Report on success stories in CSO engagement on ECDE legislation and policies through implementation of the Transnational Network Advocacy Capacity (TRANAC) project in the SADC Region.

Acronym	Definition
AfECN	Africa Early Childhood Network
ANCEFA	Africa Network Campaign on Education for All
CRNSA	Children Rights Network for Southern Africa
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
ECDCM	Early Childhood Development Coalition of Malawi
ECDE	Early Childhood Development Education
ECOZI	Education Coalition Zimbabwe
EOL	Education Out Loud
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
HRBA	Human Rights Based Approach
KII	Key Informant interviews
MPs	Members of Parliament
NEC	National Education Coalition
NECDOL	Network of Early Childhood Development of Lesotho
OC	Operational Component
PWD	People With Disabilities
RMU	Regional Management Unit
SADC	Southern African Development Community

SAFOD	Southern Africa Federation of the Disabled
SAPST	Southern African Parliamentary Support Trust
TRANAC	Transnational Networks Advocacy Capacity
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
ZINECDA	Zimbabwe Network of Early Childhood Development Actors

A)

B)

C)   Executive Summary

Through support from the Global Partnership for Education, and Oxfam IBIS, CSOs are engaging in transnational advocacy to make governments in Southern Africa more transparent and accountable to their citizens on ECDE issues. Transparent and accountable governments could ultimately improve the development and implementation of sustainable, equitable, inclusive, and gender-responsive ECDE policies, legislation, and systems and improve ECDE financing by governments and donors.

The Zimbabwe Network of Early Childhood Development Actors (ZINECDA) in partnership with the Network of Early Childhood Development of Lesotho (NECDOL), and the ECD Coalition of Malawi are implementing a Transnational Networks Advocacy Capacity (TRANAC) project which seeks to develop stronger and vibrant Early Childhood Development and Education (ECDE) in Southern Africa. This three-year project (Jan 2021-June 2023) is implemented in Lesotho, Malawi, and Zimbabwe.

Consequently, OXFAM Education Out Loud Program commissioned a study to compile success stories and document strategies used by the TRANAC project while engaging in ECDE advocacy at the regional level. The study is also expected to show how the project has created a stronger global and transnational enabling environment for national civil society advocacy and transparency efforts on ECDE especially at the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) level.

The assignment applied a case study design and analysis approach, owing to its facilitative ability to support a step-by-step process of identifying and documenting/compiling success stories and inspirational practices. The process relied on desk reviews of project documents and reports in

combination with virtual/online interviews and surveys with purposely selected representatives of project teams, partners and stakeholders.

The study findings indicate that the TRANAC project has been successful in advocating for improved ECD policies and programs at regional level, especially engaging the SADC secretariat and Southern Africa governments on issues of ECDE. Specifically, the project has increased ECDE recognition and financing, ensured the development of the children's protocol, and the establishment of the online knowledge and information Hub.

As a result of the TRANAC project, increasingly, SADC countries have recognised the significance of ECDE and increased financing for it. For example, before the project, the TRANAC baseline report revealed that the six Southern African countries allocated an average of 1.57 percent to ECDE out of the education budget. Following TRANAC's advocacy, respondents from Malawi indicated that the ECDE budget increased from 2 percent in 2021 - 5 percent in 2023 of total education budget, and in 2022, 2000 ECDE teachers were put on public funds payroll in the form of honorarium and will soon be transitioned into salaried professionals. Zimbabwe has increased its ECDE budget from 14 - 16 percent of national education budget in 2022, and around $64 per learner in 2021 to $226 per learner in 2022, and committed to increasing it even further[1]. In Lesotho, there's a commitment from the government to reallocate the USD 5 million grant from the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) multiplier fund to ECDE.

Equally important has been the increased recognition by the governments (especially education and community development ministry senior officials) that ECDE centers must be equipped with appropriate resources. For instance, recently Lesotho has been advocating for ECDE teaching aids' tax exemption that are obtained through in kind donations. Malawi, is advocating that by 2026, at least 8000 ECDE caregivers should be put on honorarium, while also aiming to professionalise ECDE and establish a law regulating ECD service provision. In addition, there is an increased positive portrayal of ECD education in mainstream media and social media platforms in Malawi, Lesotho, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Eswatini and Mozambique. The SADC children's protocol, that will deliver on the aspirations, rights and welfare of children in Southern Africa has been developed by Children's Rights Network for Southern African (CRNSA) in collaboration

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[1] TRANAC Mid-Year Narrative Report Jan-Jun 2022

with TRANAC. Specifically, sections regarding the importance of access to ECDE have been enhanced and strengthened. Other aspects of children have been incorporated such as the importance of nutrition, health, gender, inclusion of people with disabilities among others making a holistic protocol that is all inclusive.

In addition to a holistic protocol with ownership from different stakeholders on the different sections in the protocol. Given that CRNSA operates in 11 SADC countries and hosts the secretariat for the CSOs that implement the African Charter on the rights and welfare of the child across Africa, it is positioned to be the best to host the protocol. Consequently, this whole network will be positioned as a strong channel, which will lead to the acceptance and ratification of the protocol without objection as hoped for by August 2023, for the protocol to be passed and adopted by SADC member states.

TRANAC's advocacy has also seen an online, knowledge and information hub established for Horn, East and Southern African (HESA) and beyond. The availability of information has empowered TRANAC partners and SADC to advocate for policy changes in ECDE financing, resourcing, and enhancing the capacity of national coalitions. Information gathered from different SADC countries on the status of ECDE, has facilitated capacity building and led to a change of attitude by government leaders, MPs, policy makers, and implementing partners who have in turn embraced the need to advance the ECDE. The project has also resulted in the development and maintenance of meaningful relationships and collaborations with Governments, stakeholders and CSOs, thereby laying structures right from the national to SADC regional level, through a unified capacity strengthening and advocacy process.

In addition to adopting the Human rights-based approach (HRBA), focusing on collaborating with problem bearers/the affected groups by fostering research-based advocacy, the TRANAC project has ensured gender equality and inclusion approaches recognizing that policy makers and educators need to be trained in gender-responsive programming to improve ECDE performance.

The study also came up with key lessons from the project as seen below:

To achieve advocacy results, collaborate with peers and lay strategies for collaboration. TRANAC developed a transnational advocacy strategy guiding the implementation, partnerships and engagements with the government and civil society organizations through dialogues.

Equally, it is crucial to take analysed and well-packaged information then conduct capacity building based on the information for key partners and stakeholders especially those in decision making as well as continue to intensify the momentum to ensure that the commitments and discussions continue to show tangible results for the region's ECD financing and policy agenda.

In conclusion, success for the TRANAC project has been made possible due to the strategic partnerships and collaborations with other problem bearers, availing and using evidence based and well-packaged data, capacity building for partners, as well as maintaining healthy engagements with the government and CSOs rather than working in isolation and being confrontational.

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D)   1.0 Introduction

OXFAM, Education Out Loud Program (EOL) has commissioned MS-Training Centre for Development Cooperation (MS-TCDC) to undertake a study about the strategies applied by the Transnational Networks Advocacy Capacity (TRANAC) alliance for improved ECDE legislation, policies and measures in Southern Africa in its engagement in transnational and regional advocacy on ECDE at SADC level.

1.1 Education Out Loud (EOL)

EOL is the largest fund in the world dedicated to supporting capacity building for civil society and advocacy work to influence education sector policies positively. It is funded by Global Partnership for Education (GPE) and managed by Oxfam IBIS as the grant agent. The program seeks to work with CSOs toward achieving the GPE 2025 goal of accelerating access, learning outcomes, and gender equality through equitable, inclusive, and resilient education systems fit for the 21st century. The EOL program has three specific objectives:

> ➢ Strengthen national civil society engagement in gender-responsive education planning, policy development, and monitoring.
> ➢ Strengthen civil society roles in promoting the transparency and accountability of national education sector policy and implementation.
> ➢ Create a stronger global and transnational enabling environment for national civil society advocacy and transparency efforts.

1.2 Transnational Network Advocacy Capacity (TRANAC)

ZINECDA in partnership with Network of Early Childhood Development of Lesotho (NECDOL), and the ECD Coalition of Malawi are implementing a transnational advocacy capacity building project, which seeks to develop stronger and vibrant Early Childhood Development and Education (ECDE) in southern Africa. The CSOs are engaging in transnational advocacy to make governments in Southern Africa more transparent and accountable to their citizens on ECDE issues. Transparent and accountable governments could ultimately improve the development and implementation of sustainable, equitable, inclusive, and gender-responsive ECDE policies, legislation, and systems as well as improved ECDE financing by governments and donors. This three-year project (Jan 2021-June 2023) is implemented in Lesotho, Malawi, and Zimbabwe.

2.0 Purpose and Objective of the Assignment

MS-TCDC was tasked to compile success stories that have been registered by the TRANAC project while engaging in ECDE advocacy at the regional level and to determine how it has created a stronger global and transnational enabling environment for national civil society advocacy and transparency efforts on ECDE, especially at SADC level.

