



Assessment of RMU-WCA Efforts in Promoting Learning Culture, Learning and Capacity Development Among EOL Grantees in the West & Central Africa Region

Final Report

Commissioned by: Oxfam Denmark

**Main Authors: Marian Tadeffa Kubabom (Mrs.)
Delasi Frank Amable (Mr.)**



MDF
EMPOWERING PEOPLE,
CREATING IMPACT

**Consultants: Michelle Elsaesser (Ms.)
Michael Osei Nkrumah (Mr.)
Papy Bonkena (Dr.)**

June 2024

MDF West Africa Ltd

13 Kinshasa Avenue
East Legon, Accra
PMB CT 357
Ghana

+233 307038546
mdfwa@mdf.nl
www.mdf.nl

VAT C0006013317

Table of Contents

Key to Abbreviations	2
Executive Summary.....	3
1 Introduction	6
1.1 Purpose and Scope of the Learning Assessment	6
1.2 Structure of the Report	6
2. Background	8
2.1 Program Context.....	8
2.2 EOL Learning Framework.....	9
3. Methodology	12
3.1 Learning Assessment Approach.....	12
3.2 Data Collection and Analysis Steps.....	12
3.3 Limitations	14
4. Main Findings	15
4.1 Relevance	15
4.2 Effectiveness	21
4.3 Efficiency	27
4.4 Impact (Best Practices and Key Lessons)	32
4.5 Sustainability (Ownership).....	35
5 Recommendations	37
6. Conclusion.....	40
References	41
ANNEXES	42
1. Sampling Methodology	42
2. List of Stakeholders Interviewed	42
3. Learning Assessment Framework.....	42
4. Guideline for Desk Review	42
5. Guide Questions for Interviews of Grantees, Learning Partners and RMU WCA.....	42
6. Online Survey Questionnaire	42
7. Online Survey Results- Grantee Assessment of Effectiveness of Learning Activities They Attended.....	42



List of Tables

1. Stakeholders Interviewed
2. Kirkpatrick 4-Level Training Evaluation Model
3. Assessment of Grantee Participation and RMU WCA Support to the Identification and Prioritisation of Learning Needs
4. Most important Features of Effective Learning Activities According to Grantee Survey Respondents
5. Most important Features of Least Effective Learning Activities According to Grantee Survey Respondents
6. Constraining and Facilitating Factors to Learning Plan Implementation According to Grantees

List of Figures

1. EOL Theory of Change
2. EOL Learning Process
3. Experiential Learning Cycle

Key to Abbreviations

ANCEFA	Africa Campaign on Education for All
CLADE	Campaña Latinoamericana por el Derecho a la Educación
CSO	Civil Society Organization
EA	Education Advisor
ECDE	Early Childhood Development Education
EOL	Education Out Loud
FGD	Focus Group Discussion(s)
GA	Grant Agent
GCE	Global Campaign for Education
GISP	Global Independent Selection Panel
GMU	Global Management Unit
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
ISP	Independent Selection Panel
KII	Key Informant Interview(s)
KIX	Knowledge & Innovation Exchange
LP	Learning Plan / Learning Partner
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
MFW	Monitoring Framework
MTR	Mid-Term Review
NEC	National Education Coalition
OC	Operational Component
OD	Organizational Development
RC	Regional Coalition
RFW	Results Framework
RMU	Regional Management Unit
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
TOC	Theory of Change
TOR	Terms of Reference
TVET	Technical Vocational Education and Training
UNCRC	United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Children
WCA	West and Central Africa

Executive Summary

Education Out Loud (EOL), the Global Partnership for Education's (GPE) fund for advocacy and social accountability, supports civil society to be active and influential actors in shaping education policy to ensure the right to quality education for all. The program is managed by Oxfam Denmark and consists of a Global Management Unit (GMU) based in Copenhagen, Denmark, and four Regional Management Units (RMUs) in West Central Africa (WCA), Horn, East and Southern Africa (HESA), Asia Pacific (AP) and Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC).

The Learning Assessment (February - May 2024) focused on the RMU West and Central Africa, and specifically on 24 civil society organisations, coalitions and alliances from 19 countries that were EOL grantees between 2020 and 2023. The aim was to assess the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of learning methods employed by the RMU-WCA, as well as the impact and sustainability of the learning processes. Integral to the assessment was the determination of the understanding and perceptions of grantees as they experienced learning. Findings and recommendations would inform the delivery of learning by RMU-WCA, particularly for the Extension Phase of the EOL program, 2023-2027. An agreed Learning Assessment Framework guided the desk review, online survey and online key informant interviews/focus group discussions that consequently engaged 15 grantees, 5 Learning Partners and a total of 68 individuals. The An online survey received 13 grantee responses (54%) out of the targeted 24.

Main Findings

Relevance: EOL/RMU-WCA learning efforts were viewed by grantees as very relevant and opened possibilities to strengthen their capacities according to their expressed needs. The learning process introduced by RMU WCA gave full autonomy in setting learning needs and priorities to grantees, majority of whom adopted participatory and inclusive methods including series of dialogue within their networks.

EOL has provided coherence to the learning process of grantees by offering a clear goal, structure for learning and tools/frameworks (i.e. how-to guides, learning plan templates, scorecards); relevance by emphasizing the importance of contextualization in identifying learning needs; complementarity by offering additional financial as well as technical resources and e-learning opportunities; and synergies by promoting productive collaboration within each coalition and across coalitions, sharing best practices and lessons learned. The prescribed areas of learning needs, namely organizational, thematic and advocacy competencies, allowed grantees to address crucial issues in the education sector. The Regional Learning Plan 2023 and RMU WCA reports were consistent with grantee needs as discussed during KII.

There are threats to participatory and inclusive processes of learning needs identification and prioritisation, including: limited time for reflection and planning; inadequate communication of the intended scope of EOL support to learning needs; inadequate self-awareness of what coalitions would need as capacities (knowledge and skills) to affect changes in the education sector.

Effectiveness: Overall, the EOL Learning Program had attained effectiveness in inculcating a learning culture among some of the grantees, and at most enhanced the knowledge and skills of all grantees. Improvement in the performance of grantees was significantly driven by the learning approaches / tools / methodologies used by the RMU WCA and Learning Partners.

Online survey results showed positive assessment of learning activities attended by grantees, assessing them overall as Satisfactory, able to apply learning to their work to a large extent and learning as having positive effect on grant project outcomes to a large extent. Also, results of post-training assessment implemented by Learning Partners indicated the achievement of

planned learning outcomes, for some practical outputs were also produced such as Communication and Visibility Plan, Advocacy Strategy and Plans and research studies.

Grantees cited concrete outcomes of their learning under EOL, highlights of which include report writing using EOL standards; establishing research as one of the work pillars of the coalition; membership in international Learning Collaboratives and Thematic Working Groups; initiation of adaptive management processes; improved PMEL system; enhanced participation of grantee in local and national level education lobby and advocacy; and enhanced credibility with other donor partners observing the enhanced knowledge and skills.

The major threats to effective learning as experienced by grantees include: i) weak internet connection during online training; ii) conflicting EOL agendas preventing substantive participation of grantees in learning activities; iii) inconvenient schedules for training for working coalition members; iv) difficult management of workload of lean staff; v) inadequate provision of language translation support.

Efficiency: Grantees viewed funding to be appropriate in light of the activities planned within the EOL grant framework. However, funding the rest of the grantee learning needs have been a challenge especially as they were expected to be supported internally or by other partners.

Grantees found RMU WCA support very helpful in their Learning Plan implementation. 81 percent of interviewed grantees have implemented 70 to 90 percent of their Learning Plans including all the interviewed 11 Francophone Grantees. However, implementation was highly constrained by inadequate grantee resources, limited donor interest in education funding, rising operational costs and limited EOL program duration.

