ESPIG Annual Progress Report Template for Projects

Status: Accepted

Country
Caribbean

Name of project this grant is contributing to
OECS - ESPIG (May 3, 2021)

Grant ID
GPE0000475

Project ID (if applicable)

Grant Agent
OECS Commission

Grant Type
ESPIG

Approval Date
05/03/2021

Grant Effectiveness / Start Date
07/01/2021

Expected Closing Date
06/30/2026

Grant Amount
10,000,000 (USD)

Timeframe Examined in this report

From Date	To Date
06/30/2024	06/29/2025

Date of Report Submission
09/30/2025

Implementation Progress

Overall Project Progress this Reporting Period

Overall Progress this Reporting Period 1
Satisfactory (S)

Previous Rating
Satisfactory (S)

Detailed Description including factors that lead to an upgrade/downgrade in the rating

The PEARL's Year 4 implementation plan was focused primarily on the micropilot of the Digital – OECS Harmonized Primary Curriculum, with a clear rationale of introducing teachers to the new curriculum in an informal way, providing increased exposure to the curriculum and creating feedback loops for ongoing development, while allowing additional time to complete the writing, review and enrichment of the remaining portions of the curriculum.

Other key areas in the plan included the completion of refurbishment of ECE spaces, procurement of assistive devices and diagnostic tools for SEN students, completion of all scheduled modular training through MyPD and the completion of the MERL platform. All of this was framed by attention to the indicators and targets of the project's results framework.

The following were major achievements of the project realized during Year 4, suggesting that this was a highly successful implementation period.

Digital Innovation, Curriculum Development & Assessment

-Developed interactive lesson plans, digital worksheets, and assessment tools aligned with curriculum goals.

-Integrated D-OHPC content with platforms like Google Classroom for improved accessibility.

-Created real-time data collection tools to monitor student progress and inform decisions.

-Introduced an AI-powered chatbot to assist teachers with curriculum navigation and planning.

-Finalized Grade K curriculum and completed development for Grades 1–5, with indexed, production-ready versions for Grades K–6.

-Piloted OECS Early Reading and Mathematics Assessments in eight Member States, assessing over 6,800 Grade 2 students.

-Secured World Bank support to align assessments with UIS standards for SDG 4.1.1.a reporting.

-Certified 18 education officers through embedded professional development in assessment design.

-Launched 11 curriculum applications on the OECS Learning Hub.
-Fostered collaboration between educators and tech experts, enhancing digital integration capacity.

Early Childhood Education (ECE)
-Completed two new ECE centers in Dominica and Grenada.
-Trained 365 educators in child-centered learning via Module 5.
-Successfully hosted the 4th ECE Leaders' Forum with participation from all GPE Member States.
-Delivered ECE Module 13 with 167 participants across eight Member States.

Special Education Needs (SEN)
-Distributed assistive devices to 43 schools in St. Lucia.
-Reached ~25,000 people in Dominica and over 10,000 in Grenada through community sensitization.
-Delivered first SEN module to 51 educators; 21 completed certification.

Leadership and Management
-Grenada launched annual leadership conference with 100 participants.
-Dominica hosted a major leadership symposium.
-ECE leaders introduced to Smartie goals and planning templates via CSSI framework.
-CSSI grants achieved 99.99% disbursement and 98% expenditure.

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)
-Launched Module 1 of MERL professional development.
-Developed comprehensive pilot support package including results framework and coaching tools.
-Strengthened Member State capacity through technical and fiduciary missions.
-Institutional Strengthening & Programme Management
-Established partnerships with Wilfrid Laurier University and ACER for technical and financial support.
-Initiated design of a new education project to sustain OECS PEARL gains.

Institutional Strengthening & Programme Management
-Established partnerships with Wilfrid Laurier University and ACER for technical and financial support.
-Initiated design of a new education project to sustain OECS PEARL gains.

Implementation Challenges, Mitigations, and Next Steps – Coherent Narrative by Component
1. Early Childhood Education (ECE)
The ECE component continued to face infrastructure-related delays, particularly in Grenada and Dominica. Delayed refurbishments impeded the full implementation of play-based learning methodologies. The issues were addressed with interventions by the Project Management Team working directly with the national teams during scheduled expenditure check-ins. Grenada's situation proved more complex,

involving multiple agencies outside the MoE. Despite highest escalation, limited progress resulted. After much probing and advocacy, the matter was resolved with action taken by the support Ministry. More detailed documentation of the issue is appended to this report.

2. Special Education Needs (SEN)

SEN implementation was challenged by both logistical and systemic barriers. In Saint Lucia, monitoring and managing the use of assistive devices, especially in infant and primary schools, proved difficult. To address this, a small reserve of devices was retained at the Special Education Unit for island-wide assessments and future needs. The PMT also examined available monitoring tools to determine how to support Member States in tracking the utilization of the assistive devices provided through the project.

Professional development delivery models also posed barriers. The number of educators successfully completing the training designed through the project was unacceptably lower. An impact assessment is planned to determine how best to support those who did not complete the training, with future PD formats tailored to meet identified needs.

In Grenada, logistical issues restricted access to the Hanen “More Than Words” program. The Hanen ‘More than Words’ is a specialized, evidence-based early intervention program designed to empower parents and caregivers of young children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) or social communication difficulties. To sustain momentum, a Parent Support Network was instituted, and practitioners used action research templates to document and reflect on strategies.

3. Curriculum and Assessment (C&A)

Curriculum development faced delays in writing and reviewing content for Grade 6 and Kindergarten, largely due to inconsistent draft quality and slow submissions from some Member States. To accelerate progress, focused pull-out sessions were organized for writers and reviewers, providing dedicated time and resources to improve consistency and output. All curriculum development for this phase is now completed.

The PMT received reports from some MoE officials that the enthusiasm, innovation and allure of the integration of technologies into the curriculum, particularly the AI-integration, to some degree diverted attention away from the critical aspects of the curriculum such as methodology and content. In response, national teams refocused through intensive onboarding sessions for schools to balance the focus between effective use of the technologies of the curriculum within the OECS Learning Hub and the assess quality components of the curriculum.

The administration of the OERA/OEMA assessments became administratively and financially burdensome with threats to sustainability. The logistics involved in developing the instrument and preparation for administration involved a complex process that raises sustainability questions. The key mitigation was to streamline the assessment. In addition, the introduction of support from the World Bank to align the assessments to UIS standards further complicated the process and increased the scope of the overall assessment activity but helped to improve quality and reporting prospects. The next step is to ensure that countries integrate the regional assessment into their national assessment by the end of the project, providing the regional assessment a protected space in national assessment infrastructure. A stakeholder engagement strategy is being developed to generate support.

4. Leadership and Management

School leadership faced mounting pressures. Principals and District Education Officers struggled with competing responsibilities, affecting Continuous School and System Improvement (CSSI) plan supervision and reporting. Leadership workshops and symposia were held to support these roles. In response to concerns about Principals’ capacity to undertake Action Research alongside CSSI, countries agreed to defer the research to Year 5, with monitoring mechanisms in place to ensure it does not impact the pilot. A second mitigation was to renegotiate the PICT contract to include hiring teacher educators to support schools in documenting their experiences through research frameworks and developing reports to submit to research agencies for publication.

Financial oversight challenges in managing CSSI grant implementation also emerged. Delays in school-level financial reporting created bottlenecks at national and regional levels. Increased outreach and formal communications from Chief Education Officers were used to reinforce accountability.

5. Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)

Technical and motivational barriers affected participation in MERL training. Delays in the finalization of the MERL platform, low completion rates of the training in Module 1 and limited engagement of the M & E teams accumulated to result in a less than admirable performance in this component area. To assist, the Commission recruited an LMS Administrator, who now provides full technical support through a help-

desk. Engagement strategies such as visuals and reminders were introduced. Further details are available in the attached report on the issues experienced.
Strategic alignment posed another challenge. Integrating multiple plans—Sustainability, Pilot Rollout, and CSSI—into a unified operational framework required intensive coordination. The Year 5 Work Plan now reflects this integration, with country teams guiding schools to embed pilot management into CSSI plans.

