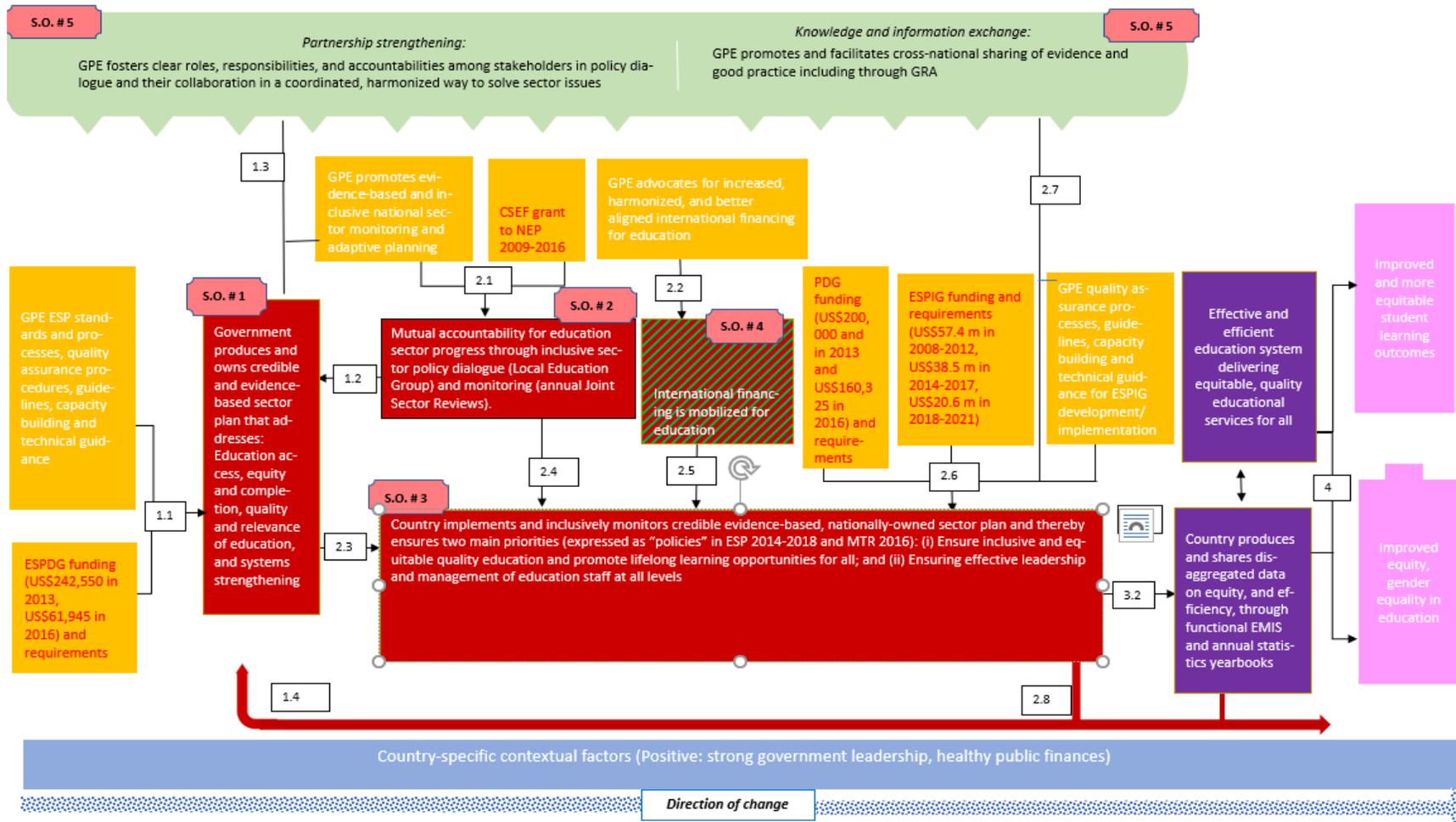
B – Additional/new questions for summative plus evaluations

MAIN EVALUATION QUESTIONS AND SUB- QUESTIONS	INDICATORS	MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION	ANALYSIS
Key question V: Has GPE support to sector planning contributed to better (more relevant, more realistic, government-owned) sector plans?			
<p>CEQ 9: To what extent has the revised QAR process for education sector plans contributed to the development of better-quality education sector plans? Why? Why not?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality ratings (GPE RF indicator 16) of previous/new sector plan Comparison of depth and clarity of appraisal reports and Secretariat comments for previous/new sector plan Comparison of the extent to which observations/recommendations deriving from Secretariat and other stakeholders' reviews and external ESP/TEP appraisal are reflected in final plans or accompanying documents (old/new plan) Extent to which identified strengths/weaknesses of the previous ESP and its implementation (see CEQ 1.2) are reflected in the new ESP and related implementation arrangements Stakeholder views on strengths/weaknesses of the revised QAR process (including on whether they find GPE-IIEP criteria helpful or problematic for assessing the quality of sector plans) Possible causes for no/limited improvements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appraisal reports, appraisal memos Secretariat feedback on draft ESP and appraisal report GPE Results Framework indicators 16(a), 16(b), 16(c), and 16 (d) for previous and most recent ESP³⁴¹ Evaluations/mid-term reviews of previous sector plan implementation Country-level national development plans/strategies Interviews Insights deriving from desk review component of the separate study on GPE support to sector planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comparative analysis (old/new sector plan and related QAR processes) Triangulation of data deriving from document review and interviews
<p>CEQ 10 - To what extent have the revised ESPDG mechanism and/or ESPIG grant requirements (under the NFM) contributed to the development of better-quality education sector plans? Why? Why not?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ESPDG amounts compared to other (domestic, other DP) resources invested into sector dialogue/stakeholder consultations during plan preparation Extent to which ESPIG process (including determination of variable part indicators where applicable) and requirements (fixed part: have an endorsed quality plan) under the NFM have been drivers of better-quality plans (including in view of fostering sector plan ownership) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ESPDG applications and completion reports ESPIG grant applications Secretariat reports, e.g. country lead back to office/mission reports Appraisal reports, appraisal memos LEG (and other dialogue mechanism) meeting notes, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Triangulate the results of document review and interviews

³⁴¹ If the respective ESP has not been rated by GPE (i.e. if no specific information is available on indicators 16 a-d), the evaluation team will provide a broad assessment of the extent to which the ESP meets or does not meet the quality criteria. This review will be based on *existing* reviews and assessments of the sector plan, in particular, the appraisal report. To the extent possible, findings of these assessments will be 'translated' in terms of the GPE/IIEP quality standards.

MAIN EVALUATION QUESTIONS AND SUB- QUESTIONS	INDICATORS	MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION	ANALYSIS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent to which ESPIG application timelines have positively or negatively affected sector planning and the quality of sector plans • Stakeholder views on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Perceived strengths and weaknesses of the current ESPDG application criteria and process (e.g. is application effort proportional to ESPDG benefits? Do application criteria positive/negatively influence country ownership?) – Perceived positive/negative effects of GPE support on ensuring a smooth transition between sector plans – Alternative ways to support sector planning • Other factors that influenced the timing and/or quality of sector planning and/or of ownership of the new ESP/TEP (e.g. changes in country's political or socio-economic contexts) • Possible causes for no improvements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • memos etc. for period relevant to most recent sector plan development • Insights deriving from desk review component of the separate study on GPE support to sector planning • Interviews 	
<p>CEQ 11: To what extent have GPE support to sector planning and to inclusive sector dialogue had mutually beneficial effects?</p> <p>a) To what extent has GPE support to sector planning influenced inclusive sector dialogue?</p> <p>b) To what extent has GPE support to inclusive sector dialogue influenced sector planning?</p> <p>Why? Why not?</p>	<p>a) Effects of GPE support to sector planning on sector dialogue</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent to which different actors having worked together during the planning process has (likely) led to sustained improvements in sector dialogue <p>b) Effects of GPE support to sector dialogue on sector planning</p> <p>Extent to which changes in sector dialogue (e.g. existence, composition, functioning of the LEG or equivalent) has (likely) led to more inclusive, more participatory and/or more evidence-based sector planning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sector plan appraisal reports for most recent and previous sector plans • Secretariat reports, e.g. country lead back to office/mission reports • LEG (and other dialogue mechanism) meeting notes, memos etc. for period relevant to development of two most recent sector plans • Interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Triangulate the results of document review and interviews

Appendix II GPE country-level theory of change for the Kingdom of Cambodia



LEGEND

	xxx	Non-financial GPE inputs/support (technical assistance, facilitation, advocacy)
	xxx	GPE financial inputs/support (grants) and related funding requirements
		Country-level objectives that GPE support/influence directly contributes to. Underlined items are issues (at least partly) supported through the ESPIG-funded PDSEB sub-sector plan.
		Global-level objectives that GPE support/influence directly contributes, which have consequences at country level (policy cycle continuum)
		Global-level objectives with ramifications at country level, that are influenced but not solely driven by GPE's global and country-level interventions and/or influence
		Intermediate outcomes: Education system-level changes
		Impact: Changes in learning outcomes, equity, equality, and inclusion
		Contextual factors
	S.O. # 3	Corresponding Strategic Objective in the GPE 2020 Strategic Plan

1

Numbers represent the key areas where logical linkages (explanatory mechanisms) connect different elements of the theory of change to one another (*'because of x, y happens'*). Numbers are aligned with the anticipated sequencing of achievements (1. sector plan development, 2. sector plan implementation, sector monitoring and dialogue, 3. education system-level changes, 4. envisaged impact).

