



Compiled by the Secretariat, the contents of this note draw on the [country-level evaluations \(CLEs\)](#) that were available as of December 2019 and the [CLE synthesis](#). The purpose is to identify positive trends and evolving challenges, with the aim of i) sharing what has been learned and ii) improving support to sector dialogue and monitoring going forward. – There is an equivalent [note on sector monitoring](#).

JULY, 2020

## WHAT DO THE COUNTRY-LEVEL EVALUATIONS TELL US ABOUT SECTOR DIALOGUE? - SOME KEY TAKEAWAYS

**KEY TAKEAWAY 1: Stakeholder participation in sector policy dialogue is diversifying and generally improving, with better representation in dialogue bodies of government actors, civil society organizations, nongovernmental actors and the private sector. However, meaningful engagement remains uneven across countries.**

The inclusion of different education stakeholders in sector dialogue bodies offers an opportunity to understand stakeholder perspectives and harmonize their support for national education priorities, while creating bridges across sub-sectors and between national and sub-national levels. The coming together of education actors is also an opportunity to mutualize resources, expertise and partner investments in the sector. Relationships between actors are often formalized through Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) or partnership agreements. However, the degree of true stakeholder engagement is strongly dependent on the good will of ministries of education to engage with diverse stakeholders, stakeholder capacities and the extent to which constituency groups are organized within themselves.

### Positive changes

There is evidence that **sector dialogue has become more broad-based** in a large number of countries.

- This includes a visible presence of, and leadership from, government actors (e.g. **Bangladesh, Kyrgyz Republic**),
- It includes greater involvement of civil society (**Kyrgyz Republic, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Senegal, Tajikistan and Zimbabwe**).
- Increased stakeholder inclusion has positive spillovers for the resources and expertise mobilized, and the division of labor and partner investments (e.g. **Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, Mauritania, Sierra Leone**).
- In **Zimbabwe**, a wider range of stakeholders have gained a voice in recent years and are more engaged in sector dialogue than ever before – including civil society organizations (CSOs), teacher associations, stakeholders from the private sector and private book publishing groups.

Relationships between education partners are **increasingly formalized** to increase clarity around the purpose of joint efforts and division of responsibilities.

- In **Sierra Leone**, the local education group (LEG) – named the Education Development Partners Group – was expanded in 2013 to include 'Education For All Sierra Leone', a CSO coalition that brings together domestic organizations advocating for progress in education, including the Sierra Leone Teachers'

Union. Membership now requires a formal application to the Ministry (which has developed a formal MoU between the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology and donor partners), as well as partnership principles outlining which organizations are eligible to participate.

## Ongoing challenges

The degree of stakeholder inclusion varies across countries and is largely dependent on the good will of governments and ministries of education to engage with different actors. Stakeholders in certain countries raise concerns that only a small number of preferred actors are included in the dialogue, which likely contributes to limited ownership and subsequent support for the education sector plan (e.g. Ethiopia, Nepal and Sierra Leone).

- In **Burkina Faso**, key sub-sector actors, notably those representing secondary and higher education, feel less inclined to participate in the consultative process around the education sector plan which, from their perspective, disproportionately prioritizes basic education over other segments of the sector. Some sub-sectors may be more vocal than others and their agendas more prominent in influencing sector implementation strategies.
- Faith-based and informal education providers are not included in **DRC, Burkina Faso, Pakistan and Sierra Leone**. This is also the case for teacher organizations in **Malawi and Mali**.
- In **Nepal**, while members of the Association of Rural Municipalities stated that *local* governments should play an active role in sector dialogue and planning, these processes are only coordinated within the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MOEST) at the federal level. The local level does play a role in sector monitoring in Nepal, but mainly in a reporting role. Both municipal authorities and MOEST acknowledge the need for improved dialogue mechanisms under the new federal structure, possibly to be formalized in the forthcoming Federal Education Act.

The roles played by, and the thematic priorities of, different CSOs vary within and across countries. The exclusion of certain representative bodies and groups of actors runs the risk of governments failing to understand and address the needs of specific learner groups or leveraging the support and capacity of these groups to the collective education effort. The adequacy of certain groups' representation and engagement in LEGs (especially for civil society) is a stated concern.

- In **Nepal**, the government reportedly preferred to limit CSO involvement, while other stakeholders prefer a less rigid cap on participation.
- In **Sierra Leone**, CSO representation in the Education Development Partners group primarily applies to international CSOs, while the voice of domestic organizations has, until now, tended to carry less weight.