The knowledge generated from documentation of the success stories will be used for orienting EOL Program especially OC3 grantees on the best strategies for creating a stronger global and transnational enabling environment for national civil society advocacy and transparency efforts. As such, the consultant documents success stories that the TRANAC project has registered in its effort to advocate for improved ECD policies and programs at the regional level, especially engaging the SADC secretariat and Southern Africa governments on issues of ECDE. The strategies the project uses to engage at the regional level and the successes derived therefrom have been documented.

2.1 Specific objectives of this assignment are;

> (1) To identify successes that the TRANAC project has registered in ECDE advocacy at the regional level.
> (2) To document the success stories identified and indicate how these have contributed to achieving project objectives

(3) To show how project engagements have created a strong and transnational enabling environment for national civil society advocacy and transparency efforts in ECDE especially at SADC level

(4) To assess how the TRANAC advocacy strategies were aligned to gender equality/inclusion and human rights-based approaches

2.2 Countries of focus

Technically, the project focuses on three countries - Zimbabwe, Lesotho, and Malawi, with a consortium of three Early Child Development organizations. Notably, the project's scope has gone beyond the three countries, through partnering with other coalitions and networks in Zambia, Mozambique and Eswatini, further creating a transnational alliance that has influenced regional efforts. Hence, conducting an investigation that seeks to understand the extent to which strategies for transnational advocacy and influencing have impacted the SADC region is critical to the assignment.

3.0 Methodology - Success Story Design, Analysis and Documentation

The case study and analysis design was selected for this assignment due to its facilitative ability to support a step-by-step process of identifying and documenting/compiling success stories and inspirational practices. The case study design also relied on desk reviews of documents and reports in combination with online interaction with selected representatives of project implementing teams and partners who participated in the TRANAC activities. The proposed case design/analysis framework treated each identified success story as a case and the analysis and presentation comprised of;

- Catchy, Descriptive Title - presages the theme of the Success Story.
- Introduction - word overview of the project (and partners), their objective in the project, activity description, the time frame, and location.
- Case Overview – what the case is about
- Case analysis (a deep dive into the case)
- Key players and stakeholders (who is/was involved)
- What was done how (the process and tools)
- Case analysis and findings (what does the case tell us)
- What objective among the 3 objectives does the case/success story belong to
- Case conclusions – what we know and what it teaches us going forward

3.1 Phase One: Identification of success stories to be documented

In terms of criteria for identifying, selecting and documentation success stories, the consultant applied the most significant/effective techniques for judgement that allowed not only facilitating the discovery of eye-catching practices, tools and achievements (creating a menu of options) of the program, but also offered a framework for ranking/selecting from the many eye-catching successes and that enabled a deep dive into the most significant success stories to understand them more and document them for further learning, dissemination, promotion and scalability. Thus far, the chosen approach has been applied through three phases whose key steps and activities are outlined below;

3.1.1 Alignment, and mapping key stakeholders

An inception report was submitted, and discussions were held with OXFAM project staff who provided feedback on the inception report. Further, the consultant engaged the Key Project Implementers from the six countries in a discussion to guide the key stakeholders' sample matrix, and align on the methodology, especially on the risks and mitigation of conducting the virtual exercise. As a result, the consultant gained more profound insights into the project and got directed to the right source of information.

Interview questions were designed, and submitted to solicit approval through the inception report. It is to be noted that a key lesson here was the level of adaptability employed by the consultant to customize questions to the different stakeholders depending on their areas of intervention and how they participated in the project.

Mapping and categorizing project documents for desk review included Project Reports, Work plans, Strategies, and Monitoring and Evaluation Tools. This facilitated a better understanding of the project and enabled the creation of a menu of success stories. Anything that seemed a success story was documented but the most promising successes were shortlisted for consideration toward phase two - deep dive.

Mapping the audience - The Lead project implementer ZINECDA devoted efforts to support the mobilization and coordination of key respondents and stakeholders;

- **The Consortium of Three Early Child Development (ECD) projects in the countries of Zimbabwe, Malawi, and Lesotho** that have been implementing the project for the last two years, upon whose efforts and impact were unpacked. In addition,

other countries working in partnership to implement the TRANAC project including Zambia and Eswatini were engaged. These stakeholders identified the successes and strategies that created an environment for the advocacy of other Civil Society Organizations in the ECD space.

- **National Education coalition members, decision/policy makers and SADC representatives** in respective countries, regional and national leaders, decision-makers and policy-makers mostly from respective governments that have been connected to the project through different interventions. These stakeholders sought to be instrumental in validating the successes identified, and further share what they saw as benefits of the project and strategies employed by TRANAC to achieve transnational-level advocacy for ECD.

3.2 Phase Two: Documentation of Identified Success Stories

This phase comprised a deep dive into further understanding the success stories identified in phase one. During this stage, it was ensured that each identified success story was treated as a case and analyzed as such; Special consideration was given to success stories that considered inclusion and gender-responsive interventions all at the SADC level. This phase comprised key steps and activities outlined below:

Deep-dive desk reviews of project documents and reports
Based on the success stories identified by the key informants, a deep-dive review of all technical documentation enabled us to build a deeper understanding.

Online-based surveys with stakeholders
An online survey/google form was deployed to at least 20 key informants and stakeholders to digitally survey a sample of ECD organizations to document the pulse - what benefits they have registered from the project as a result of their engagement. This was followed by conducting light-touch follow-ups with selected respondents as needed. This was to pre-empt some of the success stories and mitigate any challenges that could be faced while carrying out the interviews, such as connectivity or unavailability.

In-depth Interviews with Key Informants and Stakeholders; A total of 8 Key Informant Interviews were conducted, with respondents from the six implementing countries of the project. With the abled coordination of ZINECDA, and OXFAM, country project team members from Zimbabwe national Early Childhood Development Actors (ZINECDA), Malawi Early Childhood

Development Coalition (ECDC), Network of Early Childhood Development of Lesotho (NECDOL), Zambia National Education Coalition, and Swaziland Network for Early Childhood Development were engaged with a focus on identifying successes registered at a transnational SADC level. This was followed by interviewing 12 selected stakeholders participating in TRANAC interventions and activities, at national and regional levels, to deepen the understanding and validation which resulted in a final compilation of key success stories attained at the regional level and the overall impact on the implementing partners and SADC as a whole.

Data Treatment and Analysis

Data was thematically analyzed to produce robust narratives that complemented and verified the surveys. The team also conducted an internal validation session to reflect on qualitative data and feedback touchpoints with the TRANAC consortium and OXFAM. All zoom sessions were recorded live, and each session was extracted. In the end, a summary 1-minute video was produced from the entire recording for each country, and a combined 5-minute video was produced summarizing the regional picture.

Success Story Evaluation and prioritization Criteria/Definitions

Table 2: Presents the criteria employed in evaluating and prioritizing the success story.

Evaluation Criteria	Definition
Selectivity	The extent to which TRANAC activities (i.e. Projects, operations, institutional strengthening and capacity building) were selective and strategically focused. This included an analysis of OXFAM EOL's contribution and comparative advantage in relation to other donor partners (DP)
Efficiency	Efficiency measures the outputs -- qualitative and quantitative -- in relation to the inputs. When evaluating the efficiency of the TRANAC project, we considered the following questions: -Were activities cost-efficient? -Were outputs achieved on time/or do indicators show they are on track? -Was the program or project implemented most efficiently compared to alternatives?

Partnership	The extent to which the TRANAC project has effectively facilitated and engaged productive partnerships with or between Government, DP, industry, private companies, civil society, and beneficiaries. While evaluating the extent to which the TRANAC Project was a key player in facilitating and engaging productive partnerships, the consultant considered the following questions: -How did TRANAC contribute to promoting dialogue or building cooperation frameworks in ECDE? -How did TRANAC implement coordination structures, such as sector working groups? - whether TRANAC brought on board other countries into the consortium -How did TRANAC assure consultations were documented?
Analytical Capacity	The extent to which the TRANAC project has fulfilled its role as a knowledge broker, advisor, and convener, underwritten by strong knowledge and analytical work at the country and project level.
Impact	The positive and negative (intended and/or unintended) changes produced by TRANAC activities, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended. This involved an assessment of the main impacts (i.e. successes) resulting from the activity on the local social, economic, environmental, and other development indicators. The examination focused on both intended and unintended outcomes. When evaluating the TRANAC project's impact, consideration of the theory of change and the following questions guided the data collection: -What have been the project's outcomes? -What real difference have the activities made to the intended beneficiaries?
Outcome	The observable effects on the institutions and people benefiting from and interacting with the intervention for example what has changed in institutions' tools and practices that can be attributed to the institutions getting engaged in the project, what are the observable changes in the attitudes, and behaviors among affected individuals and communities, and over what periods of time?
Effectiveness	A measure of the extent to which the TRANAC project activities and associated enabling factors have generated the expected/actual

	outcomes. In evaluating the effectiveness of the TRANAC project, it is useful to consider the following questions: To what extent were the outcomes achieved/are likely to be achieved? What were the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievements of the outcomes?
Sustainability	The assignment also measured whether the outcomes will likely have a lasting benefit after donor funding has been ended. Projects need to be environmentally as well as financially sustainable. When evaluating the sustainability of the TRANAC project, it was deemed useful to consider the following questions: -What steps were taken to ensure the sustainability of the outcomes achieved, e.g. planning, capacity building, self-sustaining revenue, alternate funding, etc.? -To what extent can the beneficiaries maintain and/or continue to generate the outcomes after donor funding ceases?

