

**Report**

**October 4<sup>th</sup> 2024**

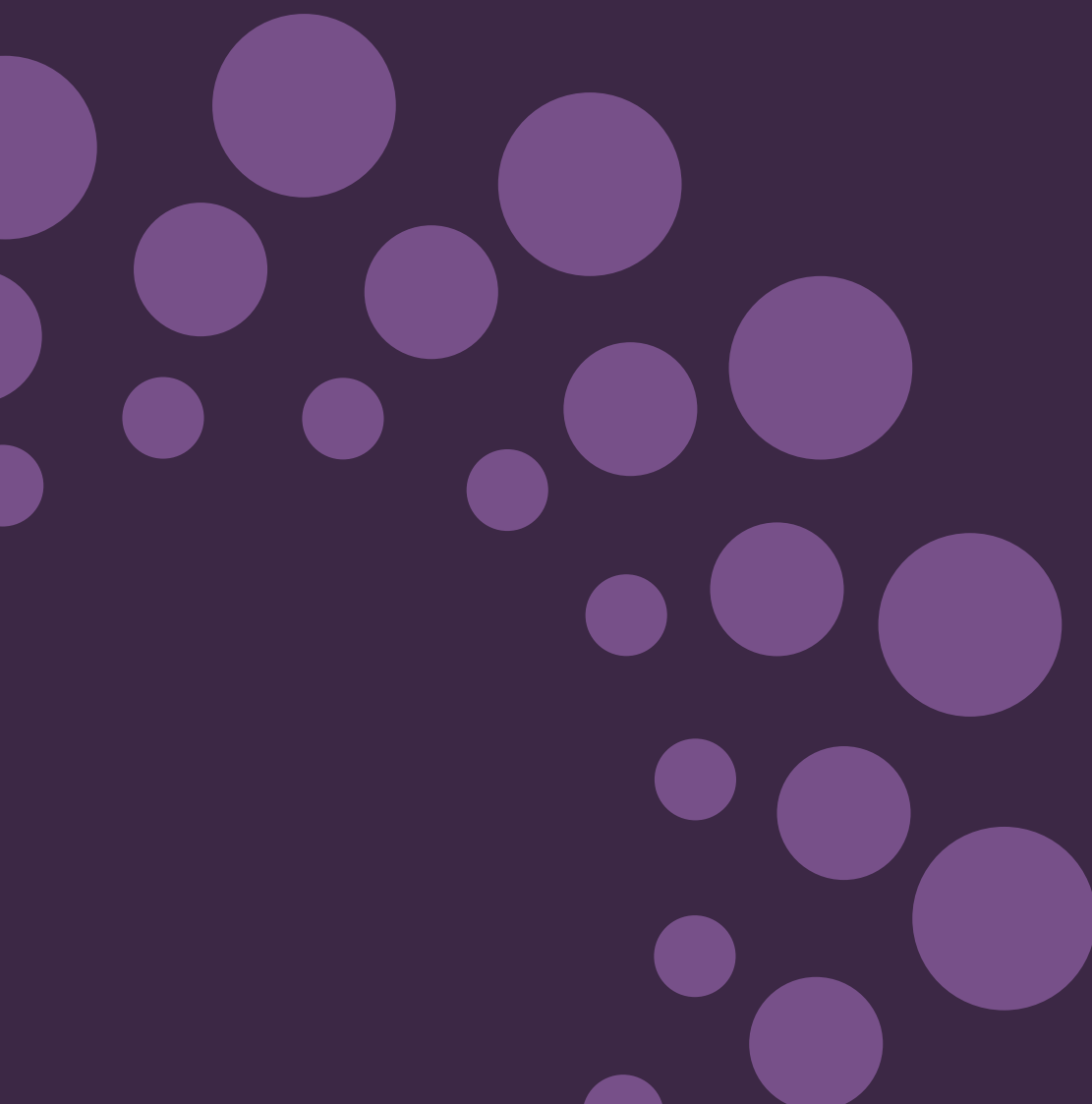
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**Review of Education Out  
Loud  
Phase 1 Report**



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## Abbreviations and acronyms

CBR	Conversation-Based Reporting
CCTA	Cohorts Convening and Technical Assistance
CSEF	Civil Society Education Fund
CSO	Civil society organization
CUE	Centre for Universal Education
EOL	Education Out Loud
GA	Grant Agent (EOL)
GCE	Global Campaign for Education
GESI	Gender equality and social inclusion
GLP	Global Learning Partner (EOL)
GMU	Global Management Unit (EOL)
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
GPSA	Global Partnership for Social Accountability
INTRAC	International NGO Training and Research Centre
LEG	Local Education Group
MTR	Midterm Review
NEC	National Education Coalition (GCE)
OC	Operational component (EOL)
ODK	Oxfam Denmark
PILC	Performance, Impact and Learning Committee (GPE)
RC	Regional Coalition (GCE)
RLP	Regional learning plan
RMU	Regional Management Unit (EOL)
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
ToC	Theory of change
TPR	Technical Progress Report

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# Executive Summary

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## Overview of Review

Education Out Loud (EOL) is the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) programme for advocacy and social accountability, designed and funded by GPE, and managed by Oxfam Denmark (ODK) as Grant Agent (GA). The programme supports civil society to be active and influential in shaping education policy, recognising the value of civil society as a central contributor to GPE's wider aim of enabling children and young people in lower income countries to get a quality education, through building equitable, inclusive and resilient education systems fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

In June 2024, GPE/EOL commissioned a team of INTRAC consultants to conduct this review of EOL, which is divided into two phases (July - Sept 2024; Oct 2024 – Sept 2025). The aim of the review is to inform decisions regarding the future direction of GPE support for civil society engagement and advocacy.

This report shares the findings of *Phase 1 of the review*, which asked three questions regarding the **progress, effectiveness** and **relevance** of the current EOL programme. These questions were taken from the Terms of Reference (ToR) and refined during an inception phase in consultation with EOL stakeholders. The main evidence base for the review was secondary data: existing EOL material (consolidated grantee self-reporting, regional and global reports and reviews); documentation from selected comparator programmes; and a small number of interviews (EOL and GPE staff and external stakeholders).

*Phase 2* (which begins in October 2024) will involve more in-depth research and primary data collection, and focus on the effectiveness of the operations and mechanisms of the programme. The design of *Phase 2* will be informed by the findings from *Phase 1*.

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## Key Findings

Based on the evidence reviewed, we assess EOL to be a **sound strategic and programmatic investment** which is contributing to the delivery of quality (and inclusivity) of education. It has strong relevance for, and provides value to, civil society advocacy and social accountability.

The results reported meet the targets identified in the results framework, and there is evidence that civil society engagement is strengthening education policy. The GA has led a rigorous response to the Midterm Review (MTR), with significant action and progress.

### **1. Progress: How and to what extent have the recommendations from the 2022 MTR been addressed, and what has influenced this?**

EOL was subject to an MTR in 2022, which made nine recommendations to be implemented directly or through the design of an extension phase (which was approved by the GPE Board in 2023). This review found that the responsible parties (GA and GPE Secretariat) were **thorough and systematic** in designing, implementing and tracking responses to all recommendations. The majority of recommendations have been fully addressed in the subsequent period, and there is some evidence of broader changes resulting from the actions taken in response to the MTR.

- **Strengthening learning:** In addition to ensuring greater coherence between learning plans and stakeholders at regional level, as recommended in the MTR, processes for developing grantee learning plans have been revised and the global learning framework updated. This has enabled more relevant and open needs assessments, improved the planning for capacity-building and organisational strengthening, and created the foundations for reflection and peer learning.

- **Framework development:** Several new or revised frameworks exist, clarifying the language and approach of EOL on key crosscutting issues, including learning, Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI), and Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL). It is too early to see evidence of their roll-out in reporting currently available.
- **Strengthening relationships:** Learning collaboratives and synchronised calls for proposals have enabled greater synergy and collaboration between grantees. The relationships and communication between certain stakeholders have been clarified and strengthened at individual levels (e.g. between the GA and Global Campaign for Education at global and regional levels, and between GPE country teams and EOL grantees), although any systemic changes to these relationships are outside the domain of the grant agent.

Certain structural and timing issues have affected the ability of the GA to fully respond to some issues raised in the MTR, and these may be further addressed in a future iteration of the programme. Specifically, there was a deliberate decision to confine the extension period to course correction within the existing design, mechanisms, and grantee relationships. This limited the extent to which recommendations could be implemented. It should also be noted that this review was conducted just before the progress report for the second half of 2023 was available, which will include more systematic evidence of the roll-out or results of some of the actions taken, although indicative results for this period are summarised in a separate paper.<sup>1</sup>

**2. Effectiveness: What does the evidence say about EOL progress towards its goals, what results have been seen and how do these align with the expectations determined in the Theory of Change? What lessons/ implications should be considered?**

The document review revealed **significant results across all areas of the results framework** and Theory of Change (ToC). **Many cumulative indicator targets have been surpassed**, years before the end of the programme. Significant progress can be seen in the area of ‘capacity’. Here we highlight some results from the main report, which draw mainly from grantee self-reporting. They are organized by Operational Component (OC), although in many cases grantees from different OCs contribute to a cumulative result.

**OC 1: Financing to National Education Coalitions (NECs) to be more inclusive and enhance their capacity, for effective participation and influence in education policy processes. 59 grant agreements have been signed as of October 2024 (expected to be 61 NECs for the 2024-2026 period).**

- The number of reported policy changes at national level has been increasing, in a growing number of countries (by mid-2023, in 40 countries).
- 100% NECs supported by EOL have developed learning plans, and 78.9% of these received consistent capacity strengthening support. More attention is paid to learning from practice.
- NECs have become more inclusive in 35 countries, although six became less inclusive, with progress towards measuring the quality of engagement of marginalised groups.
- Participation of EOL grantees in local education groups and other processes to report on the education Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) has increased, and 35 NECs have participated in monitoring the GPE partnership compact in their country.

**OC2: (Grants to national civil society organisations [CSOs] to improve the availability of data and evidence for policy change and monitoring, better mobilise citizens as rights-holders, and generate and exchange knowledge for CSO advocacy, 24 grants awarded since 2021)**

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<sup>1</sup> The GA is providing a ‘mini’ technical progress report to the GPE Performance, Impact and Learning Committee (PILC) meeting with indicative results for July 2023 to June 2024.

- In 47 of the 55 countries where EOL is active, there is evidence of grantee participation in national policy platforms and local education groups.
- 20 CSOs have reported increased capacity to mobilise citizens, and 79 grantee publications have reportedly shifted the national policy agenda or impacted education policies.
- Several examples were seen of EOL OC2 grantees facilitating spaces for local citizen monitoring of education policy, linked to evidence-building and successful advocacy for school or community-level corrective actions or policies.
- There is evidence that EOL learning activities have strengthened the capacity and commitment of grantees to integrate research into their advocacy work.

***OC3: (Grants to transnational civil society alliances to engage in regional and global policy fora, and increase capacity for strategic policy advocacy and influence, particularly in GESI, 16 grants awarded since 2021)***

- There are 10 reported examples of OC3 grantees influencing strategic policies or practices at global, regional, and national level. Examples show how improved regional frameworks or models can be used to strengthen national advocacy arguments.
- 20 social accountability mechanisms have been created or strengthened in response to action by grantees to follow up on commitments to the right to quality education, and there are 60 examples of grantee participation in relevant international events.

Beyond this focus on quantitative grantee results, the review found **strong evidence of the contribution of EOL to grantee capacity and effectiveness**, particularly organisational strengthening and advocacy skills, and to more systematic application of GESI principles. However, it is important to recognise that many of the results draw from grantee reports, against their own results frameworks. It is not always possible to understand the significance or scale of these results in their different contexts or track the effectiveness of different inputs and contributions of EOL to these results. This will be explored further in *Phase 2*.

***3. Relevance: In the current context, does the positioning and design of EOL align with and meet a significant need of the broader advocacy and social accountability architecture for education? (at global, regional and country level)<sup>2</sup>***

The study of comparator programmes found that EOL remains a **unique mechanism for funding civil society advocacy and social accountability, specifically on education**. Its added value and relevance are reinforced by a context of increasingly scarce resources, restricted civic space and political polarization. A critical contribution of EOL and (its predecessor) has been the **establishment of civil society as a key partner** in the development of national education policy, with key elements including:

- support to national and transnational coalitions of civil society.
- infrastructure to promote the coordination of advocacy across and between these levels.
- a broad approach which allows for context-specific variations in each country.

EOL's direction of travel coincides with trends observed in the comparator programmes, including localization; shifting power to grantees; grantee-led and peer-to-peer learning; and reduced reporting burdens. This indicates that EOL is relevant to, and **aligned with, overall trends in the funding landscape** – particularly amongst more progressive funders.

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<sup>2</sup> This question, framed in the ToR as coherence, was changed to relevance at inception phase, as approved by GPE and EOL.

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## Phase 1 Report

This is the report for *Phase 1* of the review of Education Out Loud (EOL), carried out by a team of consultants from INTRAC. The report responds to the three *Phase 1* questions identified in the initial terms of reference (ToR), modified in consultation with EOL stakeholders during the inception phase.

The report begins with a brief overview of the aims and processes of the review, specifically the scope, purpose and three overarching questions of *Phase 1*, and the methodological approach. It then provides detailed responses and top-level findings for each of the three review questions. The conclusion noted the limitations of this phase and provides inputs to the design of *Phase 2*.

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## 1. Introduction

EOL is the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) fund for advocacy and social accountability. Designed and funded by GPE, EOL is currently managed by Oxfam Denmark (ODK) as grant agent (GA), supervised and supported by the GPE Secretariat. EOL was launched in 2019, to support civil society to be active and influential in shaping education policy, to better meet the needs of communities, especially of vulnerable and marginalised populations.<sup>i</sup>

EOL builds on GPE support to civil society advocacy since 2009, previously under the Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF), which ran for 11 years managed at different points by UNESCO, the World Bank and the Global Campaign for Education (GCE). EOL continues to have strong links with these stakeholders, especially the World Bank which hosts GPE, and GCE and three its regional coalitions which receive grants to support OC1 learning and OC3 advocacy.

This review of EOL<sup>ii</sup> is expected to inform key decisions about the scope and design of GPE's continued support to civil society advocacy and social accountability. The review was divided into two phases: ***Phase 1* focuses on the relevance, progress and effectiveness** of EOL. *Phase 2* will focus on the effectiveness of EOL's operations and mechanisms: their relevance, coherence, efficiency and sustainability, and allow for a deeper dive into the design and operation of the programme. *Phase 1* took place from July to September 2024 and consisted of a desk review and small number of interviews. *Phase 2* will run until mid-2025 and provide an opportunity for primary data collection.