Rating Justification:
The project work on reading and mathematics assessments have contributed to institutional capacity, evidenced by increased quality of assessments and inspired more thorough evaluations of the assessment infrastructure, leading to adjustments in the national assessments. Further, the PMT provided ongoing support to national teams in planning, risk management, reporting, and monitoring implementation to help strengthen focal point engagement and increase the burn rates at the national level. National teams were supported to set targets for expenditure by quarter; such targets being linked to specific activities that were monitored with risk management strategies. In some cases, this yielded positive results. Monthly check-ins continue to provide capacity building opportunities in matters of strategic planning, risk management, financial and fiduciary management among other competencies.

Country teams received guidance and coaching in tracking indicators and reporting the data based on national targets. Strategic arrangements were made for efficiency purposes. In a bid to strengthen accountability requirements, an agreement was struck with MoEs that all quarterly reports would be reviewed and signed by the CEO before submission. Further strengthening of accountability was achieved through agreement that Change Assistants would prepare specific, structured reports based on a template that was developed collaboratively. These reports were aligned to budgets for change management and followed the results-focused approach of the project's reporting mechanisms. Finally, school reports from CSSI implementation were analysed and synthesized to inform further planning and implementation at the national and school level. Schools are increasingly involved in generating evidence to inform planning and implementation at the school level.
During the reporting period, increased partner engagement was achieved with the project securing technical and financial support from the World Bank to benchmark the reading and math assessments and align them to UIS standards. Further partnership strengthening occurred through a formal MoU between the OECS Commission and Wilfrid Laurier University. That partnership provided technical and financial support for areas of inclusive education of the PEARL. This partnership has established a pathway for designing initiatives that will help sustain the gains of the project.

The project has inspired a powerful implementation model that is cost-effective, inward-focused and centered on capacity development while providing opportunities for meaningful contributions to development by citizens of the OECS. The PMT established a Software Development Team who have contributed to technological integration needs of the new curriculum. The applications developed by the team account for value in the millions. This model is already being replicated as a viable and valuable option in favour of hiring consultants to do the same work. The approach allows for greater flexibility and agility while increasing the control that the implementing body has on the course taken, products developed, and processes followed.

Project Implementation Progress, by Component / Objective

Component / Objective	Level of Progress this Reporting Period [2]	Previous Rating
Enhanced quality and equity of access to ECDs and Special Education Needs (SEN) Services	Satisfactory (S)	Satisfactory (S)

Brief description of the major activities undertaken and the relative level of success in fulfilling the project outputs and outcomes planned for this reporting period:
Major Activities Undertaken
ECE Infrastructure Development
Comprehensive ECE training was delivered reaching 365+ educators region-wide through Module 5 (child-centered learning). Conducted the ECE Leaders' Forum (February 2025) engaging all four GPE Member States with 167 participants across eight Member States in Module 13 (January-March 2025). Completed specialized training in Q4 through Module 14 (Learning through Play - 100 participants), the "Learning Through Play" MyPD course saw low completion rates, raising concerns about educator preparedness. Module 17 (Collaborative SEN approaches - 14 participants), and Module 18 (Inclusive practices - 13 participants). Training demonstrated measurable gains in specialized pedagogy and inclusive instructional strategies among certified participants.

SEN Resource Distribution

Assistive Technology Implementation: Successfully distributed assistive learning devices (laptops, noise-canceling headphones, listening systems) to 43 schools in Saint Lucia (5 special schools, 38 primary schools) and 18 schools in Grenada. Achieved 60-80% utilization rates among identified SEN students, with devices integrated into instructional activities based on individual needs. Procured diagnostic tools in Dominica supporting establishment of Southern Assessment team for SEN evaluation. Device distribution included comprehensive teacher training to ensure effective utilization and classroom integration.

Community Engagement and Sensitization

Large-Scale Awareness Campaigns: Implemented multi-platform sensitization reaching 25,000+ people in Dominica and 10,000+ in Grenada through social media, radio programming, and cultural events. Utilized brand ambassadors including Miss Dominica 2024 and Afrikulture Stilt Walkers for authentic community engagement. Integrated SEN students into major cultural celebrations (Kiddies Carnival) to promote inclusion. Conducted targeted awareness events including World Down Syndrome Day (March 2025), Disability Sensitization March in Grenada, and Autism Awareness activities across member states. Developed specialized resources including autism support materials and sensory resources for classroom implementation.

Success Level Assessment

Moderate Success - The component achieved significant progress in professional development and community engagement while facing persistent infrastructure and procurement challenges. Professional development programmes exceeded participation targets and demonstrated measurable educator capacity improvements. SEN resource distribution showed strong utilization rates where implemented, with effective teacher training supporting sustainable classroom integration.

Infrastructure development experienced substantial delays, particularly the Sacred Heart School refurbishment that required ministerial-level intervention and creative financing solutions. However, completed facilities in Dominica and New Hampshire Pre-Primary represent tangible improvements in ECE learning environments meeting OECS standards.

Community engagement campaigns achieved exceptional reach and demonstrated innovative approaches to inclusive education advocacy through cultural integration and strategic media partnerships. The 60-80% utilization rates for assistive devices indicate genuine classroom impact, though monitoring systems require strengthening for comprehensive outcome assessment.

Overall, the component made substantial progress toward enhanced ECE and SEN service quality and equity, with particular strength in capacity building and community attitude transformation, while revealing important lessons about infrastructure project management and procurement processes in small island developing states.

Component / Objective	**Level of Progress this Reporting Period** [2]	**Previous Rating**
Enhanced Curriculum & Assessment	Highly Satisfactory (HS)	Highly Satisfactory (HS)

Brief description of the major activities undertaken and the relative level of success in fulfilling the project outputs and outcomes planned for this reporting period:

Major Activities Undertaken

Curriculum Completion

Full OECS Harmonized Primary Curriculum Development - Achieved complete curriculum writing for Grades K-6 across all subject areas, representing the culmination of multi-year collaborative development efforts. Curriculum drafting progressed systematically throughout Year 4, with Kindergarten, Grade 5, and Grade 6 Language Arts completed in Q1 despite logistical challenges from Hurricane Beryl impacts. Grade K curriculum was finalized and submitted for review, while Grades 1-5 development processes were completed by Q2. Final enrichment work for Kindergarten and Grade 6 was completed in Q3, with all indexed and production-ready versions finalized by Q4. The curriculum development involved extensive collaboration among regional curriculum experts, with structured review processes and quality assurance mechanisms ensuring alignment with OECS educational standards.

Digital Platform Development

Innovative D-OHPC Learning Hub Creation - Developed and launched the comprehensive Digital OECS Learning Hub following the groundbreaking D-OHPC Hackathon (September 3-5, 2024). The hackathon engaged 14 young regional professionals in computer coding, software engineering, digital marketing, VR/AR, and artificial intelligence, working alongside curriculum experts to create digital educational solutions. Key outputs included interactive lesson plans, digital worksheets, assessment tools, AI-powered teacher assistance chatbots, and integration capabilities with existing platforms like Google Classroom. Converted 11 prototypes into functional applications launched on the OECS Learning Hub platform. The digital development incorporated real-time data collection tools and created over 200 digital content resources supporting Social Studies curriculum implementation, establishing a scalable model for digital curriculum enhancement.