Appendix III Evaluation methodology

The evaluation aims to assess the relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of GPE's inputs at the country level and the validity of GPE's theory of change to establish if and how GPE outputs and activities contribute to outcomes and impact.³⁴² The guiding frameworks for the evaluation are the **evaluation matrix** (Appendix I) and the **country-level** theory of change for Cambodia (Appendix II).³⁴³

The overall approach to this evaluation is theory-based and uses **contribution analysis** (CA). CA is a theory-based approach to evaluation designed to identify the contribution a program or (series of) interventions is making to observed results through an increased understanding of why observed changes have occurred (or not occurred) and the roles played by the intervention and by other internal and external factors respectively.³⁴⁴

The evaluation team chose contribution analysis as the main approach to this assignment as it is particularly useful in situations (i) where a program is not experimental, but has been implemented on the basis of a relatively clearly articulated theory of change; (ii) where the change processes in questions are complex rather than one-dimensional, i.e., where change is influenced due to a variety of inter-related factors as opposed to single policy interventions that could be isolated; (iii) where the change processes in question are highly context-specific. A report deriving from applying contribution analysis does not provide definite proof, but rather provides an evidence-based line of reasoning from which plausible conclusions can be drawn on the types and reasons for contributions made by the program/intervention in question. CA draws upon both quantitative and qualitative evidence to build the 'contribution story' for the program or intervention(s) under review.

This country level evaluation (CLE), of GPE's support to the national education system of the Kingdom of Cambodia, is part of a larger GPE study that comprises a total of 20 summative and eight formative CLEs. In October 2018, the approach for the summative evaluations was slightly modified. Starting in FY18, these new 'summative plus' (including this evaluation) will have the following modifications:

- 'Summative plus' CLE will not only explore one policy cycle³⁴⁵ and related GPE support ('first policy cycle'), but also include the beginning of the following policy cycle (the 'second policy cycle'). This will allow addressing questions around the transition from one ESP to the next and related GPE contributions,
- The CLEs will also explore strengths, weaknesses and value added of the revised GPE Quality Assurance and Review (QAR) and ESPDG mechanism.

³⁴² In the context of this assignment, the term 'impact' is aligned with the terminology used by GPE to refer changes in the areas of learning, equity, gender equality and inclusion (reflected in GPE Strategic Goals 1 and 2 described in the 2020 Strategic Plan). While examining progress towards impact in this sense, the country evaluations do not constitute formal impact evaluations, which usually entail counterfactual analysis based on randomized controlled trials.

³⁴³ This country-specific ToC was adapted from the generic country-level ToC that had been developed in the assignment Inception Report.

³⁴⁴ See, for example: Mayne, J. "Addressing Cause and Effect in Simple and Complex Settings through Contribution Analysis". In *Evaluating the Complex*, R. Schwartz, K. Forss, and M. Marra (Eds.), Transaction Publishers, (2011).

³⁴⁵ i.e. from sector planning and related sector dialogue to sector plan implementation and monitoring during the period covered by the most recent fully or mostly disbursed ESPIG.

- The reports for ‘summative plus’ will include a final section on Strategic Questions, which will summarize – if applicable – suggestions for how GPE support to the respective country can be improved, and/or which will outline overarching questions about the GPE operational model that may be worth further exploring in the context of other summative and prospective CLE.

The process for this country evaluation involved four stages: (i) assessing the availability and quality of data, adapting the country-level theory of change and conducting a country-specific stakeholder mapping to determine priorities for consultations during the in-country site visit (see Appendix IV); (ii) in-country data collection during a ten-working day mission to Cambodia from April 22nd to May 3rd, 2019; (iii) assembling and assessing the GPE contribution story; and (iv) writing the evaluation report.

Data collection and analysis were conducted by a team of two international and one national consultant. Methods of data collection included:

- Document and literature review (see Appendix VI for a list of consulted documents)
- Stakeholder consultations through individual and group interviews in Phnom Penh, Cambodia (as well as a visit to Kampong Speu province). In addition, telephone interviews were conducted with the Secretariat country focal point. Appendix V provides a list of consulted stakeholders. In total, the evaluation team interviewed 74 individuals (see Box iii.1), of which 12 were women.
- Education sector performance data analysis, drawing upon publicly accessible information on learning outcomes, equity, gender equality and inclusion, and education financing.³⁴⁶

Box iii.1: Consulted Stakeholders

MoEYS: 44
 Other ministries and government agencies: 2
 Grant and coordinating agents: 7
 Bilateral and multilateral donors: 10
 Civil Society/Teacher Organizations/Parent organizations: 6
 GPE Secretariat: 1

The evaluation team analyzed the available data using qualitative (descriptive, content, comparative) and quantitative techniques, thereby triangulating different data sources and methods of data collection.

³⁴⁶ The key sources of data are the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) database, data.uis.unesco.org; the Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD) Creditor Reporting System (CRS), <https://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=CRS1>; and country-level datasets and data sources.

Appendix IV Stakeholder mapping

STAKEHOLDER	INTEREST IN/INFLUENCE ON GPE COUNTRY-LEVEL PROGRAMMING IMPORTANCE FOR THE EVALUATION	ROLE IN THE COUNTRY-LEVEL EVALUATION
Global		
Secretariat	<p>Interest: High.</p> <p>Influence: High. The Secretariat operationalizes guidance on overall direction and strategy issued by the Board.</p> <p>Importance: High</p>	<p>The main internal stakeholders and users of the evaluation; Key informants; country lead facilitated the evaluation team's contacts with stakeholders.</p>
Board members (from developing countries included in the sample)	<p>Interest: High.</p> <p>Influence: High. Board members influence the direction, strategy development and management of GPE, and they ensure resources. The extent to which DCP Board members are involved in and intimately familiar with GPE grants in their respective countries likely varies.</p> <p>Importance: High</p>	<p>Cambodia is represented on the GPE Board through the constituency Asia and the Pacific. These board members were <i>not</i> consulted during the course of this country evaluation.</p>
Country-level		
Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS)	<p>Interest: High</p> <p>Influence: High. Responsible for shaping and implementing education sector policy and managing related financing. Focal point with GPE Secretariat.</p> <p>Importance: High. Main partner for GPE grant design and implementation.</p>	<p>Key informants at country level. Directors of all key MoEYS directorates were interviewed in person during the country visit (see Appendix V, list of consulted individuals).</p> <p>Additionally, directors of PoEs and DoEs interviewed during visit of Kampong Speu province.</p>
Other Line Ministries and organizations involved in, or relevant for (basic) education, equity and equality issues: Ministry of Women's Affairs (MoWA), Ministry of Interior (MoI), Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training (MoLVT).	<p>Interest: High</p> <p>Influence: medium. The MoLVT is responsible for delivery of TVET; Ministry of Interior (MoI) is responsible for the roll-out of ongoing D&D reforms and in matters at sub-national levels.</p> <p>Importance: Medium. The ESP only covers activities planned by the MoEYS, and thus does not cover any activities related to TVET planned by the MoLVT.</p>	<p>Key informants at country level (see Appendix V, list of consulted individuals).</p>

STAKEHOLDER	INTEREST IN/INFLUENCE ON GPE COUNTRY-LEVEL PROGRAMMING IMPORTANCE FOR THE EVALUATION	ROLE IN THE COUNTRY-LEVEL EVALUATION
Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF)	Interest: High Influence: High. Responsible for allocation of national budget to various sectors, including education. Importance: High.	The evaluation was not able to meet stakeholders from the MEF.
Key Education Sector Stakeholders (national level)		
Grant Agent: World Bank (GPE2 ESPIG)	Interest: High Influence: High. Responsible for managing the ESPIG 2014-2017 in Cambodia. Importance: High	Key informant at country level. Consulted during/after the visit in Cambodia.
Grant Agent UNESCO (GPE 3 fixed tranche)	Interest: High Influence: High. Responsible for managing GPE3 fixed tranche in Cambodia. Importance: High	Key informant at country level. Consulted during/after the visit in Cambodia.
Coordinating Agency and Grant Agent: UNICEF (also GPE3 variable tranche grant agent)	Interest: High Influence: High. Through its facilitating role, the coordinating agency plays an important role in the functioning of the LEG. Also responsible for managing GPE3 variable tranche. Importance: High	Key informant at country level. Consulted during/after the visit in Cambodia.
Development Partners (donor agencies, multilateral organizations): JICA, KOICA, USAID, Sida	Interest: High Influence: Medium-High, through their participation in the LEG, in sector monitoring exercises, as well as to their own activities in the education sector. Importance: High	Key informants at country level were interviewed in person during the country visit.
Multilateral organizations: ADB, EU, WFP	Interest: High Influence: Medium-High, through their participation in the LEG, in sector monitoring exercises, as well as to their own activities in the education sector. Importance: High	Key informants at country level were interviewed in person during the country visit.