This report summarises findings and reflections responding to the *Phase 1* questions:

1. **On progress** - How and to what extent have the recommendations from the 2022 MTR been addressed, and what has influenced this?
2. **On effectiveness** - What does the evidence say about EOL progress towards its goal,<sup>iii</sup> what results have been seen and how do these align with the expectations determined in the ToC? What lessons/implications should be considered?
3. **On relevance** - In the current context, does the positioning and design of EOL align with and meet a significant need of the broader advocacy and social accountability architecture for education? (at global, regional and country level)?

The findings contained in this report will be used by the GPE Board and Performance Impact and Learning Committee (PILC) to inform decisions on the continuation of EOL in December 2024. They will also be used to inform the design of *Phase 2*, identifying the key questions for deeper exploration and informing the analytical framework.

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## 2. Methodology

*Phase 1* of the review took place over a short time period and relied primarily on secondary data. The inception phase enabled consultation between the consultants and EOL stakeholders (from ODK and GPE) to refine and agree the review questions, sources and analysis frameworks. Data collection was divided into two workstreams: an internal workstream consisted of a desk review and interviews with EOL stakeholders; and an external workstream, which involved interviews and desk research with comparator programmes. INTRAC had regular check-ins with GPE/ODK to share updates and agree approaches.

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### 2.1 Sampling strategy

Overall, the review draws from the sampling strategy developed for the MTR as a basis to select samples for research.<sup>iv</sup> However, for *Phase 1*, the scope of the desk review for the internal workstream was not sufficient to enable a representative sample, given the size and complexity of the EOL programme, which operates in 56 countries, and has 82 active grantees. As such, a purposeful sampling approach was used to identify key documents for review. This started with a review of key global progress documentation and learning reviews, followed by interviews with relevant staff to identify a set of countries (10) based on the availability of quality, recent and reflective or analytical reporting such as visit and workshop reports, case studies and stories of change. This was then triangulated against 2023 Regional Management Unit (RMU) reporting data for those countries.

Purposeful sampling is an approach used in qualitative research which involves identifying and selecting 'information-rich cases', to select a specific set of data based on clear characteristics and priorities.

We also took a purposeful approach to identifying the comparator funds and selecting external independent stakeholders (interviewed to provide a broader perspective on civil society trends and funding dynamics). Specifically, it was agreed that we should focus on comparator funds which have core similarities to EOL (such as programme scale and size, support for civil society advocacy and social accountability work) and which could provide insight and learning for EOL. This led us to identify, in collaboration with EOL stakeholders, a sample of funds/initiatives more weighted towards progressive funds and not necessarily representative of the trends and practices of all donors. Two of the funds identified are funding civil society work in the education space.

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### 2.2 Limitations to the research:

There were several limitations to the data collection for this phase of the review:

- In relation to Q1, the **timing** of the review, only 18 months after the MTR had been completed, meant that while there was evidence of work done to respond to the recommendations, limited reporting of the roll-out or results of these interventions was available.
- The reliance on **secondary material** to address question two meant that we could only summarise what already existed, and were not able to triangulate or explore the validity of claims made; or fill gaps in data, knowledge or understanding. We will address this in *Phase 2*.



- The EOL **results framework and ToC** do not capture the full extent of EOL's contribution to civil society, as they focus on specific grantee results, and do not include the added value in terms of global learning, or grantee organisational capacity strengthening. Equally, the way the results are organized does not allow appreciation of synergy and collaboration between and across OCs, as they are categorised primarily by OC rather than thematic outcome area. The synergies and links will be further explored during *Phase 2*.
- The **design of the comparator study** – with a focus on five initiatives, provides insight into funders who are working in areas adjacent to EOL, and pursuing similar approaches (in their funding). It was not a systematic review of all those who fund advocacy and social accountability, or education initiatives, so we cannot meaningfully locate EOL in relation to the wider advocacy in education sector.

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## 3. Findings

This section provides our findings for each of the review questions. We share brief notes on the evidence base, summarise our main findings, and then provide greater detail for the core elements of each question.

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### 3.1 Question 1 – Progress against the MTR

***How and to what extent have the recommendations from the 2022 MTR been addressed, and what has influenced this?***

This section provides information on the progress made in relation to the recommendations from the 2022 MTR. We answer this question by detailing each recommendation in turn and explaining the context and underlying issues for it, the corresponding actions taken, and any results seen or further actions taken. The evidence is drawn from:

- The MTR and Management Response, and subsequent progress updates.
- Relevant EOL policies and frameworks developed since the MTR, including the design of the 2025-27 extension period and the GESI and Learning frameworks.
- Interviews with EOL team members from ODK and GPE, and one of the MTR authors, to discuss responses and further changes and actions, which for the most part have yet to be captured in routine EOL reporting.

The scope and timing of this phase of the review did not allow for thorough exploration of the impact or results of the actions taken, or triangulation with the perceptions of broader stakeholders including grantees or regional EOL teams. *Phase 2* of this review will explore some of the follow-up and resulting shifts in more depth.

#### 3.1.1 Key Findings

The documentation shows that **EOL management has been thorough and systematic** in designing, implementing and tracking responses to the recommendations, taking seriously the recommendations and the issues they aimed to highlight and address.

**Full responses were made to all of the recommendations**, although in some cases these were limited due to structural design and timing issues.

- **Timing:** Since the MTR, EOL has run one new round of funding. This provided the opportunity to implement some changes to the timing and application process, though the round was limited to existing grantees. Many of these adaptations will be seen in reporting due in the current implementation period – 2024-2026.
- **Structural design:** The design and approval of a three-year extension of the programme to 2027 provided an opportunity to build in responses to certain recommendations.

However, the deliberate and understandable decision taken to confine the extension period to ‘course corrections’, limited the space available to address some design issues. As such, the responses to some of the recommendations requiring more substantial changes to design or relationships have been limited, and the design of a subsequent phase of the programme could provide an opportunity to deepen or extend responses to these areas.

In some of the areas, subsequent work has far exceeded the scope of the original recommendations. There is also some evidence emerging of **broader changes resulting from the actions taken** in response to the MTR, although this is yet to be fully triangulated.

- The **greatest changes are in the area of learning**. The recommendations focused on the need for coherent regional learning plans (RLPs), and greater synergy between learning and knowledge stakeholders. RLPs have been developed, but the system for developing grantee learning plans has also been revised, and the global learning framework updated. This has enabled more tailored, relevant and effective capacity-building and organizational strengthening, and created good foundations for reflection and peer learning.
- **Good progress has been made in developing frameworks** and clarifying EOL language and approach on key crosscutting areas. This includes GESI, which has been mainstreamed through the revised learning and MEL frameworks. However, at this stage there is little evidence of the roll out of these frameworks or results at RMU or grantee level.
- **Shifts in relationships and synergy between stakeholders** have been facilitated by some of the actions. The learning collaboratives and synchronised calls for proposals have enabled greater synergy and collaboration between grantees. However, the potential to address shifts in institutional relationships between stakeholders (i.e. GCE coalitions or GPE country teams) was limited to relationship building and communication on a more personal level, rather than structural changes which are outside of the domain of the Grant Agent.

### 3.1.2 Findings by recommendation

#### Recommendation 1: funding modalities

*In extension phase, adjust funding modalities to enable differentiated and longer-term funding for a broader range of CSOs and target those with greatest credibility and competence.*

Context	Actions taken	Further actions and results
The MTR identified a need for <b>longer-term funding</b> , to provide NECs with sufficient security and flexibility for longer-term planning and networking. It also identified that NECs had <b>variable capacity, effectiveness and representativeness</b> , and recognised that there may be other active civil society networks, outside of the GCE, with equal or greater potential to coordinate civil society advocacy for inclusive quality education.	<b>Complete.</b> <sup>vi</sup> <b>Differentiated grant funding</b> was introduced to provide more tailored support depending on the capacity and functioning of the NEC. This included options of core, partial or full funding. This continued in the 2023-27 round of OC1 funding, with more clearly defined internal processes and criteria. <sup>vii</sup>	An increase in number of applications to the open call for proposals suggests that the current modalities are attractive.  According to interviewees who manage EOL, longer-term grants have allowed NECs to “ <i>expand their horizons</i> ”, and enable longer-term planning, in some cases enabling NECs to engage a broader range of peers and interests in their policy advocacy.

Interviewees noted that the level of ambition in addressing this recommendation was limited by the GPE decision to restrict OC1 funding to GCE member coalitions, and restrict the 2023 call for proposals to existing grantees. <sup>v</sup>	<b>Longer-term grants</b> (36 months) were introduced for NECs in OC1, already the case for the other OCs. <sup>viii</sup>	
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**Recommendation 2: Year Zero support**

*In extension phase, to adjust support to provide grantees an opportunity to enrich their proposed approaches and relationships, outside of the competitive process.*

<b>Context</b>	<b>Actions taken</b>	<b>Further actions and results</b>
Year Zero provided funding for new grantees to develop capacity, relationships and collaborative planning processes in order to develop full proposals. The MTR found that it was an innovative approach to funding, appreciated by the Year Zero grantees. The grantees reported that it strengthened their organisational capacity and structures, relationships and peer learning, understanding of the context and project design. However, it was a heavy investment of time with no guarantees for full funding. <sup>ix</sup> The pandemic limited the ability of coalitions to bring members together to develop proposals.	<b>Complete.</b> <sup>x</sup> <b>Year Zero was removed</b> from grant design and was not part of EOL 2023-2027 as there were no new grantees taken on during this phase. As the applications were for existing grantees and projects it was likely that there was less immediate need for the Year Zero funding. <sup>xi</sup>	Greater emphasis has been placed on RMU support to grantees once their proposal is approved, including through the learning needs assessment (see Q2). <sup>xii</sup> This has reduced some of the need for heavy resource investment in proposal development, especially for learning plans.  However, the MTR and interviewees consider that some of the elements of the Year Zero modality may still be relevant for future rounds, and any future restructuring of the EOL programme. <sup>xiii</sup>

**Recommendation 3: RLPs**

*To develop learning plans, based on assessments of NECs' capacity to contribute to policy processes, which draw on grantee strengths and facilitate peer learning.*

<b>Context</b>	<b>Actions taken</b>	<b>Further actions and results</b>
Learning is core to the EOL ToC. Grantees drive their own learning agenda, and develop a learning plan to respond to their priorities and needs.  The MTR recognised the need for these individual learning plans to be	<b>Complete.</b> <sup>xvii</sup> <b>RMUs have developed annual RLPs since 2022</b> and regularly update their rosters of Regional Learning Partners to support RLP implementation. The extension proposal defined	Since 2024, <b>grantee learning plans are developed after proposals</b> are approved, and guidelines were developed for RMUs to facilitate online dialogue-based assessment with grantees. Regional Education Advisers facilitate discussions with grantees to identify learning needs, maturity and capacity to engage in learning processes. <sup>xxi</sup>  At a workshop for RMU staff, participants agreed that this has allowed grantees to be more open about their learning needs and shifted the focus away from compliance. The

<p>consolidated into RLPs (RLPs), to provide structure and coherence to the learning agenda and enable cross-learning.<sup>xiv</sup></p> <p>By 2023, EOL staff and learning partners saw the need for a ‘standardising approach’ to RLP development.<sup>xv</sup> A review by IDS advised separating the grantee learning plan from the grant proposal to enable more openness, and to provide more support to the process.<sup>xvi</sup></p>	<p>the purpose, process and responsibilities for developing RLPs.<sup>xviii</sup></p> <p><b>A global learning plan and framework</b> was developed in 2022 and updated in 2024. This provides a common language on how to support learning from experience and collaborative learning, with smaller, reflective spaces.<sup>xix</sup> A programme <b>Learning Brochure</b> was produced, to create confidence and clarity on the process.<sup>xx</sup></p>	<p>dialogue approach has <b>strengthened grantee reflective practice</b>, deepened their analysis and opened space for broader and more meaningful participation in the process, “since the emphasis was on growth and development of the entire organisation as opposed to building capacities needed for implementing a project”. They consider that this has resulted in <b>higher quality, better informed and more relevant learning plans</b>. With a broader range of strategies and more peer exchange.<sup>xxii</sup> This provides a <b>fuller picture of grantee learning priorities, practices and dynamics</b>, and helps to understand the impact of EOL learning processes on grantees.<sup>xxiii</sup></p> <p><b>2024 RLPs</b> reflect the extension priorities and lessons learned. They reflect the need to implement differentiated approaches to meet the diverse needs and capacities of grantees, with more follow up on how learning is used and rolled out.<sup>xxiv</sup> RMUs have also started to review their arrangements with learning partners, and select new ones, to meet the growing need for facilitation of reflection.<sup>xxv</sup></p>
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**Recommendation 4: GPE Secretariat country team engagement**

*To strengthen understanding and engagement of GPE Secretariat country teams for civil society/ EOL grantee participation in GPE operating model.*

Context	Actions taken	Further actions
<p>The MTR recognised that GPE Secretariat country teams have a “pivotal role” in facilitating EOL at country level and providing EOL grantees with access to GPE-supported policy processes. However, the MTR also noted that GPE country team staff have different levels of understanding, interest and support for civil society participation in these processes. This impacts the context for the work and effectiveness of NECs and other EOL grantees.</p> <p>Some interviewees noted that EOL lacks visibility and profile within the GPE structure and strategy, and staff are not all fully aware of its role and mechanisms. Conversely, EOL grantees often lack the necessary information to engage</p>	<p><b>Ongoing.</b><sup>xxvii</sup> Interviewees also point out that official changes to the approach of GPE country teams are outside the EOL domain.</p> <p>The management response mentioned the creation of a ‘communication plan’ targeting GPE country teams. No evidence was seen of this plan, but the EOL teams in GPE and ODK have both been proactive in engaging with GPE country team staff to facilitate and promote relationships with grantees. This includes Senior EOL staff routinely meeting GPE country teams when visiting a country, and accompanying them on visits to EOL grantees; Grant Agent meetings with GPE</p>	<p>Senior EOL staff note that GPE country teams are now more proactive in asking for information on EOL grantees, and have a better appreciation of the information, insights and perspective they provide. However, they recognise that the recent reorganisation of GPE country teams may weaken some of this relationship building.<sup>xxix</sup></p> <p>The Grant Agent has recognised its ‘responsibility’ to provide grantees with</p>

with GPE processes. Furthermore, the distance between the GPE Secretariat, country-level teams and EOL grantees, further limited opportunities for relationship building. <sup>xxxvi</sup>	country leads in Washington to build more direct links; a recent briefing from the Global Learning Partner IDS to the GPE Secretariat. <sup>xxxvii</sup>	regular updates on GPE country processes and help them prepare for such opportunities. <sup>xxx</sup>
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**Recommendation 5: GESI policy**