3.3 Success Story viability scale has been rated on a scale of 1-5 rating scale

Success story viability scale rated on 1-5 rating scale. To qualify for the next level, identified cases were evaluated/analysed against/based on the above scale, and those scoring a 3-4 were considered for the next stage/deeper analysis and reporting. A minimum of 3 cases at transnational levels have been considered for further evaluation and analysis.

3.4 Phase Three: Validation and dissemination of identified success stories

The assignment findings will be disseminated at the gathering of EOL OC3 grantees from 27th February to 01st March in Johannesburg. A virtual sharing, specifically for this assignment will be held on the 28th of February. The workshop is envisaged to provide an opportunity for implementing partners to reflect on the assignment presentation and to present their own experiences based on the story of what they consider to be their successes and outcomes of the project. Partner experience sharing will be facilitated through short 5 mins presentations that will be prepared following the framework responding to three questions:

- What's the most unique thing you did?
- How did you do it (process, stakeholders, tools)?
- What's your most exciting/significant success?

4.0 Findings and Analysis of the Success Stories

This section presents findings on the success stories identified and compiled that have been registered by the TRANAC project while engaging in ECDE advocacy at the regional level, how it has created a stronger global and transnational enabling environment for national civil society advocacy and transparency efforts on ECDE especially at SADC level. It also explores how the TRANAC advocacy strategies were aligned to gender equality/inclusion and human rights-based approaches. In addition, this section also presents findings on how sustainable TRANAC project successes are envisioned by views from primary data and documents reviewed. Key lessons learnt, recommendations and conclusions from the study have been drawn.

4.1 Successes that TRANAC project has Registered in ECDE Advocacy at regional level.

This chapter presents key success stories that have been identified and documented by the TRANAC project while engaging in ECDE advocacy at the regional level.

4.1.1 TRANAC advocacy leads to increased ECDE financing.

For TRANAC, prioritizing ECDE recognition, financing, and capacitating of influencing partners to this cause was top on the agenda. To achieve the objective of strengthening the capacity of ECDE national coalitions in internal governance, advocacy, and research, in order for them to effectively hold governments accountable and demand transparency in the formulation and implementation of ECD policies and strategies at the transnational level by December 2023. The objective sought to complement and fasten the achievement of SDG 4.2, which is about ensuring that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care, and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education. The aim was to address the challenge of

limited access to early childhood development services by children in a region where more than 50 percent of children aged between 3-5 years are still unable to access these services[2].

The TRANAC baseline study of 2021 revealed that, although different country coalitions were active on forums demanding accountability from respective governments, ECDE was not a subject of discussion at the national and transnational levels.

It is evident that indeed ECD financing has been boosted through meetings that were hosted in Zimbabwe on building the capacity of civil society, parliament members, parliamentary portfolio committees especially for primary and secondary education, as well as media on issues to do with ECD budgeting. During these meetings research and presentation of analytical information for consumption by members so that they are engaged in all the stages of drafting and implementation was used as a strong advocacy tool by TRANAC[3]. A key respondent said that "*presenting country respective data on ECD left policy makers with no option but to follow what the evidence calls for in terms of ECD enrollment ratios, per capita budgets, and ECD budget proportions of the total budgets*". A study conducted in the six countries had previously revealed that ECD allocation was averaging 1.57% of the education budget. As a result of these efforts, there has been increased budget allocations for infant education in addition to further commitments by key decision makers. For instance, in Zimbabwe within one year, 2021- 2022, the ECD budget has increased from 14% to 16% of total education budget, and per capita allocation, from around $64 per learner in 2021 to $226 per learner in 2022. Malawi's budget has also increased from 2% in 2021 to 5% in 2023. The same trend is happening in other TRANAC implementing partners.

Other ECD Financial and In kind commitments by SADC Countries

In light of the aforementioned initiatives, there have been several other commitments towards ECDE as a result of the TRANAC advocacy. These include;

- The six TRANAC project countries; Zimbabwe, Malawi, Lesotho, Eswatini, Zambia and Mozambique, have committed to increase ECDE budget allocations from 1% to 5% of total education budget. This commitment is also currently being considered at SADC level. Global Partnership for Education (GPE) multiplier fund of USD 5 million reallocated to ECDE in Lesotho. Following collaboration with Roger Federer Foundation and

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2   ECDE Budget Analysis report, 2022
3   TRANAC advocacy Strategy, 2021.

advocacy efforts inspired by the TRANAC project, Network of Early Childhood Development Lesotho (NECDOL) influenced the government to re-allocate to ECDE support a multiplier grant of USD 5 million from GPE that the government of Lesotho could choose to place it in any level of Education they wished. The grant is arranged in such a way that the recipient country must match it. Already, owing to increased attention on the significance of ECDE, the Roger Federer Foundation, through the School Readiness Initiative supporting 6 countries, is contributing $2.5 million as part of funds required to match the GPE multiplier grant meaning that only USD 2.5 million is remaining for the grant to be matched. Once this is done, there will be $ 10 million for ECDE in Lesotho. Which ongoing advocacy is, it should be spend on attaching more reception classes in order to increase access. A key stakeholder has observed that *"clearly there is a lot of momentum in regards to ECDE financing and this is expected to increase".*

- Government of Lesotho is absorbing Reception class teachers which had previously been paid on contract basis. This has seen the government ensuring that teachers who are hired are those who are qualified as previously some teachers were hired with no qualifications.

- Southern Africa governments have committed to include ECDE qualified teachers (mentors) on the government payroll. These teachers are selected from community led early childhood centres, to supervise other centres and mentor other caregivers. Specifically, in Malawi, 2000 ECDE teachers are going to be given honorarium to care givers and also have plans to scale up in terms of paying more ECDE teachers going forward.

- Introduction of ECDE teacher training colleges: Data from reports as well as interviews indicates that plans are underway to establish ECDE teachers training colleges by 2026 – 2027 in respective SADC countries to provide fully trained teachers as opposed to using volunteer community caregivers

- In addition, most governments in the SADC countries have indicated that they recognize the need for equipping ECDE centres with appropriate resources such as furniture, scholastic materials and learning aids. Discussions around exempting taxes on infant learning aids are happening in different forums.

- Development and implementation of a standardised ECDE curriculum. In Malawi, ECDE curriculum has been developed and disseminated in community ECDE centres and plans to roll it to private-led ECDE centres are underway. Lesotho has a standardised curriculum in place, and Zimbabwe is currently undergoing a review after seven years.

- Zimbabwe and Malawi are pushing to introduce preparatory classes in primary schools. Negotiations are underway to set aside one class in the primary school to get pupils ready for standard. Having this class in existing primary schools will aid in reaching more infants from vulnerable communities, instead of having ECD dedicated community centers.

- Key players have committed to hold discussions around pushing SADC countries to have ECDE as a public agenda. Subsequently, some countries such as Zimbabwe, and Lesotho have added a foundation class to primary schools to prepare infants from low-income families who could not undergo ECD Education for primary school. Learning from other implementing partners, Malawi ECD has also recently started advocating for pre-primary classes in primary schools or a separate room at ECD centre to ease facilitation of school readiness, to professionalize and define caregivers in terms of defining entry qualifications. The idea has been to advocate for ECDE rather than ECD because ECDE can be easily connected to the Ministry of Education (MoE). In addition, some countries such as Malawi, Zimbabwe and Lesotho have been pushing for drafting a law on making ECDE mandatory by 2030.

4.1.2 ECDE Provisions Strongly Featured in newly Developed SADC Children's Protocol

TRANAC adopted the Human Rights Based approach as its primary strategy in problem and context analysis in each of the countries[4]. Following a review of international and the regional conventions at SADC level, it became apparent that the right to education or early childhood learning in the commitments of respective countries was weak and not in practice[5].

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[4] Part A&B reports Jan-June 2021.

It was therefore deemed appropriate to work at the local level to draw evidence of the issues to be advocated for at the national, regional, and international levels to ensure each level has equally good policies that respond to the problems in context.

Against this background Child Rights Network of Southern Africa (CRNSA) in partnership with TRANAC embarked on developing the SADC Children Protocol. TRANAC's strategic partnerships and funding has seen the draft protocol, whose development had stalled for 21 years, developed and finalised to a point where it is awaiting ratification by SADC countries.

The process to develop the SADC Children Protocol commenced in October 2001 but it wasn't until 2022 that the final draft was produced with support of TRANAC Project.