Certain CSOs also point to their limited/sporadic involvement in sector dialogue, even when they are invited into the conversation. They may be invited to attend specific meetings, rather than being automatically included in pivotal stages of the sector plan development and monitoring.

- Technical capacity gaps, resource and opportunity constraints further limit the meaningful participation of actors invited to sectoral and thematic working groups. Many do not have the resources to attend due to their limited number of staff, meaning that their voices are less represented than those of larger organizations (e.g. **Mozambique, Rwanda**).
- The absence of a national coalition of CSOs can also limit openings to contribute to policy or strategy decisions in the education sector (e.g. **Guyana**).

## **KEY TAKEAWAY 2: Country leadership and capacities for sector dialogue at central and decentralized levels are improving, but sector dialogue is still overly centralized in many countries with weak communications and feedback loops between sub-national, provincial and local levels.**

Countries leadership of sector dialogue is generally improving, reflected in the chairing of core and thematic/technical sector dialogue bodies; better attendance in LEG meetings; transparency and information sharing; and investments in dialogue at sub-national level. However, leadership and institutional capacities to coordinate dialogue among stakeholders at different governance levels varies significantly across countries. Capacities to engage are often colored by the stability of staffing in departments responsible for education; weak communications and feedback loops across actors; and poor linkages between sub-national, provincial and local levels. In some countries, there is confusion as to who actually takes the lead in sector dialogue.

### **Positive changes**

Strong government commitment to inclusive dialogue is demonstrated through:

- › High-level chairing of the LEG (e.g. **Ethiopia, Sierra Leone and Zimbabwe**, among others);
- › Enactment of ministerial decrees, including provision for the establishment of technical committees at national and provincial levels (e.g. **Burkina Faso, DRC**).
- › Regular participation of ministry staff in the LEG and ensuring availability of comprehensive and reliable sector data to inform discussions. In **The Gambia**, the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education and the Ministry of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology have shown consistent commitment to, and leadership for, participatory and inclusive sector dialogue.
- › In certain countries, capacities are being built, and resources allocated, for the coordination of dialogue across national, district and provincial levels with data collection to support sector dialogue and monitoring (e.g. **Nepal, Zimbabwe**).
- › There is also heightened participation in dialogue and commitment of provincial governments around plan development and implementation issues (e.g. **Sindh and Balochistan provinces in Pakistan**<sup>1</sup>).
- › Development partners at decentralized level report that they leverage dialogue around education sector plan objectives and strategies to guide the development of their education projects (e.g. **Côte d'Ivoire, Pakistan**).
- › In federal and decentralized states, the dialogue can help to coordinate implementing actors within the respective national- and provincial-level education departments (e.g. **Ethiopia, Nepal, Sindh and Balochistan**).
- › Also in **Balochistan**, LEG members regularly provide information on donor and development partners' work in their province, thereby avoiding duplication of efforts and aligning partners' interventions.

### **Ongoing challenges**

Around half of CLEs noted the absence of sector dialogue at the sub-national level (or a lack of including actors from the sub-national level into central mechanisms), despite the fact that these actors were expected to play key roles in sector plan implementation.

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<sup>1</sup> CLE focuses on the two Pakistani provinces of Balochistan and Sindh given that GPE financial support has thus far focused on these two jurisdictions.

- This likely contributed to weaknesses in sector plan implementation. (e.g. **Cambodia, Ethiopia, Kyrgyz Republic, Mali, Mozambique, Nepal, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Sudan and Zimbabwe**).

At all levels, key staff may lack appropriate policy dialogue experience and skills:

- This was observed in **Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Pakistan, Sierra Leone**.
- There can also be staff turnover and staff vacancies at all levels (e.g. **South Sudan**).
- A high level of staff turnover erodes institutional memory on the issues already discussed and it takes a considerable amount of time for new LEG members to become familiar with dominant sector-wide issues and procedures (e.g. **Mozambique**).
- Staffing issues are particularly prevalent in countries affected by fragility and crisis (e.g. **DRC, South Sudan and Zimbabwe**).

In other countries, there are inadequate horizontal communications and linkages across sub-national dialogue mechanisms around plan processes.