STAKEHOLDER	INTEREST IN/INFLUENCE ON GPE COUNTRY-LEVEL PROGRAMMING IMPORTANCE FOR THE EVALUATION	ROLE IN THE COUNTRY-LEVEL EVALUATION
<p>Non-governmental organizations: CARE Cambodia, VSO, HI Cambodia, VVOB, NEP.</p>	<p>Interest: High Influence: Medium. All are members of the LEG and have participated in sector planning consultations and education sector reviews. The NEP, in particular, stands as the umbrella organization for 152 international and national education NGOs in Cambodia. Importance: Medium-High.</p>	<p>Key informants at country level were consulted during the country site visit.</p>
<p>Teacher organizations: Khmer Teacher Association</p>	<p>Interest: High Influence: Low. Not member of the LEG but attends education sector reviews (Annual Education Congress meetings). Importance: Medium-High.</p>	<p>Key informants at country level were consulted during the country site visit.</p>
<p>Relevant education sector institutions: School directors for Pothivoong and Rotary school</p>	<p>Interest: Medium Influence: Low. Not member of the LEG and did not participate in sector planning consultations and education sector reviews Importance: Medium</p>	<p>Key informants at country level were consulted during visit to Kampong Speu.</p>
<p>Private Sector representatives: Private or faith-based schools</p>	<p>Interest: Medium Influence: Low. Not member of the LEG but may have participated in sector planning consultations and education sector reviews Importance: Medium</p>	<p>No consultations conducted.</p>

Appendix V List of consulted individuals

In total, 74 individuals were interviewed for this CLE, of which 12 were women (16 percent). All consulted individuals were interviewed in person in Phnom Penh, or in Kampong Speu, by the evaluation team, except for three individuals consulted over the phone/skype.

ORGANIZATION	FIRST NAME LAST NAME	TITLE	M/W
Ministries and Agencies of the Kingdom of Cambodia and its constituent states			
Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports	HE Hang Chuon Naron	Minister for Education, Youth and Sports	M
	HE Nath Bunrouen	Secretary of State for Education, Youth and Sports	M
	Chea Vuth	Deputy Director, General Secondary Education Department (GSED)	M
	Dy Kamboly	Director, Department of Policy	M
	HE Lim Sothea	Director General of Policy and Planning, GPE Focal Point	M
	HE Prak Kosal	Director, ECE Department	M
	Sok Sokhom	Chief of Planning Office, ECE Department	M
	Chhoun Bunchhoeun	Deputy Director, ECE Department	M
	HE Tep Phyorith	Director, Department of Finance	M
	Kann Puthy	Deputy Director, Primary Education Department	M
	Von Thol	Chief of Primary Scholarship Office, Primary Education Department	M
	Chhun Ramy	Deputy Director, Primary Education Department	M
	Kouch Kou Louma	Director, Department of Non-Formal Education	M
	Hang Chan Sovan	Deputy Director - Department of Non-Formal Education	M
	Lang Sophat	Vice Chief of Office - Department of Non-Formal Education	M
	Meach Boun	Deputy Director - Chbar Morn, DoE	M
Prak Sarath	Director - Phnom Srouch, DoE	M	

ORGANIZATION	FIRST NAME LAST NAME	TITLE	M/W
	Neth Phearum	Head of Planning, School Health Department	M
	Chnay Kim Sotheavy	Director, School Health Department	W
	Yung Kunthearith	Deputy Director, School Health Department	M
	Ly Leangseng	Chief of Nutrition, School Health Department	M
	Pech Sokunthea	Chief of Administration, School Health Department	M
	Ngor Penglong	Director, Teacher Training Department	M
	Ly Keang	Deputy Director, Teacher Training Department	M
	Sombath Eath	Chief Officer, Teacher Training Department	M
	Nham Sinith	Director, Department of Planning	M
	Muong Naroath	Chief of Operational Planning, Department of Planning	M
	Pong Pitin	Director, EMIS Department	M
	Buth Sakhon	Deputy Director, EMIS Department	M
	Sar Sopheap	Director, Department of M&E	M
	Yin Ra	Deputy Director, Department of M&E	M
	Sieng Sovanna	Director, NIE	M
	Sun Bunna	Deputy Director, Curriculum Development Department	M
	Va Vuthy	Deputy Director, Curriculum Development Department	M
	Khim Sarin	Deputy Director, Curriculum Development Department	M
	Thong Rithy	Director, Department of Special Education	M
	Vorng Phirun	Director, Department of Construction	M
	Yim Kimhach	Deputy Director, PoE	M
	Eng Rith	Chief of Finance, PoE	M
	Hing Saron	Chief of Primary Education, PoE	M
	Vat Chandary	Chief of Preschool, PoE	M

ORGANIZATION	FIRST NAME LAST NAME	TITLE	M/W
	Sam Maly	Chief of Upper Secondary, PoE	M
	Chea Chanroeun	Deputy Chief of Planning, PoE	W
	Yin Sida	Deputy General Inspector, General Inspectorate	M
Ministry of Interior	Min Sitha	Director, Department of Sub-National Administration	M
Ministry of Women's Affairs	Num Bophary	Director, Department of Women and Education	W
Bilateral and multilateral donor agencies			
EU	Michele Crimella	Education Program Manager	M
JICA	Thyda Pich	Program Officer – Education and Gender	W
UNESCO (GPE 3 fixed tranche grant agent)	Santosh Khatri	Chief of Education	M
UNICEF (coordinating agency)	Katheryn Bennett	Chief of Education	W
	Rasika Sridhar Sethi	Education Specialist	W
	Channra Chum	Education Specialist	M
	Sokhany Nget	ESWG Coordinator	W
USAID	John Collins	Education and Child Protection Team Lead	M
World Bank (GPE2 grant agent)	Simeth Beng	Senior Operations Officer	M
	Tsuyoshi Fukao	Education Specialist	M
WFP	Bunthang Chhe	Programme Policy Officer (M&E)	M
	Pheng Sokrathna	Programme Policy Officer	W
	Phalla Keo	Programme Officer	M
SIDA	Magnus Saemundsson	First Secretary - Education	M
ADB	Sopheha Mar	Senior Social Sector Officer	M
KOICA	Weon Jihye	Deputy Country Director	W
	Vuthyda Pen	Program Officer	W
NGOs and CSOs			
CARE Cambodia	Jan Noorlander	Assistant Country Director Programs	M
	Khieu Dany	Education Technical Advisor	W
NEP	Hong Seng	Executive Director	M

ORGANIZATION	FIRST NAME LAST NAME	TITLE	M/W
VSO	Onno de Weerd	Programme Development and Partnership Advisor	M
HI Cambodia	Virginie Dattler	Operations Coordinator	W
VVOB	Wilco Visscher	Program Manager	M
Schools and teachers' organizations			
School	Meas Chim	School Director - Pothivong	M
	Pat Chorm Roeun	School director - Rotary	M
Khmer Association Teacher	Yos Eang	Director of Central Committee	M
	Sin Sim	Secretary General	M
GPE Secretariat			
	Aya Kibesaki	Cambodia Country Lead	W

Appendix VI List of reviewed documents

Note: all web links in this document as of 1st of July, 2019.

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Appendix VII Progress on ESP 2014-2018 implementation

Progress on ESP Core Breakthrough Indicators (CBIs) and sub-sector indicators

		2014	2015	2016	2017	2018 target	2018	Comment
Early Childhood Education								
CBI 1	Percentage of five-year old children enrolled in any form of Early Childhood Education Program	61,4%	64,1%	66,4%	68,5%	70%	63,1%	Improvement, target not met
	% of 4-year-old children accessing any form of early childhood education	29,10%	28,30%	37,4%	39,90%	41%	39%	Improvement, target not met
	% of 3-year-old children accessing any form of early childhood education	16,6%	19,8%	20,3%	21,80%	35,0%	18,5%	Improvement, target not met
	Number of pre-primary teachers received training (PRESET and INSET) with formula 12+4 each year up to 2018	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	No data
	% of pre-primary teachers holding at least Bachelor's degree each year up to 2018	n/a	3%	2%	3,4%	3,3%	6%	Improvement, target met
	Number of pre-primary teachers receiving complete/receive CPD guided INSET each year and by each level up to 2018	n/a	n/a	152	199	200	200	Improvement, target met
	% of ECE services meet quality standards	n/a	11%	15,2%	23,5%	28,8%	32,2%	Improvement, target met
	% of ECE services of 5-year-old learning capacity tested	n/a	20%	25,7%	39,2%	36%	43,3%	Improvement, target met

		2014	2015	2016	2017	2018 target	2018	Comment
	% of children with an acceptable nutritional status	n/a	n/a	27%	30%	70%	38,8%	Improvement, target not met
	% of children in public pre-schools get deworming pills	87,8%	95%	89%	90%	90%	90%	Improvement, target met
Primary Education								
CBI 2	No. of districts with primary education repetition rate less than or equal/£10%	184	171	173	173	188	180	No improvement
CBI 5a	National learning assessment of students at grade 3, in Khmer (Reading)	35.2%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	Insufficient data (noted as "Implement in SY2019-2020" in ESP 2019-2023 reporting)
CBI 5b	National learning assessment of students at grade 3, in Mathematics	41	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	Insufficient data (noted as "Implement in SY2019-2020" in ESP 2019-2023 reporting)
CBI 7	% of Primary Teachers with upper secondary certificate +2	n/a	57%	70%	72%	60%	63%	Improvement, target met
	Net admission rate (both sexes)	99,40%	95,90%	95,10%	95,20%	99%	97,50%	Deteriorated
	Net admission rate (female)	100%	95,40%	94%	95,10%	99%	97,50%	Deteriorated
	Net enrolment rate (both sexes)	97,90%	98,40%	97,70%	97,80%	100%	98,00%	Improvement, target not met
	Net enrolment rate (female)	98,40%	99,30%	98,20%	98,10%	100%	98,50%	Improvement, target not met
	Dropout rate (both sexes)	8,30%	6,20%	4%	4,10%	5%	4,40%	Improvement, target met
	Dropout rate (female)	7,20%	7,20%	3,80%	3,50%	5,20%	3,70%	Improvement, target met
	Completion rate (both sexes)	84,10%	80,60%	79,90%	79,10%	84%	86,19%	Improvement, target met
	Completion rate (female)	86,60%	83,90%	83,20%	82,70%	85%	90,35%	Improvement, target met
	Repetition rate (both sexes)	5,10%	6,70%	6,60%	6,50%	4%	6,20%	Deterioration, targets not met