*To develop a EOL GESI policy to be applied within project activities, and to deepen the understanding and application of GESI by grantees.*

Context	Actions taken	Further actions and results
<p>The MTR recognised the centrality of GESI to the design of EOL but also noted some weaknesses, including a lack of clarity in the programme’s approach to measuring inclusion for OC2 and OC3, and in its influence over grantee approaches to GESI. It recognised the diversity of grantee approaches and capacity for GESI, recommending EOL to clarify its own approach, and explore ways of developing similar levels of capacity for GESI across grantees through peer exchange and other support.<sup>xxxvi</sup></p>	<p><b>Complete.</b><sup>xxxvii</sup></p> <p>The <b>extension proposal</b> included a ‘<i>significant further commitment and alignment</i>’ to GESI: including GESI as the first strategic objective, a thematic priority in the learning framework and a key part of the ToC.<sup>xxxviii</sup></p> <p>The Grant Agent prepared and launched the <b>GESI policy guidance note</b>, aligned to GPE approaches and strategies and inspired by Oxfam resources. This document outlines the GESI approach of EOL, and aims to provide quality guidance for grantees, to inform, but not prescribe, their priorities.<sup>xxxix</sup></p> <p>This policy note has informed various other frameworks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <b>EOL learning and MEL frameworks</b> were reviewed to ensure alignment. All GLPs are working on GESI, and grantees with strong capacity are being identified to support peer learning.<sup>xxxv</sup> GESI issues are central to the regional and global learning plans.</li> <li>• The <b>templates for the 2023 OC1 Call for Proposals</b> were adjusted to respond to the policy guidance, and GESI indicators were built into the assessment processes.</li> <li>• <b>Indicator descriptions and reporting templates</b> were revised to reflect this positioning in 2024.</li> </ul>	<p>The GMU conducted an <b>internal GESI review</b> of the 2023 OC1 proposals, which found that around a quarter of grantees had a strong focus and clear approach to GESI in their proposals, while in around half this was relatively superficial. This analysis is expected to inform RMUs on the GESI support and capacity needs of grantees.<sup>xxxvi</sup></p> <p>In 2024, deeper work is planned to roll out and complement the GESI policy work. GLP IDS is carrying out an <b>GESI ‘systems check’</b> to look at selected EOL processes and approaches from the perspective of the policy note and reveal gaps and opportunities for improvement. This will support more structured work on GESI at RMU level.<sup>xxxvii</sup> The Grant Agent is also planning to <b>develop a practitioners guide</b> to enable grantees to adapt and use the policy guidance, with case studies to illustrate the main concepts.<sup>xxxviii</sup></p>

### Recommendation 6: Grant management processes

*In extension phase: to review the application process to promote greater synchronisation of call for proposals across OCs, simplified and shorter application and approval processes; to review the communications framework to share learning and stories of change.*

Context	Actions taken	Further actions
<p>The MTR identified a number of factors in the proposal process which affected efficiencies in the programme. This included issues of quality and timing, specifically the lengthy approval process which contributed to operational delays, and a lack of alignment between the calls of the different OCs, reducing possibilities to promote linkages between grantees.<sup>xxxix</sup></p>	<p><b>Complete.</b><sup>xi</sup></p> <p>The extension was designed so that the time between the call for proposals and signing the grant agreement was <b>significantly reduced</b>. The grant agreement and annexes, application guidelines and proposal templates were reviewed to reduce complexities.<sup>xli</sup></p> <p>The three 2023 calls for proposals (one per OC) were synchronised so that cohorts <b>started implementation at the same time</b>, with similar timelines running to 2026. This is expected to provide the grant agent with timely information to review the portfolio composition, cross-cutting themes, and opportunities for cross-fertilization.<sup>xlii</sup></p> <p>The second section of the recommendation relates to communication of learning and stories of change. The extension proposal includes a communications plan, and stories of change are regularly collected and shared.</p>	<p>The entire portfolio was designed and approved between June and September 2023. This has been possible because no new grantees were invited to this round of funding. In the future open calls for proposals, the process may need to be reviewed for robustness.<sup>xliii</sup></p> <p>In some countries, timeline alignment has been helpful to encourage synergy and collaboration between grantees. It is too early to see documented results in relation to synergy and collaboration across grantees.<sup>xliv</sup></p>

### Recommendation 7: Synergy in knowledge sharing roles

*To review the roles of the different stakeholders relating to global knowledge sharing, and review working practices in EOL, to promote coordinated and efficient planning and capacity and learning support to grantees at different levels (including GCE, KIX and EOL, RMUs with RCs, GMU and RMUs).*

Context	Actions taken	Further actions and results
<p>The MTR found confusion over the roles of GCE Regional Coalitions, who acted as a grantee under OC1 and a learning partner to NECs (who are also their members). The MTR also highlighted that higher standards of accountability applied to the other regional learning partners than to RCs.</p> <p>This recommendation recognised a need for GCE</p>	<p><b>Ongoing.</b><sup>xlvii</sup></p> <p>A document was prepared <b>clarifying the roles and responsibilities</b> of key stakeholders in EOL, and in particular the contribution of RCs/ GCE in advocacy and as learning partners. A shared overview of planned activities, events and milestones has been developed to improve</p>	<p>Progress in the clarity of roles, coordination and sharing of information between EOL and GCE has been noted, although some tensions and weaknesses remain.</p> <p>The matrix of activities has been helpful to see what each are doing, and new global programme managers on both sides have been able to develop constructive relationships. However, there are not</p>



<p>and EOL to better coordinate their support to grantee learning and knowledge sharing at regional (RC/RMU) and global (GCE/GMU) levels, including in the development of their respective global knowledge strategies.<sup>xlv</sup></p> <p>Furthermore, the MTR noted opportunities to strengthen synergies with KIX, another GPE programme working on education sector knowledge sharing and evidence.<sup>xlvi</sup></p>	<p>coordination of grantee engagements.<sup>xlviii</sup></p> <p>RMU staff have been strengthening coordination with RCs, and two coordination meetings have taken place.<sup>xlix</sup></p> <p>The grant agents of EOL and KIX have been working to identify areas of common priority and developed a matrix to show the timings of EOL, KIX and GPE processes in each country.<sup>l</sup></p>	<p>systematic strategic discussions between the stakeholders at regional level.<sup>li</sup></p> <p>According to ODK interviewees, the KIX and EOL grant agents share calls for proposals, and have some grantees in common. EOL grantees have joined national KIX delegations in 12 countries, and a significant number of grantees have participated in KIX workshops, and some receive KIX grants.<sup>lii</sup></p>
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### Recommendation 8: Grantee accountability

*To support grantees to use relevant MEL methods and tools to report on outcome-level change, and for the grant agent to apply relevant tools to monitor and support the representativeness and accountability of grantee NECs.*

Context	Actions taken	Further actions and results
<p>The MTR recognised shortcomings in the MEL system, as too uniform for the diverse range of grantees, with an overreliance on quantitative indicators and low-quality evidence of grantee contributions to reported policy outcomes.<sup>liii</sup></p> <p>This recommendation encouraged EOL to be more reflective, accommodating and proactive in supporting grantees to distil and communicate outcomes and learning.<sup>liv</sup></p> <p>It also urged EOL to undertake a ‘network effectiveness analysis’, which the MTR authors intended as an opportunity for EOL to assess the inclusiveness and representativeness of NECs, so as to identify and support the most effective civil society engagement model for each context.<sup>lv</sup></p>	<p><b>Complete.<sup>lvi</sup></b></p> <p>The extension proposal states that “grantees are expected to improve their outcome level reporting ... and provide more qualitative information at outcome level” and commits to use EOL budget resources for this work in EOL 2023-27.<sup>lvii</sup></p> <p>The global MEL framework has been updated, and reporting requirements from grantees to the grant agent reduced and reviewed. EOL indicator descriptions have been reviewed to align with the GESI policy note and improve the use of gender markers/ indicators.<sup>lviii</sup> This includes a broadening of indicators of NEC representativity and inclusiveness to include mixed methods/ qualitative studies.<sup>lix</sup></p>	<p>GMU and RMU sources consider that, after EOL support and training for grantees on MEL and reporting, consolidated reporting has improved: it is more useful and outcome-based.<sup>lx</sup> However, lack of continuity in the post of MEL coordinator has slowed the review and roll out of the MEL framework.</p> <p>EOL also pointed to the learning needs assessments and learning partner accompaniment as strengthening grantee reporting of changes and outcomes. This has enabled grantees to identify and build capacity for advocacy, ToCs and communication strategies.<sup>lxi</sup> However, interviewees recognise that the shift to ‘a more reflective mindset’ is challenging and takes time.</p>

### Recommendation 9: Synergy between OCs

To review how EOL planning and implementation processes can facilitate synergy between OCs now and in extension phase

Context	Actions taken	Further actions and results
<p>The MTR found that grantees were keen to link with each other to share learning and develop joint actions, but that there was little evidence of any systematic efforts to strengthen these synergies. This issue is also considered in recommendation 6, on the synchronisation of calls for proposals.</p>	<p><b>Ongoing.</b><sup>lxii</sup></p> <p>Synergy is one of seven key themes of the EOL extension programme, and an internal task force is planned to review the issue.<sup>lxiii</sup></p> <p>The 2023 proposal templates require applicants to detail their plans to ensure coordination and synergy with other grantees. This is also a reporting requirement. The Grant Agent shares information about approved projects among all grantees so that they can identify and connect with relevant peers.<sup>lxiv</sup></p> <p>RMUs also support grantees to develop synergy plans, convening meetings between grantees to facilitate joint planning and leverage synergies. EOL staff also use country visits to bring grantees together, and identify opportunities for collaboration.<sup>lxv</sup></p> <p>Learning collaboratives have been established to strengthen opportunities for synergy and peer learning (see Q2).</p>	<p>There are several examples of stronger collaboration between grantees resulting from synergy plans and meetings.<sup>lxvi</sup> For example, the Asia Pacific and HESA RMUs both brought together OC3, OC1 and OC2 grantees to explore collaborations on learning and advocacy. In Bangladesh the grantees agreed on a joint advocacy action.</p> <p>However, although there are now 20 countries that have multiple grantees, interviewees point out that there is still no clear guidance or vision to strengthen synergies between them.<sup>lxvii</sup> This means that while EOL recognises the potential benefits of civil society synergies, in terms of efficiency and effectiveness, there is no clarity on the strategic purpose of synergy, and grantee autonomy remains the most important principle.<sup>lxviii</sup></p>

## 3.2 Question 2 - Effectiveness

**What does the evidence say about EOL progress towards its goals, what results have been seen and how do these align with the expectations determined in the ToC? What lessons/implications should be considered?**

This section provides a summary description of the evidence available from EOL on progress towards the programme’s stated goals and outcomes, to provide a ‘snapshot’ of effectiveness.

### 3.2.1 Overall reflections on Effectiveness

The **overall goal of EOL** can be broken down into a broad objective: “*promoting inclusive, gender responsive and equitable national education policies and systems...*” and a more direct or intermediate outcome: “*... through enhanced civil society capacity and participation in social accountability and policy advocacy processes.*” This suggests that, to understand the effectiveness of EOL, we must look at the reports and evidence of progress towards policy change, and results and achievements in the areas of civil society capacity and participation.



The document review revealed **significant results across all areas of the results framework** and Theory of Change (ToC). **Many cumulative indicator targets have been surpassed**, years before the end of the programme. Significant progress can be seen in the area of ‘capacity’. Here we highlight some results from the main report, which draw mainly from grantee self-reporting. They are organized by Operational Component (OC), although in many cases grantees from different OCs contribute to a cumulative result.

***OC1: Financing to National Education Coalitions (NECs) to be more inclusive and enhance their capacity, for effective participation and influence in education policy processes. 59 grant agreements have been signed as of October 2024 (expected to be 61 NECs for the 2024-6 period).***

- The number of reported policy changes at national level has been increasing, in a growing number of countries (by mid-2023, in 40 countries).
- 100% NECs supported by EOL have developed learning plans, and 78.9% of these received consistent capacity strengthening support. More attention is paid to learning from practice.
- NECs have become more inclusive in 35 countries, although six became less inclusive, with progress towards measuring the quality of engagement of marginalised groups.
- Participation of EOL grantees in local education groups and other processes to report on the education Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) has increased, and 35 NECs have participated in monitoring the GPE partnership compact in their country.

***OC2: (Grants to national civil society organisations [CSOs] to improve the availability of data and evidence for policy change and monitoring, better mobilise citizens as rights-holders, and generate and exchange knowledge for CSO advocacy, 24 grants awarded since 2021)***

- In 47 of the 55 countries where EOL is active, there is evidence of grantee participation in national policy platforms and local education groups.
- 20 CSOs have reported increased capacity to mobilise citizens, and 79 grantee publications have reportedly shifted the national policy agenda or impacted education policies.
- Several examples were seen of EOL OC2 grantees facilitating spaces for local citizen monitoring of education policy, linked to evidence-building and successful advocacy for school or community-level corrective actions or policies.
- There is evidence that EOL learning activities have strengthened the capacity and commitment of grantees to integrate research into their advocacy work.

***OC3: (Grants to transnational civil society alliances to engage in regional and global policy fora, and increase capacity for strategic policy advocacy and influence, particularly in GESI, 16 grants awarded since 2021)***

- There are 10 reported examples of OC3 grantees influencing strategic policies or practices at global, regional, and national level. Examples show how improved regional frameworks or models can be used to strengthen national advocacy arguments.
- 20 social accountability mechanisms have been created or strengthened due to grantee activity to follow up on commitments to the right to quality education, and there are 60 examples of grantee participation in relevant international events.

### **3.2.2 Sources, evidence and limitations**

The review, of nearly 60 documents, covered global EOL documentation, reports and case studies from global learning partners and regional processes, and a sample of grantee or country level reports and regional reporting. No primary data was collected to triangulate or validate the data. No assessment was made of the relevance or potential limitations of the Results Framework and reporting mechanisms, as this was not in scope for this stage of the review. Thus, the summary provided is based on self-reported data, augmented by reporting of some of

the learning processes and visits. These provide further insight into the progress, outcomes and changes taking place.