- This can be due to weak incentives for information sharing and coordination; can lead to overlap and duplications between interventions financed by international donors and CSOs; and weakens countries' data gathering and monitoring efforts (e.g. **DRC, Nigeria and Pakistan**).

Country leadership of sector dialogue is further weakened by a lack of clarity over roles and responsibilities where several ministries share responsibility for the sector;

- Limited capacity for inter-ministerial coordination and a lack of information sharing between ministries; and ministries sharing documents late (**DRC, Kenya**) or not sharing documents (e.g. **Mali**).
- Representative structures are needed to enable municipalities and stakeholders to engage in national debate around education issues, especially in countries in transition to decentralized education systems. Although high-level sector stakeholders are undoubtedly aware of this, meeting reports do not give much indication to this 'participation gap' being systematically addressed (e.g. **Nepal, Nigeria and Pakistan**).

**KEY TAKEAWAY 3: The quality of sector dialogue is improving as it becomes more evidence and incentive driven, although its value and impact can be reduced where the scope of sector dialogue is too narrow or disconnected from the local level. A more solid investment case is needed on the long-term contribution of sector dialogue to education results, partner collaboration and mutual accountability.**

A number of countries report that the quality of their sector policy dialogue has improved over time as it becomes more evidence, data or incentive driven, and through greater efforts to generate deep dives into specific thematic issues. As a result, LEGs are experiencing increasing relevance/influence as an advisory and consultative body for decision-making. However, the quality and potential impact of the dialogue can be diluted by a number of factors including: i) a narrow focus on plan development and information sharing over troubleshooting implementation challenges; and; ii) limited evidence, or investment case, for the long-term contribution of sector dialogue to progress towards education sector results, or how to improve partner collaboration and accountability for sector results. This is perhaps due to inconsistencies in monitoring progress and reviewing advancements around partners agreed roles.

### Positive changes

The quality of policy dialogue has been improving in a number of countries. Discussions are increasingly evidence based. Partners also leverage the sector dialogue mechanisms to inform each other about their

respective (project-level) activities, to share important sectoral updates (including results from important studies) and to prepare members for upcoming joint education sector reviews (among others).

- In **The Gambia, Kenya and Zimbabwe**, different partners commit to making available quantitative and qualitative information, provide status updates and share quality data to inform discussions.
- In **The Gambia**, a national CSO coalition conducted research and advocacy on learners with special needs, the findings of which fed into the policy dialogue.
- In **Côte d'Ivoire**, three technical commissions (basic education, vocational-technical education and higher education) have been established, inviting broad participation and perspectives from stakeholders in civil society and the private sector (NGOs, teachers' unions, parents' associations...).
- Evidence-sharing activities contribute to the effectiveness of dialogue and are a valuable medium for mutual accountability (e.g. **Kenya**).

Education plan development and appraisal as well as application preparation for GPE's education sector program implementation grants (ESPIGs), create incentives for more frequent and participatory dialogue among country actors.

- The introduction of GPE's variable tranche of ESPIGs has created a stimulus for sector dialogue in certain countries (e.g. **Ethiopia, Mozambique and Zimbabwe**). Here, the variable tranche was praised as making ongoing sector dialogue more meaningful by providing a focus and incentive for closely following (parts of) ESP implementation.
- In **DRC**, the indicators for the variable tranche of the 2017–2021 ESPIG are also regarded as an important (potential) monitoring tool.
- In some instances, ministry of education priorities have shifted as a result of development partner advocacy during LEG meetings. This was the case for example in **Tajikistan**, which started placing a stronger emphasis on early childhood education following ECE-promotion activities.

Improved dialogue has also, in many cases, been a precursor to better alignment of partner projects and investments around sector goals and improved collaboration and harmonization among partners.

- In **Tajikistan**, dialogue within the LEG is widely credited to have helped strengthen development partner coordination, reducing duplication and strengthening synergies between donor-funded interventions. This is evidenced, for example, in the GPE-funded project's focus on ECE, which built on sub-sector studies led by the World Bank and ECE models piloted by UNICEF and the Aga Khan Foundation.

## Ongoing challenges

Sector dialogue meetings tend to focus too much on plan development and on information sharing, and not enough on whether/how country stakeholders actually use these plans, or on applying results-based management techniques that would privilege decision-making. Across countries reviewed in the CLE, LEGs are often used as a vehicle for information sharing on sector issues or actors' respective project-level activities, but not necessarily to inform government decision-making throughout the entire policy cycle. While LEGs influence on decision-making per se is more noticeable during sector plan development, it has been much less so post-endorsement, where LEG meetings have not been used to systematically discuss or course-correct plan implementation.