Knowledge sharing is not satisfactorily implemented by many grantees due to limited time and budget, scattered location of coalition members and poor internet connectivity.

Impact: It is premature to assess the impact of the EOL RMU WCA learning efforts as the implementation period for learning activities had been short so far. Achievements have been at the level of learning activities and not as much on project results or outcomes. At best, capacity enhancement have created a conducive environment for project outcomes and envisioned changes to be achieved. The indications include: i) emergence of learning culture among grantees; ii) improved operational efficiency and decision-making, increased innovation, adaptation to environmental changes, and increase service or product quality; iii) strengthening network and coalition management; iv) enhanced visibility and credibility of grantees due to increased role in advocacy efforts and leadership in national policy dialogue; v) high levels of interest in grantees by donor organizations due to their learning plans and processes.

Grantees and Learning Partners were in agreement in their observation of best learning practices. They cited collaborative learning, international networking events, learning and exchanges among network of coalitions within the same language groups, and Learning Partner-facilitated workshops and follow up processes such as mentoring and coaching.

Some of the key lessons generated from the assessment include:

- Identification and prioritisation of learning needs require adequate time for the consultative process to be effective at the same time harnessing ownership.
- New knowledge can be better translated into action, if there would be further follow-up measures to training, such as mentoring or peer exchange
- Some grantees tend to mix up their internal learning needs with their broader mission in the educational sphere. RMU WCA can guide grantees to distinguish between internal and external needs, and the varying levels of actions to address them
- Collaborative learning and learning events with large groups would be only beneficial if all participants have equal access to understanding materials and proper language translation

- There are a number of grantees and even Learning Partners who believe the duration of training events are too short. There is a need for mutual review of the time devoted to the different training courses with the aim of allowing for good assimilation of the subject matter.
- Handouts, assignments and recordings were made available to training participants but not all consumed them for continuous learning and knowledge sharing.
- There is no clarity yet on how learnings are actually translated into the organisational activities of the grantee organisations and how they are embedded or institutionalized within the longer-term vision of the networks.

Sustainability: Despite the limitations in the implementation of their Learning Plan and sharing knowledge, grantees have actually recognised the usefulness of a systematic learning process introduced by EOL. There is now a high sense of ownership of this process though it is at the initial stage where grantees are trying to resolve how to bring it to full take off. Eleven (11) out of the 13 grantee survey respondents (85%) agree that “there is evidence that the culture of learning and strengthening of capacities will be carried out at the level of their organisation”. Prospects for continuation of the learning culture will be contingent on availability of funding, preferably from diverse sources including internal grantee resources.

Grantees are definite about the possibility of replicating the EOL process with for instance, RNCEPT-Cape Verde, CONAMEB-Madagascar indicating the intention to work with actors in the non-formal education and out of school children. Also, the participatory approach in planning and decision-making, the involvement of partners and beneficiaries in program design as well as identification of training needs, can potentially expand knowledge on EOL and related processes.

Recommendations

As the EOL Extension Phase 2023-2027 have officially started in January 2024, some of the ensuing issues and practical recommendations are currently being addressed by RMU WCA. The 22 May 2024 sense-making workshop coincided with the RMU WCA reflection and planning event with grantees allowing them to integrate the findings and recommendations in their discussions.

By way of recommendations, grantees should: i) institute systems that will encourage and support trained staff to internalize learning culture and share acquired learning with other members; ii) initiate an institution-wide familiarization and internalization of the EOL Learning Framework; iii) ensure that the processes of adaptive management and M&EL are linked to the ToC and effectively guiding project management; iv) Consider virtual networking and collaboration among grantees and work on transforming the collaborative processes by extending this with the public sector systems.

RMU WCA should: i) facilitate the process of developing grantee-level learning strategies; ii) integrate a deliberate training of trainers for grantees during a dialogue-based learning needs assessment, and put in place a process documentation system; iii) strengthen grantee capabilities for alternative funding models that include diverse funding partners and internal resource mobilization; iv) reinforce the linkages between organizational capacities, ToC and adaptive management, and reinforce grantee guidelines to describe the outcome and impact of learning, not just activity reporting; v) enhance grantee adaptive management processes by building their capacity in data collection and analysis, encourage them to allocate adequate resources to organizational learning, and coach them how to overcome structural barriers to collaboration; vi) consider funding for adequate material and in-training language translation, as well as support to grantee knowledge sharing; vii) disseminate training schedules early and with to allow grantees to effectively plan internally; viii) consider in-person format learning activities such as Thematic Competency Areas that have more technical concepts, Learning Events and Learning Collaboratives that require more dynamic interaction among participants, particularly those with big and multi-lingual groupings.

1 Introduction

This report, submitted to the RMU-WCA, details out the results of the assessment of learning efforts by the Education Out Loud (EOL) program conducted by MDF West Africa between March and May 2024. The Learning Assessment consultancy, for which this report is developed focused on the RMU West and Central Africa (RMU-WCA), and specifically on 24 civil society organisations, coalitions and alliances from 19 countries that were EOL grantees between 2020 and 2023.

1.1 Purpose and Scope of the Learning Assessment

The EOL learning assessment, commissioned by RMU WCA, was designed to provide clarity on the following objectives:

- a. The assessment of the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of learning methods employed by RMU-WCA, as well as the impact and sustainability of the processes;
- b. The determination of the understanding and perceptions of grantees about learning under the EOL, their experiences over the grant implementation period, and the extent of the ownership of their Learning Plans;
- c. Tracking and capturing good practices and lessons learnt from the past learning efforts, including actual changes and / or improvements in the grantees' practices, strategies, methodologies and whether institutionalisation of learning has taken place; and
- d. Propose recommendations for improvement in learning processes and the delivery of learning by RMU-WCA to Grantees, particularly for the Extension Phase of the EOL program, 2023-2027.

Finally, there is a need to highlight that the period of implementation for the EOL Learning Assessment was originally meant to be implemented during the last quarter of 2023 starting in the month of December. This is for timely use of the eventual findings and recommendations for the EOL Extension Phase 2024-2026 that was planned to start in January 2024. Technical considerations only allowed the assessment to take off in February 2024, around which time critical program documents such as the EOL Learning Framework had already been updated and an EOL Learning Brochure was put in place for dissemination to the grantees. In consideration of the learning assessment period which cover the EOL Phase 1, RMU WCA decided to use program documents and guidelines that pertained to Phase 1. This includes using the first version of the EOL Learning Framework and the underlying principles and assumptions that go with it.

1.2 Structure of the Report

This report reports provides a clear and detailed outcome of the learning assessment, and is in six chapters. Chapter One, the introductory chapter, provides an overview of the purpose and scope of the learning assessment and the structure of the report. Chapter 2 discusses the background to the EOL programme and the implementation context. It also presents the EOL Learning Framework which provided the guide for the development of grantee learning plans, and the EOL Theory of Change.

Chapter 3 details out the methodology for the assessment, with discussions on the approach and principles used and processes undertaken. The findings from the assessment are presented in Chapter 4, organized in terms of the relevance of the learning efforts, their

appropriateness, methodologies, and impact in facilitating learning and capacity development of EOL grantees. Also presented are findings on the effectiveness and efficiency of the RMU regional learning plan, the RMU engagement/involvement in the capacity development processes, and the sustainability of all these learning efforts at grantee level. Chapter 5 lists detailed recommendations for the consideration and action of both the RMU WCA and the grantees, and Chapter 6 provides the concluding remarks.

2. Background

Education Out Loud (EOL), the Global Partnership for Education's (GPE) fund for advocacy and social accountability, supports civil society to be active and influential actors in shaping education policy and implementation to meet the needs of communities, especially of the vulnerable and marginalized people, to ensure the right to quality education for all. The program is managed by Oxfam Denmark and implemented across the globe through three Operational Components (OC). The EOL set-up consists of a Global Management Unit (GMU) based in Copenhagen, Denmark, and four Regional Management Units (RMUs) in West Central Africa (WCA), Horn, East and Southern Africa (HESA), Asia Pacific (AP) and Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC).