Micro-Pilot Implementation

D-OHPC Classroom Testing and Feedback - Implemented systematic micro-pilot programs in 29+ schools across Grenada (12 schools), Dominica (17 schools including 5 additional for Grade 6 pilot), and Saint Lucia (selected schools). Micro-pilots provided real-world testing environments for digital curriculum functionality, teacher usability, and student engagement. Conducted sensitization sessions with Ministry officials, principals, and teachers to prepare stakeholders for implementation. Pilot feedback informed curriculum refinements and identified areas requiring additional teacher support, particularly regarding digital literacy and technical infrastructure requirements. Schools reported varying levels of readiness, with some expressing enthusiasm for curriculum innovation while others identified needs for enhanced technical support and professional development.

Regional Assessments

OERA and OEMA Development and Administration - Completed comprehensive revision of the OECS Early Reading Assessment (OERA) and OECS Early Mathematics Assessment (OEMA) to align with new curriculum standards and UNESCO Institute for Statistics requirements for SDG 4.1.1a reporting. Conducted successful pilot assessments in Q2 across all member states, followed by full-scale administration in Q4 reaching 6,883 students in reading and 6,849 students in mathematics across eight participating countries. Assessment revision involved collaboration with Australian Center for Educational Research (ACER) to ensure technical quality and international alignment. Developed comprehensive administration protocols, training materials, and quality control systems. Despite logistical challenges including material preparation delays and scheduling conflicts, achieved region-wide implementation providing baseline data for curriculum effectiveness evaluation.

Capacity Building and Professional Development

Systematic Educator Training Programmes - Trained 102 educators across seven member states in specialized Kindergarten curriculum management, addressing the unique thematic approach distinguishing Grade K from other levels. Certified 19 educators from eight participating countries in assessment administration through job-embedded professional development during OERA/OEMA development phases, creating sustainable regional assessment capacity. Conducted tiered training strategies for lead teachers in all primary schools on curriculum implementation and digital platform utilization. Provided specialized training for education officers in lesson observation and coaching strategies, developing adapted observation tools aligned with D-OHPC requirements. Training programs incorporated hands-on methodologies and addressed varying levels of technological readiness among participants.

Success Level Assessment

High Success - Component 2 achieved its most critical objectives with the complete OECS Harmonized Primary Curriculum representing a landmark accomplishment for regional educational coordination. The curriculum development process demonstrated effective multi-state collaboration and produced comprehensive, standards-aligned educational materials ready for region-wide implementation.

The digital platform development through the hackathon model proved exceptionally innovative, creating functional educational technology solutions while building regional capacity in educational innovation. The AI-powered assistance tools and interactive learning resources represent significant advances in Caribbean educational technology implementation.

Regional assessment administration achieved remarkable scale and coordination, successfully testing nearly 7,000 students across eight countries while maintaining quality standards and generating valuable baseline data. The alignment with UNESCO standards enables OECS reporting into SDG indicators for the first time, representing important progress in international educational accountability.

Micro-pilot implementation provided essential real-world feedback while revealing important implementation considerations including digital infrastructure requirements and teacher preparation needs. The pilot process demonstrated effective stakeholder engagement strategies and identified specific support requirements for successful curriculum rollout.

Capacity building efforts created sustainable regional expertise in both curriculum implementation and assessment administration, with certified educators positioned to support ongoing program expansion. The specialized Kindergarten training addressed unique curricular requirements while assessment certification built long-term regional evaluation capacity.

Implementation challenges centered primarily on digital literacy gaps among some educators and infrastructure limitations in certain locations, but these were addressed through adaptive training approaches and technical support mechanisms. The component's achievements established strong foundations for Year 5 full curriculum pilot implementation while demonstrating effective regional collaboration models for educational innovation.

Component / Objective	Level of Progress this Reporting Period [2]	Previous Rating
Strengthened Leadership and Management	Satisfactory (S)	Highly Satisfactory (HS)

Brief description of the major activities undertaken and the relative level of success in fulfilling the project outputs and outcomes planned for this reporting period:

Major Activities Undertaken

CSSI Implementation

Exceptional Grant Program Performance - Achieved outstanding success with the Continuous School and System Improvement (CSSI) grants program, reaching 99.99% disbursement to participating schools and 98% expenditure rate by schools by year-end. The program engaged schools across all GPE member states in systematic improvement planning and implementation. In Dominica, 15 of 22 participating schools utilized 100% of allocated funding, while Grenada expanded the program to 20 schools utilizing grant funding for targeted improvement areas. Saint Lucia achieved 95% school implementation of CSSI-aligned School Improvement Plans, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines successfully onboarded additional schools despite Hurricane Beryl impacts. The program integrated improvement planning with national education priorities, creating sustainable school-level capacity for continuous improvement processes. Schools implemented diverse improvement initiatives including infrastructure enhancements, instructional resource procurement, and professional development activities aligned with their specific improvement goals.

Professional Development programmes

Leadership Certification and Capacity Building - Delivered comprehensive leadership development initiatives across member states with varying approaches tailored to national contexts. Dominica achieved exceptional results with 100% pass rate among 28 participants in leadership certification programmes, including 26 distinctions and 2 passes, demonstrating high-quality program delivery and participant engagement. Saint Lucia reported 30% of principals and 67% of vice-principals actively engaged in structured continuous professional development programmes. Conducted leadership conferences and symposiums, including Grenada's inaugural annual leadership conference "Empowering School Leaders as Catalysts for Educational Transformation" engaging 100 participants, and leadership symposiums in Dominica focusing on education reform implementation including OERA, OEMA, and D-OHPC pilot preparation. Professional development programming created linkages between Education Sector Strategic Plan priorities and PEARL activities, ensuring alignment with national education goals.

Capacity Building for Senior Education Leaders

Strategic Leadership Development - Implemented targeted workshops for senior education officials focusing on supervision, coaching, and data-driven improvement strategies. Conducted two-day workshop for senior leaders in Saint Lucia emphasizing supervision and coaching competencies. Provided specialized training for education officers in lesson observation and coaching strategies, developing observation tools adapted from existing Ministry forms to align with D-OHPC requirements. Leadership focal points successfully connected CSSI implementation with priorities from Education Sector Analysis, creating coherent improvement frameworks. Engaged school leaders in policy discussions and implementation planning, ensuring their representation in key education initiatives through regular meetings with principals and senior educators addressing challenges and developing strategic action plans.

Action Research Integration and Framework Development

Research-Practice Integration Model - Developed comprehensive conceptual models for integrating action research with CSSI implementation, creating structures for evidence-based school improvement. Approved frameworks during the annual meeting for systematic integration of research competencies with ongoing school improvement processes. The action research component was strategically deferred to the 2025-2026 academic year due to competing end-of-year priorities and school leader workload considerations. Framework development aimed to build research competencies among school leaders, enhance evidence utilization in decision-making, and create opportunities for findings publication. Recruited and prepared teacher educators to serve as action research coaches, developing support structures for research implementation within school improvement planning processes.

Success Level Assessment

High Success in CSSI, Moderate Overall - Component 3 demonstrated exceptional achievement in the CSSI grants program while showing moderate success in broader leadership development objectives. The 99.99% disbursement rate and 98% school expenditure rate represent outstanding program management and school-level implementation capacity, exceeding typical grant program performance standards.

Leadership certification programmes achieved strong completion rates with notable success in Dominica's 100% pass rate and positive engagement across other member states. The leadership conferences and symposiums effectively built networks and reinforced school improvement competencies, though coverage varied among member states due to resource and scheduling constraints.

Capacity building initiatives for senior education leaders successfully established linkages between national education priorities and local improvement efforts, creating coherent frameworks for systematic improvement. The supervision and coaching workshops built essential competencies for curriculum implementation support, particularly important for D-OHPC rollout preparation.

The action research integration framework development represented important progress toward research-based improvement models, though deferral to Year 5 limited immediate impact assessment. The strategic decision to postpone full implementation acknowledged realistic capacity constraints while maintaining program quality standards.