		2014	2015	2016	2017	2018 target	2018	Comment
	Repetition rate (female)	4,30%	8,10%	5,10%	4,90%	4%	4,70%	Deterioration, targets not met
	Transition rate from primary to lower secondary (both sexes)	78,70%	82,10%	85,50%	86%	89,80%	85,70%	Improvement, target not met
	Transition rate from primary to lower secondary (female)	81,20%	85%	88,30%	88,50%	89,80%	88,40%	Improvement, target met
	Number of districts achieved with primary education completion rate at least 80%	104	95	90	91	126,00	122,00	Improvement, target met
	Percentage of new grade 1 students with pre-school experience	n/a	61,85%	64%	65%	72%	68,40%	Improvement, target not met
	Percentage of child friendly schools at intermediate and developed levels	73,60%	73,45%	79,40%	81,30%	81,40%	83,40%	Improvement, target met
	Percentage of primary schools with latrines	80,90%	85,90%	85,90%	90,60%	87%	92,20%	Improvement, target met
	Percentage of primary schools with safe water	56,80%	58,10%	59,10%	59,30%	87%	58,90%	Improvement, target not met
	Percentage of primary schools with hand-washing facilities	47,20%	47,20%	53%	52,90%	57,80%	56,70%	Improvement, target not met
	Percentage of primary schools with first aid boxes	40,20%	54,10%	68%	68%	68%	70,80%	Improvement, target met
	Number of scholarship students in primary education	n/a	75000	77654	86126	75000	96507	Improvement, target met
	Number of primary teachers received training (PRESET and INSET) with formula 12+4 each year up to 2018	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2000	1800	Target not met

		2014	2015	2016	2017	2018 target	2018	Comment
	% of primary teachers holding at least Bachelor's degree each year up to 2018	n/a	6,90%	6,20%	7%	7,20%	7,90%	Improvement, target met
	Number of primary teachers receiving complete/receive CPD guided INSET each year and by each level up to 2018	n/a	1500	1492	1827	1500	1611	Improvement, target met
Secondary and Technical Education								
CBI 3	No. of provinces with lower secondary education completion rate at least 40%	9	8	11	13	12	15	Improvement, target met
	Gross enrolment rate at lower secondary (both sexes)	55,10%	56,50%	57,60%	59,20%	54,90%	59,10%	Improvement, target met
	Gross enrolment rate at lower secondary (female)	56,20%	59,40%	61,50%	63,40%	57,90%	63,80%	Improvement, target met
	Gross enrolment rate at upper secondary education (both sexes)	25,30%	25,10%	26,50%	28,50%	29,50%	29,70%	Improvement, target met
	Gross enrolment rate at upper secondary (female)	27%	26%	28,10%	30,90%	29,50%	32,90%	Improvement, target met
	Transition Rate from lower Secondary to upper Secondary education (both sexes)	71,10%	72,40%	74,50%	76,80%	77,10%	75,40%	Improvement, target not met
	Transition Rate from lower Secondary to upper Secondary education (female)	72,90%	75%	77,60%	79,20%	77,10%	78%	Improvement, target met
	Completion rate at lower Secondary (both sexes)	40,30%	39,20%	44,50%	46,50%	44,80%	47,60%	Improvement, target met
	Completion rate at lower Secondary (female)	41,80%	41,30%	48%	51,10%	44,80%	52,60%	Improvement, target met

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018 target	2018	Comment
Dropout rate at lower secondary education (both sexes)	21%	19,20%	17%	15,40%	14,00%	15,80%	Improvement, target not met
Dropout rate at lower secondary education (female)	20,30%	18,20%	15,50%	14,20%	14,00%	14,20%	Improvement, target not met
Number of students receive scholarship at lower secondary education	n/a	n/a	69514	72071	60000	72418	Improvement, target met
% Student scholarship at LSS	11%	12,60%	11,90%	11,90%			Improvement, target not met
% of secondary schools implements CFS	53,10%	22,86%	23,40%	23,5%	34,30%	23,69%	Deteriorated
% secondary school has latrines (LSS)	63,10%	65,50%	83,40%	65,10%	72,40%	90,86%	Improvement, target met
% secondary school has latrines (USS)	95,8%	98,5%	91,2%	97,1%	100%	95,5%	Deteriorated
% of secondary school has safe water (LSS)	34,5%	33,40%	43,4%	30,5%	42,7%	42,6%	Improvement, target not met
% of secondary school has safe water (USS)	59,9%	57,2%	53,90%	54,6%	79,0%	54%	Deteriorated
Number of General Secondary and Technical Education High Schools (GTHSs)	3	4	7	9	7	14	Improvement, target met
Number of GTHS Students (both sexes)	868	1066	1148	1471	1746	2104	Improvement, target met
Number of GTHS Students (female)	326	444	464	526	529	784	Improvement, target met
Number of Lower Secondary teacher received training (PRESET and INSET) with formula 12+4	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1000	1200	Target met
% of secondary teachers holding at least Bachelor's degree each year up to 2018	n/a	34,5%	35,2%	39,6%	37%	43%	Improvement, target met

		2014	2015	2016	2017	2018 target	2018	Comment
	Number of secondary teachers receiving complete/receive CPD guided INSET each year and by each level up to 2018	n/a	n/a	698	1691	1500	2339	Improvement, target met
Non-Formal Education								
CBI 4	Adult literacy 15 and above	78,1%	80,5%	80,7%	82,5%	83,1%	82,5%	Improvement, target not met
	Number of illiterate populations completed literacy program (both sexes)		53996	17280	17678	20000	16850	Deteriorated
	Number of students studying in equivalency program (both sexes)	4146	4228	5814	5275	6409	6914	Improvement, target met
	Number of students studying in equivalency program (female)	182	831	2368	2667	n/a	n/a	Improvement, target not met
	Number of CLCs	347	342	353	350	367	356	Improvement, target not met
	Number of students completed in re-entry program to be transfer to formal education system (both sexes)	15643	12096	10910	10016	11000	10099	Deteriorated
	Number of students completed in re-entry program to be transfer to formal education system (female)	7271	5556	5037	4778	n/a	n/a	Deteriorated
	Number of participants who completed skill trainings (both sexes)	8524	7563	8220	8002	7784	9170	Improvement, target met
	Number of participants who completed skill trainings (female)	5381	4680	5583	5365	n/a	n/a	Deteriorated
	Provinces established NFE-MIS	25	25	25	25	25	25	No improvement, target met

		2014	2015	2016	2017	2018 target	2018	Comment
Higher Education								
CBI 6	Number of HEIs evaluated (internal and external)	n/a	10	38	5	70	0	Deteriorated
	Percentage of public student scholarship in first year	8%	10,5%	10,0%	10,5%	14%	9,7%	Improvement, target not met
	Gross enrolment rate (18-22)	15%	12%	10,9%	10%	16%	11,6%	Deteriorated
	Number of HE qualification professors (Local master's degree)	70	8247	8985	8737	8545	8991	Improvement, target met
	Number of HE qualification professors (Local PhD)	30	941	939	871	996	883	Improvement, target not met
	Number of HE qualification professors (Overseas master's degree)	70	49	335	367	110	621	Improvement, target met
	Number of HE qualification professors (Overseas PhD)	20	80	75	68	120	112	Improvement, target not met
	Percentage of graduates with employment	n/a	89,6%	n/a	n/a	80%	n/a	<i>Insufficient data</i>
	Percentage of HEIs complied with internal quality assurance standards	20%	29%	40%	41%	37,40%	42%	Improvement, target met
	Percentage of HEIs prepared annual budget	20%	33%	40%	60,3%	36%	62%	Improvement, target met
	Budget for HE sub-sector	8%	9%	12,60%	13,6%	13%	12,8%	Improvement, target not met
Youth Development								
	Number of youths received a short training	2700	1055	1389	565	3300	1544	Deteriorated
	Number of youths received training on volunteer	2500	1500	3100	1100	2000	1244	Deteriorated

		2014	2015	2016	2017	2018 target	2018	Comment
	Number of Youth Centre	9	16	22	22	19	22	Improvement, target met
	Number of youths created their own jobs per year for each centre	10	7	7	2	10	n.d.	Deteriorated
	Percentage of Grade 4 to 9 children participated in the children council	99%	99%	99%	99%	100%	96,9%	Deteriorated
	Percentage of Grade 10 to 12 student participated in the youth council	89%	89%	89%	89%	100%	97,5%	Improvement, target not met
	Number of youths received leadership and entrepreneurship training	300	375	250	928	300	928	Improvement, target met
Physical Education and Sport								
	Number of physical education and sport teachers trained per year	150	150	100	100	150	150	No improvement, target met
	Revision of sports fields (National Stadium)	n/a	n/a	n/a	100%		100%	Target met
	Revision of sports fields (Royal University of Phnom Penh)	n/a	n/a	50%	100%		100%	Improvement, target met
	Revision of sports fields (National Institute of PE and Sport)	n/a	n/a	50%	50%		100%	Improvement, target met
	Revision of sports fields (Siem Reap Stadium)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a		n/a	No data
	Secondary schools have filed (Football)	2	1	0	0		n/a	Deteriorated
	Secondary schools have filed (Basketball)	3	4	3	0		n/a	Deteriorated
	Secondary schools have filed (Volleyball)	4	0	3	0		n/a	Deteriorated