Despite the challenges around policy advocacy and the delay that characterised the development of the Children's protocol, TRANAC was convinced that "investing in the early childhood education is the smartest and cost effective way for countries especially in Africa because it has great impact on brain development which affects learning, health, behaviours, and consequently lifetime opportunities."[5] Initially, the delay to finalise the protocol was partly caused by lack of funds andimpetus to transform from youth focus to including children. The broadening of buy-in of the protocol from CSO membership to country wide, inclusive of government was also limited as a base to influence the SADC region's heads of states. This changed once the TRANAC project brought on board the requisite funds, that allowed cost-sharing for the validation of the 2nd draft, and finalisation, as well as the advocacy prowess through engaging the CRNSA secretariat, board members and national chapter representatives. After the analysis of the initial stages of the protocol, relevant articles on ECDE were formulated and added in the draft Protocol. Subsequently, the support from TRANAC through NECDOL, ZINECDA and ECDE Malawi led to the validation of the second draft and the development, validation and finalisation of the 2nd draft.

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[5] Advocacy Report for a Transnational Advocacy Capacity Building Project in Southern Africa (TRANAC); Improving policy and legislation towards ECDE in Southern Africa, submitted by ZINECDA.

Furthermore, after realising that there was a draft Inclusive ECDE policy framework, which was developed by Southern Africa Federation for the Disabled (SAFOD), TRANAC engagements established consensus on broadening ECDE to be holistic and thus a draft framework has also been developed[6].

With support from TRANAC, the SADC children's protocol has been developed with strong sections highlighting the need for early childhood education and other components around the inclusion of people with disabilities, nutrition, health, and gender among others also integrated into the protocol.

4.1.3 Online knowledge and Information hub Developed and Established for HESA and beyond

Establishing an online knowledge/information hub for the Horn, East and Southern Africa (HESA) and beyond by TRANAC has reshaped understanding of ECDE and strengthened key institutions, partners and stakeholders in Southern African countries and beyond.

Globally, about half of all three to six-year-olds have access to pre-primary education. Comparatively, only 27% of children in sub-Saharan, attend preschool, and only 26% of children in the Middle East and North Africa[7]. In order to strengthen the capacity of ECDE national coalitions on areas of internal governance, advocacy and research for them to facilitate the formulation and implementation of ECD policies and strategies related to SDG 4.2[8]. The TRANAC project established a virtual/online information hub to produce information on ECDE and provide data to be used in evidence-based advocacy. The hub is also aimed at empowering partners in respective SADC countries to develop and implement ECDE policies and ensure that these are part of the development agenda.

Absence of information on ECDE had been identified as a hindrance to effective advocacy. Yet because there was no information hub in the target countries and at regional level and information sharing at national level was weak, there wasn't a good base for the development of a strong

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[6] TRANAC Quarter 3 Report.
[7] TRANAC Advocacy Strategy december 2021
[8] Ibid

transnational ECDE information hub. At the beginning of the project, out of the five coalitions under the TRANAC consortium, four coalitions indicated that they had not successfully advocated for the inclusion of ECDE indicators in reporting management information systems and decision position papers due to lack of valid information on ECDE[9].

When available data and usage of ECDE data at national and transnational levels for advocacy were assessed as part of the TRANAC baseline study, it became apparent that coalitions did not have Monitoring Evaluation and Learning (MEAL) systems in place at the national level/institutional level. Indeed before TRANAC, all five coalitions depended on MEAL systems of active donor projects and data from ministries of education that focused on primary education. The coalitions also indicated that they did not have information sharing systems before the TRANAC project. M and E data was inadequate and functional social accountability systems had not yet been established by the coalitions. Consequently, TRANAC project implementers devised a bottom-up approach of working with respective country coalitions to conduct research and gather information on the status of ECDE at national level, so as to build a basis for establishing a transnational information hub. TRANAC proposed the establishment of the hub for ECDE. However, RMU HESA had been planning to create an education wide hub. When TRANAC's idea was submitted, OXFAM found it fit to merge the goals and create one portal focusing on education and not just ECDE, and have it run and connected to the ZINECDA website. The Link to the information portal is https://africaeducationhub.org/.

The portal has been used to strengthen the capacity of coalitions both at national and regional level, create awareness about the status of ECDE, invite decision makers to celebrate successes, and learn from others' successes.

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[9] Baseline Evaluation for a Transnational Advocacy Capacity Building Project in Southern Africa (2021)

4.2 Strategies for creating a strong and transnational enabling environment for national civil society advocacy and transparency efforts in ECDE especially at SADC level.

4.2.1 Formation and Leadership of TRANAC

Right from the start, TRANAC project partners understood that a collective voice was a pre-requite for success. This inspired the formation of a consortium of implementing members (partners and stakeholders) and civil society actors together. Following the GPE call for proposals, a consortium of three actors, ZINECDA, NECDOL, and ECD of Malawi, was formed. A novel winning goal was implementing TRANAC, specifically focusing on ECD education[10].

At the project design stage, a situational analysis revealed a lack of transparency and accountability on ECDE by governments. In addition, ECDE was not prioritized in the financing, there was a shortage of resources for teaching, age-appropriate infrastructure, and a massive deficit in qualified and well-trained ECD teachers.

Furthermore, there is poor implementation of existing integrated ECD policies and weak or non-existing directorate positions at the decision-making level. In addition, the project baseline survey conducted in 2021 discovered a need for vibrant national and transnational CSO coalitions or alliances that hold governments accountable on ECDE issues for some Southern African countries.

However, there were capacity gaps amongst ECDE coalitions notably in areas of internal governance, leadership development, human resources management, resource mobilization, relationship building, diplomacy, and transnational advocacy.

To better address the identified issues on ECDE, the consortium realized they needed to first build their capacities and elect a leader/coordinating body to drive effective implementation of the already aggravated issues of ECDE. Therefore, the consortium conducted organizational leadership assessments that determined the capacities of the implementing organizations. This process facilitated the decision on which organization was better positioned among TRANAC implementing partners (ZINECDA, NECDOL, and ECDE Malawi) to lead the implementation of the project.

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[10] TRANAC Baseline Report

The results indicated that ZINECDA was positioned to lead TRANAC implementation, owing to their good governance and experience in advocating for ECDE issues at the transnational level. This enabled proper coordination and leadership of the advocacy campaigns under the project. Consequently, the data reviewed and the interviews conducted have revealed that the TRANAC project was very well designed. A respondent from one of the six TRANAC implementing partners noted:

"Our idea of forming ourselves into a consortium emanated from the fact that our countries are not organised the same way. This propelled us to realize that for effective advocacy at the SADC level, there was a need to be organized as pan-Africanists instead of working in isolation". Hence, the decision to form TRANAC to champion the consortium for collective progress.

4.2.2 Formation of Technical and Taskforce Committees

The TRANAC project formed a national task force and technical committees, composed of members of TRANAC partners (6 implementing countries), government officials, and Parliamentarians to influence transnational and national advocacy on ECDE from national to SADC levels. These task force teams were created to facilitate, lobby, and create ownership and buy-in for the uptake of ECDE information and advocacy issues to the broader national governments and regional bodies. The task teams' national agenda was also formed to promote transparency and accountability in the implementation of education policies, influencing the development of comprehensive and inclusive ECDE policies and legislation. Consequently, these committees have given direction on national advocacy issues for consideration and adoption by Government and regional bodies such as SADC.

The task forces also served to identify, share and advocate for best practices on ECDE issues at national and transnational levels. TRANAC took advantage of the Malawi Government, by then a Chair of SADC, to develop a concept for submission to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to lobby for the inclusion of ECDE on the SADC Heads of State agenda for discussions in DRC in August 2022. According to the TRANAC 2022 mid- year narrative report, these two processes were the basis of organising civil society side events for the Education Ministers' Conference in Malawi where a position paper was developed and submitted to the ministers.

As a result of this pan-Africanist strategy, TRANAC is now a member of the African ECD Network. On this platform, all players meet to identify issues and analyze the collective efforts towards liberating the entire Southern Africa from the problems relating to Early childhood Development Education (ECDE) and other development issues. One key Informant interview said:

> "*TRANAC's bottom-up approach, national-level advocacy, is the hallmark of international advocacy.*"

Indeed, TRANAC's "Road to SADC" strategy laid the foundation for ensuring that decision-makers, national coalitions, government officials, and parliamentarians were equipped with skills, data, and priorities to position them to support ECDE and also resulted into the exchanging of notes and ideas for transnational activities[11]. The Hopkins frame approach to advocacy analysis was used to develop the advocacy strategy. This approach focuses on policy analysis, identification of the policy issue, identification of the key decision makers, identification of key decision makers' priorities and the best channels to reach the policy makers at national and regional levels. This approach addressed all the issues that the client identified for redress in the terms of reference. This has positioned TRANAC's advocacy work to penetrate quicker at the regional level through the national technical committee, and become more effortless.

It is evident that the impact of introduction of ECD within the SADC space, and making it part of the discourse, has been quite huge, benefiting the continental education strategy for Africa. Moreover, the SADC NGO forum, which is a recognized forum by SADC, has endorsed ECD as an issue worth carrying forward because they were surprised there was such a huge gap, a respondent noted. The same respondent added:

> "*In the last SADC meeting for the SADC heads of states, there was quite a substantial section specifically to call upon SADC countries to embrace ECD as an important priority for children to survive and thrive*".