2.1 Program Context

According to UN Statistics, the COVID-19 pandemic has compounded the challenges to achieving quality education as outlined in Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4. This has led to significant learning setbacks in 80% of countries. As of 2023, without further interventions, it is projected that only one in six countries will meet the universal secondary school completion goal by 2030. An estimated 84 million children and young individuals will continue to lack access to education, with around 300 million students struggling to acquire basic numeracy and literacy skills crucial for their future success¹. And notwithstanding the efforts of various governments across the world to transform their individual learning, the world continues to be confronted by learning challenges, with the effect of COVID-19 pandemic resulting in significant learning losses around the world².

These crises have been further exacerbated by the effects of conflict, climate change, and economic slowdown particularly on children from the poorest families, girls and children with disabilities, increasingly impacted by huge barriers to learning. Some of the other constraint to education include lack of access to, and participation in quality education, the inability of states to address learning disparities, the low pace of adapting and responding to technological advancements and the lack of and /or limited support for teachers.

Low quality of teaching and learning remain a challenge in the attainment of education goals, with a learning poverty rate³ in low- and middle-income countries at 57%, 6 out of 10 children up to age 10 could not read and understand basic texts. The impacts are more severe in sub-Saharan African countries, with a learning poverty rate at 86% for children up to age 10. Access to education, especially at the preschool level, is restrictive, with close to about two-thirds of countries lacking the requisite and proper framework for the provision of free and compulsory pre-primary education.

It is worth noting that education decision making in most countries, is not evidence-based, and such has reflected in policies for the education sector. There is little, and / or no attention given to empirical evidence when designing education policies.

¹ See SDG Report, 2023 www.unstats.un.org/sdgs/

² As of 2022, 7 in 10 children in lower-income cannot read a simple story by age 10. www.worldbank.org

³ Learning poverty rate is a measure of children unable to read and understand a simple passage by age 10 (World Bank Group).

The call by the international community for governments to ‘institute measures to develop inclusive, responsive and resilient education systems to meet the needs of children, youth and adults in crisis contexts including internally displaced persons and refugees’ is yet to be fully materialized.⁴

The role of civil society in meeting the SDG goal to "ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all" has never become crucial in the light of global education policy trends. Civil society capacity to effectively play a part in transformative education has been the subject of many international development programs. Largely due to the complexity of the problems as well as that of the network of stakeholders in the sector, the value of learning while implementing policy processes cannot be more emphasized. The EOL program seeks to strengthen the learning processes of civil society through financial and technical support, and an assessment of what has been started is part of this process.

2.2 EOL Learning Framework

There are three major objectives of the EOL which are also treated as the major operational components (OC) within which support to EOL Fund recipients, called grantees, is categorized. These 3 components are:

OC1: Strengthen national civil society engagement in planning, policy dialogue and monitoring, towards inclusive and gender-responsive education;

OC2: Strengthen civil society roles in promoting the transparency and accountability of national education sector policy and implementation; and

OC3: Create a stronger global and transnational enabling environment for national civil society advocacy and transparency efforts.

Throughout these EOL operational components, learning has been designed as a core element for two practical reasons:

- a. To inform and improve the practices of EOL grantees and related civil society organizations to enhance their effectiveness and strategic impact on policies, their implementation and social accountability in the education sector; and
- b. To inform and influence the practices of the wider education stakeholder group around education advocacy and accountability including GPE secretariat/partners, international and national NGOs such as Oxfam, ministries of education and other education decision-makers at national and regional levels in relation to civil society participation in education policy processes.

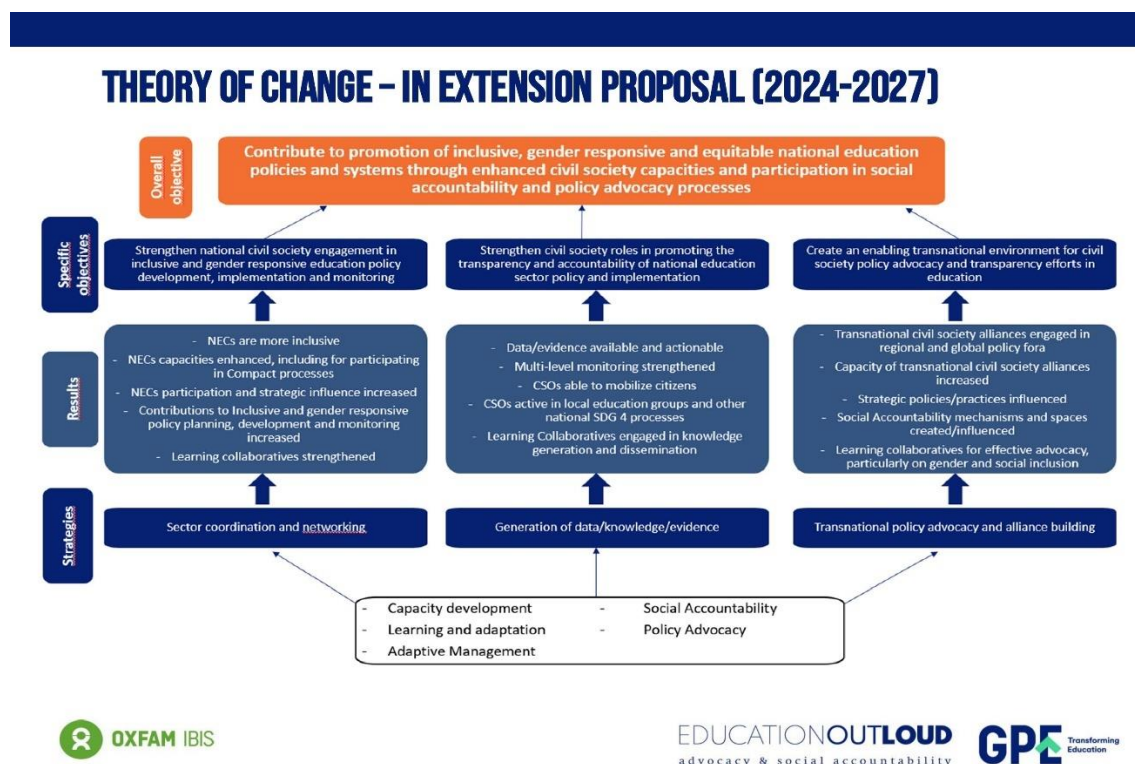
The EOL learning framework⁵ reflects the ‘complexity and heterogeneity of the EOL grantee portfolio, CS landscape and the diverse context in which the grantees are working thus avoiding a ‘one size fits all’ scheme. Learning is both a process and a product linked to the EOL Theory of Change (Figure 1) that assumes learning strengthens civil society and increase

⁴ [Education 2030: Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action for the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all: 2016 \(unesco.org\)](#)

⁵ The EOL Learning Framework used in this learning assessment is the original version that was introduced to the 24 grantees by way of workshops and online exchanges organized by the RMU WCA Learning Advisor under Phase I. This original version had been updated as of February 2024 reflecting the lessons from implementing EOL for the past three years as well as areas needing to be added as well as improved on in the extension phase (2024-2027).

the chances of grantees reaching their own project goals and objectives, and thereby contributing to the EOL objectives.