		2014	2015	2016	2017	2018 target	2018	Comment
Miscellaneous								
CBI 8	% of Teacher Educators (P/RTTC and NIE) with master's degree		10%	20,2%	18,2%	21%	30,4%	Improvement, target met
CBI 9	Number of school principals trained in SBM (Primary and Secondary)	n/a	n/a	948	752	500	705	No improvement, target met
CBI 10	MoEYS Liquidation rate	86,2%	94,3%	94%	95,2%	95%	95,7%	Improvement, target met

Appendix VIII Areas of ESPIG contributions

PROJECT COMPONENTS	INDICATORS	TARGET	ACHIEVED	STATUS 2017
To expand access to ECE for 3 to 5 years old	Enrollment ratio of children aged 5 in the urban and rural districts where new 100 formal and 1,00 community-based pre-school facilities are provided	59.49	66.30	Met
	Enrollment ratio of children aged 5 in the urban and rural districts where new 100 formal and 1,00 community-based pre-school facilities are provided (girls)	51.51	65.50	Met
To improve access to basic education, particularly those from a disadvantaged background	Lower secondary enrollment rate	37.10	41.90	Met
	Lower secondary enrollment rate (girls)	38.10	46.40	Met
To improve quality of basic education, particularly those from a disadvantaged background	Percentage of students in grades 3 reaching 45-60 words per minute on the Early Grade Reading Assessment	66.50	68	Met
	Percentage of primary teachers applying effective EGRA teaching methods as defined by classroom observation criteria	50	63	Met
Improving the access and educational experience of vulnerable and disadvantaged students	Number of children aged 3-5 reached by project supported ECE services (70 FPS, 1000 CB, 500 HB)	32500	125337	Met
	Enrollment ratio of children aged 5 in the urban and rural districts where new 100 formal and 1000 community-based pre-school facilities are provided	71	67.98	Not Met
	Enrollment ratio of children aged 5 in the urban and rural districts where new 100 formal and 1000 community-based pre-school facilities are provided (girls)	67.20	69.36	Met
	Number of students receiving financed scholarships	133000	142655	Met
	Number of teachers completing training on disability screening	2000	5460	Met

PROJECT COMPONENTS	INDICATORS	TARGET	ACHIEVED	STATUS 2017
	Percentage of ECE formal services rated as level 5 overall on the adjusted early childhood education environment indicators through classroom-observation evaluation (50 FPS)	30	66	Met
	Percentage of ECE formal services rated as level 5 overall on the adjusted early childhood education environment indicators through classroom-observation evaluation (100 CBPS selected)	30	35	Met
	Average age of students entering grade 1	6.8	6.8	Met
	Number of Community ECE teachers and core parents reached by training and materials supported by the project	1850	3861	Met
	Teachers recruited or trained	6000	32719	Met
Benchmarking student competency	EGMA rolled out in 5 provinces	Yes	Yes	Met
	System for learning assessment at the primary level	Yes	Yes	Met
	Utility of the learning assessment system	1	1	Met
	Roll out of Grades 3,6, and 8 National Assessment (each assessment once during the project lifecycle) and publication of their results	Yes	Yes	Met
	Direct project beneficiaries	170950	476560	Met
	Female Beneficiaries (percentage)	45	48.83	Met
Improving Cambodia's teaching force	Number of principals completing leadership training	1600	2474	Met
	Direct project beneficiaries	170950	476560	Met
	Female Beneficiaries (percentage)	45	48.83	Met
	Teachers recruited or trained	6000	32719	Met
System strengthening and	Number of District Offices of Education constructed	20	20	Met
	Number of provinces implementing a unified early childhood and primary education sub-sector monitoring system	12	18.50	Met

PROJECT COMPONENTS	INDICATORS	TARGET	ACHIEVED	STATUS 2017
monitoring and evaluation	Number of provinces implementing a unified early childhood and primary education sub-sector planning system Plans	12	18.50	Met
	Direct project beneficiaries	170950	476560	Met
	Female Beneficiaries (percentage)	45	48.83	Met

Appendix IX Selected sector financing data

ISSUE	DATA
Total domestic educ. expenditure	<p>Absolute allocations grew 273% from US\$335.5 million in 2014 to US\$915.4 million in 2019</p> <p>Approximated MoEYS adjust for inflation: There is no official country-level or UNESCO UIS data on education budget allocations in real terms for the review period. A comparison between an approximation of the MoEYS budget adjusted for inflation and nominal figures for the MoEYS does not indicate a substantial difference. According to an approximation of the MoEYS budget adjusted for inflation for 2014-2017, the budget increased by 190 percent, from US\$335.5 m to US\$636 m. The nominal increase of MoEYS allocations for the same period was by 204 percent, from US\$335.5 m to US\$685 m. Data on inflation rates for Cambodia from the World Bank was available only for 2014-2017 and indicates an average of 2.75 percent inflation for the same period.³⁴⁷</p> <p>Projected increase in nominal MoEYS budget: Allocations to domestic education expenditures in nominal terms are projected to increase from 3,506 billion Riels in 2020 to 4,470 billion Riels in 2023 (approximately 127 percent increase).³⁴⁸</p>
Education share of total government Expenditures	Increased from 9.9% in 2014 to 14.2 percent in 2019
% of domestic education financing allocated to Primary education	<p>Projected allocation of resources to primary education increased slightly over the review period from 47.1% in 2014 to 49.6% in 2018.</p> <p>Actual recurrent budget allocations for primary education remained relatively close to the 45 percent mark (44.8 percent and 44.6 percent in 2014 and 2015 respectively; no data for 2016-2019).</p>
% of domestic education financing allocated to Secondary education	<p>Projected allocation to secondary and technical education decreased, from 29.5% to 28.1% in 2018.</p> <p>Actual budget allocations to secondary and technical education were higher than projects. ESP financing surpluses for 2014 and 2015 were 7 percent and 10 percent for secondary and technical education. Reasons for this increase quoted in the MTR as: “(i) an</p>

³⁴⁷ World Bank data: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/FP.CPI.TOTL.ZG>

³⁴⁸ Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. “Final Draft Education Strategic Plan 2019-2023”. Kingdom of Cambodia. April 2019. p. 111.

ISSUE	DATA
	increase expenditure for the national exam, which double expended to compare the last year; (ii) to increase the number of teachers working in secondary schools, and (iii) increase operational budget for the resource center. ³⁴⁹
% or domestic education financing to other sub-sectors	<p>ECE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projected allocation of resources (including both DP and government resources) to ECE increased slightly, with some fluctuations, from 7.21 percent in 2014 to 8.6 percent in 2018. • Actual budget allocations to ECE were smaller than projected. ESP financing gaps, expressed in terms of actual recurrent allocations as a percentage of projected recurrent requirements, for 2014 and 2015 for ECE were 31 percent and 19 percent. The reason for the shortage of funds is cited as “It had been planned in the ESP to train 500 teachers per year but the government has allocated about 250 people per year so that why it still has shortage of teachers.”³⁵⁰ <p>Projected allocations to non-formal education also increased from 1.2 percent to 2.6 percent between 2014 and 2018, while projected allocations to the two remaining sub-sectors, Youth Development and PE & Sport, decreased from 0.6 percent and 2.7 percent respectively in 2014 to 0.1 percent and 1.3 percent.</p>
Funding by expenditure type	<p>Capital expenditure allocations: increased substantially in both nominal terms and as a share of the total budget: from 2.2 percent (US\$8.75 million) in 2015 to 21.3 percent (US\$178 million) in 2019</p> <p>Recurrent expenditure allocations decreased from 97.8% to 78.7% from 2015 to 2019</p> <p>No systematic data on composition of recurrent expenditures. Available data suggests teacher salaries accounted for approximately 73.5 percent of recurrent expenditures in 2017.</p> <p>MoEYS budget allocations to SOBs increased both nominally and as a share of the allocations to recurrent expenditures between 2014 and 2019, from US\$12.7 million (2.5 percent) in 2016 to US\$32.6 million (4.4 percent) in 2019. Additionally, the average SOB per school increased between 2016 and 2019, from US\$1.02 million to US\$2.45 million.</p>

³⁴⁹ Global Partnership for Education. “Endorsement of Cambodia’s Education Strategic Plan 2014 – 2018 Mid-Term Review for submission to the Global Partnership for Education Secretariat”. Letter to Ministry of Education Youth and Sports. Washington DC, 12 December 2016. p. 82

³⁵⁰ *ibid*

ISSUE	DATA
Amount of international financing	Total education ODA increased from US\$84 million in 2014 to US\$114 million in 2017.
Education ODA as share of overall ODA	<p>Proportion of education ODA to overall ODA has increased from 6.5% in 2008 to 10.8% in 2014 to 12.3% in 2017. (OECD CRS data)</p> <p>It should be noted that it is likely that OECD CRS data on education ODA inflows to Cambodia disaggregated by sub-sector are approximations, as this study notes the relatively high proportion of education ODA classified as “level unspecified.” For example, 32.8 percent of total education ODA (US\$37.5 million of US\$114 million) was cited as “level unspecified” ODA funding in 2017. One interviewed DP mentioned the overall challenge in obtaining clear data on ODA disbursements by education sub-sector, suggesting that this was largely due to capacity shortages at the MoEYS in tracking the channeling of ODA funds according to sub-sector. There was no country data which provided information on ODA disbursements or allocations according to sub-sector.</p>
ESPIG amount as % of education ODA during review period	ESPIG funding represented 7.5% of all education ODA and 31.9% of basic education ODA from 2014-2017.
ESPIG amount as % of <u>actual</u> ESP financing	ESPIG funding support financed 1.2% of ESP costs between 2014-2018.