The limitations of this evidence base must be acknowledged. For example, although we can count the number of policy changes reported on in grantee reports, we do not have the wider evidence base to understand the scale and significance of this number. We are not able to situate the result in relation to effort, priorities or needs. Likewise, the size and complexity of the programme, and the importance of context, mean that we cannot describe the documents reviewed as representative, or the results as illustrative of wider trends. We can use the examples to illustrate results and processes, but not provide a clear sense of the magnitude of results. A more focused exploration of EOL contributions to grantee results and policy shifts in *Phase 2* of this review will enable further insight in relation to the ToC and Results Framework.

### 3.2.3 Findings by outcome area

We have organised this section using a table for each thematic outcome area, consolidating the latest available reporting against indicators and targets for each outcome related to that thematic area. Although we began our analysis by organising evidence against the outcomes set out in the EOL results framework, we realised that this was limiting, as it did not enable connections to be made across grantees working on different OCs, or include the evidence from the learning partners which relates to grantees from all OCs. Moreover, organising the evidence by OC meant that there was substantial repetition as similar results are included in different points in the table. By organising thematically, we can present a clearer picture of where progress has been made and share a more nuanced understanding of results at portfolio level, including grantee collaboration across the OCs.<sup>57</sup>

Finally, some outcome areas which are not directly covered in the results framework, but have clearly emerged from the review of evidence, are discussed. We expect that these areas and frameworks can be further explored in *Phase 2* of this review.<sup>lxix</sup>

It is important to note that the targets from the Results Framework are cumulative, for the entire extension period, (2023-27), while the numbers used in the following tables are from the first year of reporting (Jul22-Jun23). As such, those outcomes which are yet to meet the target are not necessarily 'off-track'; there are still 3 more years of the extension period. Additional examples and comments have been included to illustrate or explain progress.

#### Policy outcomes

This set of outcomes and indicators focuses on changes to policies and practices influenced by civil society, at national and transnational levels. As well as the quantitative indicators reflected in the table, there are many documented examples of EOL grantee contributions to the processes leading up to policy changes, although the links from EOL contribution via grantee inputs to policy changes are not easy to evidence, in large part due to the complexity and diversity of factors influencing change.<sup>lxx</sup>

Furthermore, these positive examples of policy change do not give a sense of the scale or significance of the changes in relation to broader need. Evidence of policies which have not shifted despite advocacy by EOL grantees, or a sense of the overall number of policies targeted, would help to understand the relevance of the final figure within the broader context of education policy in GPE-supported countries. This can be explored in *Phase 2*.

Relevant outcomes	Targets by 2027	Results to mid-2023	Comments
1.5 Gender responsive education planning, policy development and monitoring are	40 countries	40	This relates to national level policy, where the number of policy changes reflecting grantee demands has

influenced by civil society in a significant number of countries.			increased, in a growing number of countries.  Examples include policies relating to provisions for education for adolescent mothers and children with disabilities and increases in education funding.
3.3 Strategic policies or practices changed at global, regional, and national level through civil society transnational alliances, advocacy, and campaigns	<b>30</b> changes in education policies influenced by grantees	10	Several examples were found of OC3 grantee engagement in strengthening transnational frameworks, such as an SADC model law on financial management. <sup>lxxi</sup> These grantees report how they are using these transnational frameworks to strengthen their national advocacy.
3.7 EOL supported civil society alliances have influenced global, regional and national policies and plans.	<b>10</b> global / regional / national institutions, policies or plans influenced.	4	

**Additional area of outcome:** At **subnational** level, there are several examples of changes to school, municipal or district-level policies and funding following engagement by grantees, or by citizens in spaces facilitated by grantees. Examples include increases in district budget allocations for education where an OC2 project had been advocating in Pakistan, and a new policy on financial assistance for students with disabilities in a district of Kenya where OC1 and OC3 grantees had been advocating. No overall figures are available on subnational policy change, which is covered across outcomes in different parts of the results framework.<sup>lxxii</sup>

#### Civil society capacity for policy advocacy

This set of outcomes and indicators focus on increased capacity of civil society to engage in and influence education policy at different levels. While the indicators track plans for and (to some extent) outcomes of advocacy capacity building, there are many emerging results in relation to organisational strengthening, significantly for resource mobilisation and project management, which are not directly tracked, summarised at the end of this sub-section.

No additional evidence was found of transnational alliance capacity, and though the outcomes of civil society capacity for local level monitoring and policy influence are noted in other sub-sections, no evidence was found of links between these outcomes and EOL learning or capacity-building activities.

Relevant outcomes	Targets by 2027	Results to mid-2023	Comments
1.2 NEC capacities are increased, particularly in relation to engagement in policy dialogues.	<b>100%</b> of NECs with learning plans to improve their capacity	<b>100%</b> , from a baseline of 69%.	It is too early to assess the impact on policy outcomes. However, there are some cases where grantees have linked EOL-supported advocacy capacity to greater trust and engagement with government entities
	<b>80%</b> of NECs receive support	<b>79.6%</b> (from	

	from GCE/RCS for 8 semesters	baseline of 70%)	and more active and effective contributions to education policy processes. These insights have not been systematically collected and improvements are not spread evenly across all capacity areas. <sup>lxxiii</sup>
	90% of NECs receiving support are satisfied	94% (from baseline of 80%)	This change extends to recipients of grants in the other OCs. For example, grantees from Asia Pacific participating in one learning partner review noted an increased ability to gather evidence and use it for community information or policy influence and greater confidence to approach decision-makers. <sup>lxxiv</sup> In some cases, training received by grantees is cascaded to members and other CSOs. <sup>lxxv</sup>
1.3 Civil society capacities, participation and strategic influence in formal education policy processes have increased in selected countries.	60% of NECs on-track in relation to their own results-framework.	83%	This outcome is measured in relation to policy changes and NEC results. RMUs and learning partners are broadly positive about NEC influence. One RMU notes is 'usually proportional to its capacity'. Overall, RMUs assess that a sizeable minority of NECs have a good track record of influencing policy with important inputs, while others are 'quite strong' in their country contexts, but yet to show full potential. Some link their visibility and influence with government decision-makers in part to their participation in Local Education Groups. <sup>lxxvi</sup>
	100 education policies with changes that are influenced by EOL grantees	136 policies in 40 countries	
1.8 NECs are more strategic in their policy influencing work in a significant number of countries.	60 lessons learned for national civil society alliances regarding strategies for influencing education policies	41 (12 in this period)	A series of regional learning reviews found " <i>signs of the emergence of a learning culture among grantees</i> ", including operational efficiency, innovation, quality, coalition management, visibility and credibility and interest from donors. <sup>lxxvii</sup>
3.1 Transnational and/or "vertically integrated" civil society alliances representing a wide and diverse combination of social actors formed around	4 civil society alliances with advocacy plan for identified policy change/ area	9 civil society alliances with advocacy plan for identified policy	Little evidence was found in the broader documentation to give context to the figures given in the TPR for these indicators. While some examples were reviewed of the policy advocacy strategies and activities of OC3 grantees, little was found on the learning, capacity or alliance building

identified strategic policy changes or areas related to SDG4 and GPE Indicator		change/area	underpinning this. These examples will be sought in <i>Phase 2</i> primary data collection.
3.2 Increased capacities of transnational civil society alliances, particularly in relation to advocacy.	In 5 semesters, 80% of learning plans improve organisational, thematic and advocacy capacity	3 semesters	
3.8 At the end of the EOL project, various EOL supported civil society alliances have increased their capacities for promoting policies and practices in the education area.	15 lessons learned collected, systematised and disseminated	11 lessons learned collected, systematised and disseminated	

**Additional areas of outcome:** There is significant reporting of improvements to the **organisational capacity of grantees**, as an important outcome of EOL support, integral to grantee advocacy capacity strengthening. Reviews of grantee self-assessed learning needs show that they have consistently prioritised *‘internal focused capacity building over the outwards advocacy approach’*, including support for project management, GESI, financial and human resource management.<sup>lxxviii</sup> As seen in Q1, the learning approach with EOL grantees has enabled a fuller assessment of the capacity needed for organisational effectiveness and sustainability, beyond narrow project goals.<sup>lxxix</sup>

Participation in the EOL grant processes has also been a source of capacity strengthening, including **skills relevant for resource mobilisation**, especially significant for OC1 grantees who are largely dependent on GPE funding. RMUs state that the *“rigour brought by EOL has helped the NECs realize that they have to care about quality both in proposal writing, in implementation and in the way they present their results”*. Several reviews pointed to increased diversity in NEC funding sources and strategies.<sup>lxxx</sup> OC2 grantees also noted that Year Zero support had strengthened their planning, relationships and structures.<sup>lxxxi</sup> This capacity strengthening could facilitate longer term financial sustainability of grantees.

#### Social accountability mechanisms and spaces

These outcomes relate to the participation of civil society in spaces and processes for social accountability and monitoring mechanisms, as well as national and transnational forums for policy debate. Overall, there is evidence of the effective use of spaces for social accountability and policy advocacy at different levels (regionally, nationally and locally). This includes the **creation of new spaces** for social accountability or policy dialogue, especially at subnational levels, **increased participation** of civil society, and in some cases **increased influence** of civil society due to participation in those spaces. Examples are emerging of a linked-up process between citizen engagement in monitoring or identification of policy needs, and this evidence being shared in policy spaces at district or national levels. There are several examples of effective civil society participation in Local Education Groups, although the level of functioning varies across contexts.

Relevant outcomes	Targets by 2027	Results to mid-2023	Comments
<p>1.9 NECs are active in monitoring and accountability mechanisms of public national education to ensure the delivery of transformative policies and programs that accelerate access, learning outcomes, and gender equality, leaving no one behind.</p>	<p>45 NECs participate in monitoring the GPE partnership compact in their country.</p>	<p>35 (from baseline of 27)</p>	<p>Evidence shows that EOL grantees are increasingly engaging in Local Education Groups, with all but four EOL-supported NECs participating as members of local education groups by Dec.2023.<sup>lxxxii</sup> Furthermore, NECs in 17 countries were active in the presentation of the GPE operating model and discussions of the partnership compact, in some cases leading to involvement in the identification of country priority areas.<sup>lxxxiii</sup></p> <p>There are examples of <b>relevant NEC policy inputs through the LEGs</b>, including the submission of evidence based on community data and consultations.<sup>lxxxiv</sup> Some grantees expressed that participation in the LEGs strengthened their influence and visibility, especially when in a coordination or leadership role. For example, one NEC considered that participation in the LEG “enables them to occupy and influence important education policy spaces in the country”.<sup>lxxxv</sup> However, there is also evidence that LEGs do not always operate effectively or meet regularly, with one source finding LEG engagement ‘superficial and often donor-driven’.<sup>lxxxvi</sup> Furthermore, the MTR noted little evidence of the quality, effectiveness or best practices of NEC engagement in LEGs.<sup>lxxxvii</sup> Since then, GCE developed a tool for NECs to track and monitor the nature of their engagement in LEGs, representation of broader movements, and ability to influence inclusion and equality in education, though no evidence of this tool or its use has been seen in this research.<sup>lxxxviii</sup></p>
<p>2.2 multi-level monitoring is strengthened and CSOs have increased capabilities to mobilise citizens as rights holders, particularly at local level, in strategic data collection and / or monitoring of</p>	<p>25 national monitoring / follow-up / data collection initiatives include citizens / right holders in defining methodologies</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>Several examples were found of grantees developing local spaces to monitor education policy, quality etc and engage with school or subnational authorities, some with tangible results. This included ‘voluntary local reviews’ to input into the VNR process, spaces for social dialogue between government or local authorities and community groups, and mechanisms for local groups to engage with and</p>

government commitments and education policies/plans.			monitor education policy and budget commitments and identify and advocate for changes at local level. <sup>lxxxix</sup>
2.4 Civil society participates actively in Local education groups, national SDG4 follow-up groups and other national monitoring mechanisms of national education policies, including budgets, in a significant number of countries.	50 countries.	47	Some evidence was seen of positive results from grantee participation in national policy platforms, including follow up mechanisms to SDG 4 and VNR processes. <sup>xc</sup> VNR processes have enabled linkages from grassroots to national policy, and grantees have produced a range of documentation to submit to governments. For example, in Nepal the NEC conducted local consultation on the implementation status of SDG4 to feed into the national SDG tracking process, and through the GCE RC, the HLPF.
3.4 Social accountability mechanisms and spaces, such as Ombudsman office; periodic gathering of “Accountability Commission”; tripartite commission created or strengthened to follow up on global, regional or national commitments related to the right to quality education	20 social accountability mechanisms and spaces created/ strengthened	22	Some evidence was found of the creation or strengthening of transnational social accountability mechanisms, through EOL-supported alliances, coalitions and CSOs. <sup>xi</sup> At the time of the MTR, few results from OC3 could be seen, although there was some evidence of OC3 grantees developing voice and presence in regional platforms such as SADC (ECDE financing working group). <sup>xii</sup>
3.6 Various EOL supported civil society alliances’ interests have communicated in international conferences or to international platforms.	40 international (global and regional) platforms invite civil society to participate.	60	Examples were found of grantee participation in international events such as the 2022 Transforming Education Summit and pre-summit, the UNESCO International Conference on Adult Education and 2023 Asia Pacific People’s Forum, ECLAC Forum on Sustainable Development or LAC Education Ministerial regional meeting, and the follow-up to the high-level steering committee for SDG4. <sup>xiii</sup>

#### Availability of data and evidence

Evidence-led advocacy is a key strategy for grantees, and there is evidence that EOL learning activities, in particular action research and learning plans, have contributed to strengthening these practices. Both outcomes in this sub-section relate to OC2, but additional evidence of progress on data and research capacity is drawn from all grantees, including OC1.