Figure 1 : EOL Theory of Change

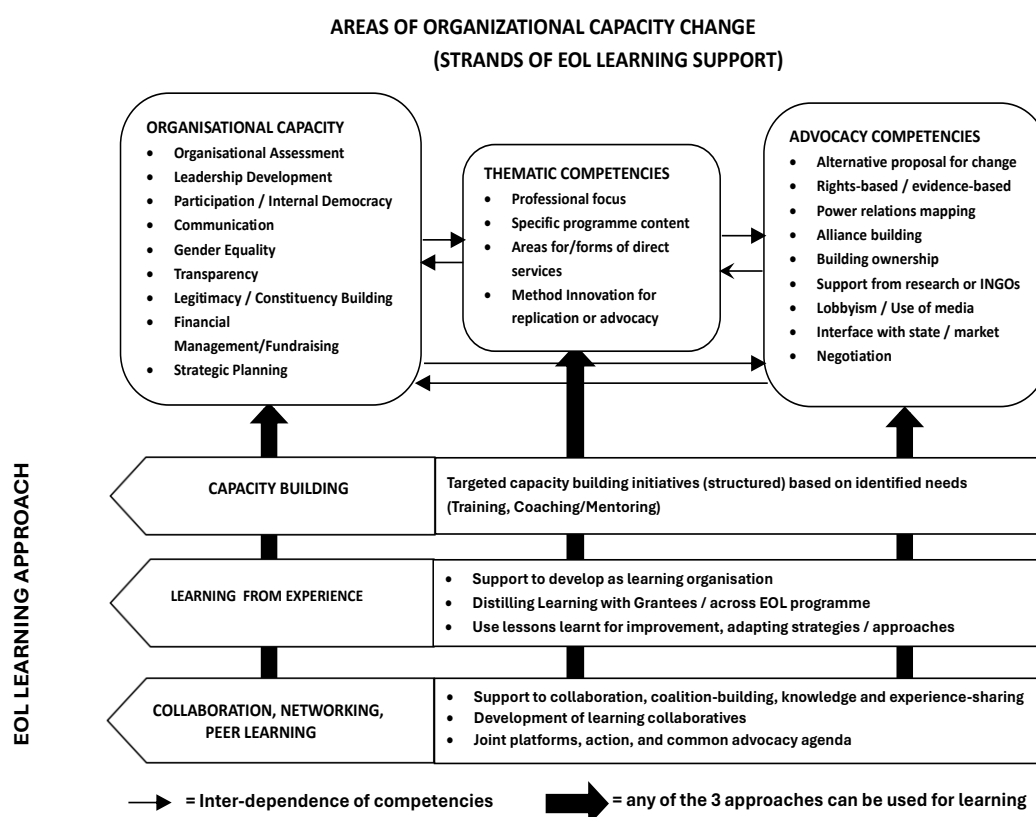


EOL Areas of Capacity Change, Learning Approaches and Grantee Learning Paths

Guiding the EOL Learning Framework is an integrated and holistic model on organizational capacity reflecting the inter-linked and mutually inter-dependent nature of three (3) change areas, namely: Organizational Development, Thematic and Advocacy Areas. The EOL program provides support to the priority learning needs of grantees within the relevant operational components: OC1, OC2 and OC3. The program applies three (3) learning approaches that are also interrelated and complementary to each other. These are Capacity Building, Learning from Experience and Collaboration/Networking/Peer Learning.

The relationship of these two concepts are depicted in Figure 2. The chart was adapted from the presentation of the two concepts in the EOL Learning Framework, and guided the conduct of the learning assessment.

Figure 2: EOL Learning Process



Actual learning within EOL can come from two learning paths: 1) learning driven by grantees as manifested in learning needs assessments and plans, learning from experience that can be integral in their practice of adaptive management; and, 2) learning facilitated by the Grant Agent (RMU WCA) as manifested in global and regional learning plans, contracts with Learning Partners, organization of learning collaboratives, studies among others.

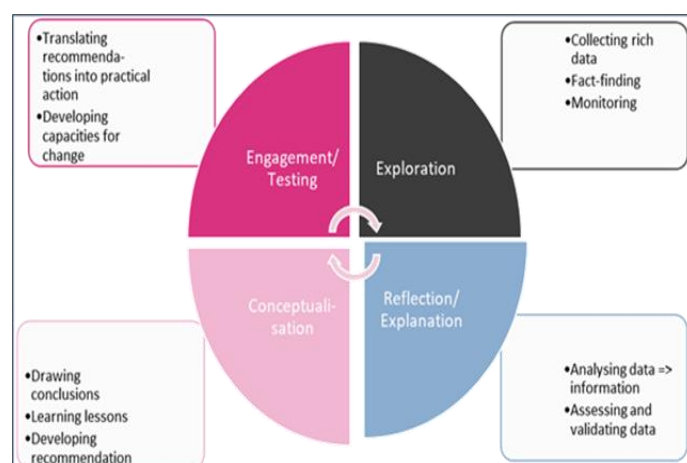
The Learning Plan is a document outlining agreed learning goals and an action plan for the achievement of these learning goals. The plan, moreover, includes a plan for monitoring achievements and for ongoing revision. EOL applies a participatory approach in supporting grantees to design and consistently adapt the plan. The goal is to promote ownership of this planning process. Learning Partners are expert organizations or institutions that represent a variety of different and recognized capacities and with relevant experience and methodology for capacity building and learning. All EOL grantees in OC1, 2 and 3 are eligible for Learning Partner support.

Grantee experiences in learning starting with their identification of their learning needs and development of their Learning Plans were major focus of this learning assessment, the same way that lessons were generated from the Grant Agent (RMU WCA) and one of their channels of service delivery, the Learning Partners.

3. Methodology

3.1 Learning Assessment Approach

The methodology and approach for the learning assessment followed the experiential learning cycle as depicted in Figure 3. This approach necessitated the use of quantitative



and qualitative data collection methods, participatory and inclusive processes recognizing gender and power dynamics, employment of self-assessment techniques and allowing for adequate reflection and diverse voices/perspectives.

The major stakeholders and for that matter the focus for the assessment were the Grantees, Learning Partners and RMU-WCA staff and management. Considering the limited period for data collection, a sampling of grantees and

Figure 3: Experiential Learning Cycle

Learning Partners was done in tandem with RMU WCA. Annex 1 describes the sampling method used and the organizations targeted for sampling.

Consequently, 15 grantees out of a targeted sample of 16, and 5 Learning Partners out of the targeted 6, were interviewed as presented in Table 1. A total of 68 individuals (26 or 38.2% are women) were engaged in the process as some of the organizations were represented by more than 1 person the highest being 11 from Chad. A complete list of stakeholders interviewed is shown as Annex 2.

Table 1: Stakeholders Interviewed

	Number of Organizations	Number of Individuals
Grantees	Lusophone – 2 (OC1)	20
	Anglophone – 2 (OC1/OC2)	4
	Francophone – 11 (OC1/2/3)	31
Learning Partners	5	8
RMU WCA	1	5
Total	21	68

3.2 Data Collection and Analysis Steps

A Learning Assessment Framework agreed with RMU WCA, (see Annex 3) guided the process. The framework consists of the major questions outlined in the Terms of Reference that were translated into specific questions categorized under relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact (with focus on best practices and key lessons) and sustainability (that addressed institutionalisation and ownership). The framework also describes the data collection and analysis tools to be used, as well as sources of information. The operationalisation of this

framework translated into guides for the desk review, KII/FGDs and online survey are presented Annexes 4, 5, and 6, respectively.

The effectiveness and impact of training were assessed following the 4-level model of Donald Kirkpatrick⁶ Table 2 shows these 4 levels that were made integral to the Learning Assessment Framework as specific guide questions.

Table 2: Kirkpatrick 4-Level Training Evaluation Model

Levels	Description
1. Reaction	During and at the end of the training, measurement of how the learners found the course, whether it's fun, engaging and relevant to their need/job
2. Learning	During and at the end of the training, measurement of whether the learner is improving / has improved in understanding the concepts.
3. Behaviour	Post-training, measurement of behavioral changes with learners including whether they are applying the learning to their job
4. Results	Post-application of training, whether targeted organizational outcomes occur as a result of training, or were the results due to external factors

Desk review

The information required to address the 'learning assessment questions' were subsequently generated from the existing programme documents such as that EOL ToC, EOL Learning Framework, EOL Learning Brochure, Mid-term Review of the EOL Programme, grantee Learning Plans and Progress Reports, RMU-WCA Learning Plans and Reports and Learning Partner Reports.