- Insufficient time is spent troubleshooting implementation issues or tracking progress (e.g. **Ethiopia, Mauritania**);

- Insufficient time is spent discussing specific sub-sector issues and stakeholder concerns (e.g. **DRC, Malawi**). There is also little concrete follow-up on whether commitments made during joint sector reviews (as recorded in related *aide-memoires*) have been integrated into countries' implementation strategies.<sup>2</sup>

In terms of scope and coverage, sector dialogue has also been characterized as **disconnected** from local realities and overly centralized.

- Technical working groups fail to offer practical, technical solutions to challenges facing the sector and focus on budget line items rather than strategic items; i.e. connecting implementation achievements and challenges to learning outcomes. Bottom-up feedback loops are not systematically effective (e.g. **Mozambique**).

There is **limited evidence** that dialogue has fostered **greater collaboration** and harmonization among stakeholders. During plan implementation, agency contributions are typically not synthesized under the lens of whether and how they jointly contributed to meeting plan objectives and targets.

- In **Mauritania**, the education sector is almost exclusively project driven, with the exception of AFD budget support. Discussions around harmonization apparently take place in development partner sub-committees although there appears to be limited interest in moving towards greater harmonization (pooled funding, for example).
- In **Nigeria**, development partners work on their own projects, with weak links to state-level education plans.

While stakeholders are, on the whole, **accountable for the results** achieved through their own individual education projects, this accountability is not as evident with regards to how those projects fit within the broader sector plan and allow for achieving the country's sectoral goals/priorities.

- International development partners also sometimes fail to share results and reports that would have been relevant across the sector (e.g. **Mali, Mauritania**).

The prevalent use of a project-based approach, the fact that projects don't necessarily clearly map onto the sector plan, and that actors don't necessarily report projects achievement on plan, further combine to make it difficult to understand how the mosaic of varied projects contribute to sectoral results.

**KEY TAKEAWAY 4: The functioning and management of sector dialogue mechanisms is improving over time as countries learn from practice and gain experience. However, loss of momentum and partner fatigue are experienced where there are too few investments in dialogue beyond the planning phase or countries have multiple dialogue mechanisms.**

Arrangements for education sector dialogue may be deeply embedded in countries' education architecture, with resources and investments over many years helping to improve stakeholder participation, their governance and working arrangements. In certain countries, a more recent, heightened demand for sector dialogue has also fueled improvements in the efficiency of sector dialogue mechanisms at central or decentralized levels. However, a lack of investment in sustaining multi-stakeholder dialogue beyond the planning phase, and the

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<sup>2</sup> See the equivalent note: *What Do the Country-Level Evaluations (CLEs) Tell Us About Sector Monitoring? Some Key Takeaways*

existence of multiple dialogue fora in countries with overlapping membership and mandates, can result in a loss of momentum or a level of partner fatigue and feeling of redundancy in meetings.

## Positive changes

All but one of the 28 CLE sampled countries now have one or more formalized mechanisms for sector dialogue in place, with one of these assigned to function as 'local education group' in the context of GPE processes.

- The arrangements for sector dialogue is deeply embedded in some countries' education architecture (e.g. **Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, The Gambia, Mozambique, Nepal, Rwanda, Sierra Leone**, among others).
- **The Gambia**, for example, has two well-established mechanisms that have been in place since the early 2000s (or before) and have not considerably changed since: Coordinating Committee Meetings (CCMs) and the LEG (the former pre-dates the latter.)
- In **Nepal**, collaboration between donors and the government has a long history, with the first education sector-wide approaches initiated in 1999.

In certain countries, there is heightened demand for sector dialogue:

- This has influenced the revision or creation of sector dialogue *mechanisms* at central (e.g. **DRC, Liberia**) or decentralized levels (e.g. **Sindh and Balochistan, Nigeria**). The decision to formalize sector dialogue at federal level in Liberia was to complement an existing larger dialogue body (e.g. the Education Sector Development Committee). In DRC, sector dialogue structures have been overhauled and formalized through a ministerial decree. There have also been some improvements in the functioning of dialogue mechanisms at the provincial level (e.g. **Kenya**).
- The heightened demand has also driven efforts to manage LEG meetings more efficiently (e.g. in **Rwanda and Togo**), by merging previously overlapping groups (e.g. **Kyrgyz Republic, Uganda**), reducing the size of the LEG while maintaining its inclusivity (e.g. **Guinea**), and through strengthening ministry of education capacity for stakeholder coordination (e.g. **South Sudan and Zambia**).