Relevant outcomes	Targets by 2027	Results to mid-2023	Comments
2.1 Data/ evidence relevant for policy changes and/ or monitoring of government commitment has been gathered, made actionable and available.	50 grantee publications on education, social accountability and transparency have placed issues on/ shifted the national agenda / impacted education policies.	79	A 2022 a systematization self-assessment exercise showed that half of OC2 grantees had generated evidence “to a large extent”. <sup>xciv</sup> There are many examples of grantee activities to gather and collate monitoring data and feedback at different levels, conduct research, mapping and budget analysis related to inclusion, and develop policy briefs on issues such as education in emergencies and the learning experience of minority language, people with disabilities and transgender students. <sup>xcv</sup> There are also few examples of youth-led research, for example on child marriage or discriminatory practices. <sup>xcvi</sup>
2.5 NECs have improved capabilities for using data in their policy influencing work in a significant number of countries.	20 lessons learned for CSOs on how to turn evidence into political tools for change of education policies and structures	10	There is evidence that EOL learning activities have strengthened the capacity and commitment of grantees to integrate research into their advocacy work. <sup>xcvii</sup> However, one study found that information developed by NECs, while useful for other CSOs, is not always systematically available. <sup>xcviii</sup> Equally, learning partners noted that EOL grantees do not usually have access to systematic, robust and reliable government data, including published budget allocation and disbursement data, hampering their advocacy work. <sup>xcix</sup> Some grantees have been working on advocacy for improved data systems to track inclusion, such as data to track resource allocations for children with disabilities. <sup>c</sup>

**Example: Evidence-generation and multi-level advocacy in Pakistan.**

An OC2 project in Pakistan collects regular data through a system of citizen scorecards, to track education delivery, which is used for annual budget analysis and development of a costed agenda for action. This is used to engage with CSOs and local authorities, but feeds into national level reporting on government expenditure on education. This was consolidated into a review



of public financing of education in Pakistan from 2010 to 2023, which has informed mass advocacy campaigns in Pakistan to increase education financing.<sup>ci</sup>

#### Gender equality, social inclusion and NEC representativeness

Overall, there is evidence of progress in EOL contributions to GESI, in relation to its own approach which has been made more explicit and coherent (see Q1), and in relation to changes in the GESI policies, capacity and practices of EOL grantees (although there is less evidence available to support this claim). The outcomes relating to this area focus on NEC membership, inclusivity and diversity. Other evidence relating to GESI capacity are captured below, and in the appropriate sections on advocacy capacity and organisational strengthening above. Question 1 also details some of the EOL progress in relation to GESI policies, frameworks and support.

Relevant outcomes	Targets by 2027	Results to mid-2023	Comments
1.1 NECs are more inclusive, particularly for marginalised and local groups	30 NECs are more inclusive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>15 increased</b> over 10 percentage points in the inclusivity index.</li> <li>• <b>20 increased</b> over 5 percentage points</li> <li>• <b>6 decreased</b> over 10 percentage points.</li> </ul> <p>The majority are stable.</p>	<p>While almost all NECs have members representing people with disabilities, women and girls, and marginalised or illiterate youth, others representing ethnic, caste, migrant, and religious minorities are under-represented. In 2023 only 12% of NECs included groups representing the LGBT community.<sup>cii</sup></p> <p>Some NECs make active efforts to enable diverse representation, including reviewing their constitution to create more space, working with a youth forum, or supporting small groups and CBOs to formalise, access local policy spaces and join their coalition, and note the difference to their agenda and positioning.<sup>ciii</sup> However, some NECs face challenges with inactive members, and one review noted that while some NECs act as a movement, others are led by an individual organisation, which may give them a stronger voice but reduce space for local influence, and risk ‘crowding out’ other members from policy spaces.<sup>civ</sup></p>
1.6 A significant number of countries affected by fragility and conflict where NECs have been supported.	25% of grant recipient countries characterised as affected by fragility and conflict.	39%	<p>Fragile contexts is an important cross-cutting issue highlighted for phase two of the review, but during the desk review little evidence emerged specifically on this indicator or characteristic. Furthermore, as EOL follows the GPE classification of contexts and there were restrictions on new grantees under the extension, the</p>

			GA has close to no impact on this figure. <sup>cv</sup>
1.7 A significant number of grantees that represent groups of people excluded from the education system have been supported.	50% of grantees represent people excluded from education	25% (baseline 22%)	

**Additional areas of outcome:** EOL has developed GESI policy guidance, which is described and assessed in the proposal process. GESI markers have been developed, and several sources suggest that EOL support has contributed to strengthening grantees’ capacity, awareness and commitment to GESI.<sup>cv</sup> A 2022 review of OC2 grantees found that 59% were promoting gender principles in their projects ‘completely’, and 55% promoting social inclusion completely or to a large extent.<sup>cvi</sup> In 2023, just over half of grantees included one or more specific GESI related objective in their learning plans, mostly related to policy analysis, with some requesting learning on social inclusion issues including education for children with disabilities, language, ethnicity and LGBT inclusion.<sup>cvi</sup> However, most of these learning plans were developed before the extension period, and the updated learning framework.

Question 1 provides more detail on the initiatives undertaken since the MTR to strengthen GESI capacity and mainstreaming in grantees and projects, including a rapid analysis of the latest round of proposals, and the learning assessment dialogues, which highlighted grantee learning needs and regional variations in capacity, to be addressed through the grantee, regional and global learning plans. All new global learning partners have GESI as a key focus area, and the upcoming ‘systems check’ will identify issues relating to how GESI is funded, supported and assessed.<sup>cix</sup>

Evidence shows a gradual increase in grantees developing their own **gender policies**, in some cases linked to EOL-supported gender training or capacity building. In 2023, the TPR named six NECs with active gender policies, including one which monitors the participation of women and gender-related activities of members. In 2022, GCE analysis found that 71% of NECs in Africa had a gender strategy or guiding document, but 45% faced challenges in implementing them.<sup>cx</sup> The RMU in HESA noted that grantees had an ‘increased appetite for promoting gender equality’, with several NECs developing gender and inclusion policies after RMU training in 2021.<sup>cx</sup> In LAC, only half of grantees reported incorporating a gender perspective into their own structures, for example via equal pay or sexual harassment policies, noting that they faced resistance from members and peers because of prejudice against “gender ideology”.<sup>cxii</sup> However, the number of NECs with 50% or more female board members rose from 28% in 2020 to 34% in June 2022, up to 80% in LAC.

### Learning

The outcomes in this area focus on the establishment of learning collaboratives on different themes. At the time of the MTR, EOL was still in the process of establishing functional learning collaboratives, with each RMU adopting its own approach. Since then, the Learning Framework has helped to broaden the approach from a training focus and clarify the role of reflection and peer support.<sup>cxiii</sup> 31 Learning Collaboratives have been created, of which 23 are fully operational in 2024.<sup>cxiv</sup> Sub- and cross-regional collaboratives have been formed (organically between OC2

grantees), including for the Asian sub-continent, Arab countries, Central America and Lusophone countries.

Some reviews noted that learning collaboratives are rarely initiated by grantees, and require support (from regional learning partners) to maintain relevance and mutual interest as grantees are not always able to adapt the learning to their context.<sup>cxv</sup> Other sources note the value given by grantees to opportunities for peer exchange and support, for example, engagement with the Lusophone network enabled Angola NEC to strengthen its institutional setup and performance, and in Pakistan the LC *“enhanced our collaborative approach and enriched our capacity to drive positive change at the local level.”*<sup>cxvi</sup> In this way, learning collaboratives and other peer learning initiatives have, in some cases, strengthened advocacy collaboration and joint actions, and the potential for synergy between OCs.<sup>cxvii</sup>

Relevant outcomes	Targets by 2027	Results to mid-2023	Comments
1.4 “Learning collaboratives” established generating lessons for institutional strengthening of CSOs.	20 learning collaboratives for institutional strengthening	27	The sub-section on civil society capacity shows some results relating to this area of learning, though no direct links to LCs are made.
2.3 ‘Learning collaboratives’ established on actionable data and how to turn information into advocacy relevant tools for change.	15 learning collaboratives on actionable data	3	
3.5 ‘Learning collaboratives’ established on effective advocacy strategies	15 Learning collaboratives on effective advocacy strategies	8	

### 3.3 Question 3 – Relevance and Coherence

***In the current context, does the positioning and design of EOL align with and meet a significant need of the broader advocacy and social accountability architecture for education? (at global, regional and country level)?***<sup>cxviii</sup>

#### 3.3.1 Key findings

The comparator study found that EOL remains a **unique mechanism for funding civil society advocacy and social accountability, specifically on education**. Its value and relevance is reinforced by a context of increasingly scarce resources<sup>cxix</sup>, restricted civic space and political polarization.<sup>cxx</sup>

A critical and arguably unique contribution of EOL and (its predecessor CSEF) has been the **establishment of civil society as a key partner** in the development of national education policy, with key elements including:

- its support to national and transnational coalitions of civil society;
- an infrastructure which promotes the coordination of advocacy across and between these levels;
- a broad approach within the sectoral focus which allows for context-specific variations in each country.

EOL's direction of travel coincides with some trends observed in comparator funds, including localization; shifting power to grantees; grantee-led and peer-to-peer learning; and reduced reporting burdens. This indicates that EOL is relevant to, and **aligned with overall trends in the funding landscape** – particularly amongst more progressive funders.

### 3.3.2 Methodology and sample

The relevance and added value of EOL in the current global context was explored through:

- A comparative study of five funds/ initiatives that bear similarities to EOL. Data on these funds was collected through key informant interviews and desk review. The sample was selected in consultation with GPE and the Grant Agent, drawing on their in-depth knowledge of the civil society advocacy funding landscape<sup>cxix</sup> and based on agreed selection criteria:
  - support for civil society advocacy and social accountability
  - funding of advocacy at multiple levels and in multiple countries in the global South
  - focus on education or support for education-related advocacy.
  - similar size of fund and grants
  - similar programme design and timeframe
- Semi-structured Interviews with three independent stakeholders to provide qualitative evidence on the main trends and features in the current global context affecting civil society advocacy and social accountability work in education. This sample was also selected in consultation with GPE and the Grant Agent, and focused on individuals who were not a direct recipient of EOL funding, could provide a global overview of trends and had proximity to civil society advocacy and social accountability work.
- A brief desk review of secondary literature on the current context and funding landscape for civil society advocacy and social accountability work.

This section begins with a brief description of the features of the current global context which is of relevance to our understanding of EOL's added value. It then assesses EOL's perceived added value in this current context overall. The third sub-section explores EOL's added value when compared with the five comparator funds.

### 3.3.3 External Context

The Civicus 2024 State of Civil Society report<sup>cxix</sup> notes a series of challenging trends for civil society, including: a restriction of civic space in an ever-larger number of countries; increased polarisation fuelled by disinformation, conspiracy theories and hate speech (made easier by AI technologies); and the flouting of international law by a growing number of governments which in turn is undermining the rules-based international order and reducing progress towards, and commitment to, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Similar patterns are experienced within the education policy space, with many countries seeing a rise of right-wing (often religious) and private-sector backed movements displacing the progressive, pro-equality development non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that emerged in the early 2000s.<sup>cxix</sup> Despite this trend, vibrant coalitions have emerged in some countries to push for SDG4 implementation (some independently of NECs).<sup>cxix</sup>

Since 2000 the number of out-of-school children (OOSC) at both primary and secondary school levels has dropped significantly. However, efforts to further reduce OOSC numbers have recently stagnated or even experienced reversals as countries across the globe struggle with deepening debt crises following the Covid-19 pandemic.<sup>cxix</sup> At the same time, levels of violent

conflict and extreme weather events triggered by the climate crisis have contributed to an increase in humanitarian crises, with a knock-on effect on education.<sup>cxxvi</sup> The problem is not simply one of education access, but also of poor quality, a lack of infrastructure, qualified teachers, digital access (especially for women and girls) and modern teaching methods. While digital access remains a challenge, digitalisation has also facilitated activism and engagement of citizens through online platforms, plus access to much larger data sets and to evidence for advocacy work. It has also impacted on how local and global actors interact.<sup>cxxvii</sup>

With regard to the humanitarian and development spaces, and SDG implementation specifically, recent years have seen a growing emphasis on 'localisation' - defined by the United Nations as the process of supporting the achievement of the SDGs from the bottom up, with a focus on those furthest behind.<sup>cxxviii</sup> For progressive CSOs and philanthropies, the localisation agenda concerns questions of who designs programmes, where decision-making sits and how resources flow. However, despite donors' strongly stated commitments to localisation, funding flows to CSOs in the global south remain similar to levels in 2014, according to Civicus and to the #Shift the Power movement.<sup>cxxix</sup> This is partly because grassroots groups and social movements are often unable to overcome barriers such as language or eligibility or grant management requirements in order to apply for funds, including the requirement to be a registered organisation. At the same time, restricted civic space in a growing number of countries and the associated restrictions on foreign funding of CSOs are thought to be having a chilling effect on levels of donor funding to civil society in the global south.<sup>cxxx</sup> Meanwhile, a number of bilateral donors are cutting ODA budgets (including ODA to CSOs), citing pressures on their own public budgets<sup>cxxxi</sup>. A rightward shift in several European governments has consolidated this stance.

In this context, interviewees considered that the need for civil society advocacy and social accountability work on education has never been greater; and yet some of the funding previously available for this work now appears to be under threat. Various bilateral funders have stepped back from prioritising education financing (e.g. Norway<sup>cxxxii</sup> and the Netherlands<sup>cxxxiii</sup>) and this is mirrored in foundations (e.g. Open Society Foundation<sup>cxxxiv</sup> and Wellspring<sup>cxxxv</sup>). Education is not currently a priority for many foundations, who are increasingly shifting their focus to other issues, prominently climate change, and democracy/governance.

Aside from the quantity of funding on offer, the *quality* of funding to CSOs in the global south remains an issue. While there are 'pockets of inspiration' where a small number of progressive funders are taking a trust-based, flexible, long-term approach, the majority of funders have not shifted their traditional operational methods, according to independent stakeholders interviewed for this review. These approaches can drive CSOs towards a mindset of competition and scarcity, and towards a siloed, funding-led, projectized approach. It is within this context that the added value of EOL must be understood.

### 3.3.4 Added value and contribution of EOL in the current global context

Research for this review indicates that EOL's unique value lies in the combination of the following features: its broad but specific focus on education, its explicit links to formal policy processes in education through its partnerships (with evidence of contributions to solid policy outcomes), and its emphasis on a coalition-based approach with an infrastructure which enhances national-regional-global connections and coordination. Our conclusion is therefore that **EOL would leave a major gap in the resourcing of education-related advocacy and social accountability work if it were to cease to exist.**

This is partly because of the volatile funding context for this work (documented in the previous section), but also because of what is perceived as **EOL's unique approach to funding civil society advocacy**. One respondent asserted that EOL "*is one of the few spaces where you still have that fundamental recognition of the need to invest in civil society – not just to hold governments to account but also to improve [education] policy and the work that is done, both nationally and*

*globally*". The fact that EOL distinguishes between 'advocacy' and 'social accountability' is regarded as another strength, as civil society actors are focusing on policy *implementation* as much as policy change and reform.

Data collected for this review indicates that **EOL is a rare example of a multi-donor effort which is specific to one sector**, and which has seen the value of linking the funding of traditional service delivery in education (i.e. through GPE) with funds for civil society advocacy and social accountability work. *'You don't want social accountability in the abstract. You want it to be embedded in real issues or countries or sectors,'* comments one informant.