Implementation challenges included persistent delays in financial reporting from schools affecting regional reporting timelines, and varying levels of engagement among education leaders due to competing responsibilities. Some member states experienced difficulties with expanding community engagement and stakeholder participation in leadership development activities.

The moderate overall assessment reflects the component's substantial achievement in core grant implementation while acknowledging that broader leadership framework development and research integration remained works in progress. The CSSI program's exceptional success provided strong foundations for sustainable school improvement practices, while leadership development activities built regional capacity for educational reform implementation.

Component / Objective	**Level of Progress this Reporting Period** [2]	**Previous Rating**
Programme Management, Institutional Strengthening, Monitoring and Evaluation	Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	Satisfactory (S)

Brief description of the major activities undertaken and the relative level of success in fulfilling the project outputs and outcomes planned for this reporting period:

Major Activities Undertaken

Financial Management and Expenditure Tracking

Enhanced Monitoring and Accountability Systems: Implemented systematic monthly check-ins with each member state to address persistent financial absorption challenges throughout Year 4. These one-on-one sessions engaged Chief Education Officers, National Coordinators, Project Assistants, and component focal points in joint assessment of implementation progress and expenditure alignment. The check-ins identified gaps, delays, and bottlenecks while developing real-time response strategies and accountability mechanisms. Despite these interventions, overall financial absorption remained below targets, progressing from 45% in Q1 to 61% by Q4, consistently rated as "off-track." The PMT implemented automatic notification systems, scheduled expenditure monitoring check-ins, and developed tailored approaches for country-specific challenges. CEOs and finance officers were required to participate in sessions to improve both support and accountability structures, though expenditure acceleration remained limited by procurement delays and capacity constraints.

MERL Platform Development and Implementation

Digital M&E System Creation: Completed development of the comprehensive Monitoring, Evaluation, Research, and Learning (MERL) platform designed to facilitate real-time data collection, streamlined reporting, and centralized resource access. Platform development faced significant delays and engagement challenges, with Module 1 training achieving limited success across member states. Training results showed 85 completions, 17 incomplete participants, and 80 individuals who never accessed the system across all member states, indicating substantial engagement barriers. Technical access issues, expired credentials, and login difficulties undermined participation despite multiple intervention attempts including LMS Administrator onboarding and extended deadlines. By Q4, the PMT determined to utilize internal OECS software development expertise to host and refine the platform, with anticipated readiness by September 2025. User feedback guided iterative development phases, though full platform utilization

remained limited throughout the reporting period.

Strategic Partnership Development
Enhanced Technical Capacity Through Collaboration: Established significant new partnerships strengthening project technical capacity and sustainability prospects. Secured collaboration with Wilfrid Laurier University providing both financial and technical support for ongoing curriculum development and future project conceptualization. Partnered with Australian Center for Educational Research (ACER) through World Bank funding to guide assessment development and align OECS instruments with UNESCO Institute for Statistics standards, enabling first-time reporting into SDG indicator 4.1.1a. These partnerships enhanced regional capacity in assessment design, administration, and data interpretation while providing access to international expertise and funding streams. Partnership development included preliminary work with Wilfrid Laurier University on conceptualizing successor projects to sustain and advance OECS PEARL gains, representing strategic planning for post-project sustainability.

Capacity Building and Professional Development
M&E Training and Skills Development: Conducted extensive training initiatives targeting over 80 staff members from GPE member countries and the OECS Commission, though participation rates remained below expectations. Developed comprehensive MERL training manuals and standardized practice frameworks to ensure consistent implementation approaches. Despite overwhelming initial registration interest nearly tripling anticipated thresholds, actual participation rates were significantly impacted by technical platform access issues and competing work priorities among target participants. Training focused on data collection methodologies, analysis techniques, and evidence-based decision-making processes. Additional capacity building included missions to member states addressing technical and fiduciary management requirements, resulting in improved compliance with procurement and financial management arrangements. Country-specific training addressed gaps in strategic planning, risk management, and resource allocation competencies.

Success Level Assessment:
Moderate Success with Significant Challenges - Component 4 maintained essential project management functions while establishing valuable partnerships, but faced persistent challenges in financial performance and M&E system engagement that limited overall effectiveness.
The monthly check-in system represented important progress in project oversight and accountability, creating structured opportunities for problem-solving and strategic adjustment. These sessions demonstrated positive impacts in individual cases, such as resolving procurement delays in Dominica and addressing staffing gaps in Saint Lucia, though broader financial absorption challenges persisted throughout the year.
MERL platform development achieved technical completion but faced substantial implementation challenges with low user engagement and technical access barriers undermining intended impact. The platform's sophisticated design and comprehensive functionality were offset by practical usability issues that prevented effective adoption by target users.
Partnership development with Wilfrid Laurier University and ACER represented significant achievements that enhanced both immediate project capacity and long-term sustainability prospects. These collaborations provided access to international expertise and funding while building regional capacity in specialized areas like assessment development and educational research.
Capacity building initiatives showed mixed results with strong initial interest but limited sustained engagement due to technical barriers and competing priorities. The training materials and frameworks developed provide valuable resources for future implementation, though immediate capacity development impact was constrained.
The moderate assessment reflects the component's essential role in maintaining project coordination while acknowledging that financial absorption challenges (ending at 61% versus targets) and limited M&E system adoption prevented achievement of fully satisfactory performance levels. The established partnerships and improved oversight systems provide foundations for enhanced performance, though systemic challenges in procurement and stakeholder engagement require continued attention.

Lessons, innovative/promising practices

Lessons Learned

Stakeholder Engagement and Communication

Early and Consistent Engagement is Critical- Securing principal buy-in for curriculum pilots led to greater teacher participation and enthusiasm, while delayed or inconsistent communication created anxiety and disengagement among educators Proactive Communication Prevents Implementation Delays- Timely sharing of key dates and transparent discussion of challenges enabled collaborative problem-solving, while communication gaps led to scheduling setbacks and stakeholder frustration Community Sensitization Requires Sustained Effort- Successful SEN integration and ECE acceptance required ongoing sensitization activities with multiple touchpoints rather than single awareness events

Professional Development and Capacity Building

One-off Training Events Are Insufficient- Sustainable educational reform requires continuous, job-embedded coaching and support rather than standalone professional development sessions Flexible Delivery Models Increase Participation- On-demand and hybrid training options addressed scheduling conflicts and increased educator accessibility, particularly important in small island contexts Embedded Capacity Building Creates Expertise- Training national officers during assessment development processes created sustainable regional capacity while building local ownership

Infrastructure and Procurement Management

Disaster Preparedness Essential in Caribbean Context- Hurricane Beryl impacts highlighted the need for contingency planning and reserved resources in disaster-prone regions to maintain program continuity Multi-Agency Dependencies Require Enhanced Coordination- Infrastructure projects involving multiple government agencies need strengthened oversight mechanisms and realistic timeline projections Local Procurement Capacity Needs Development- Delays in procurement processing across multiple member states revealed systemic capacity gaps requiring targeted technical assistance

Digital Implementation Challenges

Digital Literacy Gaps Must Be Addressed Systematically- Successful digital curriculum implementation required addressing varying technological readiness levels through differentiated support strategies Technical Infrastructure Assessment Critical- Platform access issues and connectivity constraints significantly impacted program participation, highlighting need for infrastructure readiness assessments

Successful Practices The D-OHPC Hackathon Model

Collaborative Innovation Approach- Engaging 14 young regional professionals in computer coding, software engineering, and AI with curriculum experts created functional educational technology solutions while building regional capacity Multi-Stakeholder Co-Creation- The hackathon model demonstrated effectiveness in accelerating digital curriculum development through voluntary collaborative activities that fostered innovation and stakeholder buy-in Scalable Technology Solutions- Produced AI-powered teacher assistance tools, interactive learning resources, and platform integration capabilities that established replicable models for educational technology development