4.2.3 Processes and tools adopted to Influence ECDE Financing.

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[11] TRANAC EOL 2021 Report

For TRANAC to be able to influence ECD financing, a number of tools, processes and strategies were employed, ranging from research for evidence-based advocacy, dialogues with partners, consultations as well as capacity building/induction as seen below;

Research for Evidence Advocacy: TRANAC conducted research on the status of ECD and budgeting, partners' consultations and dialogues, as well as signing position papers at the regional level.

This thrust towards the technical research on the budget allocations, and an ongoing one on costing for early childhood development, have built the empirical evidence that has been used to meaningfully lobby. TRANAC has been able to strengthen their lobbying for policy through the evidence based approach in addition, sharing resources between TRANAC and Education Coalitions has been beneficial for all parties.

As a result, country education coalitions of Malawi, Zimbabwe, Lesotho, Zambia, Eswatini and Mozambique now carry out annual analysis of the budgets to influence what goes to education. Akey respondent said:

"Education Coalition of Zimbabwe has been able to share resources with the TRANAC project, and together, have broadened the terms of references for studies, conducted analysis, and came up with very concrete information, that has been tabled to ministers, parliamentarians through co-facilitated workshops".

Indeed, data reviewed indicates TRANAC is on track with its strategic issues of increasing ECDE access, ECDE financing, government accountability to ECDE, and enabling member states of the SADC community to advocate for the inclusion of ECDE in the southern African region.

Budget Analysis: As part of the TRANAC project, budget analysis of all the six countries (Zimbabwe, Malawi, Lesotho, Eswatini, Zambia and Mozambique) was carried out as an advocacy strategy. As a result, the implementing partners were able to analyze trends in financing, expenditures, extent of prioritisation and resourcing in the six countries and a regional picture of financing ECD was drawn. This analysis revealed that an average of 1.57 percent of the national education budgets went into ECD education. Subsequently, Permanent Secretaries (PSs) and Chief Education Officers (CEOs) from respective countries met in Zimbabwe as part of consultations to assess, validate as well as make commitments to increase ECDE financing.

Capacity building: The TRANAC annual reports indicate that different learning sessions with Southern African Parliamentary Support Trust (SAPST) have aimed at capacity building of civil society organizations to engage parliament meaningfully on ECD. The engagement with CSOs has focussed on unpacking public finances with education committees in order to understand

how to prioritize the resourcing towards education and lobby for a socially inclusive approach to Public Finance Management(PFM) within parliament. This process has also engaged in tracking whether there has been appropriate expenditure through analysis of audit reports that come out on public financing. A key respondent said highlighted:

> *"TRANAC's capacity in the area of PMF has been strengthened, especially on ECD. Whereas the majority of TRANAC project implementers are mostly child rights or education experts, the appreciation of PMF could have been at a lower level at the beginning.*

Consequently, this strategy has also contributed to advocacy efforts aimed at getting countries to increase their budgets. A correspondent noted:

"Our strategy aimed to get 5% of financing from the national education budget to go into ECD. We are now involved in doing national budget analysis workshops. Right from pre-budget, we influence what is supposed to be included, and conduct a post-budget analysis."

Consultations and Dialogues: 2021 reports highlighted that TRANAC adopted the human rights-based approach (HRBA), including issues such as participation, accountability, non-discrimination and equality, empowerment, and legality at national and regional levels. The frameworks also focused on gender, including SDG 4.2, which deals with ECD. For TRANAC, the advocacy has been designed to focus on dialogue, build consensus, and hold discussions to prioritize and work together based on facts to address the issues affecting ECDE. In addition, dialogues with ministers in charge of; finance, child care, home affairs, gender, primary and secondary education from National to SADC level, Parliamentarians and parliamentary portfolios, education coalitions, researchers, and other relevant CSOs were also core in the ECDE financing advocacy activities. Clearly, the "do no harm" approach positioned TRANAC for peaceful advocacy, instilled confidence in the partners, and eased collaboration at all levels. An interviewee said:

> *"The strategy I have learned from the TRANAC project is their ability to not make noise to policy makers, but to carry along policy makers to platforms where they can have an opportunity for knowledge sharing and learning with their peers. These exchange visits by government leaders have been very impactful and as a result they have built these networks of actors and advocates in various countries on ECD issues."*

Capacity strengthening across for Implementing partners and stakeholders: The advocacy plan and reports reviewed indicated that TRANAC was able to improve ECD commitments due to capacity building efforts that enabled improved accountability and transparency.

- **Coalition members:** Firstly, TRANAC carried out a capacity assessment of the leadership, followed by internal and external audits that led to strengthening systems for governance for each coalition involved in the project. Consequently, a member of the ECDE coalition of Malawi observed thus: *"The coalition of Malawi has earned a lot of benefits from conducting internal and external audits, in that it has enhanced our work books, led to increased visibility and accountability as well as earned the coalition a vote of confidence from donors and other partners".*

  TRANAC also strengthened the capacity of ECDE country chapters, *the SADC secretariat, and the department that handles the sector of ministers and ECDE issues in general.* As such, TRANAC built strong relationships with these strategic groups, especially those that push agendas to ministerial meetings and then to the heads of state agendas.

- **Members of Parliament and other decision makers.** As part of its capacity building agenda, the TRANAC project ensured that selected parliamentarians from SADC parliamentary portfolio and officials from the SADC Secretariat are invited to attend induction and capacity building training by implementers. At the training sessions, the significance of ECDE was strongly highlighted and presentations evolved around the status of ECDE in respective countries and issues of limited ECDE financing in the region which have challenged leaders to think deeply about how to address these gaps respectively.
  These workshops were very informative in terms of making MPs aware that they can specifically push issues of ECD separately rather than putting it under education. Data from interviews indicate that this platform also provided space for information sharing from different countries hence MPs learned from each other. This was seen as an eye opener for MPs who have a responsibility to provide an oversight and legislative role to influence decisions made on issues of ECD.

  As a result MPs, policy makers, and other decision makers have made commitments to devote more efforts in supporting the initiatives by TRANAC in order to advance the ECDE agenda in their respective portfolios.

- **Media practitioners.** For visibility and appropriate portrayal of the ECDE agenda, media practitioners were inducted on the available ECDE policies and declarations, how to report ECD issues identified in the six countries and at regional level, as well as equipped with skills to sensitise the communities on the same. Indeed, several correspondents interviewed for this report noted that, since the media houses in the region were inducted, a positive image of ECDE has been portrayed and the ECDE agenda has been popularised and driven forward.

4.2.4 Processes and Tools for Developing and finalizing the SADC Children's Protocol

Engaging partners to form an alliance: TRANAC engaged the CRNSA secretariat, board members, and national chapter representatives to form an alliance. The alliance, worked together to develop articles for insertion into the protocol and submitted for consideration resulting in a separate section for ECD being created[12]. The alliance also managed to kick-start the process of broadening a holistic and inclusive ECD strategy framework for the SADC region in conjunction with SAFOD, hence creating a common front to influence SADC on ECDE and disability issues. To ensure buy-in from national chapters, partner teams were formed at the country level to push for the SADC inclusion of ECDE.

Essentially, the development of the Children's protocol has been enabled by the cooperation between TRANAC implementing partners and other partners that joined efforts to ensure that the ECDE sections are strongly featured.

One of the TRANAC project stakeholders interviewed noted: *"The strong and strategic approach of working together devised by TRANAC has been very instrumental in increasing a strong and enhanced ECDE framework into the Children Protocol".*

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[12]   TRANAC Mid-Year Narrative report Jan-June 2022

Another stakeholder also observed: *"We would still be stuck on the first draft of the protocol that has taken us 22 years, if not for TRANAC. TRANAC's coming on board was timely and helped us to move."*

The TRANAC indicator performance tracking table of 2022 shows a good percentage between (63-100) in terms of being on track in achieving its objective 2, which is to engage national and transnational advocacy to influence development of comprehensive and inclusive ECD policies, and legislation and systems by governments Zimbabwe, Lesotho, Malawi and other Southern African Countries by December 2023.

This achievement has been largely attributed to the positive movement of TRANAC in influencing the finalisation of the protocol and working as a consortium of implementing partners. The key players behind the development of the Children protocol are; CRNSA, ZINECDA, NECDOL, and ECDC. The other partners were SADC countries namely; Eswatini, Mozambique, Zambia, SADC Secretariat and relevant CSOs in the SADC countries.

TRANAC has since lobbied to have the SADC Childrens protocol submitted at the Ministers Conference and Heads of Government Summit in DRC in 2022, or Angola 2023. The draft inclusive policy framework will follow once the protocol has been passed. These two processes were the basis of organising a civil society side event, the SADC Education Ministers' Conference in Malawi where a position paper was developed and submitted to the Ministers. The event also enabled Malawi EOL to be supported and OC3s from Lesotho/Malawi/Zimbabwe to forge synergies and work together for a common cause. In order to disseminate the protocol, get endorsement by SADC countries, mobilisation efforts are underway with key stakeholders to support the adoption.