At the same time, **EOL's relatively broad focus** (covering a wide range of civil society advocacy and social accountability activities in the education sector) is itself a distinct feature when compared with the two other education-related civil society funds in our comparator sample. These other funds have a more specialised focus on the promotion of a particular aspect of quality education (e.g. digital skills by Generation Digital, non-academic skills by KDNLC). By contrast, EOL's relatively broad focus allows for national and regional variations in grantees' advocacy and social accountability work, tailored to the specific education challenges and priorities in their national contexts.

There is nevertheless a danger that a sectoral-based approach such as EOL (albeit a broad sectoral-based approach) can lead to silos if not fragmentation which in turn can limit the scope for a holistic, joined up approach, preventing the identification of synergies across sectors and systems. *'Things that happen in an education project could also be relevant to health or climate resilience,'* states one informant, while another points out that *'the issue of tax justice matters for a CSO who cares about the quality of education but also for a CSO who cares about climate change, and for a CSO who cares about inequality. What made sense to compartmentalise in the past doesn't make sense anymore.'* The potential for a future program to facilitate stronger linkages between CSO advocacy and social accountability in education and similar work in other sectors could warrant further exploration.

Another critical aspect of EOL uniqueness and added value is the **long-term support provided to NECs**, with each coalition containing a range of member organisations drawing on differing constituencies, competencies and priorities. This is further reinforced by the potential for NECs to be linked into regional and global advocacy initiatives through Regional Education Coalitions, the transnational civil society alliances (funded through EOL OC3) and GCE. This model continues to encourage a broad, holistic and coordinated approach to advocacy for inclusive, quality education across civil society (even if there are variations in the extent to which this coordination happens). The promotion of a coalition-based approach and the associated coalition infrastructure – at least at the *national* level – was not witnessed in the other funds studied (even if there are efforts to promote networks and networking in several of these funds – particularly in KDNLC).

In terms of the *type* of advocacy and social accountability work supported by EOL, there is recognition of the effective way in which GPE has used EOL and its preceding civil society funds to firmly establish civil society as a critical partner in the Local Education Groups (LEGs) and in the development of education policy at the national level (even if there are variations in the adoption of this approach). This **partnership approach** is felt to be an increasingly important contribution when civic space is being eroded and civil society's legitimacy challenged in a growing number of countries. More fundamentally, one key informant asserted that in a context in which the role of the State in education provision is itself being questioned, civil society's social accountability work (in parallel to the direct resourcing of states' quality education provision through GPE) can also help to strengthen the role of the State in education *per se*.

Other aspects of EOL, though not unique to EOL, nevertheless reinforce its added value and strategic contribution. Drawing on our findings in relation to questions 1 and 2, we would particularly highlight **EOL’s multi-faceted approaches to learning, the proactive promotion of GESI, and the number of policy-related outcomes** to which EOL grantees are perceived to have contributed.

In terms of **relevance**, we have identified a number of common trends which resonate with EOL’s policy and practices across some or all of five comparator funds. These indicate that EOL is indeed **aligning its operations with both the needs of civil society advocacy & social accountability actors in the current global context and with critical shifts in the development cooperation funding landscape**. It should be noted that our comparator sample is weighted towards more progressive funders that are actively seeking to embrace trends such as localisation and the shifting of power to grantees. In following suit, EOL would appear to be positioning itself towards the more progressive end of the funding landscape.

### 3.3.5 How does the current approach of EOL compare with other funds?

*Annex 1 provides a table with systemised information on each fund compared with EOL.*

*Annex 4 provides a list of sources for the information on each fund in the table below*

#### **Comparator funds/initiatives analyzed**

**BUILD** (programme of the Ford Foundation) focuses on the institutional strengthening of social justice organizations as a long-term contribution to reducing inequality. Grants to 350 organizations in 30 countries, including both small community-based organizations and INGOs, are for 5 years and vary in size, depending on the size of the organization. \$1 billion was disbursed in the first round, 2016 – 2021 and another \$1 billion will be disbursed in the second round, 2022-26.

**Generation Digital** is a GIZ project (delivered on behalf of the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation & Development), 2022 - 25 which supports African partners in efforts to promote digital skills amongst children and young people. Civil society grants are around 100,000 euros for one year. GCE is the grant manager for civil society grants. Grants to governments are managed by an in-country grant agent (e.g. UNICEF).

**Global Partnership for Social Accountability (GPSA)** is a multi-donor trust fund worth \$30 million per annum, hosted by the World Bank, which seeks to target the causes of service delivery failure and jointly problem-solve in partnership with the public sector and community counterparts. Its website states that it is supporting 40 civil society-led social accountability initiatives in 31 countries (though these figures may be out of date). It has been running for 10 years (since 2014).

**Knowing Doing Network Leadership Coalition** is a coalition of 11 organisations/ networks (Brookings Institute + 10 CSOs based in the global south) seeking to transform education systems so that children and young people develop a breadth of skills (i.e. socio-emotional skills, critical thinking, creative & collaborative skills). Funded by the LEGO foundation, it is the brainchild of the Center for Universal Education at Brookings. Each coalition member receives an annual grant of \$100,000 per year for coalition activities (2023-27). Additional financial support is provided to coalition members to attend convenings, trainings etc. The total 4-year budget is \$9 million.

**Voice** is funded by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs and seeks to contribute to an inclusive world where empowered rights holders can express their views and demand their rights to public services, resources and political participation. It focuses on 5 rightsholder groups in 10 countries and 5 grant types (including influencing grant type) + 19 multi-country grants. It distributes 1,500 annual grants of 25,000 – 200,000 euros per year. Its key principle is reaching the furthest behind first. Total budget of 86.5 million euros over an 8-year period (2016-end 2024). Hivos & OxfamNovib are joint grant managers. Voice will not be replaced by any similar fund when it closes in late 2024.



### **Features of EOL that are common to the other five funds analysed:**

Our study identifies a number of trends amongst the funds analysed that are similar to those observed in EOL - primarily in relation to: design and positioning, learning, relationships with grantees, and GESI. *These are presented in tabular form in Annex 2 and summarised here.*

#### *Design and positioning:*

- **EOL's direct grant-making to coalitions and CSOs in the global South resonates with the 'localisation approach'** of the five comparator funds. All are seeking to directly support organisations and networks in the global South and open up funding to smaller, less established organisations. This approach contrasts with GPSA's standard model since 2014 of grant-making to INGOs and large, established NGOs (the only actors with the capacity to comply with World Bank grant requirements).<sup>cxxxvi</sup>
- **EOL's emphasis on localised priority-setting** and based on grantees own results frameworks (within the framework of EOL ToC) in order to enhance grantee ownership and ensure plans and indicators are contextualized. This aligns with the general trend amongst the five comparator funds towards shifting power, with the grantees in the driving seat and the funder/grant agent providing support and facilitating learning.
- **The extension of EOL OC1 grants from two to three years**, to provide more security and flexibility for longer-term planning and collaborative advocacy (in response to MTR recommendation 1) aligns with the trend amongst two of the funds (BUILD and KDNLC, and the aspiration in Voice) towards longer term grants (4-5 years). A 2022 evaluation of the BUILD programme concluded that 5-year funding had enabled CSOs to build vibrant movements and establish the *conditions* for long-term change.<sup>cxxxvii</sup>

#### *Relationships with grantees:*

- The growing emphasis in EOL towards the **grant agent playing a supportive rather than a compliance-focused role** and acting as a facilitator of learning and peer-to-peer exchanges, resonates with trends observed in the comparator funds.
- With regard to accountability, the **EOL team's commitment to ensuring a good balance** between time spent on project implementation and time spent on collecting data and writing reports aligns with a general trend observed in the comparator funds.

#### *Learning:*

The overall emphasis on learning in the EOL program is similarly observed in the funds studied. All five regard themselves as facilitators of learning as much as funders. Other common trends:

- EOL grantees driving their own learning agendas (through learning plans)
- The facilitation of peer-to-peer learning (e.g. Learning Collaboratives)
- EOL Regional Learning Partners bear similarities to the national Link & Learn facilitators in the Voice programme
- EOL global learning partners resonates with the efforts of several of the comparator funds (KDNLC, Voice, GPSA, Generation Digital) to project, aggregate, and synthesise learning generated at grantee/country levels to the meta level (both regionally and globally) as a means of engaging a broader community of stakeholders.

#### *Promotion of GESI:*

The five comparator funds do not appear to have anything like EOL's Policy Guidance Note on GESI, which indicates that EOL's attention to GESI may be more advanced than several of these funds (namely KDNLC, GPSA and Generation Digital). It is also worth noting that none of the five funds uses the term, GESI. Nevertheless, the conscious efforts of EOL to 'hardwire' GESI into all aspects and stages of EOL implementation (i.e. including GESI as the first strategic objective, a thematic priority in the learning framework and a key part of the ToC) resonates with the



conscious efforts of Voice, Generation Digital and BUILD to integrate gender and inclusion into the culture and core practices of the programme, rather than treating these dimensions as a separate area of work.

### 3.3.6 Approaches for consideration in a successor fund to EOL

The following approaches observed in certain comparator funds could warrant further investigation when designing a successor fund to EOL.

Approach	Fund
<b>Design:</b> Involve grantees & rights-holder groups in the design of the programme and the development of the ToC (e.g. through grantee-led working groups & workshops)	Voice, KDNL
<b>Grants:</b> Create a call for proposals/grant sub-category for 'Innovate & Learn' projects + for 'Sudden opportunity' grants – to better respond to unpredictable political contexts for advocacy	Voice
<b>Proposals:</b> Co-creation of proposals by grantee and funder/grant agent prior to the submission of grants	Generation Digital
<b>Grant-making:</b> Include rights-holders in the grantmaking process to increase ownership and relevance	Voice
<b>GESI:</b> Development of an inter-sectional approach to gender equality and social inclusion	Voice
<b>Institutional strengthening:</b> Compulsory allocation of a proportion of grant to institutional strengthening of grantee organisation/coalition (grantee determines proportion in consultation with funder)	BUILD
<b>Grantee accountability:</b> Introduce Conversation-Based Reporting as a substitute to written reports as a means of making grant management more suitable/feasible for grassroots/community-based groups	Voice

## 4 Conclusion

This first phase of the review found that good progress has been made in response to the MTR recommendations, and that there is evidence that EOL is accomplishing the results as articulated in its ToC and Results Framework. At the same time, our review clearly demonstrates the continued relevance and strategic added value of EOL as a grant mechanism, particularly in the context of constrained resources for civil society advocacy and social accountability work and the lack of a comparable fund working in education specifically.

However, it must be noted that the evidence reviewed in this period was largely self-reported data, and there is a limit to the claims that can be made based on this material. Moreover, the data collected focuses more on grantee achievements than the contribution of EOL itself as grant-maker, which we believe to be significant and currently under-acknowledged. It was not possible to triangulate the material reviewed in this stage, to understand for example whether the claims made in the self-reporting were reasonable, or to understand the scale and significance of the reported changes. Finally, there was no possibility of unpacking the different factors which enable strong and effective programmes or of identifying how these interact to enable change to take place.

**Phase 2** will run from October 2024 to September 2025, and focus on the **design and operation of EOL**. While *Phase 1* focused on whether and to what extent EOL is a sound strategic investment for GPE, *Phase 2* expects to go deeper to understand the effectiveness of current operations and mechanisms. Findings will be used to inform the design and scope of future

support for civil society and social accountability (notably by PILC and the June 2025 GPE Board meeting).

*Phase 2* will involve primary data collection through three focused case-studies, with an expanded team including researchers based in case study countries, to enable an evaluative assessment of the contributions, relationships and implementation of the programme, using a realist evaluation approach to explore what works, for whom and under what circumstances.

We will have the opportunity to go beyond the results reported against the EOL results framework, and explore key questions to inform an assessment of EOL's current operations, and identify design features for the subsequent design. These include a focus on:

- relevance (in relation to GPE and how EOL contributes to broader strategy; and in relation to the needs and priorities of civil society in different country contexts);
- coherence (and how the three OCs together cover and fulfil the objectives of EOL, and what is meant by synergy);
- efficiency (in relation to internal operations, adaptability and mechanisms);
- and sustainability (of programmatic efforts and organisational capabilities).

## Annex 1: Table: Comparator Study – info on other funds compared with EOL

	<b>BUILD Programme (Ford Foundation)</b>	<b>Generation Digital (GIZ/BMZ Germany)</b>	<b>Global Partnership for Social Accountability (GPSA)</b>	<b>Knowing Doing Network Leadership Coalition (KDNLN)</b>	<b>Voice Programme</b>	<b>Education Out Loud</b>
<b>Overall budget &amp; size of grants; countries</b>	<p>\$1 billion budget 2022-26</p> <p>Grants to 350 CSOs in 30 countries.</p> <p>5-year flexible grants; size of grant depends on size of grantee. Grant must be 10-40% of grantee's overall budget.</p> <p>BUILD grantees generally have to be in receipt of another Ford grant already.</p>	<p>Grants to CSOs and to governments in 25 African countries (all regions).</p> <p>Civil society grants are around 100,000 euros for 1 year (but this is flexible).</p> <p>GCE is grant manager for civil society grants.</p>	<p>Multi-donor trust fund hosted by the World Bank. \$30 million disbursed annually.</p> <p>Size of grants ranges from \$200,000 - \$1million. Most projects run for 2-4 years.</p> <p>Grants to social accountability projects/initiatives in 40 countries Africa, Asia &amp; East Pacific, Eastern Europe &amp; Central Asia, Latin America &amp; the Caribbean, MENA (according to GPSA website)</p>	<p>Total budget of \$9million provided by LEGO Foundation and managed by CUE at Brookings Institute.</p> <p>Each of the 11 selected coalition members (CUE at Brookings + 10 CSOs/CSO networks from the global south) to receive a grant of \$100,000 a year for coalition activities.</p> <p>One KDNLN member (ie grant recipient) in each of the following countries: Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, South Africa, India, Pakistan, Jordan, Peru, Chile, Mexico</p> <p>Additional funding is provided to coalition members to attend convenings, trainings etc.</p>	<p>Funded by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Hivos and OxfamNovib are joint grant managers.</p> <p>Focuses on 5 rightsholder groups in 10 countries (Indonesia, Philippines, Laos, Cambodia, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Niger, Mali, Nigeria)</p> <p>Total budget of 86.5 million euros over 8-year period.</p> <p>Funding allocated to: Empowerment; Influencing; Innovate &amp; Learn; Sudden Opportunity; Empowerment Accelerator (for grantees who had past Empowerment grant).</p> <p>1,500 grants made and each grant is total of</p>	<p>EOL's total envelope: \$133 million.</p> <p><b>OC 1:</b> NECs. 2020-21: 54 grants to NECs in 54 different countries; 2022-23: 60 grants; 2024-26: app. 60 grants ; Ceiling USD 137,000 per year. 3-year grants. Each proposal assessed by Regional Independent Selection Panels which decide on funding level – ie full funding/partial funding etc/core operational funding/no funding but can participate in learning</p> <p><b>OC 2:</b> Social accountability 2021-24: 10 grants to national CSOs in different countries with a ceiling of USD 400,000/year. 2024-26: app. 14 grants with a ceiling of USD</p>