Principal-Led Implementation Strategy

School-Level Leadership Drives Success- Schools where principals actively monitored and encouraged D-OHPC engagement reported higher participation levels and teacher enthusiasm compared to schools with passive leadership Distributed Accountability Model- Principal ownership of curriculum implementation created sustainable change mechanisms that extended beyond project timelines

CSSI Grant Implementation Excellence

Near-Perfect Implementation Rates- Achieved 99.99% disbursement and 98% expenditure rates through systematic school support, clear guidelines, and responsive technical assistance Peer Learning Networks- High-performing schools sharing best practices with struggling institutions created effective knowledge transfer and motivation for improvement Integration with National Priorities- Connecting school improvement plans with national education goals enhanced relevance and sustainability

Monthly Check-In System

Structured Accountability Mechanisms- Regular one-on-one sessions with member states involving CEOs, coordinators, and focal points enabled real-time problem-solving and progress monitoring Tailored Technical Assistance- Country-specific discussions identified unique challenges and developed customized response strategies, demonstrating positive impact on individual implementation issues

Innovative Interventions Cultural Integration of Inclusion Messaging

Carnival as Inclusion Platform- Integrating SEN students into Dominica's Kiddies Carnival as featured participants rather than beneficiaries fundamentally reframed public discourse around disability and inclusion Brand Ambassador Strategy- Utilizing Miss Dominica 2024 and Afrikulture Stilt Walkers as OECS PEARL ambassadors created authentic Caribbean cultural connections that resonated with community values Creative Media Campaigns- "Rock Your Socks" competitions and slogan development for ministry staff maintained engagement while building internal advocacy within education systems

AI-Powered Educational Technology

Conversational AI for Teacher Support- Developed AI chatbots to guide teachers in D-OHPC navigation, lesson planning, and resource recommendations, providing 24/7 professional support Adaptive Digital Learning Tools- Created interactive lesson plans and digital worksheets that adapt to diverse student needs while maintaining curriculum alignment Real-Time Data Collection Integration- Developed prototypes for continuous progress monitoring that inform both classroom practice and educational policy decisions

Community of Practice Development

Parent Support Networks- The Hanen "More Than Words" program in Grenada created unexpected community-building outcomes among parents of children with autism, revealing strong need for ongoing peer support Professional Learning Communities- Established structured collaboration mechanisms among educators that fostered sustained, data-driven instructional improvement beyond project activities

Action Research Integration Model

Research-Practice Integration- Developed frameworks combining action research with CSSI implementation, creating systematic inquiry cycles that enhance school improvement effectiveness Teacher-Researcher Development- Recruited and trained teacher educators as research coaches, building sustainable capacity for evidence-based educational improvement

Multi-Platform Digital Engagement

Comprehensive Digital Curriculum Ecosystem- Created integrated platform combining curriculum content, assessment tools, professional development resources, and AI assistance in single access point Offline Capability Development- Developed offline tools for schools with connectivity constraints, ensuring equitable access to digital curriculum resources Google Partnership Integration- Established authentication systems and cloud storage integration that simplified access while building digital citizenship skills

Cross-Cutting Innovation Themes Regional Collaboration Models

Eight-Country Assessment Coordination- Successfully implemented standardized assessments across diverse educational systems while maintaining quality and comparability Shared Resource Development- Created curriculum materials and digital tools designed for regional use while allowing country-specific adaptations

Sustainability-Focused Design

Local Capacity Building- Embedded professional development within implementation activities created ongoing regional expertise rather than external dependency Integration with National Systems- Aligned project activities with existing educational frameworks and policies to ensure post-project continuation

Adaptive Implementation Strategies

Flexible Response Mechanisms- Demonstrated ability to adjust timelines, delivery methods, and resource allocation in response to external challenges like Hurricane Beryl while maintaining program integrity Evidence-Based Adjustments- Used pilot feedback and implementation data to refine approaches continuously rather than adhering rigidly to original plans

Impact stories

The Year 4 implementation generated 27 documented success stories and digital resources spanning all four project components, with particularly strong representation in:

- Infrastructure and facility improvements (ECE refurbishments)
- Curriculum innovation and digital development (D-OHPC platform, hackathon outcomes)
- Special education inclusion initiatives (community sensitization, assistive technology)
- School improvement success cases (CSSI implementation)
- Professional development outcomes (leadership conferences, teacher training)

These success stories demonstrate tangible impact across educational infrastructure, pedagogy, technology integration, community engagement, and inclusive education practices throughout the OECS region. A list of success stories by quarter is provided below:

Q1 Impact Stories

1. Creating Better Writers – Unlocking Creative Expressions (Grenada)
Description: Six-week creative writing course led by District Education Officer Peter Regis at Holy Cross Catholic School in Grenada. Students discovered storytelling joy after low Minimum Competency Test scores. Ten-year-old Stephen Neckles and classmates engaged in imaginative workshops with resource experts like Dr. Christopher Williams, role-playing and crafting original stories. The Capstone Project demonstrated OECS PEARL's commitment to enriching basic education across the Eastern Caribbean.
URL: SharePoint Document: https://moegd-my.sharepoint.com/personal/gpecoordinator_moe_edu_gd/_layouts/15/onedrive.aspx?id=%2Fpersonal%2Fgpecoordinator%5Fmoe%5Fedu%5Fgd%2FDocuments%2FGPE%2FProjects%2FOPEARL%5FESPIG%2FOPEARL%20ProDocs%2FC4%20MERL%20%26%20CM%2FChange%20Mgmt%2FImpact%20Stories%2FOECS%20PEARL%20Impact%20Story%20%2D%20Creating%20Better%20Writers%20%E2%80%93%20Unlocking%20Creative%20Expressions%2Epdf

2. Building Bright Futures: Empowering Students with Special Needs for Successful School Integration (Grenada)
Description: OECS PEARL transformation of lives by empowering children with special needs for mainstream school success. Featured 8-year-old Lily with cerebral palsy receiving personalized support including speech therapy, academic tutoring, and assistive technology. Journey from struggling at home to confidently preparing for school integration through early intervention and specialized care, fostering inclusion, empathy, and collaboration.
URL: SharePoint Document: https://moegd-my.sharepoint.com/personal/gpecoordinator_moe_edu_gd/_layouts/15/onedrive.aspx?id=%2Fpersonal%2Fgpecoordinator%5Fmoe%5Fedu%5Fgd%2FDocuments%2FGPE%2FProjects%2FOPEARL%5FESPIG%2FOPEARL%20ProDocs%2FC4%20MERL%20%26%20CM%2FChange%20Mgmt%2FImpact%20Stories%2FOECS%20PEARL%20Impact%20Story%20%2D%20Building%20Bright%20Futures%2Epdf

3. The Multiplier Effect (Grenada)
Description: Ten-year-old Daidrion Wilson and classmates at Paraclete Government School discovered new love for mathematics. Teacher Kendlyn Williams led "The Multiplier Effect" project, transforming students' multiplication skills using games, technology, and engaging methods. After three months, students showed remarkable improvement with assessment scores jumping dramatically. Initiative demonstrated how innovative teaching practices unlock student potential and foster learning passion.
URL: SharePoint Document: https://moegd-my.sharepoint.com/personal/gpecoordinator_moe_edu_gd/_layouts/15/onedrive.aspx?id=%2Fpersonal%2Fgpecoordinator%5Fmoe%5Fedu%5Fgd%2FDocuments%2FGPE%2FProjects%2FOPEARL%5FESPIG%2FOPEARL%20ProDocs%2FC4%20MERL%20%26%20CM%2FChange%20Mgmt%2FImpact%20Stories%2FOECS%20PEARL%20Impact%20Story%20%2D%20The%20Multiplier%20Effect%2Epdf