Online Key Informant Interviews (KII) and Focus Group Discussions (FGD)

Primary data collection involved online KIIs and FGDs. The choice of the approach was based on the availability of respondents, especially the grantees where FGD was conducted based on the number of people engaged in the process.

Online Survey

A survey aimed to reach out to all the 24 grantees and allow for objective generalization in their learning experience. Survey Monkey was the tool applied. Consequently, only 13 (54%) responded to the survey including 10 Francophone, 2 Lusophone and 1 Anglophone grantees.

Data Analysis and Sense-Making

Data analysis was done, first by transcription of all responses, followed by uploading onto excel sheet. This process allowed for thematic and trend analysis to arrive at the findings specific to the ToR questions. This was complemented by analyses, and reports developed by the individual consultants using the findings from the various interviews, language-based group interviews and a subsequent analytical discussion at the MDF team level. There were however, series of ad-hoc discussions with the RMU WCA where expedient.

A virtual sense making workshop, where preliminary findings were presented to RMU and grantees, provided valuable insights and inputs into the assessment and reporting process. At the end of the presentation, around 50 grantees reflected upon the report using the guiding questions below:

- ❖ What surprises you in the presentation and why?
- ❖ What do you think was missing?

⁶ <https://www.kirkpatrickpartners.com/the-kirkpatrick-model/>

The reflections from the sensemaking workshop have been factored and reflected in the report.

3.3 Limitations

The methodology and approach employed have limitations that may have affected the quantity and quality of findings. Nevertheless, some of these limitations have been addressed during data collection.

- a. The online survey received only 13 responses out of the 24 targeted grantees, representing 54.2 percent. It would have been ideal to have obtained 100 percent response rates but a little more than half provides at least a trend in grantee opinions and experiences.
- b. Online data collection including surveys and KII contributed to a large extent to delays in responses, and may have limited the amount of information collected. There were challenges in getting through to some respondents or call-backs. This however did not anyway lead to any substantial deficiencies to the authenticity and quality of information.
- c. KII and FGD sessions have the tendency to be biased if not well facilitated, with the participation of respondents managed to reduce 'elite capture' especially in FGDs. Consultants ensured that adequate probing was done with respondents, including attempts to re-phrase and re-direct questions.
- d. Confirmation and elimination of bias was addressed by the approach of the lead consultants having regular and / or informal discussions, and where necessary having dialogue with the other consultants in charge of data collection.
- e. Grantee Interviewers were conducted by consultants who have mastery over the three language groups. Their experience allows them to discern whether a respondent is trying to please (courtesy or political correctness bias) or providing misleading information.

4. Main Findings

This section presents the main findings of the learning assessment along the criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. Focus was given to the main concerns of RMU WCA for the learning assessment as reflected in the ToR.

4.1 Relevance

- ❖ *To what extent has the EOL/WCA RU learning efforts responded to the learning needs of EOL grantees and how were the grantees engaged in setting learning priorities & implementation?*
 - ❖ *How appropriate were the learning methodologies and approaches in facilitating learning and capacity development of EOL grantees in the region?*
 - ❖ *How was learning within EOL understood and perceived by grantees?*
-

- 1) EOL/RMU-WCA learning efforts were viewed by grantees as very relevant and opened possibilities to strengthen their capacities according to their expressed needs.
- 2) The Learning needs and capacity gaps identified in the EOL Narrative Regional Learning Plan 2023 and RMU WCA reports were consistent with grantee information generated from the KII. This indicates that RMU WCA already has an understanding of local context, therefore, key topics that need further attention.
- 3) Grantees confirmed they had full autonomy in setting their learning needs and priorities, using dialogue within their networks and feedback from RMU-WCA.
- 4) Almost all grantees were able to adopt a participatory and inclusive approach in identifying and prioritizing their learning needs.
- 5) There are threats to participatory and inclusive process of learning needs identification and prioritisation, including:
 - a. Limited time allowed within the EOL grant review and approval process
 - b. Inadequate communication of the intended scope of EOL support to identified learning needs by grantees
 - c. Inadequate self-awareness of what coalitions would need as capacities (knowledge and skills) to affect changes in the education sector
- 6) The EOL learning tools/frameworks (i.e. how-to guides, learning plan templates, scorecards, etc) helped structure the learning process and facilitated effective plan implementation.
- 7) EOL RWU-WCA Learning Plan template and prescribed areas of learning needs, namely organizational, thematic and advocacy competencies, allow grantees to identify their needs that address the crucial issues in the education sector in their respective countries
- 8) Grantee responses to the online survey indicated high level of understanding of the EOL grant project Theory of Change. However, interviews obtained some limitations in grantee application of this tool.

Overall Relevance

There was unanimity among the grantees that the EOL RMU WCA learning efforts not only assisted them to address their practical learning needs but have positively shaped their learning approaches and activities. Before their engagement with EOL, learning efforts of most grantees consisted of participation in in-person skills training/workshops that were

either built into their programs/projects as agreed with donors, and/or offered from time to time by international, public and private partners in the education field. Some of the grantees also utilize the online web resources to add to knowledge that guides their policy decision-making and operations.

We go from the basis of projects when elaborating concepts. We think about the themes and ask the question whether or not we have the expertise. We also recruit if we don't have the expertise in-house/ otherwise, if donor allows, we propose capacity building for the team involved and we organize training for all our staff.

(OC1 Benin)

There was no clear EFANet learning strategy before their EOL engagement although there had been sharing of lessons during GCE annual assemblies that took place in Nepal, South Africa and Zimbabwe. Board members and Coalition Secretariat Coordinator/ Programme Officer attended these physical events. Online learning activities were only experienced after 2019 under EOL.

(OC1 The Gambia)

We found RMU-WCA learning framework to be very compatible to our own approach especially because the focus is on participatory learning, strengthening civil society capacities, peer learning and shared learning which made the implementation to be seamless.

(OC3 GNB)

EOL has provided coherence to the learning process of grantees by offering a clear goal and structure for learning; relevance by emphasizing the importance of contextualization in identifying learning needs; complementarity by offering additional financial as well as technical resources and e-learning opportunities; and synergies by promoting productive collaboration within each coalition and across coalitions, sharing best practices and lessons learned. Synergy is also achieved because the capacity engendered by EOL learning efforts enriched grantee implementation of other donor-funded programs.

Once the data (learning needs) was gathered, there was the need to analyse and EOL gave us options to do this and we chose peer learning which allowed us to do the ranking of the learning priorities leading to consensus building. The methodology for identifying and prioritizing learning needs is good, it lend itself to a scientific approach

(OC1 Cameroon)

There was an introductory phase to EOL's learning approach, one session every two weeks for one month. The orientation sessions were interactive, allowing grantees to understand how to apply EOL learning concepts to their own projects. Approximately 70% of the staff and management participated. We have received learning tools/frameworks from EOL, including how-to guides, learning plan templates, and scorecards. These tools have been used to identify and prioritise learning needs, set clear goals and develop effective learning strategies.