Policy advocacy often takes a long period of time to come to fruition. Looking at the interventions in developing and advancing the children's protocol, the results are commendable given the short period TRANAC has been in existence.

4.2.5 Processes for setting up the information hub

Different TRANAC implementing team members and partners have noted that establishing the information hub on ECDE has been a process. TRANAC implementing partners first gathered available data on ECDE in the SADC region, specifically in the respective TRANAC implementing countries[13]. They found that in all the countries sampled, there was no specific information gathered on ECDE. Stakeholders only used information gathered for primary education by ministries of education and other information system platforms. A key respondent said: *"The absence of data on ECDE was a huge challenge since there were neither national level information sharing hubs nor a regional information hub".* As a result TRANAC decided to advocate for Monitoring & Evaluation and research right from national level to regional level. This was intended to create a good base for developing a strong transnational ECDE information hub to support the advocacy interventions with the help of a consultant. To ease data collection by all TRANAC partners, Monitoring and Evaluation tools and TRANAC reporting templates have been developed and shared with all partners to collect data and submit to consultants to consolidate, analyse, validate, and upload to the information Hub, which would then be accessible to all partners. In this regard, learning platforms were created and utilized to promote ECDE knowledge exchange/ learning at transnational level. Thanks to these efforts, ECDE focused research/policy analysis is now published/disseminated at transnational level.

Dissemination is done in a way that Members of Parliament from respective countries, the SADC Parliamentary Forums as well as country specific coalitions are taken through several induction training and data gathered from respective countries is presented for digestion. Members of Parliament (MPs) in the different relevant portfolios such as education, financing, health are also urged to make commitments to advocate for ECDE enhancement and integration in all education processes and agendas.

The TRANAC project has clearly made great strides in creating a regional online knowledge-information hub. A key stakeholder said: "*TRANAC has acquired a regional advocacy outfit that has facilitated and will continue to facilitate learning and improve capacity by providing information to facilitate evidence-based advocacy and influence policies and actions".*

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[13] ZINECDA Advocacy Report for Transnational Advocacy Capacity Building Project in Southern Africa (TRANAC) Improving Policy And Legislation Towards ECDE In Southern

There is a sense that the establishment of an information hub which falls under objective 3, sets a foundation for the other two objectives since all of them do ride on the wheels of evidence data/ information, highlight the documented successes, allow for the identification of gaps and data to provide evidence-based advocacy on issues around ECDE. Several stakeholders such as the CRNSA secretariat, the parliamentary portfolio secretariat, Zambia coalition among others revealed that as a result, they have acquired data, which they are using to advocate for ECDE enhancement and on SDG 4.2 and education as a whole in their specific interventions. They also noted that the hub was created sustainably in the sense that any research each country publishes is uploaded, a practice that is likely to continue.

Indeed, looking at the information on the portal and the number of downloads viewed for different key documents that provide basis for ECDE advocacy and resource mobilization, the hub's significance cannot be overstated.

This is evidence that the information hub was timely as it has provided evidence necessary for policy makers, parliamentarians and decision makers to advocate for and influence policy legislation, quality education, ECDE financing and resourcing among them. One of the key respondents noted:

"Data gathered indicates that information collected at the national level is used at the regional level since policies at the SADC level have a bearing at national level and at Regional level hence establishing a thread from regional to multiple interdependencies".

Also, the documents reviewed indicated that the focused research published and disseminated at national and transnational levels was at 80 percent, clearly on track and actually towards the target[14].

As such, it is evident that by establishing this hub, the TRANAC project implementers have successfully met objective 3, which is about improving the availability of ECDE data through research, monitoring, and evaluation, for use at national and transnational level in advocacy, learning, research and decision making. This is aimed at meeting SDG 4.2 and GPE related targets on ECDE in Lesotho, Malawi, Zimbabwe and other Southern African countries by 2023.

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[14] TRANAC Indicator performance Tracking report July - September 2022

4.3 Gender Equality/inclusion and Human Rights-based Approaches adopted by TRANAC

TRANAC's advocacy strategy, a Human rights-based approach (HRBA) was adopted. The HRBA approach focuses on collaborating with problem bearers/the affected groups by fostering research-based peaceful advocacy. The TRANAC advocacy strategy made it clear that advocacy was to be non-confrontational but rather implementers needed to position themselves as partners. In addition to the HRBA approach, the TRANAC EOL report of 2021 notes that the project adopted a gender-sensitive approach recognizing that policy makers and educators need to be trained in gender-responsive programming to improve ECDE performance.

Interviewed partners and stakeholders also revealed that the ECD policy positions girls as a predominant sets. They also added that the fact that there are more female caregivers than male caregivers, professionalizing ECD teachers and getting them on payrolls enhances women's incomes and leads to their economic empowerment. More numbers of female ECDC caregivers is attributed to the fact that, caregiving is traditionally a female's role, however, both sources confirm that campaigns to attract more male caregivers to ECDE and awareness raising programs on the importance of masculinity in ECD are ongoing in all TRANAC implementing countries especially in Eswatini.

In terms of gender representation in TRANAC, the leadership has been intentional in selecting leaders and as a result now has 50 percent representation of females and males. The same has been replicated in selecting participants for workshops and decision making committees to ensure inclusive decision making.

Away from this, In Lesotho, high violence against children was registered in a survey that was done in 2018 by ICAP. Data analysis indicated that 54% of children feel safer in schools, and hence the need to ensure that all children then get to school while strategies for making homes safer are ongoing.

In addition, Data from the study showed that most parents beat, verbally, physically or emotionally abuse their children because they are stressed. As a result, NECDOL and TRANAC partners have created a parental stress management program in addition to holding campaigns in communities during the 1000 days of a child's development.

4.4 Sustainability and scalability of the successes documented.

Power in the numbers and seizing partnerships: The outcomes achieved by TRANAC were assessed to establish whether they are likely to have a lasting impact after donor funding has ended. It was revealed that TRANAC embedded sustainability approaches, right from design, and across the implementation. The formation of a consortium of three partners in Zimbabwe, Malawi, and Lesotho, is one outstanding outcome, as highlighted by one of the respondents. Subsequently, TRANAC realized the power of teamwork and embarked on a course to bring Zambia, Eswatini, and Mozambique on board, making it six implementers in this phase. In addition, negotiations to onboard South Africa, Botswana, and Namibia into the consortium are ongoing.

From the beginning, the consortium of allies co-created the vision, and have the innate drive and inspiration to run independent activities in countries even beyond funding. For instance, Zambia, Eswatini and Mozambique have been implementing TRANAC activities without resources from EOL.

TRANAC leveraged existing operating and working partnerships with CRNSA, which was working on developing and pushing the SADC childrens protocol and Southern Africa Federation of the Disabled, to co-create the disability framework to embed ECD. CRNSA currently has membership and networks of child rights in 11 out of 16 SADC countries. This is envisioned as a channel for mobilizing SADC states to ratify the children's protocol, by having more national coalitions advocating and influencing their decision-makers to approve it, which then becomes law for all countries and governments to implement.

Additionally, the TRANAC project is making strides in ECD through ZINECDA's leadership. ZINECDA was appointed to a leadership role by Africa Network Campaign on Education for All (ANCEFA), which has networks in 23 countries and is a member of the global campaign for education. The Education Coalition of Zimbabwe got that role, because technically, ZINECDA is part of the coalition and this was ANCEFA's way of recognising the efforts made by TRANAC.

Data from this study reveals that before TRANAC there were quite a lot of efforts and initiatives around pushing for education financing across the regions done by a number of organizations such as ANCEFA, the national education coalitions, and EOL's collaborative learning initiative. However, success was limited because initiatives were through coalitions

that focussed on respective countries. In addition, due to limited resources they could not actually go out and influence regional level.

But with TRANAC coming in, as a funded project dedicated to advocacy at regional level, many national and regional bodies have embraced it and even many funding partners are really enjoying the concept of having some members that are looking at regional advocacy as opposed to working in silos. Primary data revealed the fact that development partners and donors in the region and beyond refer to the TRANAC project as a model for transnational agendas.

Broadening advocacy for ECD: TRANAC has made commendable progress regarding capacity building, induction, and engagement of partners at SADC level. However, stakeholders indicated that engaging only the Ministers of Education and MPs in the education portfolio is insufficient. TRANAC should adopt a holistic investment in childhood development and not just education. Ensuring that engagement at SADC level is done across sectors such as bringing on board experts in nutrition, and health.

Capacity building process: In addition to conducting cross-sector capacity building, the TRANAC performance indicator matrix as well as data from interviews highlight that TRANAC is on track in building the capacities and inducting ministers, MPs on ECDE at SADC level. It recognises that decision makers have been positioned to embrace the importance of ECDE and equipped with packaged data for advocating for ECD recognition and financing. However, the challenge remains the changing nature of governments that are term based–members of parliament and ministers change as terms change.
One key stakeholder interviewed noted: that;
"When TRANAC conducted the training for the Members of Parliaments, Ministers and other decision-makers, Lesotho MPs and ministers did not participate, because they did not have MPs at the time, adding that soon Zimbabwe is going for elections meaning they are likely to have completely new MPs and ministers and the trend is envisioned to continue for other governments".
In this regard, most of the interviewed stakeholders suggest that there should be continuous capacity building and induction for these crucial decision-makers to avoid memory loss and stagnating commitments and debates on ECDE that are already progressing well.