					25,000 – 200,000 euros over 1-3 years (or 6-12 months re Sudden Opportunity grants).	250,000/year. 3-year grants <b>OC3:</b> Transnational advocacy 2021-24: 10 grants to transnational civil society alliances with a ceiling of USD 400,000/year; 2024-26: app. 6 grants with a ceiling of app. USD 320,000/year. 3-year grants
	<b>BUILD Programme (Ford Foundation)</b>	<b>Generation Digital (GIZ/BMZ Germany)</b>	<b>Global Partnership for Social Accountability (GPSA)</b>	<b>Knowing Doing Network Leadership Coalition (KDNLC)</b>	<b>Voice Programme</b>	<b>Education Out Loud</b>
<b>Time-frame of initiative</b>	2022-26  (first BUILD prog was 2016-21)  After 2026, there may be a similar fund to replace BUILD but not confirmed.	2022-25	2014 – 2026. Due to close in June 2026.  A successor fund at the World Bank is currently being developed to replace GPSA.	2023-27  At present, it is not clear what will happen after 2027.	2016-24  The programme will close completely at the end of 2024. The Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs is not planning to establish a successor fund.	Initially 2019-24. Extension period 2024-26.  Preceded by Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF): CSEF I (2009-12); CSEF II (2013-15); CSEF III (2016-19)
<b>Main theme</b>	Institutional strengthening of human rights & social justice CSOs	Digital access & digital skills in African education systems	Social accountability in relation to public services (including education)	Promotion of a breadth of skills in education beyond core reading, writing, arithmetic skills	Marginalised groups securing a voice in political processes that affect them (eg re service delivery)	Civil society advocacy & social accountability in the education sector
<b>Key features</b>	Highly flexible grants. In each grant, 60-80% is flexible, core funding; 20-40% must be spent on institutional strengthening.	Supports African partners to promote digital skills amongst children & young people (including through advocacy).	GPSA seeks to target the causes of service delivery failure and promote joint problem solving by civil society and government	KDNLC is a global network of CSOs working to understand how education transformation systems occur in local ecosystems with the goal of	Voice's mission is to contribute to an inclusive world where empowered rightsholders can express their views and demand their rights for	EOL's goal: Enhanced civil society capacity to further GPE2020 goals in learning, equity and stronger systems, by improving civil society participation, advocacy

	<p>BUILD funds CSOs and networks in the US and in the global south. Also funds several INGOs engaging with NGOs/INGOs in global south.</p>	<p>Prospective civil society grantees are required to discuss their proposal with the relevant government ministry before the grant is approved to enhance synergy at a country level (and with GD's support to governments)</p>	<p>counterparts in a diverse range of public sectors and countries.</p>	<p>improving holistic learning for children and young people globally and ensuring they have the breadth of skills they need to co-construct a more peaceful, equal and sustainable world (eg socio-emotional skills, critical thinking, creative skills etc).</p>	<p>inclusive and responsive societies.</p> <p>The programme seeks to a) enhance the influence of rightsholders over access to public services, resources and political participation, and b) tackle prejudice and cultural norms by offering tailored approaches for their inclusion in social and political spheres, based on rightsholders' analysis of their context.</p> <p>Actively encourages collaboration between rightsholder groups and CSOs at national, regional and global levels.</p>	<p>and efforts to ensure transparency and increased effectiveness of national educational policy and implementation processes</p> <p><b>Objectives:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.Strengthen national civil society engagement in education planning, policy dialogue and monitoring</li> <li>2.Strengthen civil society roles in transparency and accountability of national education sector policy and implementation</li> <li>3.Create a stronger global and transnational enabling environment for civil society advocacy and transparency efforts</li> </ol> <p><b>Key activities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Support for national coalitions</li> <li>-Social accountability initiatives</li> <li>-Transnational advocacy</li> </ul>
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	<b>BUILD Programme (Ford Foundation)</b>	<b>Generation Digital (GIZ/BMZ Germany)</b>	<b>Global Partnership for Social Accountability (GPSA)</b>	<b>Knowing Doing Network Leadership Coalition (KDNLC)</b>	<b>Voice Programme</b>	<b>Education Out Loud</b>
<b>Rationale/Theory of Change</b>	<p>Inequality is at the root of every social problem but there's no quick fix. It is therefore essential to invest in CSOs working to reduce inequality <i>long term</i>.</p> <p>To build a sturdy foundation, CSOs need: clear strategic goals &amp; plan; effective &amp; diverse staff &amp; leadership; efficient systems; steady flexible funding to seize opportunities &amp; build resilience.</p>	<p>Digital skills are a basic necessity for internet-based participation in society and politics and greater employability. But education systems are unable to keep pace with tech progress and there are inequalities in digital access amongst children &amp; young people.</p> <p>Digitalisation requires money but also understanding, listening, cooperation, training, trust.</p>	<p>GPSA's <a href="#">Theory of Action</a> states that public service delivery can be more effective, and public policies can be stronger and more sustainable, when public sector and societies interact to help shape, execute, manage, deliver, monitor, and adjust their policies and service delivery programs. However, carefully designed public policies are often not adopted or implemented because of governance failures. The GPSA programme is designed to address this problem.</p>	<p>Current education systems do not prepare children and young people for the challenges of today's world. There's a limited focus on the essential competencies young people require. Children and young people need education systems that foster their reengagement (after the pandemic), socio-emotional well-being, the cultivation of critical thinking, creative skills, collaborative skills. To transform education systems, education leaders need to collaborate, globally and locally.</p>	<p>In the collective journey to end poverty and inequality, no-one can be left behind.</p> <p>Grassroots rightsholder groups have difficulty accessing funding. Hence the need for this programme</p>	<p>Civil society: -is a key actor for systems transformation -plays a critical role in protecting the right to education -contributes to more efficient education systems through its proximity to education stakeholders -plays a key role in strengthening dialogue and coordination mechanisms</p> <p>A triangle of transparency, participation and advocacy (to generate political will) leads to stronger education systems</p>
<b>Approach to learning</b>	<p>BUILD program organizes a range of capacity-strengthening and network-weaving opportunities – summarized as Cohorts,</p>	<p>Annual Generation Digital exchanges at regional &amp; continental level for peer-to-peer learning and sharing and scaling up good practices at a regional</p>	<p>GPSA organizes an annual workshop which convenes grantees online and offline. A broader network of stakeholders beyond</p>	<p>KDNLC seeks is to strengthen spaces for experimentation and exploration (and collaboration).</p>	<p>Early on, Voice had traditional training programmes, PPT presentations etc. But learning is now shared</p>	<p>3 main approaches: 1. Learning from experience: Distilling learning with grantees and making sure they adapt advocacy</p>

	Convenings & Technical Assistance (CCTA).	level (separate exchanges for civil society & governments); also online convenings in which CSOs & gov partners participate together for cross-fertilisation.	just grantees are involved in these convenings. GPSA's 300 Global Partners are CSOs, donors, private sector, and academia collaborate with the GPSA on knowledge exchange and research.	There is a strong emphasis on peer-to-peer learning in KDNLC and ultimately through the broader KDN.  At KDNLC's first convening in Nairobi in 2024, working groups were set up on: learning and network; learning & discovery working group, made up of self-selected coalition members.	through more innovative approaches.  One of the Voice grants at a country level is now used to contract a Link&Learn facilitator org to link all Voice grantees in each country and promote peer-to-peer learning. (previously there was only funding for regional and global learning events).	strategies etc based on learning 2.Targeted capacity-building initiatives 3.Collaboration, networking and peer learning: learning collaboratives, joint platforms and action on common advocacy  Two learning paths: 1.Learning driven by grantees: eg learning plans etc 2.Learning facilitated by grant agent: global & RLPs, learning partners, Learning Collaboratives, studies & research
	<b>BUILD Programme (Ford Foundation)</b>	<b>Generation Digital (GIZ/BMZ Germany)</b>	<b>Global Partnership for Social Accountability (GPSA)</b>	<b>Knowing Doing Network Leadership Coalition (KDNLC)</b>	<b>Voice Programme</b>	<b>Education Out Loud</b>
<b>Approach to GESI</b>	Intentional effort to support women-led orgs; Ford tracks how many women-led orgs are being funded; 60% of BUILD grants are going to women-led orgs.  Standard proposal process includes questions re the composition of org's	Promotion of gender equality is a GiZ priority. All applications are screened against OECD DAC criteria re gender equality.  Conflict sensitivity is also important to GD/GiZ.	A significant number of GPSA projects specifically focus on targeting vulnerable populations to include them in social accountability processes.  Several GPSA projects seek to strengthen women's inclusion in	CUE uses the language of norms rather than policies. The primary cross-cutting inclusion issue is 'youth voice and agency' which must be evident in all KDNLC outputs.  Trust, transparency and welfare are other cross-cutting norms	Inclusion lies at the heart of the Voice programme.  Strong emphasis on an intersectional approach, since rightsholders have diverse identities which may result in overlapping forms of exclusion. An intersectional approach also prevents silos in the approach to rights.	EOL Policy Guidance produced on GESI, in response to MTR. This is for EOL (ie not imposed on grantees).  Grantee proposals have to include GESI context analysis'; grantee results frameworks have to include GESI.

	leadership (re gender, disability, ethnic & racial diversity) and their accountability to communities.		decision-making processes.	underpinning the KDNLC culture.	Gender, ethnicity, age, and disability emerged as prevalent, overlapping factors in the Voice programme 2017-22.	<p>A gender analysis undertaken of latest set of NEC proposals.</p> <p>NECs' approaches:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Increased diversity of secretariat and board</li> <li>- Member orgs representing women/girls; marginalised groups</li> <li>-Gender equality committees &amp; policies</li> <li>- Raising voices of marginalized groups</li> <li>- Promoting gender responsive and inclusive education policies</li> <li>- Research and analysis on GESI to inform advocacy</li> </ul>
<b>Relationship with grantees</b>	<p>BUILD grantees report against their own strategies.</p> <p>Annual reports required but emphasis on relationship and mutual accountability between grantee and Ford regional program officer/BUILD program officer. Regional officer meets with every BUILD grantee in the region 2-3 times a year.</p>	<p>End of grant report required of each GD grantee (at the end of the 1 year).</p> <p>Emphasis on developing relationships with grantees.</p> <p>Co-development of grant proposal jointly be GIZ and grantee prior to submission.</p>	<p>Up till now, the World Bank has made direct GPSA grants to INGOs and national NGOs. This has meant onerous reporting requirements. The new model will be to make grants to a consortium of large NGOs/INGOs which can act as intermediaries to sub-grant to smaller NGOs. This will reduce</p>	<p>CUE is the grant manager for KDNLC but also a member of the Coalition, along with 10 CSOs/CSO networks from the global south. A potential tension between these two roles played by CUE.</p> <p>Strong focus on co-creation of KDNLC and coalition outputs by its 11 members.</p>	<p>An MTR of Voice in 2020 indicated that reporting requirements were v heavy for grantees. In response, 6-monthly Conversation-Based Reporting (CBR) was introduced and popular with grantees.</p> <p>Feedback from grantees is that the financial reporting format required by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is hard</p>	<p>Localised priority setting aims to enhance ownership and sustainability. But EOL ensures that these align with a rights-based approach tand the overall EOL TOC, goals and objectives.</p> <p>Grantees have their own results frameworks and report against these every 6 months.</p>



			<p>reporting requirements. The critical relationship for programme delivery will be between the intermediary and grantees rather than with GPSA directly.</p>	<p>Standard reporting requirements of coalition members – ie quarterly program and financial reports and trackers re outcome-level results.</p>	<p>to understand. But this cannot be changed much, due to MoFA regulations.</p> <p>Voice has conducted annual grantee perception surveys to gather portfolio level data on grantees' perceived progress.</p>	<p>When EOL was set up in 2019-20, MEL was compliance-based but now being streamlined.</p> <p>Some NECs are completely reliant on GPE for funding.</p>
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## Annex 2: Common Trends across Comparator funds and EOL

Common trend	Fund/initiative
<b><i>Design &amp; positioning</i></b>	
Seeking to put grantees in the driving seat and shift power to grantees, with the funder playing a support and facilitative role, and grantees shaping the overall theory of change in some cases	Voice, KDNLC, BUILD, Generation Digital, EOL
Co-creation of projects with grantees, based on their contexts and priorities	Generation Digital, KDNLC, BUILD
Shift towards more flexible funding and longer, multi-year grant periods	BUILD, KDNLC, EOL
Actively seeking ways to fund smaller organisations closer to communities and/or 'hard-to-reach' groups	Voice, GPSA, BUILD
Strengthening civil society voices and advocacy at multiple levels (local-national-regional-global)	Voice, KDNLC, BUILD, EOL
Support of/and promotion of networks, coalitions, and networking	KDNLC, GPSA, Generation Digital, EOL
<b><i>Relationships with grantees</i></b>	
Focusing on relationships with grantees rather than on upward accountability, in order to promote more of a partnership based on mutual trust, accountability and co-creation	BUILD, Voice, KDNLC, Generation Digital
Reducing the upward reporting burden on grantees so as to free up more time for grantees to do the work and also enable smaller and more grassroots organisations to apply for grants	GPSA, Voice, KDNLC, BUILD, EOL
<b><i>Approaches to advocacy &amp; social accountability</i></b>	
Emphasis on partnerships between civil society and governments and other stakeholders	GPSA, Generation Digital, EOL
<b><i>Approaches to learning</i></b>	
Shift away from traditional technical capacity-building towards peer-to-peer learning	Voice, BUILD, KDNLC, Generation Digital, EOL
Shift towards grantees identifying their learning needs	Voice, BUILD, EOL
Convening grantees (both in-person and online)	VOICE, Generation Digital, KDNLC, Ford, GPSA