(OC1 Chad)

There was synergy of actions: on the basis of EOL project, our work with the World Bank was enhanced because we already had an understanding and required competencies in advocacy and organizational management

(OC 1 Cameroon)

Even for an OC3 grantee such as Girls Not Brides that has been pursuing a sophisticated learning strategy engaging member organizations with multiple learning approaches, acknowledges the benefits from EOL, stating:

The EOL learning agenda has been helpful in terms of assisting us strengthen learning for the coalitions. EOL also gave us access to funding and technical tools to implement our learning programme

(OC3 Girls Not Brides)

Meanwhile, Learning Partners, who only responded to the EOL Terms of Reference (ToR), could only surmise that the training / capacity building services they provided were relevant to the grantees. Nevertheless, all 5 LPs interviewed were able to further validate the relevance of the learning activity, particularly training, through the standard pre-training needs assessment, in-training discussions on organizational experiences on the subject matter and closer interactions between LPs and grantees during the mentoring phase of the LP contract. The mentoring period also gave LPs the opportunity to discuss other organizational learning gaps of grantees that they eventually reported to RMU WCA. The latter exhibited flexibility in recognizing the critical nature of some of the learning gaps and organized learning activities to address them.

After reporting the additional learning identified during mentoring with grantee, RMU WCA agreed to a period extension so Learning Partner can provide coaching to design grant proposal.

(Kalube Consult)

RMU WCA Regional Learning Plan

Regional Learning Plans are part of the EOL Learning Framework meant to ensure strategic analysis and planning based on regional learning priorities, grantee learning priorities and the lessons from past experience and assessment of grantees' strengths and weaknesses. The relevance and responsiveness of the lineup of consolidated learning priorities reflected in the RMU WCA Narrative Regional Learning Plan 2023 as well as reports, were confirmed during grantee interviews. This indicates the astuteness by which RMU WCA analyse regional and national contextual issues and their implications to priority learning needs. The Regional Plan have listed learning needs that were common across some of the grantees but also additional needs identified as priorities by RMU WCA. Two of the RMU WCA identified learning needs have been cited by the following grantees as the most satisfactory learning activity that they have participated in:

- a) Regional Workshop on Education in Emergency situations – Burundi, Benin, Chad
- b) Evidence-Based Advocacy and Policy influencing strategies – Benin, Madagascar, Guinea, Burkina Faso, Mozambique

Meanwhile, EFANet (The Gambia) particularly noted that although they did not list Safeguarding and Child Protection as a priority learning need they were grateful that they were invited by RMU WCA to participate in a PSEA (Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse) training as they have realized the importance of the topic to their coalition work.

PSEA training supported EFANet in understanding the concept, the need to have zero tolerance for sexual exploitation applied to all EFANet staff, Board, members and beneficiaries and related personnel. There has been series of step-down training on PSEA after RMU WCA training to increase the knowledge and ensure that roles, responsibilities and expected standards of conduct in relation to PSEA are adhered to.

(EFANet, The Gambia)

The relevant information in the RMU WCA Regional Learning Plan is, however, not shared with grantees. This is a missed opportunity, as the document can provide the grantees greater understanding about the concrete intentions of EOL RMU WCA for supporting a certain set of learning and capacity building initiatives.

Grantee Participation

The initial process adopted by the EOL RMU WCA involved grantees submitting a Learning Plan together with their EOL grant proposal. This was under the Call for Proposals for the part 2 of the first phase of EOL. The Learning Advisor of the RMU WCA held series of orientation workshops with grantees, mostly online, providing the objectives, basic principles, approaches and tools contained in the EOL Learning Framework. Alongside the orientation workshops, templates for learning needs assessment and developing the Learning Plan were shared and RMU WCA feedback were provided on the submitted Learning Plans. Grantees generally assessed the learning plan development as highly participatory and that they were given full autonomy in the process. Responses to the online survey supported this fact as shown in Table 3:

Table 3: Assessment of Grantee Participation and RMU WCA Support to the Identification and Prioritisation of Learning Needs

Indicators	Rating (Total Respondents = 13)
Organisation is involved and participates actively in the identification and in the prioritisation of learning needs	Average Rating: 8 (1-10, 10 = Highest)
Majority of staff was involved in the identification and prioritisation of learning needs	Average Rating: 9 (1-10, 10 = Highest)
Extent EOL RMU-WCA helped you identify and prioritise learning needs	To a large extent - 7 To a very large extent - 5
Extent EOL RMU-WCA support to learning activities are relevant	To a large extent - 8 To a very large extent - 2

Since the grantees consist of education coalitions (OC1), consortium partners (OC2) and international alliances (OC3), the identification and prioritisation of learning needs essentially followed their organisational decision-making structure that involves reflections and consultations either in a general assembly (SfL-Ghana, Angola, Chad, Madagascar) or series of consultative workshops in regions where members are located (Cape Verde etc.).

The rest including grantees from Burundi, Benin and Girls Not Brides used multiple approaches that included meetings, individual interviews, online surveys and field visits to make sure they obtain the widest range of inputs from members. Grade Africa constituted a committee headed by a Coordinator to oversee the reflection on learning needs and planning to address them.

EFANET-The Gambia Secretariat was unable to conduct Coalition-wide consultations because there was no time and resources to bring together members at that time. Instead, they used the information gathered from the most recent general meetings that included a reflection on capacity building needs.

Threats to Participatory and Inclusive Learning Needs Identification

The experience of The Gambia represents one of the threats to participatory and inclusive process of learning needs identification and prioritisation- limited reflection time. Fortunately, before this current Learning Assessment commenced, a shift in the process had already been decided based on the recommendation of a⁷ study by the Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex. “Oxfam Denmark took a deliberate decision to detach the learning needs assessment and learning plans development from the call for proposal and grant making stage with grantees”. Learning Plans are no longer required for submission together with grant proposals starting with grantee implementation of the EOL 2024-2026. This will allow more time for grantees to reflect and document their priority learning needs.

The other identified threats to learning plan assessment was the inadequate communication of the intended scope of EOL support to identified learning needs by grantees. A few of the grantees had the expectations that once they have done a comprehensive learning plan, EOL will be supporting its implementation.

We did not delegate anyone to update the learning plan. We initially expected the RMU WCA to support the funding of the plan but we later understood that was not the case and that it is our plan and we needed to look for money to implement it.
(OC 2 Benin)

The expectation was for the EOL to support the whole Learning Plan only to be told in the course of grant project implementation that they were expected to implement and support those learning needs that have not been covered by the EOL budget. By the time they got this information organizational budget had already been allocated to other activities.
(OC1 The Gambia)

The participatory and inclusive identification of learning needs is a good way of obtaining a rounded view of needs. However, it leads to a tall list of learning priorities, 30 in our case, but EOL budget was not enough to implement all.
(OC1 Cameroon)

A third threat to participatory and inclusive development of grantee Learning Plans is the inadequacy, among some of them, of self-awareness of what coalitions would need as capacities (knowledge and skills) to affect changes in the education sector. For instance, through the grantee interviews the impression was gained that some organizations mix up their internal learning needs with their broader mission in the educational sphere. In completing the online survey, grantees were unable to properly place learning activities under the EOL categories of organizational, thematic and advocacy competencies. The Regional

⁷ The Institute of Development Studies is a an EOL global learning partner that conducted a review of grantee learning plans and found them somewhat superficial learning plans and lacking in depth in terms of organizational learning needs. The study also cited possible grantee lack of willingness to reveal weaknesses as it was part of the proposal stage.

Learning Plan 2023 talked about “grantees under OC1 have difficulties to identify institutional weaknesses and prioritize their learning needs”. This was definitely observed, for instance, with Lusophone grantees upon review of their Learning Plans and during interviews under this assessment. A grantee that gave a low rating regarding the staff involvement in the identification and prioritisation describe their reason below.

Our (online survey) score is a lower 4 because we found out that the majority of staff were not involved in the identification and prioritisation of learning needs. We acknowledge that a lot more needs to be done even though the coalitions are not at the same level of maturity and competencies.

(OC1 Chad)

EOL Theory of Change, Results Framework and Understanding of Learning Framework

Responses to the online survey showed high self-rating on grantee level of awareness and understanding of their EOL project Theory of Change- ToC (Average of 8 self-rating, 1-10, 10 being the highest).