Where several national bodies are engaged in policy dialogue, further efficiencies in decision-making emerge from the tailoring of groups to specific sector needs.

- In **Nepal**, the Local Education Development Partners Group (LEDPG), composed of nine joint-financing partners and five non-joint financing partners, meets monthly, and plays an instrumental role in supporting education sector planning, implementation and monitoring. The more broadly-based LEG participates in both Budget Review Meetings and Joint Sector Meeting and gathers for ad-hoc meetings as needs arise. Consulted stakeholders mostly noted benefits of this model, although some raised concerns over the potential of it limiting the influence of CSO and other non-donor stakeholders (see Key take-away 1).

Success factors of well-functioning LEGs may be of both institutional and individual nature.

- In **Nepal**, stakeholders in MOEST and LEDPG have expressed pride in the strength of the SWAp in Nepal, which they believe has been the product of many years of partnership and trust-building. One interviewee in Nepal reflected that this may have originally been down to specific personalities in the LEDPG but has transcended to become part of the institutional culture of the education sector.

## Ongoing challenges

While dialogue structures might be in place or have been revitalized at the plan development/ESPIG application phase, sustaining interest and momentum in sector dialogue beyond the plan development phase is found to be problematic in some instances.

- Once the plan was finalized/ESPIG application completed, LEGs in two-thirds of countries (**Bangladesh, Cambodia, DRC, Guinea, Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, Mauritania, Nigeria, Kyrgyz Republic, Pakistan, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Sudan, Togo, and Zimbabwe**) tended to work relatively well as forums for information exchange, but had either limited or no observable influence on rallying different actors behind supporting ongoing sector plan implementation and monitoring. This likely contributed to the often-fragmented implementation of sector plans.
- The frequency of meetings may fall after plan endorsement, making the LEG less dynamic and responsive (e.g. **Malawi, Sierra Leone**).
- Declining member participation leads to the dialogue fora becoming inactive (e.g. **Burkina Faso, DRC, Nigeria, Pakistan, South Sudan**).

Some of the reasons for interrupted momentum after the plan development phase include:

- Limited intrinsic motivation among stakeholders to engage in continued sector dialogue or monitoring (e.g. **Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, Guyana**);
- Lack of government leadership in driving dialogue among education stakeholders; frequent turnover of government staff; limited development partner presence in the sector (e.g. **Guyana**); and
- Security situations or humanitarian crisis (e.g. **Pakistan, South Sudan, Zimbabwe**).

In rare cases, mechanisms for sector dialogue are not formalized at all and there is no regular means for nongovernment stakeholders to inform decision-making, or for information exchange and mutual accountability between actors:

- Likely factors in **Guyana** include: (i) relatively weak incentives for stakeholders to come together due to the education financing mechanism; and (ii) limited interest in formalizing sector dialogue and monitoring due to the small number of development partners supporting the education sector and the tendency for interactions to be informal.

Many countries have multiple dialogue fora with overlapping membership and mandates for sector/sub-sector planning and operational oversight:

- This is observed in the case of **Liberia, Mozambique, Rwanda, South Sudan and The Gambia**).
- Likely reasons for the existence of several dialogue bodies are not always evident, but tend to combine pragmatic considerations (e.g. in **Bangladesh**, the desire to have specialized groups being able to focus on sub-sectoral issues in more depth) with political or contextual ones.
- In **South Sudan**, the simultaneously present development and humanitarian interventions each come with their own coordination needs and related structures.

Having several sector dialogue bodies is not automatically worse than having only one. However, LEG meetings are frequently seen as placing a heavy burden on government and partner staff assigned to attend because the same individuals are responsible for participating in a number of other working groups.

A further issue is that representatives who participate in sector dialogue are generalists rather than education specialists, limiting their contributions to specific policy discussions. Language limitations on the part of certain donor representatives also constrain functionality.

The multiplicity of dialogue bodies in certain countries also risks a duplication of efforts and the exclusion of certain (usually civil society) actors from key decision-making processes. This likely contributes to the often-expressed perception that LEGs (or equivalents) mostly serve as forums for information exchange but lack the ability to truly influence decision-making.