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## Annex 3: Interviewees

### I Study of comparator funds

1. **Shireen Zaman**, BUILD Program Officer, Ford Foundation
2. **Ronja Hoelzer**, Project Manager, Generation Digital, GiZ
3. **Aly Rahim**, Program Manager, Global Partnership for Social Accountability Secretariat (GPSA), World Bank
4. **Mo Olateju**, Fellow, Center for Universal Education (CUE), Brookings Institute
5. **Inez Hackenberg**, Programme Manager & **Ishita Dutta**, Link&Learn Coordinator, Voice Secretariat (*joint interview*)

### II Independent stakeholders

1. **Antonia Wulff**, Director of Research Policy & Advocacy, Education International
2. **Clara Bosco**, Senior Advisor on Civil Society Resourcing & **Tamryn Lee Fourie**, Chief Officer of Innovation & Sustainability, CIVICUS [*joint interview*]
3. **Michael Jarvis**, Executive Director, Trust, Accountability & Inclusion (TAI) Collaborative

### III Internal interviewees

1. **Lars Udsholt**, ODK EOL GMU Lead
2. **Tanvir Muntasim**, GPE Secretariat, EOL
3. **Ellie Edmonson**, Global MEL coordinator, EOL
4. **Martin Wolf Andersen**, OC1 Coordinator/GESI
5. **Dorte Jorgensen**, OC2 Coordinator/Regional Learning
6. **Marianne Olesen**, OC3 coordinator/Global Learning
7. **Cowan Coventry**, MTR consultant

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## Annex 4: Documentary sources

### I Study of comparator funds

#### BUILD program, Ford Foundation

- [BUILD](#) web-pages
- [BUILD Developmental Evaluation – Final Report](#) March 2022
- [It's time to reimagine the role of program officer](#) – Learning Reflection by Shireen Zaman & Christopher Cardona

#### Generation Digital

- [Generation Digital](#) web-pages
- [Generation Digital FAQs](#)
- [Evaluation of GIZ Back-Up Initiative](#) – Final Report, 2024

#### Global Partnership for Social Accountability (GPSA)

- [GPSA](#) web-pages
- [GPSA Results Framework](#)

#### Knowing Doing Network Leadership Coalition (KDNLC)

- [KDNLC](#) web-pages:
- KDN Theory of Change, CUE, Brookings Institute

#### Voice Programme

- [Voice](#) web-pages
- [Voice 2022 Annual Report](#)
- [Voice Final Evaluation Report, Nov 2023](#)

### II Context for civil society advocacy & social accountability work on education

- [2024 State of Civil Society Report, Civicus](#)
- <https://www.un.org/en/desa/un-calls-urgent-action-address-education-crisis>, April 2023
- <https://www.bond.org.uk/news/2023/01/the-state-of-global-education-looking-at-the-year-ahead/>, Jan 2023
- <https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/250-million-children-out-school-what-you-need-know-about-unescos-latest-education-data>, Sept 2023
- [Millions of Children Learn Only Very Little](#), Max Roser, June 2022
- [The Role of Civil Society in National Education Policy in the Global South](#), Abrehet Gebremedhin & Naomi Hossain, Accountability Brief, Jan 2024
- [Local 2030: Localising the SDGs](#)<sup>1</sup>
- [Norway's proposed 2024 development budget \(donortracker.org\)](#)
- [Issue Deep Dive: Netherlands/Education \(donortracker.org\)](#)
- [A look into Open Society Foundations' grantmaking | Devex](#)
- [Wellspring Philanthropic Fund | Our Priorities \(wpfund.org\)](#)

### III EOL Document review

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## Endnotes

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- <sup>i</sup> ToR for Review of EOL
- <sup>ii</sup> INTRAC was contracted by the Grant Agent (EOL team of ODK) to deliver the review. The ToR, decision to contract INTRAC, and the overall review design, implementation and quality is overseen by a team comprising of the GPE Secretariat's Results and Performance team and ODK's evaluation unit
- <sup>iii</sup> Goal, as adopted during the extension phase, is understood as: promoting inclusive, gender responsive and equitable national education policies and systems through enhanced civil society capacity and participation in social accountability and policy advocacy processes.
- <sup>iv</sup> Geographical spread, OCs, project maturity and CIVICUS country status
- <sup>v</sup> Interviews ODK.
- <sup>vi</sup> MTR Status Update
- <sup>vii</sup> Implementation update, extension proposal, *TPR J22–23*
- <sup>viii</sup> Extension proposal, interview, ODK.
- <sup>ix</sup> Systematization, interview ODK
- <sup>x</sup> MTR Status Update
- <sup>xi</sup> MTR Status Update
- <sup>xii</sup> Status update, GPE interview
- <sup>xiii</sup> MTR, ODK interview
- <sup>xiv</sup> Interviews
- <sup>xv</sup> Interviews and IDS Learning Plan Review.
- <sup>xvi</sup> IDS review, ODK interviews.
- <sup>xvii</sup> MTR Status Update
- <sup>xviii</sup> status update, extension proposal
- <sup>xix</sup> Global Learning Framework
- <sup>xx</sup> Tanzania workshop report, interviews ODK, learning brochure
- <sup>xxi</sup> HESA 2024 RLP, Interviews ODK, Tanzania workshop report
- <sup>xxii</sup> Tanzania workshop report, interviews ODK, HESA 2024 RLP.
- <sup>xxiii</sup> Tanzania workshop report, HESA RLP 2024.
- <sup>xxiv</sup> Tanzania workshop report, interviews ODK, HESA 2024 RLP.
- <sup>xxv</sup> Tanzania workshop report, interviews ODK.
- <sup>xxvi</sup> MTR, interviews ODK, GPE, MTR consultant, EOL internal paper on country engagement
- <sup>xxvii</sup> MTR Status Update
- <sup>xxviii</sup> MTR management response, interviewees from ODK and EOL.
- <sup>xxix</sup> Interviews GPE and ODK.
- <sup>xxx</sup> EOL internal paper 2024
- <sup>xxxi</sup> MTR, interviews
- <sup>xxxii</sup> MTR Status Update
- <sup>xxxiii</sup> extension proposal, 2023 PILC presentation
- <sup>xxxiv</sup> EOL GESI policy guidance note.
- <sup>xxxv</sup> MTR management response/ status update, interviews ODK.
- <sup>xxxvi</sup> MTR status update, interviews, internal review of gender in OC1.3 proposals.
- <sup>xxxvii</sup> Interviews
- <sup>xxxviii</sup> Interview ODK, PILC presentation
- <sup>xxxix</sup> MTR management response, Extension proposal, ODK interview
- <sup>xl</sup> MTR Status Update
- <sup>xli</sup> Interviews ODK
- <sup>xlii</sup> MTR status update, Extension proposal.
- <sup>xliiii</sup> Status update, Interviews GPE and ODK.
- <sup>xliiv</sup> status update, ODK interview
- <sup>xlv</sup> MTR, ODK interviews.
- <sup>xlvi</sup> MTR, ODK and MTR interviews, TPR 2022
- <sup>xlvii</sup> MTR Status Update
- <sup>xlviii</sup> status update, extension proposal, interview ODK, TPR 2022
- <sup>xlix</sup> Tanzania workshop report, interviews ODK.
- <sup>l</sup> Status update, interviews.
- <sup>li</sup> Interviews ODK.
- <sup>lii</sup> Interviews ODK.
- <sup>liii</sup> MTR, Interviews ODK.
- <sup>liiv</sup> ODK interview.
- <sup>lv</sup> MTR, MTR interview.
- <sup>lvi</sup> MTR Status Update
- <sup>lvii</sup> Extension proposal
- <sup>lviii</sup> Update status, interviews ODK, GESI policy note.

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- lix Interview ODK
  - lx GPE interview, HESA RLP 2024
  - lxi Update status, MTR management response, ODK interviews.
  - lxii MTR Status Update
  - lxiii MTR Status Update
  - lxiv Extension proposal, TPR 22-23
  - lxv MTR management response, interviews ODK.
  - lxvi TPR 2022, AP learning review, Zambia visit report
  - lxvii MTR, interviews GPE, TPR 2022.
  - lxviii Interviews ODK and GPE, Madagascar trip report.
  - lxix INTRAC (2024) EOL Inception report July 5. The MTR timing meant that OC2 and 3 were not well covered, and so paid particular attention to these two OCs in this review.
  - lxx MTR, systematization 2022.
  - lxxi TPR 22/23
  - lxxii These results can also be seen in outcomes related to multi-level monitoring, under civil society capacity, and on local social accountability spaces. Evidence drawn from MDF Acer study and TPR 22-23
  - lxxiii AP, WCA, LAC Learning Reviews. 2022 systematization report.
  - lxxiv AP learning review.
  - lxxv MDF Acer learning study
  - lxxvi AP Learning Review, MDF Acer learning paper, 2022 systematization,
  - lxxvii WCA learning review.
  - lxxviii MTR, TPR 2022, IDS Learning plan review, 2024 HESA RLP, gender review of EOL extension proposals.
  - lxxix OC1 systematization 2022
  - lxxx 2002 systematization, AP policy contribution study, AP learning review.
  - lxxxi OC2 systematization report.
  - lxxxii MTR, TPR 2022, TPR 22-23.
  - lxxxiii Presentation to PILC.
  - lxxxiv TPR 22-23, 2023 RMU report.
  - lxxxv Zambia visit report.
  - lxxxvi 2022 Angola visit report, Mongolia visit report.
  - lxxxvii MTR, EOL internal document on country engagement.
  - lxxxviii TPR 22-23.
  - lxxxix MDF ACER study, TPR 22-23, TPR 2022
  - xc TPR 2022, MDF ACER study.
  - lxi TPR 2022-23
  - lxii TPR 22-23
  - lxiii TPR 2022, 22-23.
  - lxiv OC2 systematization, MDF Acer study, TPR 22-23, AP policy study
  - lxv TPR 2022, TPR 22-23, Mongolia visit report.
  - lxvi TPR 22-23, AP Policy study.
  - lxvii MDF Acer action learning study.
  - lxviii AP Policy study
  - lxix AP Policy Study, MDF Acer study.
  - c TPR 2022-23, TPR 2022.
  - ci MTR, TPR 2022, TPR 22-23
  - cii TPR 22-23, MTR
  - ciii TPR 2022, 22-23, LAC learning review
  - civ 2022 Systematization report
  - cv Interview with EOL ODK
  - cvi LAC learning review, 2022 systematization
  - cvi OC2 systematization
  - cvi IDS learning review
  - cix ODK interviews, Rapid gesi review of proposals.
  - cx TPR 22-23.
  - cxii 2022 systematization
  - cxii systematization 2022, LAC learning review
  - cxiii MTR, IDS learning plans review, learning framework
  - cxiv TPR 22-23, internal tracking sheet. Currently there are 7 active LCs in Asia Pacific, 3 in HESA, 5 in LAC and 4 in WCA and four cross-regional or global.
  - cxv TPR 22-23, internal document, cyan visit report, 2024 RLP HESA, OC2 systematization
  - cxvi AP Learning review, OC1 Angola
  - cxvii AP Policy study, LAC, WCA, AP learning studies, MDF ACER study, Zambia, Eswatini visit reports
  - cxviii Q3 as articulated in the EOL *Phase 1* Review Inception Report, July 2024
  - cxix For further details on cuts to ODA by EU and European bilateral donors, for example, see [The EU Aid Cuts Revealed](#), Devex, Sept 2024. See also sub-section 3.3.3 External Context, for further details of cuts to civil society advocacy in the education sector by philanthropic donors.



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- <sup>CXX</sup> See [State of Civil Society Report](#) 2024, CIVICUS, for further details on restrictions to civic space and political polarisation.
- <sup>CXXI</sup> It should be noted that a relatively in-depth study of a selection of comparator funds was the preferred methodology for exploring Q3 specified in the Terms of Reference for *Phase 1* of the Review of EOL and substituted for a systematic desk review of all sources of funding for civil society advocacy & social accountability work in the education sector. In the past similar comparator exercises have been undertaken, including when EOL was being designed. This review therefore provided an opportunity to do a rapid analysis to update our understanding of EOL's relevance in the current landscape.
- <sup>CXXII</sup> [State of Civil Society Report](#) 2024, CIVICUS
- <sup>CXXIII</sup> [Gebremedhin Education civil society AB 3 \(1\).pdf](#)
- <sup>CXXIV</sup> Anecdotal evidence provided in interview with key informant in Oxfam Denmark
- <sup>CXXV</sup> The 2023 [UNESCO Global Education Monitoring Report](#) finds that since 2015, the percentage of children completing primary education has increased by less than 3% to 87% and the percentage of youth completing secondary education has increased by less than 5% to 58%. While the global population of primary- and secondary-school-aged children is rising, post pandemic, education systems are struggling to meet this rising demand. Data from UNESCO shows that the number of out-of-school children and youth therefore actually rose by 6 million 2021-23 - to 250 million.
- <sup>CXXVI</sup> See *Note for EOL Coordination Group meeting: Risk management in regard to challenging country contexts*, Jan 2022
- <sup>CXXVII</sup> See [GenerationDigital! - giz.de](#)
- <sup>CXXVIII</sup> See [Localizing the SDGs: Strategies and Plans | SDG Help Desk \(unescap.org\)](#)
- <sup>CXXIX</sup> Observation on funding levels to CSOs in the global south made by Clara Bosco, Senior Advisor on Civil Society Resourcing, CIVICUS – interviewed for this review in Aug 2024. This is supported by the [Too Southern to Be Funded report](#) of the #Shift the Power movement, published by the Global Fund Community Foundations, April 2024, which identified that less 10% of all ODA funnelled to CSOs goes to CSOs in the global south, based on an analysis of 12 donors' ODA 2009 – 2021.
- <sup>CXXX</sup> Observation made by two of the independent stakeholders interviewed.
- <sup>CXXXI</sup> See [Reduction in the UK's 0.7 percent ODA target - House of Lords Library \(parliament.uk\)](#). See also see [The EU Aid Cuts Revealed](#), Devex, Sept 2024.
- <sup>CXXXII</sup> [Norway's proposed 2024 development budget \(donortracker.org\)](#)
- <sup>CXXXIII</sup> [Issue Deep Dive: Netherlands/Education \(donortracker.org\)](#)
- <sup>CXXXIV</sup> See [A look into Open Society Foundations' grantmaking | Devex](#)
- <sup>CXXXV</sup> [Wellspring Philanthropic Fund | Our Priorities \(wpfund.org\)](#)
- <sup>CXXXVI</sup> It should be noted that GPSA is now testing a new consortium model whereby the consortium will make grants to smaller local NGOs as an intermediary.
- <sup>CXXXVII</sup> [BUILD Developmental Evaluation Final Report \(fordfoundation.org\)](#)