4. D-OHPC Hackathon (Regional)
Description: Digital Curriculum Hackathon (September 3-5, 2024) brought together 14 young professionals from the region specializing in computer coding, software engineering, digital marketing, VR/AR, and AI. Collaborating with education specialists, participants developed innovative digital solutions transforming curriculum including dynamic interactive tools, centralized curriculum repository, and AI conversational tools for educators with special attention to SEN support.
URL: OECS Press Room: https://pressroom.oecs.int/oecs-successfully-concludes-digital-curriculum-hackathon

Q2 Impact Stories and Initiatives

5. Kiddies Carnival Inclusion Initiative (Dominica)
Description: OECS PEARL participated in Dominica's Kiddies Carnival, promoting inclusion of SEN students. Initiative provided platform for children with special needs to engage socially, build confidence, and integrate seamlessly into school activities, fundamentally reframing public discourse around disability and inclusion.
URL: Kiddies Carnival Launch

6. Afrikulture Stilt Walkers and Miss Dominica 2024 as Brand Ambassadors (Dominica)
Description: Afrikulture Stilt Walkers and Miss Dominica 2024, Kyanna Dyer, served as OECS PEARL brand ambassadors wearing branded costumes at national events. Their presence raised awareness about the program, fostering public engagement and cultural appreciation while creating authentic Caribbean cultural connections.
URL: Afrikulture Stilt Walkers & Miss Dominica (URL not provided in document)

7. Boys Room Initiative (Dominica)
Description: Youth engagement initiative highlighted as safe space for discussions on mental health, education, and social issues affecting young boys, though limited details provided.
URL: Boys Room Initiative (URL not provided in document)

8. Leadership Conference in Grenada
Description: Over 100 school leaders participated in inaugural Leadership Conference under theme "Empowering School Leaders as Catalysts for Educational Transformation." Event reinforced leadership skills and Continuous School and System Improvement (CSSI) models.
URL: [MOE's Leadership Conference - Opening Ceremony](URL not provided in document)

9. OECS PEARL Donates Early Childhood Education Resources
Description: Project provided Early Childhood Education resources to four preschools, improving access to quality learning materials and demonstrating direct community impact.
URL: GIS - OECS PEARL Donates ECE Resources (URL not provided in document)

Q3 Success Stories (Facebook Posts and YouTube Videos)

Facebook Posts:
10. Handing Over of the Newly Refurbished and Extended New Hampshire Pre-School
URL: Facebook Post: https://www.facebook.com/share/p/15WoBP7RYZ/
11. Pre School Refurbished - MOE POST
URL: Facebook Post: https://www.facebook.com/share/p/1CLZTWsM1j/

12. Handing Over of the Newly Refurbished New Hampshire Pre School - GIS NEWS
URL: Facebook Video: https://www.facebook.com/share/v/1Zosz4osof/
13. Dynamic Reform and Digitization of Primary School Curriculum - GIS NEWS
URL: Facebook Video: https://www.facebook.com/share/v/1BX4GpgaSR/
14. D-OHPC Sensitization with SEN Focal Points
URL: Facebook Post: https://www.facebook.com/share/p/1EfsExCCXp/
15. St. Andrew's Catholic School highlights CSSI
URL: Facebook Video: https://www.facebook.com/share/v/1Ee9Dy1hdF/
16. Telescope Primary School highlights CSSI
URL: Facebook Video: https://www.facebook.com/share/v/1BxexDx2Kj/
17. WEE FM Radio Post - World Down Syndrome Day Celebration
URL: Facebook Post: https://www.facebook.com/share/p/16LtWZJUqQ/
18. CSSI - St. George's Methodist Post
URL: Facebook Post: https://www.facebook.com/share/p/16CcZchXaJ/
19. OECS PEARL Newsletter
URL: Facebook Post: https://www.facebook.com/share/p/15w9QHz2Vx/
YouTube Videos:
20. OECS PEARL Holds Two Day Early Childhood Education Forum
URL: YouTube Video: https://youtu.be/gPnSfGH4fP0?si=96XFoXAkZtkJCaXW
21. ECE Teachers to Deliver Quality Education
URL: YouTube Video: https://youtu.be/qB2V-CU1hU4?si=BHksMIK1xuKCZy5V
22. Dynamic Reform and Digitization of Primary School Curriculum
URL: YouTube Video: https://youtu.be/LiffF68FhiM?si=PGZ_x4vHGJ8LQnqv
23. OECS PEARL ECE Leaders Forum
URL: YouTube Live Stream: https://www.youtube.com/live/XXtgM5xQPqU?si=KeZAX0PsAIg7ORGB

Q4 Success Stories

24. Report on More Than Words Parent Coaching (Grenada)
Description: Detailed report on the Hanen "More Than Words" program implementation in Grenada for families with children with Autism Spectrum Disorder or communication challenges. Program showed significant success with unexpected positive outcome of developing supportive community among parents, highlighting need for support groups and respite care.
URL: SharePoint PDF Document: https://moegd-my.sharepoint.com/:b:/g/personal/gpecoordinator_moe_edu_gd/ESKOMOhkT2dIhHbHFoUZFXsBvUqRwxXyKQQKhuzz8xP_Kg?e=Gm8dac
25. Spotlight of Success - CSSI - Telescope Primary School
Description: Video showcase highlighting successful implementation of Continuous School and System Improvement (CSSI) model at Telescope Primary School, demonstrating effective school-level improvement practices and outcomes.
URL: Facebook Video; https://www.facebook.com/share/v/1CHY7xxt9q/
Additional Digital Resources and Platforms
26. OECS PEARL Digital Curriculum Platform (OECS Learning Hub)

Description: Comprehensive digital platform hosting the D-OHPC curriculum with interactive tools, AI assistance, and integrated educational resources developed through the hackathon process.

URL: OECS Learning Hub: https://oecslearninghub.org/

27. OECS PEARL Hackathon Product - OECS MakerStudio

Description: Digital makerspace platform created during the D-OHPC Hackathon, providing virtual environment for creative educational activities and project-based learning.

URL: OECS MakerStudio: https://makerstudio.oecslearning.org/

Tangible Outputs, Knowledge Products, Results Framework and other Supporting Documentation

#	File Name	Document Type	Description
1	OECS PEARL Performance Result Framework (Updated Sept 9, 2024)_11th September 2025 - Copy.xlsx	Results Framework	Quarterly Reporting Template
2	OECS PEARL Procurement Annual Report Y4.docx	Knowledge Product	OECS PEARL Procurement Report
2	PMT_Y4 Report on Regional Assessments_29July2025 (1).docx	Knowledge Product	Report on Regional Assessments
2	Regional School Grants Closure Report - 30.06.2025 (Revised) (1).docx	Knowledge Product	School Grants Report
2	Copy of Beneficiaries_ECE & SEN.xlsx	Knowledge Product	
2	COPY_OECS PEARL Performance Result Framework_11.05.26.xlsx	Results Framework	

The documents listed were submitted with the progress report. If you'd like access to them, please contact the grant operations officer for your country.

Financial Reporting & Grant Management

Financial Reporting on GPE Grant

Cumulative Financial Absorption Rate

Approved Budget to Date	Cumulative Expenditure	Cumulative Financial Absorption Rate	Level of Financial Absorption
10,000,000	6,118,365	61.18	Off Track

Since the financial absorption is not rated as 'on track', please provide an explanation that identifies the main activities that have been delayed and their corresponding unspent amounts, as well as reasons for the delay and steps taken to ensure that expenditure absorption gets on track in the next reporting period.