ECDE Financing: Gathered evidence indicates that ECDE financing has been embraced by partner states hence increased recognition and financing commitments from respective governments and increased funding from other international funding organizations. It was

highlighted that ECDE financing is sustainable because of the capacity building programs conducted, children's protocol that has ECDE sections enhanced, and the Malawi ECDE law that is under draft. The different commitments include teachers on the payroll in the form of honorarium, the establishment of teachers training colleges and ongoing discussions around equipping ECDE centers with resources and appropriate materials with proposals under debate to have their tax exempted. However, stakeholders indicated fears about how follow up of these commitments is being tracked if TRANAC budget ceases. Currently, the commitments and investments rely heavily on aid, and there's a need to fast-track government commitments to translate into figures.

As recommended by respondents in the interviews, TRANAC should conduct a donor mapping of ECD funders in these countries and organize roundtable meetings to share the fantastic framework, which can lead to more funding. Donors are already curious to understand this TRANAC project, there is already a lot of buy in.

Online, Knowledge and Information Hub for the Horn, East, and Southern Africa (HESA) and beyond. As a sustainable move, stakeholders have proposed for TRANAC to lobby for the information hub to be hosted by the SADC Resource Center for ownership and continuity as opposed to ZINECDA. One stakeholder who has been instrumental in TRANAC activities from other three countries said:

"TRANAC should continue to recruit more partners (other SADC countries) to ensure that at the end of TRANAC project, each SADC country will have earned ownership of the online information hub, hence positioning them to populate and upload materials on the portal from country specific MEALs."

The platform also ensures shared standards in terms of ECD implementations across countries, which makes scale and adoption effortless. Besides, success stories shared have also been instrumental, with networks such as ANCEFA leveraging them for showcasing progress and lobbying.

4.5 Challenges Experienced by TRANAC

Limited research: As seen in the TRANAC baseline study, there was no data for evidence-

based advocacy to use at the commencement of the project. Although data collection, analysis and packaging information for advocacy on ECDE was time consuming, TRANAC had no option but to invest in research since it was deemed very critical for the project's success in advocating for ECDE recognition, financing and importance.

Funding: It was also noted that it takes a lot of funding to convene the decision makers in different countries for training, which has impacted the number of selected MPs per country. It is also evident that, more resources will be needed to mobilize more countries to join TRANAC and mobilization campaigns for SADC states to ratify the Children's protocol and frameworks, development of the ECDE Law, as well as continuous follow up of commitments made by different partner governments to ensure they put in practice/ implement the commitments.

Bureaucracy in engaging ministries at SADC level: Influencing SADC is such a long process, the systems of bringing agendas to the desk is tough. There are many competing priorities that require prioritization.

High turnover of MP's and Government leaders: It has been noted that the majority of MP's and Ministers that benefited from the capacity building processes by TRANAC have changed. This means that the current MPs in some countries where elections have happened recently such as Lesotho did not acquire the skills others got during the inductions and training of MPs and ministers held at SADC level.

4.6 Recommendations

Given the findings, we make the following recommendations;

In terms of fundraising, TRANAC should continue to position itself to be recognised by other donors in addition to EOL/GPE. TRANAC should continue nurturing already existing partnerships with other donors such as the Roger Foundation, respective government and CSOs.

TRANAC should accelerate documentation and use of the online knowledge and information hub to address the issue of limited research. Interventions should be carried out right from national to regional level. Since data has been deemed very critical for the project's success in advocating for ECDE recognition, financing, and its importance.

TRANAC should continue mobilising and engaging more countries to join its ranks as they have done before. In addition to the six countries, TRANAC should accelerate formalizing the joining of South Africa, Namibia and Botswana as well as other remaining SADC countries.

To address the issue of bureaucracy in engaging ministers and MPs at SADC level, TRANAC should continue strategizing soft entry points to penetrate and influence SADC. It is through this that national parliamentarians and Pan-african parliamentarians should be engaged, if the project is to continue registering progress in getting through to the SADC parliament.

TRANAC should continue training MPs and government leaders to address the issue of turn over of leaders occasioned by change of terms in respective countries. Inductions and training should be continuous for incumbent MPs, Ministers, and other top decision-makers. As part of mitigation efforts, TRANAC should also consider engaging both the Senate and the National Assembly. This is because the Senate is more stable as they are not elected by the public into power, which brings some aspect of permanence. The study also proposes that platforms and committee members should be continuously engaged and equipped with skills to continue ECD advocacy processes and prevent memory loss.

It has also been identified that including the staff of the Parliament, especially the committees on ECD and education is critical and more sustainable. This will enable them to share the information with the new incoming MPs.

TRANAC should devote more efforts to mobilize SADC countries to be ready to approve and ratify the Children's protocol and mitigate the likelihood of the previous scenario, where it was delayed for years.

4.7 Conclusions

This section presents conclusions drawn from the study on the identified and compiled success stories.

The success stories identified and compiled included; the increase and recognition of ECDE financing and resourcing, the development and finalisation of the children's protocol with ECDE sections enhanced, and the establishment of an online knowledge and learning information hub

for East, Horn and Southern Africa (HESA), the unified South African/one South African Network established, intentional capacity building of relevant stakeholders, as well as the establishment of able leadership and consortium implementation approach of TRANAC.

Increase and Recognition of ECD Financing: SADC countries have recognised the significance of ECDE and embraced its financing following the implementation of the TRANAC project. For example, before the project, the six Southern African countries allocated an average of 1.57 percent to ECDE. Following TRANAC's concerted advocacy efforts of the three countries with packaged data collected from each partner country embarked on holding country specific workshops to show the status of ECD in respective countries which propelled decision makers to commit to increase in ECD budgets. For Instance, in Malawi ECD budget increased from 2 percent - 5 percent, and 2000 ECDE teachers are now on public funds payroll in the form of honorarium and will soon be transitioned into salaried professionals. Zimbabwe has increased its budget from around $64 per learner in 2021 to $226 per learner in 2022 and education budget from 14 - 16 percent and committed to increase it even further[15]. Apart from this, the Lesotho government committed to reallocate the USD 5 million grant from the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) multiplier fund to ECDE as well as increase infant access to Clearly the commitments for ECD financing are progressing each year that passes by.

The SADC children's protocol has been developed by Children's Rights Network for Southern African (CRNSA) in collaboration with TRANAC. Specifically, sections regarding the importance of access to ECDE have been enhanced and strengthened. Other aspects of children have been incorporated such as the importance of nutrition, health, gender, inclusion of people with disabilities among others making a holistic protocol that is all inclusive.

In addition to a holistic protocol with ownership from different stakeholders on the different sections in the protocol. Given that CRNSA operates in 11 SADC countries and hosts the secretariat for the Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) that implement the African Charter on the rights and welfare of the child across Africa, it is positioned to be the best to host the protocol. This arrangement also positions this whole network as a strong channel that will lead to the acceptance and ratification of the protocol without objection as hoped for by June 2023, for it to be passed and adopted by SADC member states.

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The children's protocol is crucial and envisioned to serve as a parent of ECDE interventions at SADC level, so there is a need to mitigate any risks of it staying on the shelves to avoid a similar incident that happened in 2001. TRANAC needs to devote more efforts to mobilizing SADC countries to ratify the developed holistic protocol.

Looking at the data collected from the study, the TRANAC project has clearly made great strides in creating a regional online knowledge-information hub.

Concerted efforts should be made to mobilize more member states, CSOs, and coalitions from other SADC countries for a collective voice in pushing for an ECD agenda and policies that are steadily taking shape.

As per the findings above, TRANAC through the leadership of ZINECDA, has made commendable progress in a span of 2 years. While research has shown that influencing policy and legislation takes a long time to come to fruition it has taken TRANAC just 2 years to influence ECDE issues in the SADC region.