Appendix X Selected system-level data

Changes suited to remove barriers to equitable access to education

ISSUE	OBSERVATIONS
Changes in # of schools relative to # of children	<p>Number of classrooms grew 3.2 percent at the primary level, slightly outpacing the growth in primary student populations.</p> <p>Number of lower secondary classrooms did not keep up with the growth in the lower secondary student population which was 6.3 percent.</p> <p>Number of pre-primary classrooms grew by 22.9 percent, outpacing the growth in the pre-primary student population</p> <p>Number of upper secondary level classrooms grew at 11.2 percent, keeping up with the growth in the upper secondary student population.</p> <p>Change in pupil-classroom ratio:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-primary: decreased from 35:1 in 2014 to 34:1 in 2017 • Primary: remained the same over the years at 47:1 • Both lower and upper secondary levels. It increased from 49:1 in 2014 to 50:1 in 2017.
Changes in average distance to school	No data on actual average distance to school is available.
Changes in costs of education to families	<p>No data on actual average cost of education to families is available in a way that would allow comparisons over time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RESA indicates that household expenditures are high and have increased considerably between 2004-2014, the average out of pocket expenditure was US\$185 per child in 2014, while expenses for children in pre-school education and lower education increased by 8 and 3.6 times respectively
Changes in availability of programs to improve children's readiness for school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 500 community preschools and 76 state-run preschools constructed between 2014 and 2017;³⁵¹ Net increase of 858 state preschools for period 2014-2018 (from 3443 to 4301)
New/expanded measures put in place to meet the educational needs of children with special needs and learners from disadvantaged groups	<p>Modest improvements in inclusive education:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MoEYS adopted a new policy on Inclusive Education in June 2018 for students with disabilities, and the Multilingual Education Action Plan 2019-2023 for students from indigenous and ethnic minority backgrounds. • More work was done in training teachers with regards to teaching students with disabilities through formulating a guide for in-service training consisting of 35 training hours on inclusive education for general education teachers in 2011, the first of its kind, and subsequently a manual for pre-service training

³⁵¹ Education Congress reports for 2015 notes that the MoEYS identified the 500 locations for the construction of community preschools, while the Congress report for 2016 notes that 101 of the community preschools had been constructed by that year. The planned construction of all 500 community preschools is confirmed in the ESPIG 2013 completion report (World Bank, Implementation Completion and Results Report, Cambodia GPE Second Education Support Project, 2018, p. 47).

ISSUE	OBSERVATIONS
	<p>consisting of 25 training hours. National Institute for Special Education also established in 2017</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is still a lack of comprehensive screening tools with accompanying guidelines. • Lack of data to assess progress made during the review period in levels of enrolments and dropout rates of students with disabilities, or the number of out of school children with disabilities.
New/expanded measures put in place to further gender equality in education	<p>There are no substantial system level improvements made during the review period in relation to gender in education.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Gender Mainstreaming Strategic Plan was incorporated into the policies of the MTR update of the ESP 2014-2018, but details of the rollout were not detailed. • There is a lack of gender-sensitive strategies in education reform, especially in response to declining education indicators for boys. • Disproportionately low representation of women in MoEYS managerial roles both at national and sub-national levels- 19.2 percent of national level senior managers and 15.7 percent of sub-national managers were women.
Other (may vary by country)	<p>WASH improvements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of primary and lower secondary schools with latrines increased between 2014 and 2018 (from 80/9% to 92.2% for primary schools and 63.1 to 90.0% for lower secondary • % of upper secondary schools with latrines decreased from 59.9% in 2014 to 54% in 2018 • Less progress in access to clean water. Targets set for primary, lower and upper secondary were not met. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Primary schools with clean water increased consistently from 56.8% in 2014 to 58.9% in 2018, despite not meeting annual targets for 2017 and 2018 of 87%. – Percentage of lower secondary schools with clean water increased overall as well, despite fluctuations during the 2014-2018 period, from 34.5% in 2014 to 42.6% in 2018, slight below the 2018 target of 42.7 %. – Secondary schools with clean water decreased overall, from 59.9% in 2014 to 54% in 2018, and were consistently below annual targets.

Changes suited to remove barriers to quality education

ISSUE	OBSERVATIONS
Changes in Pupil/teacher ratios	<p>Relatively limited overall changes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total number of teachers across pre-primary to secondary increased from 89,151 in 2014 to 92,835 in 2018, but the pupil-teacher ratio remained the same at 34:1 over that period. • Differences in urban and rural areas- rural areas pupil to teacher ratio was 37:1 and it remained the same in the entire period and in urban areas it increased from 24:1 to 25:1 from 2014 to 2018.
Changes in pupil/trained teacher ratio	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary level: decreased from 45:1 to 42:1 • Lower secondary level: increased from 20:1 to 21:1

ISSUE	OBSERVATIONS
Changes in equitable allocation of teachers (measured by relationship between number of teachers and number of pupils per school)	N/A
Changes in relevance and clarity of (basic education) curricula	<p>Comprehensive revision of curricula undertaken from pre-primary to upper secondary levels beginning in 2015 indicates substantial progress made in relation to the relevance of education in Cambodia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curriculum Framework of General Education and Technical Education was approved in 2015 and stipulated for focus on the development of students' core competencies in literacy and numeracy, foreign languages, ICT, communication and teamwork, creative-thinking and analysis, knowledge-application, entrepreneurship and leadership. • The new curriculum framework covers virtually all school subjects (from Khmer language, Mathematics, Social Studies, and Science, to Arts Education and Health Education among other subjects) and outlines expected learning outcomes and study hours for each subject for all non-higher education levels (including technical education).
Changes in availability and quality of teaching and learning materials	<p>New textbooks for grade 1-3 were distributed to students annually between 2014-2018 at the rate of 3 textbooks per student.</p> <p>Less progress in the revision of textbooks and learning materials, as there has been a lack of revision of textbooks, especially for Grades 4 to 12</p>
Changes to pre-service teacher training	<p>Reforms introduced to promote teacher qualification- all teachers needed to have at least an upper secondary certificate, since 2015.</p> <p>The BA fast track program (part of TPAP) aimed at basic education teachers currently teaching in schools to earn a bachelor's degree has been implemented- 906 teachers out of a planned 2700 (by 2020) have completed this program in 2017-18.</p> <p>Teacher Education Colleges were established in 2017 with a focus on upgrading the provision of training to teachers enrolled in TTCs according to the 12+4 formula.</p>
Changes to in-service teacher training	<p>Adoption of policies for teacher career development-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy Framework on Teacher Career Pathways (TCP) was adopted in 2018, as per the TPAP's objectives to improve the professional development of teachers. • Policy on Continuous Professional Development (CPD) for Education Staff was adopted in 2017, which aimed to cultivate life-long professional development of education staff through the establishment of a framework for CPD, and to ensure linkages between CPD and the TCP <p>Both of these have yet to be fully implemented and is still too early to observe any plausible changes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1,611 primary teachers and 2,399 secondary teachers received in-service, CPD-guided training in 2018, meeting the 2017 target of 1,500. (table 3.4)

ISSUE	OBSERVATIONS
Changes in incentives for schools/teachers	Increases in teacher salaries since 2014 following a cross-sectoral plan to increase salaries of all civil servants.
Others	Adoption of TPAP in 2013. The plan focuses on addressing challenges related to the recruitment of high-quality teacher candidates. Improving teacher training, raising the status of teaching as a profession, and reforming teacher practices through the encouragement of active pedagogies.

Progress in strengthening sector management

ISSUE	OBSERVATIONS
Changes in the institutional capacity of key ministries and/or other relevant government agencies (e.g. staffing, structure, organizational culture, funding)	<p>Master Plan for Capacity Development (MPCD) was introduced in 2011 to provide and overall framework guiding MoEYS and DP efforts to improve sector management and outlines MoEYS aims to develop individual and institutional capacities from the central to the sub-national level.</p> <p>Current MPCD 2014-2018 outlines objectives to improve capacities in policy research and dialogue, results-based planning and M&E, data collection and analysis as part of EMIS, financial accountability, and deployment and management of MoEYS personnel</p>
Is a quality learning assessment system (LARS) within basic education cycle in place?	<p>Some progress in conducting national learning assessment tests:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National test conducted on Khmer, Math and Physics for Grade 8 students in 2014 • Introduction of EGMA in 2015 and the commencement of dissemination of learning results • Cambodia participated in PISA-D. This was piloted in 56 target schools in 2016, and there are plans to continue participation in the learning assessment for the 2019-2023 phase.
Changes in how country <u>uses</u> LARS.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of evidence that the data from these assessments is systematically used by MoEYS technical departments to at the central or sub-national level to inform decision-making and revise pedagogical approaches in order to improve school-level management or learning in classrooms. • Capacities to comprehend and utilize learning assessment results among technical departments and sub-national government actors remain limited. • Although results are made available to local and regional stakeholders, capacity is lacking at different levels of the system to analyze these data in order to determine how and where in-service teacher training, pedagogical support and school inspection services should be prioritized.
Does country have functioning EMIS?	Yes. EMIS data is used during Congress meeting presentations by the MoEYS and is used in Congress reports. Annual education statistics yearbooks published since at least 2009.
Changes in how country <u>uses</u> EMIS data to inform policy dialogue, decision making and sector monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over the review period, MoEYS collected comprehensive data on a regular basis and published annual education statistics. • An evaluation of CDPF support in Cambodia found significant improvement in data collection capacities at the EMIS department.