Some of the major activities that have been delayed are:

Activity: 1.1.1 Refurbish ECD centers/ classroom facilities and provide appropriate furniture, equipment

Unspent amount: $236,545

Reason(s) for delay: Works were ongoing in Grenada and St Vincent and the Grenadines. In addition, the devastation caused by Hurricane Beryl affected schedules, with government teams in Grenada

diverting their attention to the recovery efforts required. In Dominica, the supply of furniture was impacted by an extremely lengthy local procurement approval process and associated complications.
Steps to get on track: By the end of the period, progress was made with a contract for the refurbishment in Grenada. Similarly, in Dominica, work has progressed and is expected to be completed between the first and second quarters. Therefore, in the next period, close monitoring and frequent check-ins will be used to ensure that the schedule does not suffer any further delays.

Activity: 1.2.2 Develop and provide professional training to teachers and practitioners who interact with children with SEN
Unspent amount: $245,910
Reason(s) for delay: In Dominica and Grenada, the diagnostic tools were received, but payments were not made by the end of the period. In St Vincent and the Grenadines, funds were reallocated from the refurbishments line 1.1.1.c 74,500 to this budget line (1.2.2) at the end of Year 3, as part of the approved restructuring, because the initial budget documents received were well beyond the available budget. However, the MoE changed its intentions with the procurement and opted instead to revise the list of materials, resulting in a much-reduced budget.
Steps to get on track: The PMT will monitor financial reports to verify that reports have been made and follow up where necessary. The PMT will also ensure that all unused funds are duly assigned in the plan and budget for Year 5.

Activity: 1.2.3 Incorporated assistive tools in selected Educational Institutions
Unspent amount: $39,600
Reason(s) for delay: procurement of diagnostic tools was delayed in some member states. St. Vincent ECE resources have not been utilised.
Steps to get on track: An issue emerged where the firm reported delivery of tools to SVG, but the MoE has advised that the items were not received. The matter is presently being investigated by the Procurement Unit of the Commission. The contract amount is approximately $38,000

Activity: 1.2.4 Special Needs Community Sensitization/Awareness program
Unspent amount: $31,918
Reason(s) for delay: Activities were undertaken in the Member States, but the expenditure targets were not met. However, the scale of the activities in some territories was not as large as previously expected.
Steps to get on track: A Communications Officer is being recruited who will be assigned to support national teams in achieving higher levels of engagement. The series of major activities is intended to point to higher expenditure that can be expected.

Activity: 2.2.3 Procure and Develop Curriculum Support Materials
Unspent amount: $130,136
Reason(s) for delay: A wide range of software applications were developed by the PMT and regional team, reducing the need for new purchases.
Steps to get on track: An assessment will be conducted to make decisions about the best use of the funds. The assessment will determine whether the funds can remain within the line with meaningful purchases or whether they should be reallocated to support another Component 2 activity.

Activity: 2.2.4 Conduct a pilot implementation of the New OHPC
Unspent amount: $116,120
Reason(s) for delay: During the implementation of the micropilot, it was determined that the level of funding anticipated was not needed. Instead, much of the funding was reserved for the full-scale pilot activities. In addition, the procurement of devices for electronic data capture did not take place in year 4 as planned. Adjustments in the assessment methodology required holding off on the procurement of the devices to ensure that the devices were still required.
Steps to get on track: Ensure that the activity is completed and devices are disseminated for implementation of project activities.

Activity: 2.3.1 Strengthen OECS Early Grade (K2) Reading Assessment

Unspent amount: $100,006
Reason(s) for delay: The assessment model changed with the Commission and Member States agreeing to a very streamlined assessment instrument. The change in methodology that placed a heavy emphasis on sustainability meant that less funding than budgeted was required. The original budget was established based on historical data for student assessment at the level of the OECS in a previous project.
Steps to get on track: Establish sustainability structures, such as a major capacity development activity to help country teams develop the competencies for managing local aspects of the assessment mechanism for meeting quality assessment standards, and reporting locally, regionally, and internationally.

Activity: 2.3.2 Strengthen OECS Early Grade (K2) Reading Assessment
Unspent amount: $100,892
Reason(s) for delay: Same as above.
Steps to get on track: Same as above.

Activity: 2.3.3 Develop student assessment instruments
Unspent amount: $47,020
Reason(s) for delay: The model proposed by the consultants required much less input and effort than was anticipated. The approach used was more efficient and cost-effective, leading to the cost savings reflected in this line.
Steps to get on track: Reallocate funds to other critical areas of Component 2.

Activity: 3.1.2 Conduct Professional Development for School Leaders
Unspent amount: $95,253
Reason(s) for delay: The level of engagement of key officials for this component of the project was less than desired. Consequently, the number of activities that were anticipated and the associated spending did not materialize.
Steps to get on track: In collaboration with the PICT, a strategy is being devised to increase the level of engagement of the Leadership and Management Focal Points, as well as intensify the support from former School Grants Administrative Officers who can support school-level leadership teams. Through this engagement, school team activities are expected to increase expenditure.

Activity: 4.3.1 Conduct training in ESPIG project monitoring and evaluation reporting, and learning Framework
Unspent amount: $90,233
Reason(s) for delay: Some of the capacity-building activities in M&E were not undertaken as planned. This issue is directly linked to delays with finalizing the MERL platform, explained below.
Steps to get on track: M&E teams were engaged before the end of the year and in preparation for the new year. The teams received guidance to enact strategies to increase efficiencies, reporting, and other M&E-related areas of attention to strengthen the national teams. In addition, national teams were supported in devising budgets to facilitate national activities that correspond to the increased M&E activity planned at the regional level.

Activity: 4.3.2 Implement a MERL data collection, analysis, and reporting system
Unspent amount: $30,989
Reason(s) for delay: A large portion of this allocation is to the contract with the project’s M & E firm. Extended delays in finalizing the platform have affected the timeline for making the payment. The process is expected to be finalized by the first quarter of next year.
Steps to get on track: Ensure that the submission is made by the consultants within the scheduled timeframe and initiate the payment process to close this deliverable within the contract.

Budget Variance Analysis for the Current Reporting Period

Total Approved Budget for the Current Reporting Period
3,577,391

Total Expenditure for the Current Reporting Period
2,202,490

Explanation for underspending or overspending in excess of 10%
Approximately 38% of the amount projected for the current reporting period was unspent. This was largely as a result of the several delays and challenges highlighted above, as well as the rescheduling of certain key activities to year five, such as the activities aligned to the new digital OHPC.

Management Performance

Level of Management Performance
Moderately Satisfactory (MS)

Previous Rating
Moderately Satisfactory (MS)

Detailed Description
FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT
1. The Finance Unit continues to monitor the fiduciary arrangements of the PEARL subgrants. Financial Management Supervision missions were successfully conducted during the year, with several areas identified for improvement and strengthening. The main objectives of the missions were to review each sub-recipient's fiduciary management system, specific to capacity, governance, and cash management functions to identify key gaps and issues; to assess the design and operational effectiveness of the financial management system of the sub-recipient for the sub-grant; to physically verify the existence and condition of fixed assets purchased using grant funds; to assess the implementation progress of the refurbishment works conducted at ECE centres, and the reasonableness of the works undertaken in line with reported expenditure; to assess the completeness and accuracy of the financial documents and records; to seek explanations for any discrepancies; and provide recommendations for strengthening measures and identify avenues for further capacity building. Some of the common issues observed were inaccurate or delayed financial reporting, and poor asset management. The national teams have been urged to build their asset databases and regularly update their asset registers to track fixed assets properly. Reconciliations against financial records and spot checks are expected to be conducted in the next period.

2. The Unit engages in continuous capacity-building initiatives to strengthen the capacity at the Member States' level to manage and implement the subgrants. During the year, capacity-building sessions focused on acceptable financial management procedures, documentation and record-keeping, budget management, financial reporting, and asset management, using tools such as templates, checklists, and bulletins. As project closure draws near, capacity building will be conducted as needed, with a specific focus on project closure procedures.