Majority of the grantees recognize the usefulness of their grant project ToC in the identification of learning needs aligning these needs with the overall institutional vision and mission. EOL has trained them that both the project ToC and the Results Framework set out the results and targets as well as the pathways towards these results, including capacities needed to effectively implement activities.

The project theory of change has been well communicated and every year, the annual work plans must be prepared in line with the theory of change and also our annual activity progress reports must also be reviewed in conformity with this theory of change.

(OC1 Niger)

From project approval to completion stage, the ToC serves as guide for evaluation of the different phases of the implementation process. In the course of planning our field missions, we review the relevant documents taking into account the performance indicators as well as the ToC. Additionally, after the field missions, we cross-check to ensure that the results are in line with the expected outcomes of the project.

(OC1 Guinea)

The ToC and Results Framework are key documents in results-based management. One focuses on sustainable and inclusive change through strengthening institutions and monitoring mechanisms whereas the other serves to communicate results. The documents helped us to identify the needs to be reinforced for an effective and efficient piloting.

(OC1 Togo)

However, especially for some Lusophone and Francophone grantees, more clarity is needed on how to truly apply the ToC in the organization’s specific context, how to utilize it efficiently in the identification of learning needs, as well as how to make it a guiding document in their institutional operations and outreach activities. Specifically, they would like to deepen their knowledge on the tool, how to translate the envisioned changes into concrete activities, as well as how to monitor the ToC over time.

4.2 Effectiveness

- ❖ To what extent did the EOL/RMU WCA learning efforts achieve the planned learning outputs & outcomes of grantees as captured in the Grant program proposals?
 - ❖ To what extent has the EOL learning approaches/methodologies assisted the grantees to improve their performance and outcomes?
 - ❖ To what extent have the Grantees implemented adaptive management within their program?
-

- 1) Overall, the EOL Learning Program had attained effectiveness in inculcating a learning culture among some of the grantees and at most enhanced the knowledge and skills of all grantees through the EOL learning activities.
- 2) Results of post-training assessment implemented by Learning Partners indicated the achievement of planned learning outcomes. Also, targeted outputs for grantee use have been produced such as Communication and Visibility Plan, Advocacy Strategy and Plan, research studies (e.g, state education budget etc.)
- 3) Online Survey results showed positive assessment of Learning Activities they attended, assessing them overall as Satisfactory, able to apply learning to their work to a large extent and learning as having positive effect on grant project outcomes to a large extent.
- 4) Improvement in the performance of Grantees was significantly driven by the learning approaches / tools / methodologies used by both the RMU WCA and Learning Partners.
- 5) Grantees and Learning Partners opined that RMU WCA's effectiveness had improved over time, in terms of frequent communication, as well as the more rapid payment of financial disbursements and the support to development the new Learning Plan in a joint exercise.
- 6) The major threats to effective learning as experienced by grantees include:
 - Weak internet connection during online training
 - Conflicting EOL agendas preventing substantive participation of grantees in learning activities
 - Inconvenient schedules for training for working coalition members
 - Management of workload of limited grantee staff
 - Inadequate provision of language translation support
- 7) Application of adaptive management has been mixed. While most Francophone grantees reportedly apply the principles in their work, understanding of some Lusophone and Anglophone grantees remain conceptual with their application limited to keeping RMU WCA informed on certain challenges and finding a way around that barrier.

Assessment of Training Effectiveness

The 13 grantees responding to the online survey reported participating in a number of learning activities under the three competency areas:

- ❖ Organizational Capacity (9 areas)
- ❖ Thematic (8 areas)
- ❖ Advocacy (13 areas)

Grantees registered high satisfaction in the following aspects of the training:

- Satisfaction with Enhanced Knowledge/Skills: **Satisfactory**
- Extent of Application of Learning to Work: **Large Extent to Very Large**
- Learning Positively Affected Project Output/Outcome: **To a Large Extent**

Skills areas rated less than average (i.e. Fair, To some extent) included Fund-raising, PMEL, Education in Fragile Contexts and Education System Transformation. Annex 7 lists all the learning activities reported and their assessments.

Grantees cited concrete outcomes of their learning under EOL, particularly in the following areas:

- a) Setting up of an advocacy process;
- b) Development of Communication and Visibility Plan;
- c) Initiation of a learning process starting with learning needs assessment, prioritisation and Learning Plan development;
- d) Report writing using EOL standards;
- e) Establishing research as one of the work pillars of the coalition. For instance, RNCEPT produced a study on state education budget that allowed them to present concrete facts as they advocate with local and national authorities;
- f) Membership in international Learning Collaborative and Thematic Working Groups;
- g) Improved staff working techniques and interpersonal relations;
- h) Initiation of adaptive management processes;
- i) Improved PMEL system;
- j) Establishment of organizational PSEA policy;
- k) Enhanced participation of grantee in local and national level education lobby and advocacy; and
- l) Enhanced credibility with other donor partners observing the enhanced knowledge and skills

RNCEPT is always being involved, even on a local level, when there are decisions to be taken in educational topics. The local authority is very interested in RNCEPT's activities, especially in defence of the rights for quality education, and has even provided an office space to host the network delegation. It's a recognition of the coalition's work. RNCEPT and other unions were very involved in the debates on the national budget for pre-school activities, and influenced the budget being raised from 0.1% to 2.3%.

(OC1 Cape Verde)

The coalition was asked to implement the advocacy component of the PARI-Pedagogique project in which state actors and other organizations of civil society are the beneficiaries. In addition, the coalition was made a member of the national coordination team of the KIX Afrique 21 programme in Cameroon where there are frequent exchanges and sharing of experience and innovations. The coalition is responsible for facilitating or conducting step-down training for the other actors and other partners who are in need of capacity improvement with respect to thematic competencies and or learning activities

(OC1 Cameroon)

Interviews with RMU WCA confirmed the improved performance of grantees after series of EOL learning initiatives.

There had been improvement in financial reporting by grantees as evidenced by reduction in the frequency of back-and-forth feedback on reports. Improvements in financial reporting can be due to RMU-WCA interventions, but, some came from Peer-to-Peer learning (between grantees) particularly in the cases of DRC, Guinea, Benin, Angola and Mozambique.

(RMU WCA)

The Online survey also generated what for the grantees were the top five (5) most effective learning activities and the features that make them effective as shown in Table 4. The most effective training and learning events according to rank are as follows:

- 1) Evidence-based Advocacy
- 2) Regional Workshop on Education in Emergency Situations
- 3) Training on Social Accountability: Strategy and Practice
- 4) Fundraising / Resource Mobilization
- 5) Communication, Media, Branding and Visibility training

Table 4: Most important Features of Effective Learning Activities According to Grantee Survey Respondents

Important Feature	Description
1. Relevance of Topic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Importance of topic to education advocacy
2. Tangible Training Output	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Production of a practical document (e.g. Communication Plan)
3. Quality Training Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approach and Methodology employed Practical demonstrations through role plays Field trips Mentoring sessions carried out Awareness of the educational system by the Learning Partners
4. Training Dynamics and High Interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sharing of experiences with other Coalitions Networking created or strengthened Extensive in person training that promoted diversity and shared purpose Total involvement of the actors

Aside from standard expectations for quality training delivery that includes methodology, the list of important features of effective learning activity emphasizes good experiences with, therefore preference for, more interactive cross-coalition/country sharing that leads to productive networking. However, sharing and networking events must be designed for effective exchange which may not be achieved if the number of participants are huge, the methods are not designed to allow each individual to participate actively, time for interaction is limited and provisions for adequate translation are not factored in particularly for a multi-language target group.