- In **Uganda**, development partners no longer consider the broader Education Sector Consultative Committee as an effective forum to advance sector dialogue on key issues of concern. As a result, at

the urging of development partners, the government instituted “bilateral meetings” with donors in 2018 – not including civil society – to increase the frequency and quality of sector dialogue between these actors. While effective for government and development partners, this arrangement further limits the extent to which civil society and other stakeholders feel (and are) included in discussions that influence decision-making and priority setting.

**Key takeaway 5: In complex crisis and humanitarian situations, stakeholders may gather more frequently to address immediate issues related to the crisis, but fragile contexts can also blur mandates in sector dialogue.**

During heightened humanitarian crises or in most fragile contexts, key education stakeholders may meet more frequently around plan development to address urgent education and evolving humanitarian needs. At the same time, the multiplicity of dialogue fora often observed in such contexts can weaken sustained dialogue and stakeholders’ respective accountabilities.

### Positive changes

Crises usually require actors from the education sector and beyond to consult to jointly solve pressing issues – through the Education Cluster or ad-hoc dialogue structures created to coordinate engagement.

- In **Sierra Leone**, during the Ebola outbreak, regular meetings of the Education Development Partners (EDP) group were complemented by issue-specific working groups. The MOEST, as well as EDP members, expressed great satisfaction with this arrangement, which allowed for closer technical collaboration and coordination than through the larger group.
- In **Bangladesh**, the government and the humanitarian community have engaged in close consultations leading to the annual Joint Response Plans to the Rohingya crisis. The Cox’s Bazar Inter-Sector Coordination Group is the main body for operational and strategic coordination and dialogue across sectors. In addition, monthly meetings are held specific to the education sector, including a wide range of actors from local and international NGOs, multi-lateral organizations and humanitarian agencies. These meetings provide updates on overall progress on the education response, current challenges in implementation (e.g., natural emergencies) and forward-looking planning. In 2018, the education sector coordinator proposed to make the Rohingya response a standing agenda item for the Education Local Consultative Group and has been regularly invited to provide updates.

### Ongoing challenges

In humanitarian crisis contexts, sector actors may be too stretched to prioritize sector-wide dialogue processes. Nor do stakeholders necessarily have the opportunities (resources, time, conducive environment) to work together to plan and resolve sector issues.

- In **South Sudan**, sector dialogue happens through a multiplicity of fora, with partly overlapping composition and mandates. The relative activity and prominence of these fora has fluctuated over time, without, however, a trend towards consolidation. As a result, it is unclear which body constitutes (for GPE and sector purposes) the LEG. Similarly, civil society coordination faces duplication, as two NGO/CSO coalitions with largely identical membership exist.

**Key takeaway 6: The coordinating agency plays a pivotal role in sector dialogue but can be overstretched when situations demand heavier involvement or could have a better-defined role post plan preparation.**

The role of the coordinating agency is appreciated in countries experiencing capacity constraints. However, there may be agencies that are interested but do not have the full capacities to take on the role.

### Positive changes

The coordinating agencies play an important role in bringing different education stakeholders together (especially towards the meaningful participation of CSOs and teachers' unions).

- Their facilitation of dialogue within (and outside of) LEG meetings is particularly appreciated by LEG members in countries where the governments face capacity constraints (e.g. **Liberia, Mauritania and Sierra Leone**). The coordinating agencies' facilitation allows LEGs to complete time-sensitive review processes (e.g. across countries, for reviewing ESPIG proposals or draft sector plans).

### Ongoing challenges

While the role of the coordinating agencies in sector dialogue is recognized, due to the high workload involved, it is sometimes difficult to find donor partners willing to take on leadership and coordination positions in LEG and its working groups.

- In decentralized and federal states having only one coordinating agency poses problems when capacity of the coordinating agency is low (e.g. **Nigeria, Pakistan**).
- Coordinating agencies appear to have had less influence on ensuring that LEG meetings in the post plan preparation phase play a role in problem-solving or monitoring sector actors' alignment with, and contributions to, sector plan implementation. There is sometimes confusion when the role of the coordinating agency overlaps with that of the grant agent, or when the coordinating agency is not engaging strongly enough in bringing about coordination in complex environments (e.g. **DRC**).