Appendix XI Selected impact-level data

Impact level trends

ISSUE	OBSERVED TRENDS (UP TO AND INCLUDING DURING REVIEW PERIOD)
Learning outcomes	
<p>Changes/trends in learning outcomes (basic education) during period under review (by gender, by socio-economic group, by rural/urban locations)</p>	<p>Insufficient data on learning outcomes during the review period to compare over time.</p> <p>Reports published by EQUAD about the national assessment held in 2014 (for grade 8) and in 2015 (for grade 3) and a baseline assessment for an Early-Grade Mathematics Assessment (EGMA) conducted in 2015 indicate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significantly low level of performance of Grade 3 children in Khmer reading and writing. • Grade 8 - 55.6% of sampled students responded to questions correctly in the Khmer assessment overall, only 28.3% of students were found to respond to questions correctly in the writing components of the test, compared to 73.8% of students responding correctly to parts of the test which assessed students' reading. • The percentage of questions correct for urban Grade 3 children was 50.3%, compared to 31.5% among rural children. The difference is statistically significant and also substantially large. • Percentage of questions answered correctly among the lowest quintile of Grade 3 children for Khmer was 29.9%, compared to 48.1% among children in the highest quintile. A similar difference was noted in Math test results, as percentage of questions correct among the lowest quintile of children was 36.5%, versus 56.3% among children in the highest quintile. <p>PISA-D assessment results: performance of 15-year-olds in Cambodia in reading, mathematics and science were lower than average scores for OECD and lower-middle income countries.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The percentage of students achieving minimum levels of proficiency (level 2) in reading and mathematics were substantially lower than OECD and lower-middle income averages
Equity, gender equality and inclusion	
<p>Changes in (i) gross and (ii) net enrollment rates (basic education <u>including pre-primary</u>) during review period (by gender, by socio-economic group, by rural/urban</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-primary <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – GER: improved from 8.7% to 10.8% – NER: improved from 16.7% to 20.1% • Primary: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – GER: decreased between 2014 and 2017 from 116.8% to 107.8%. – NER: increased marginally from 97.9 in 2014 to 98% in 2017 (according to country data). Decreased from 95% to 90% (according to UNESCO UIS data).

ISSUE	OBSERVED TRENDS (UP TO AND INCLUDING DURING REVIEW PERIOD)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Primary urban GER decreased from 94.2% to 89.6% while primary rural GER decreased from 115.2% to 112.3%. • Lower secondary: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – GER: increased from 55.1 in 2014 to 59.1 in 2018. • Upper secondary: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – GER: increased from 25.3% to 29.7% • Rural lower and upper secondary GER increased substantially between 2014 and 2017- from 52.1% to 57% and from 19.9% to 23.6%. • Urban lower and upper secondary GER decreased in the same period- from 58.3% to 56%, and from 40.6% to 39.3%, respectively. • Widening gender disparities in secondary enrollment, in favour of girls: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – GPI for lower secondary GER: increased from 1.1 in 2014 to 1.15 in 2017. – GPI for upper secondary GER: increased from 1.0 in 2015 to 1.18 in 2017.
Changes in (i) primary completion rate and (ii) lower secondary completion rate (by gender)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary completion rate: decreased overall from 2014-2017 from 84.1% to 79.1% but increased to 86.2% in 2018 (overall increase of 2.1 percentage points). • Lower secondary completion rate: increased from 40% in 2014 to 47.6% in 2018 (increase of 7.5 percentage points). • Widening gender disparities in favour of girls: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Primary completion rate for girls: decreased between 2014 and 2017 from 86.6% to 82.7%, before increasing to 90.4% in 2018 (overall increase of 3.8 percentage points, higher than increase for both sexes). Accompanying this was an increase in the GPI for PCR from 1.01 in 2012 to 1.09 in 2017. – Lower secondary completion rate for girls: increase for girls was higher than for both sexes, from 41.8% to 52.6% from 2014 to 2018 (increase of 10.8 percentage points).
Changes in out of school rates for (i) primary and (ii) lower secondary	Data is insufficient to compare trends over time.
Changes in the distribution of out of school children (girls/boys; children with/without disability; ethnic, geographic, urban/rural and/or economic backgrounds depending on data availability)	Data is insufficient to compare trends over time.

ISSUE	OBSERVED TRENDS (UP TO AND INCLUDING DURING REVIEW PERIOD)
Changes in transition rates from primary to lower secondary education (by gender, by socio-economic group)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The transition rate from primary to lower secondary levels increased from 78.7% to 85.7% between 2014 and 2018. • A similar trend was observed for girls- transition rates increased from 81.2% in 2014 to 88.4% in 2018. • The proportion of children transitioning from lower to upper secondary increased from 71.1% to 75.4% between 2014 and 2018 for both sexes
Changes in dropout and/or repetition rates (depending on data availability) for (i) primary, (ii) lower-secondary education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proportion of children dropping out of school decreased at the primary level (from 8.3% to 4.4%) and lower secondary level (from 21% to 15.8%) between 2014 and 2018. • Dropout rates for girls decreased from 2014 to 2018 with girls slightly less likely to drop out at both primary (7.2% to 3.7%) and lower secondary levels (20.3% to 14.2%). • The share of children repeating a school level increased slightly at the primary level, from 5.1% to 6.2%, and grew marginally at the lower secondary (from 6.2% to 7.3%) and upper secondary level (from 1.3% to 3%). • Primary repetition rates for girls increased overall from 2014 to 2018 as well, though with a smaller margin (from 4.3% to 4.7%)

Appendix XII Terminology

Alignment	Basing support on partner countries' national development strategies, institutions and procedures. ³⁵²
Basic education	Pre-primary (i.e. education before Grade 1), primary (Grades 1-6), lower secondary (Grades 7-9), and adult literacy education, in formal and non-formal settings. This corresponds to International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) 2011 levels 0-2.
Capacity	In the context of this evaluation we understand capacity as the foundation for behavior change in individuals, groups or institutions. Capacity encompasses the three interrelated dimensions of <i>motivation</i> (political will, social norms, habitual processes), <i>opportunity</i> (factors outside of individuals e.g. resources, enabling environment) and capabilities (knowledge, skills). ³⁵³
Education Management and Information System (EMIS)	A system for the collection, integration, processing, maintenance and dissemination of data and information to support decision-making, policy-analysis and formulation, planning, monitoring and management at all levels of an education system. It is a system of people, technology, models, methods, processes, procedures, rules and regulations that function together to provide education leaders, decision-makers and managers at all levels with a comprehensive and integrated set of relevant, reliable, unambiguous and timely data and information to support them in fulfilling their responsibilities. ³⁵⁴
Education systems	Collections of institutions, actions and processes that affect the educational status of citizens in the short and long run. ³⁵⁵ Education systems are made up of a large number of actors (teachers, parents, politicians, bureaucrats, civil society organizations) interacting with each other in different institutions (schools, ministry departments) for different reasons (developing curriculums, monitoring school performance, managing teachers). All these interactions are governed by rules, beliefs, and behavioral norms that affect how actors react and adapt to changes in the system. ³⁵⁶
Equity	In the context of education, equity refers to securing all children's rights to education, and their rights within and through education to realize their potential and aspirations. It requires implementing and institutionalizing arrangements that help ensure all children can achieve these aims. ³⁵⁷

³⁵² OECD, Glossary of Aid Effectiveness Terms.

<http://www.oecd.org/dac/effectiveness/aideffectivenessglossary.htm>. GPE understands 'country systems' to relate to a set of seven dimensions: Plan, Budget, Treasury, Procurement, Accounting, Audit and Report. Source: Methodology Sheet for Global Partnership for Education (GPE) Indicators. Indicator (29) Proportion of GPE grants aligned to national systems.

³⁵³ Mayne, John. *The COM-B Theory of Change Model*. Working paper. February 2017

³⁵⁴ GPE 2020 Results Framework Indicator 20 Methodology Sheet.

³⁵⁵ Moore, Mark. 2015. Creating Efficient, Effective, and Just Educational Systems through Multi-Sector Strategies of Reform. RISE Working Paper 15/004, Research on Improving Systems of Education, Blavatnik School of Government, Oxford University, Oxford, U.K.

³⁵⁶ World Bank. 2003. World Development Report 2004: Making Services Work for Poor People. Washington, DC: World Bank; New York: Oxford University Press.