3. The measures employed to accelerate overall expenditure through regular touchpoints with the Member States have proved to be successful, evidenced by the annual average expenditure of USD2.2M for years three and four. Notwithstanding this, efforts will intensify with specific strategic support in this area to achieve greater results.

4. Through strategic partnerships with other agencies, co-funding was received in support of (1) Digital Curriculum Hackathon, where curriculum leads and technology experts from non-GPE countries benefited from UNICEF's contribution of USD8,157, and (2) Wilfred Laurier University contributed CAD15,000 towards the participation of SEN Focal Points in the OECS Inclusive Education Forum. Additionally, the World Bank recruited the Australian Center for Educational Research (ACER) to conduct an evaluation of the OECS student assessments and to make recommendations for improving the assessments to fulfill quality standards for meeting the reporting requirements. The value of this consultancy is undisclosed.

Overall Grant Management

Throughout the implementation period, the Commission provided ongoing support in project management areas to national teams to support their overall management of the grant at the national level. The support focused on matters of risk management, financial management, and human resource management. Through the monthly check-ins and regional coordination meetings and through the quarterly progress review meetings, agenda items targeted crucial areas of need for strategic planning, assessment, knowledge sharing and collaborative interrogation of issues to arrive at pathways for easing implementation burdens and reducing bottlenecks.

Overall management of the Grant is provided by the Commission's Grants Management Committee. The Committee comprises the Head of the Development Cooperation and Resource Mobilization (DCRM) Unit as Chair and the following other committee members: Director of Operations; Head, Human and Social Division; Manager - Donor Accounting Portfolio, Finance & Accounting Unit, and representatives of the Project Management Team, including support services from the Finance & Accounting Unit and the Procurement Unit. The committee meets every six weeks or as necessary. Matters for discussion revolve around risk management primarily. These discussions have helped preserve the integrity of implementation as well as helped with course corrections.

Revisions to the grant

This period, have there been any revisions to the grant other than those submitted to the GPE Board or Secretariat for their approval?

No

How likely is that the grant agent will submit a request for revision to the GPE Board or Secretariat in the next 12 months for their approval?

Unlikely

Annexes

Annex 1: List of Acronyms

Acronym	Description
CEOs	Chief Education Officers
DCEO	Deputy Chief Education Officers
DCP	Developing Country Partner
EDMU	Education Development Management Unit
EOI	Expression of Interest
ESPDG	Education Sector Programme Development Grant
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
MS	Member State(s)
M & E	Monitoring and Evaluation

MoE	Ministry of Education
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MS	Member States
NAC	National Advisory Committee
NCs	National Coordinators
NFP	National Focal Point
OECS	Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States
OESP	OECS Education Support Project
PEARL	Program for Educational Advancement and Relevant Learning
PICT	Project Implementation Consultancy Team
PMT	Program Management Team
PS	Permanent Secretary
QTLLF	Quality Teaching, Leadership and Learning Framework
RFQ	Request for Proposal
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
USD	United States Dollar
PDP	OECS Professional Development Programme
ECJBTE	Eastern Caribbean Joint Board of Teacher Education
OECSC	OECS Commission

Annex 2: Global Numbers Reporting Template

Provide the data related to GPE's three global numbers for this reporting period below:

- Textbooks purchased and distributed
- Teachers trained
- Classrooms built or rehabilitated

Note: For cofinanced grants, please provide the proportion that can be attributed to GPE grant. For example, if the grant's financial contribution accounts for 50 percent of a teacher training activity, the proportion that can be attributed to GPE grant for the number of teachers trained through that activity would be 50%.if the unit of analysis in the indicator is the number of schools and not classrooms, please enter an estimated number of classrooms and provide an explanation in the comments box.

GPE Indicators

Textbooks purchased and distributed

#	Indicator	Actual Number Achieved (during this reporting period)	% attributed to this grant (for cofinanced grants)	Comments
1	Number of textbooks purchased for ECE Spaces	0		

GPE Indicators

Teachers trained

#	Indicator	Actual Number Achieved (during this reporting period)	% attributed to this grant (for cofinanced grants)	Comments
1	Number of teachers trained in Child centered learning	337		A total of 337 teachers were trained in specialized child learning courses. Of these 289 were involved in early childhood courses while the remaining 48 participated in delivery to children Special Education Needs.

GPE Indicators

Classrooms built or rehabilitated

#	Indicator	Actual Number Achieved (during this reporting period)	% attributed to this grant (for cofinanced grants)	Comments
1	Number of pre-primary classrooms established and equipped according to minimum standards in each GPE DCP	5		In this period, Dominica completed 3 spaces while Grenada Completed 2.

Annex 3: Cumulative Beneficiary Children Reporting Template

Provide the cumulative number of children (both in school and out of school) who directly participated in project activities, received project-supported incentives or services, or benefited from project

interventions so far. Also provide relevant disaggregated values by sex (applicable to all grants). If appropriate and available, provide disaggregated values by varied subgroups and by education level. Reporting beneficiary data cumulatively means counting all beneficiaries as a running total, adding up all beneficiaries since the start of the grant and up to the end of this reporting period. Data on beneficiaries are to be collected using the methods and tools proper to each project. It is understood that some disaggregated data will only be collected if a project expressly targets specific subgroups through their interventions and uses their own methods for counting beneficiary children/other students.

NOTE: For cofinanced grants, please provide the numbers for the entire program and indicate the proportion that can be attributed to GPE grant. For example, if the grant's financial contribution accounts for 40 percent of the program that is cofinanced by GPE and other donors, enter 40% in the "% attributed to this grant.

	Pre-primary (optional)	Primary (optional)	Secondary (optional)	Others (optional)	Total	% attributed to this grant (for cofinanced grants)
Number of children who directly benefited from the project so far:	410					
Of which, girls:						
Of which, children with a disability (optional):						
Of which, refugee children (optional):						
Of which, internally displaced children (optional):						
Of which, out-of-school children, in school age (optional):						
Of which, children from marginalized ethno-cultural/ linguistic minorities: specify which ones (optional):						

Provide any comments on beneficiary children, if needed. This could include for example: the definition employed by the project for a particular subgroup (including a more granular description of these subgroups), the approach/tool used to calculate the number of beneficiaries overall or by subgroup, any limitation of the approach/tool employed for this calculation, and reasons why data on beneficiary children is unavailable. Please provide the number or proportion of girls for varied subgroups in the comment section below, if available.

1 Highly Unsatisfactory - The project has major shortcomings or delays that limit or jeopardize the achievement of one or more outputs and a resolution is unlikely. Unsatisfactory - The project has significant shortcomings or delays that limit or jeopardize the achievement of one or more outputs and a resolution is uncertain. Moderately Unsatisfactory - The project has moderate shortcomings or delays that limit or jeopardize the achievement of one or more outputs, but a resolution is likely. Moderately Satisfactory - The project is expected to achieve most of its major outputs efficiently with moderaten shortcomings or delays. Satisfactory - The project is expected to achieve almost all of its major outputs efficiently with only minor shortcomings or delays. Highly Satisfactory -The project is expected to achieve or exceed all of

the major outputs efficiently without significant shortcomings or delays.

2 Highly Unsatisfactory - The component/objective has major shortcomings or delays that limit or jeopardize the achievement of one or more outputs and a resolution is unlikely. Unsatisfactory -The component/objective has significant shortcomings or delays that limit or jeopardize the achievement of one or more outputs and a resolution is uncertain. Moderately Unsatisfactory -The component/objective has moderate shortcomings or delays that limit or jeopardize the achievement of one or more outputs, but a resolution is likely. Moderately Satisfactory- The component/objective is expected to achieve most of its major outputs efficiently with moderate shortcomings or delays. Satisfactory- The component/objective is expected to achieve almost all of its major outputs efficiently with only minor shortcomings or delays. Highly Satisfactory-The component/objective is expected to achieve or exceed all of the major outputs efficiently without significant shortcomings or delays.