Annexes to the Report

Annex1:Key Informants and stakeholder Interviewed

	Name	Entity	Booking entity/country	Status
1	Mammehela Matamane	SADC Parliamentary Forum (Education, Finance and Health Focals/Portfolio committees)	Zimbabwe	Interviewed - Stakeholder
2	Chengetai Kanyungu	Southern Africa Parliamentary Support Trust (SAPST)	Zimbabwe	Interviewed - Stakeholder
3	Kgomotso Montsho	Child rights Network of Southern Africa (CRNSA)	South Africa	Interviewed - Stakeholder
4	Clemence Nhliziyo	Education Coalition of Zimbabwe	Zimbabwe	Interviewed - Stakeholder
5	Mercy Sakanya	Child Protection Society	Zimbabwe	Interviewed - Stakeholder
6	Pepukaii Chivore	Director of Parliament - Zimbabwe Parliament in the Budget Office	Zimbabwe	Interviewed - Stakeholder
7	Thuto Nts'ekhe Mokhehle	Chief Education Officer Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (Persons in-charge of early childhood education)	Lesotho	Interviewed - Stakeholder
8	Sekonyela Mapetja	Lesotho Council for NGO's (LCN)	Lesotho	Interviewed - Stakeholder
9	Pauline Simwaka	Chief Child Development Officer in Ministry of Gender, Community Development and Social Welfare	Malawi	Interviewed - Stakeholder

10	Ellena Simango	Deputy Director for Basic Education in Ministry of Education	Malawi	Interviewed - Stakeholder
11	Nellie Masamba Maneya	Ministry of Gender	Malawi	Interviewed - Stakeholder
12	Anderson Moyo	Action Aid	Malawi	Interviewed - Stakeholder
13	George	Zambia National Education Coalition	Zambia	Interviewed - KII Implementor
14	Emmanuel Moyo	Swaziland Network for Early Childhood Development	Eswatini	Interviewed - KII Implementor
15	Naison Bhunhu	TRANAC Consortium Lead,	Zimbabwe	Interviewed - KII Implementor
16	Marceline Kahlari	Zimbabwe Network of Early Childhood Development Actors (ZINECDA)	Zimbabwe	Interviewed - KII Implementor
17	Joylet Genda	Malawi Early Childhood Development Coalition (ECDC)	Malawi	Interviewed - KII Implementor
18	Shoeshoe Mofokeng	Network of Early Childhood Development of Lesotho (NECDOL)	Lesotho	Interviewed - KII Implementor
19	Richard Along	OXFAM/ IBIS (GPE), Regional Program Manager	OXFAM	Interviewed - KII Funder
20	Kobia David	OXFAM/ IBIS (GPE), Regional Education Advisor	OXFAM	Interviewed - KII Funder
21	Ntsebeng molulela	Catholic Relief Services	Lesotho	Booked - No show (8th Feb)
22	Kisa Kumwenda	Program Manager Civil Society Education Coalition (CSEC)	Malawi	Booked - No show (8th Feb)

Annex II Guiding Questions for Key Informants

E) **Key Informants: OXFAM Project Team and ZINECDA /TRANAC Coordinator**

Q.1 What's your role in the project? (title, position and role played)

Q.2 Tell us about the project - objectives (highlight some relevant facts - the project's driving factor).

Q.3 What was envisioned as success at the end of the project (what did you expect to achieve)

Q.4 What success stories have you registered so far?

Q.5 What do you think made the success happen? (strategies, approaches)

Q.6 Looking at the success stories registered, which objective among the three was highly achieved?

F) **Key Informants: Implementing Partner Consortium Team:** The Zimbabwe Network of Early Childhood Development Actors (ZINECDA), Malawi ECD Coalition commissioned Empowerment for Career Development Pvt Ltd (EMCAD), Network of Early Childhood Development of Lesotho (NECDOL)

Q.1 History/background of the project and activities

   i) What's been your practical experience in the project - key highlights,

   ii) What have been your interventions in terms of

   - Provision of new resources for teaching in ECDE,
   - Influencing the prioritization of financing,
   - Development and implementation of inclusive and comprehensive ECDE policies, legislation and systems in Zimbabwe, Malawi and Lesotho
   - What have you done to influence and how have you done it - strategies and approaches.
   - Capacity building for the national ECDE coalitions and partners
   - Monitoring and evaluation to avail data for evidence based advocacy and implementation.

   iii) What do you see as key successes and why?

   ii) Where do you see your success falling within the three (3) objectives of TRANAC

   iv) What were the challenges?

v) What strategies did you apply to mitigate the challenges?

Q.2 Scaling and Replication

    a) Do you envision upscaling project successes

        i) Why do you think upscaling is ideal for this project?

        ii) What would you do differently?

Q.3 Sustainability

    b) How do you see the sustainability of the successes registered

        i) What have been the strategies in place to sustain the successes

G) **Key Stakeholders and Beneficiaries**

Q.1 What's your role in the project (title, position)

Q.2 What has been your role in the implementation of TRANAC project

  - i) What activities did you carry out in the implementation of the project/practical experience/key highlights

  - ii) Have you registered some successes as a result of the project? If yes, what are the successes?

Q.3 What were the enabling factors that catalyzed the success to happen?

  - i) Whether they were more of political, social or economic or other factors)

Q.4 What were the key challenges faced during the implementation and how were these addressed for the success to happen?

Q.5 What do you see as the overall impact of the project

Annex III Implementation Plan

	Activity	Timeline								
	Phase 1: Identification of the Success Stories	January				February				
	Inception and alignment (5th - 13th January)	W 1	W 2	W 3	W 4	W 1	W 2	W 3	W 4	

Task	Date	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Coordinate project documents and initial review	6th - 8th Jan	X	X						
Develop an inception report to guide the process	9th - 12th Jan		X						
Interview questions designed and finalized. Development of data collection tools (KII tools) among others; Solicit inputs into draft tools and approaches from OXFAM;	10th - 12th Jan	X	X						
Mapping and categorisation of documentation for review and targeted interviewees.	5th - 6th Jan	X	X						
Submit inception report to OXFAM for review	13th Jan		X						
Phase 2: Documentation of identified success stories									
Data collection and stakeholder engagement (16th - 3rd February)									
Meeting with ZINECDA to align on stakeholder coordination and timelines	18th Jan			X					
Conduct desk review of all technical documentation, reports and projects related to the projects	16th - 19th			X					
Deploy quantitative online surveys and follow ups with stakeholders to harvest impact data, and perform quality checks	19th Jan			X					
Send emails to key informant stakeholders scheduling meetings	19th - 20th			X					
In-depth virtual key informant interviews to identify the successes	23rd - 27th Jan				X				
In-depth virtual stakeholder interviews to validate and document the successes	30th - 3rd Feb					X			

Task	Date									
Video editing and compilation	30th- 10th Feb						▓	▓	▓	
Analysis, validation and report writing (6th - 24th February										
Conduct raw data analysis	6-10th Feb							▓		
Draft report of the documented success stories	6-10th Feb							▓		
Submit Draft Report to OXFAM for review and feedback	13 - 15th Feb								▓	
Incorporate comments in 2nd draft of the Report and success stories	16th - 18th Feb								▓	
Submit 2nd Draft Report to OXFAM for review	20th - 22nd									▓
Finalize the report	23rd									▓
Phase 3: Validation and dissemination of identified success stories										
Dissemination (24th - 28th February)										
Stakeholder data validation session	24th Feb									▓
Completion of the assignment and handover	27th- 28th									▓

Annex IV Consent Form

Key Informants and Stakeholders

Consent form

INTRODUCTION:

Hello. My name is_____ on behalf of the research team, contracted by OXFAM, Education Out Loud Program. We are undertaking an assignment that forms part of an effort for generating knowledge and evidence through the systematization of information, analysis and evaluation of the strategies that Transnational Networks Advocacy Capacity (TRANAC) alliance for improved ECDE legislation, policies and measures in Southern Africa led by Zimbabwe Network of Early Childhood Development Actors (ZINECDA) has applied in its engagement in transnational and regional advocacy on Early Child Development Education (ECDE) at SADC level. The objective is to document success stories that transpired during the implementation of the project.

In this survey and interview I will ask you questions about your experience in the project. You have been selected to participate in this exercise because you are part of the stakeholders in the implementation. The information you give us will be used for orienting the EOL Program on best strategies for creating a stronger global and transnational enabling environment for national civil society advocacy and transparency efforts.

I guarantee that the information you give us will be kept confidential and only used for this particular program. You have the right to accept or refuse to participate in this survey and your participation or refusal will not have any consequences to you personally or your organization or programs. Similarly, if at any time you feel that you can't continue to answer the questions, you can tell us and we will stop the exercise immediately. You do not have to answer any question you do not feel comfortable answering. This interview (discussion) will take about one hour. Please let me know if you have understood the aim of this interview and your rights to participate or not.

[*FACILITATOR TO PAUSE AND PROBE IF THERE IS ANYTHING THAT THE RESPONDENT WANTS TO KNOW*]. All participants in this survey are required to indicate their acceptance by signing that they have been informed and that they accept to participate. If you have questions after the survey, you may contact the research team (Diana Ninsiima with e-mail: diananinsiima20@gmail.com, +255768741272; Alice Bamusime with e-mail: bamusiime@gmail.com, +255 756441902).

(Please tick accordingly, and continue with the interview once the consent of the respondent is secured. If the respondent refuses consent, thank him/her for his/her time and continue to the next respondent.)

            I agree   I do not agree

Interviewee Signature………………………………… Date: ……………………

Annex V References

TRANAC Baseline Report, 2021

TRANAC Indicator Performance Tracking July-September 2022

TRANAC Quarter 3 Report, 2021

TRANAC EOL Report, 2021

Part A and B report Jan-June 2021

ZINECDA EOL Proposal, May 2020

TRANAC Mid-year Narrative report _Jan-June 2022

Online Knowledge and Information Hub, https://africaeducationhub.org/

TRANAC ECDE Budget Analysis final