³⁵⁷ Equity and Inclusion in Education. A guide to support education sector plan preparation, revision and appraisal. GPE 2010; p.3. Available at:

Financial additionality	This incorporates two not mutually exclusive components: (a) an increase in the total amount of funds available for a given educational purpose, without the substitution or redistribution of existing resources; and (b) positive change in the quality of funding (e.g. predictability of aid, use of pooled funding mechanisms, co-financing, non-traditional financing sources, alignment with national priorities).
Gender equality	The equal rights, responsibilities, and opportunities of women, men, girls, and boys, and equal power to shape their own lives and contribute to society. It encompasses the narrower concept of gender equity, which primarily concerns fairness and justice regarding benefits and needs. ³⁵⁸
Harmonization	The degree of coordination between technical and financial partners in how they structure their external assistance (e.g. pooled funds, shared financial or procurement processes), to present a common and simplified interface for developing country partners. The aim of harmonization is to reduce transaction costs and increase the effectiveness of the assistance provided by reducing demands on recipient countries to meet with different donors' reporting processes and procedures, along with uncoordinated country analytic work and missions. ³⁵⁹
Inclusion	Adequately responding to the diversity of needs among all learners, through increasing participation in learning, cultures, and communities, and reducing exclusion from and within education. ³⁶⁰

file:///C:/Users/anett/AppData/Local/Packages/Microsoft.MicrosoftEdge_8wekyb3d8bbwe/TempState/Downloads/2010-04-GPE-Equity-and-Inclusion-Guide.pdf

³⁵⁸ GPE Gender Equality Policy and Strategy 2016-2020. GPE 2016, p. 5f. Available at:

<http://www.globalpartnership.org/sites/default/files/2016-06-gpe-gender-equality-policy-strategy.pdf>

³⁵⁹ Adapted from OECD, Glossary of Aid Effectiveness Terms

<http://www.oecd.org/dac/effectiveness/aideffectivenessglossary.htm>, and from Methodology Sheet for Global Partnership for Education (GPE) Indicators. Indicator (30) Proportion of GPE grants using: (a) co-financed project or (b) sector pooled funding mechanisms.

³⁶⁰ GPE 2010, p.3.

Appendix XIII Acronyms

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AOP	Annual Operational Plan
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ATP	Advanced Training Programme
BSP	Business Strategic Plan
BTOR	Back to Office Report (of the GPE Secretariat)
CA	Coordinating Agency
CANPRO	Cambodian Analysis and Projection
CBI	Core Breakthrough Indicator
CDC	Council for the Development of Cambodia
CDPF	Capacity Development Partnership Fund
CEQ	Country Evaluation Question
CL	Country Lead
CLC	Community Learning Center
CLE	Country-Level Evaluation
CLS	Country-Level Stakeholder
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
CRS	Common Reporting Standard
CSEF	Civil Society Education Fund
CSO	Civil Society Organization
D&D	Deconcentration & Decentralization
DCP	Developing Country Partner
DOE	District Office of Education
DP	Development Partner
ECE	Early Childhood Education
EFA	Education for All
EGMA	Early Grades Math Assessment
EGRA	Early Grades Reading Assessment

EMIS	Education Management Information System
EQAD	Education Quality Assurance Department
ESA	Education Sector Analysis
ESIC	Education Sector Investment Case
ESP	Education Sector Plan
ESPDG	Education Sector Plan Development Grant
ESPIG	Education Sector Plan Implementation Grant
ESR	Education Sector Review
ESRP	Education Sector Reform Program
ESSSUAP	Education Sector Support Scale Up Action Program
ESWG	Education Sector Working Group
EU	European Union
FMIS	Financial Management Information System
FTI	Fast Track Initiative
GA	Grant Agent
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GIZ	Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
GER	Gross Enrollment Rate
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
GPI	Gender Parity Index
GPEP	Global Partnership for Education Program
GRA	Global and Regional Activities
HDI	Human Development Index
HEMIS	Higher Education Management Information System
HRMIS	Human Resource Management Information System
IBRD	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IDP	Industrial Development Policy
IIEP	International Institute for Educational Planning
ITRP	Independent Technical Review Panel
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency

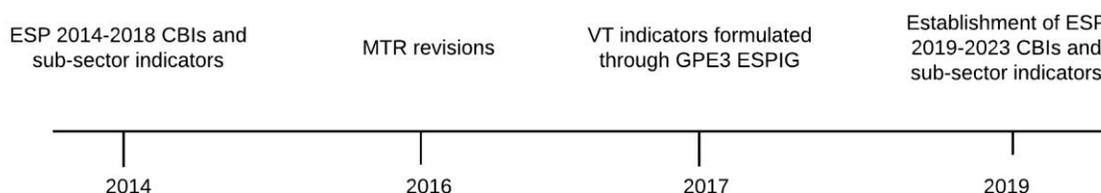
JSR	Joint Sector Review
JTWG	Joint Technical Working Group
KQ	Key Question
LARS	Learning Assessment and Reporting System
LAS	Learning Assessment System
LEG	Local Education Group
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MCA	Maximum Country Allocation
MEF	Ministry of Economy and Finance
MoI	Ministry of Interior
MoLVT	Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training
MoEYS	Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport
MPCD	Master Plan for Capacity Development
MTR	Mid-Term Review
NEP	NGO Education Partnership
NER	Net Enrollment Rate
NFEMIS	Non-Formal Education Management Information System
NFM	New Funding Model
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NIE	National Institute of Education
NSDP	National Strategic Development Plan
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development
OOS	Out-of-School
OOSC	Out-of-School Children
PB	Program Budgeting
PCR	Primary Completion Rate
PDG	Program Development Grant
PDO	Project Development Objective
PESP	Provincial Education Sector Plan
PFM	Public Financial Reform

PISA-D	Program for International Student Assessment for Development
POE	Provincial Office of Education
PTTC	Provincial Teacher Training College
QAR	Quality Assurance Review
QEMIS	Quality Education Management Information System
RESA	Rapid Education Sector Analysis
RF	Results Framework
RGC	Royal Government of Cambodia
RTI	Research Triangle Institute
RTTC	Regional Teacher Training Center
SBM	School-Based Management
SCP	Specialized Coursed Programme
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SEIP	Secondary Education Improvement Project
SES	Socio-Economic Status
SESSP	Second Education Sector Support Project
Sida	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SIG	School Improvement Grant
SOB	School Operational Budget
STEPCam	Strengthening Teacher Education Programs in Cambodia
TCP	Teacher Career Pathway
TEC	Teacher Education College
TEP	Transitional Education Plan
ToC	Theory of change
TOR	Terms of Reference
TPAP	Teacher Policy Action Plan
TTC	Teacher Training Center
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UIS	UNESCO Institute for Statistics
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
US	United States
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
US\$	United States Dollar
USESDP	Upper Secondary Education Sector Development Program
VSO	Voluntary Service Organization
VT	Variable Tranche
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WB	World Bank
WFP	World Food Programme

Appendix XIV Links between VT indicators and ESPs

Figure xiv.i Timeline of formulation and revision of indicators (2014-2019)



Overall, there is no clear indication that GPE3 VT indicators are reflected in the ESP 2019-2023 (see Table xiv.i for outline of VT targets and related ESP indicators). Primary education sub-sector indicator 23 in the ESP 2019-2023 is the most closely linked to the VT targets focused on school directors trained in preparing standardized school development plans and budgets.

Of greater potential significance is that the ESP 2014-2018 contained a CBI on primary repetition rates (CBI 2) and the ESP 2019-2023 no longer contains such a CBI. This is despite the inclusion of a stretch indicator in relation to repetition rates in the VT. VT indicators and targets were focused more on outputs and processes rather than setting multiple outcome-level targets, and the only outcome-level stretch indicator in the VT is not included in the new ESP.

Table xiv.i GPE3 VT targets and related indicators in ESPs

RELATED ESP 2014-2018 INDICATORS	GPE3 VT TARGETS	RELATED ESP 2019-2023 INDICATORS
Indicator 11 (primary education): Number of scholarship students in primary education	Equity-focused primary scholarship framework adopted by MoEYS (including grades 1-3) in 2019.	Indicator 13 (primary education): Number of scholarship students in primary education
Indicator 11 (primary education): Number of scholarship students in primary education	Number of children eligible for scholarships selected by schools and local scholarship committees in line with the timeline defined in the equity-focused scholarship framework by 2019 At least 60% of primary scholarship beneficiaries receive the first tranche of scholarship payment by 30 November 2020	Indicator 13 (primary education): Number of scholarship students in primary education

RELATED ESP 2014-2018 INDICATORS	GPE3 VT TARGETS	RELATED ESP 2019-2023 INDICATORS
<p>CBI 9: Number of school principal trained in SBM (Primary and Secondary)</p>	<p>50% of primary school directors in 26 target districts are trained on School-Based Management (SBM) for implementation by 2019 (472 of 944 primary schools in 26 target districts by 2019)</p> <p>70% of the 472 primary school directors trained in 2019 in the 26 target districts (330 of 472 primary schools) prepare standardized school development plans and budgets as per School-Based Management (SBM) guidelines by 2020</p> <p>Remaining 50% of primary school directors in 26 target districts are trained on SBM implementation by 2019 (472 of 944 primary schools in 26 target districts)</p>	<p>CBI 8: Number of school principal trained in SBM (Primary and Secondary)</p> <p>Indicator 22 (primary education): Number of school principals trained in SBM per year</p> <p>Indicator 23 (primary education): Number of public primary school fully complemented in SBM</p>
<p>CBI 2: No. of districts with primary education repetition rate less than or equal 10%</p> <p>Indicator 4 (primary education): Repetition rate in primary education</p>	<p>Repetition rate has decreased from 14 percent in 2016 to 13 percent in 2017, and subsequently to 11 percent in 2018.</p>	<p>Indicator 4 (primary education): Repetition rate in primary education</p>
<p>N/A</p>	<p>80% of grades 1-3 teachers in 21 target districts receive mentoring support (1822 out of 2278) by 2019</p> <p>20 % of Grade 1 teachers in 21 target districts apply expected core early grade learning methodologies on reading, in line with the CPD Framework and Action Plan by 2020</p>	<p>N/A</p>