The survey respondents were also asked for their least effective learning activity under EOL. Ten (10) learning activities were cited for reasons that include difficult training environment/low quality of delivery, challenges met both in the project internal and external environment. Table 5 lists the important features as well as grantee recommendations for improvement of these learning events.

Table 5: Most important Features of Least Effective Learning Activities According to Grantee Survey Respondents

Least Effective Learning Event	Important Features	Grantee Recommendation for Improvements
Challenges in the external project environment		
Influence and collaboration with the media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration with the media is influenced by money 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grantee training on Education in fragile and emergency contexts
Research and institutional support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate contributions from research institutions as expected. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grantee to take steps to integrate this approach into their advocacy processes.
Creation of alliances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unable to develop inter-country initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negotiation training
Challenges in the internal project environment (Organisational)		
Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited communication approaches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the learning collaboratives to enable us to deepen the knowledge acquired.
Fundraising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work scheduling limited knowledge sharing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share experiences with Coalition members
Advocacy capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overlapping agendas (learning sessions coinciding with programme activities) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harmonisation of the sessions should be improved
Difficult training environment/low quality of delivery		
Influence and collaboration with the media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weak internet connection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better internet connection is essential
Digital communication and working tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenging training timelines • Low Quality of delivery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify necessary resources to address challenges • Proper scheduling of training sessions • Better quality of training experts
Budget for education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenging training timelines • Low Quality of delivery 	
Organizational leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little content and concrete examples 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote more learning and training events on these topics
Education in emergency contexts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not much exchange of knowledge and concrete experiences, especially from African countries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bringing concrete experiences and examples from African countries.

Grantees meeting challenges in the external environment as they implement their newly-acquired knowledge and skills can benefit from follow-up coaching organized by RMU WCA or they can solicit advice from Learning Collaboratives either within or outside EOL. Based on the survey responses, Learning Collaboratives on media engagement and partnership with research institutions can be explored. After all these two concerns are shared by development organizations across West and Central African countries. Cape Verde is one of the grantees that seem to actively involve the media in the Coalition's activities, always trying to make sure that their messages are captured and mainstreamed by media representatives to have broader outreach.

Key concerns across the survey respondents, themes that were also recurring during grantee and Learning Partner interviews, are weak internet that disrupts online learning and conflicting EOL work agendas.

There were times that coalition members wanted to participate in planned training but the schedule provided by RMU WCA was not convenient. Board members and coalition members are mostly 8 to 5 workers and their most convenient time for learning is weekend. However, it seemed this period is not also a good timing for RMU WCA and Learning Partners.

As a result, the Secretariat who has the full-time staff are forced to send their own staff to the training participants (with the view that they can echo the learnings at a later stage). This becomes problematic especially if the Secretariat itself has lean staff. Either they cannot provide full concentration/time to the training, or they may not be right personnel to attend.

(OC1 The Gambia)

Other Observations

There are indeed evidence of the effectiveness of learning activities in terms of improved knowledge and skills of grantees and these have translated to improved work performance. However, limitations were observed such as follows:

- 1) No clarity yet on how learnings are actually translated into the organisational activities of the grantee organisations and how they are embedded or institutionalized within the longer-term vision of the networks;
- 2) Grantee monitoring of the learning process seems to be purely on activity level reporting, and the learning aspect of a broader MEAL framework is not yet fully exploited. It could help to further translate monitoring results into better institutional performance and the promotion of learning; and
- 3) Grantees received training in fundraising, however, it seems that with the newly gained knowledge on mobilizing resources they mostly aim to write better proposals to other donors, rather than to also target internal structures and alternative means of resources generation.

Adaptive Management

For grantees that have internalized adaptive management learnings, the benefits have been transformative. Learning has been integrated into work processes, brought in changes in the program context, making conscious efforts towards learning from the process.

The adaptive management training and the subsequent process, linked to learning process and the new concept introduced to development field was a game changer for organization and their consortium partners. It brought to the fore, the recognition of the need to learn, adapt and implement deliberate process, activities and channel efforts towards improvement. It also implied that there should be deliberate efforts and dedication of time for reflection and learning, harvesting learning results and changes, as well the need for documenting key learning and changes

(OC2 SfL-Ghana)

Girls not Brides conducts quarterly reviews of the implementation of their learning plan especially given that they are working mostly in conflict-ridden areas (two coups d'état in Burkina-Faso and Niger) during the period of implementation. On the basis of the reviews and with the emergence of new or additional information, strategy refinement takes place.

(OC3 GNB)

Thanks to the MEAL training, CNT/EPT projects are elaborated in a flexible and agile manner to ensure that adaptations are easier during implementation.

(OC1 Togo)

For some of the grantees, adaptive management processes have yet to be made systematic. Through RMU WCA efforts in terms of guidance in progress reporting and field visits and on-demand advising, there is somehow a gradual introduction of feedback mechanisms, continuous learning cycles, and flexible decision-making processes into grantee program implementation. to improve the effectiveness of their programs and activities.

To improve adaptive management overall, it is important to build the capacity of grantees in data collection and analysis, allocate adequate resources to organizational learning, promote a culture of learning and innovation, and overcome structural or cultural barriers that may hinder collaboration and communication. It is also crucial to ensure the equal participation of women and men in all learning and decision-making processes.

4.3 Efficiency

- ❖ Were the financial resources used efficiently to achieve learning results?
 - ❖ What factors facilitated or impeded the learning plans implementation?
-

- 1) Grantees viewed funding to be appropriate in light of the activities planned within the EOL grant framework. However, major challenges were encountered funding the rest of the learning needs expected to be supported internally by grantees and those for support by other external partners.
- 2) The process of achieving learning outcomes was efficient and the costs involved adequately justified the results achieved. The EOL grant budget structure and financial planning process have been generally effective in promoting the learning process.
- 3) Learning Partners assessed RMU WCA support as satisfactory. There is just strong suggestions for more resources to be invested in translation of materials and translation services in order to deliver a more efficient training.
- 4) Grantees found RMU WCA support very helpful in their Learning Plan implementation.
- 5) 81 percent of interviewed grantees have implemented 70 to 90 percent of their Learning Plans including all the interviewed 11 Francophone Grantees. The Learning Plans have not been updated, grantees are essentially just waiting for the grant extension to review and update their plans. Most monitoring of the learning plan implementation was made integral to the overall grant project monitoring.
- 6) The implementation of Learning Plans have been constrained by inadequate grantee resources, limited donor interest in education funding, rising operational costs and limited EOL program duration
- 7) Knowledge sharing is not satisfactorily implemented by many grantees due to constraining factors the most important of which are limited time and budget, scattered location of coalition members and poor internet connectivity.

RMU WCA Resource and Service Implementation

By experience, RMU WCA has sufficient budget for supporting identified annual learning initiatives. There is good support from the EOL Global Management Unit (GMU) to ensure the required financial support is available. In the first 3 years, RMU-WCA was working with a budget quota, but for 2023 a required budget was submitted and approved by GMU.

In 2020, the process of implementing the learning needs budget was delayed due to COVID. By the end of 2021, there were surplus fund but all had been exhausted by the end of 2022, implying that all planned initiatives had been implemented.

Aside from financial efficiency, the EOL approach to implementing learning initiatives is to identify complementary areas where it can add value, avoiding redundancies, and looking for opportunities for collaboration to maximize resources and outcomes.

The RMU-WCA also provides on-going support for needs identified during project implementation by grantees. The following are the approaches to these needs:

- a) Organize a webinar to address identified gaps particularly for common problems among the grantees. This webinar can be organized by language groups.
- b) One-on-one coaching
- c) Identification of in-country coach or Learning Partner to address a need of a grantee
- d) Monitoring and follow-up visits to grantees.

Generally, the RMU WCA has adequate staff to support the implementation of the consolidated learning needs of grantees. If the competencies are not available in-house, that is the time they seek out Learning Partners.

One limitation, however, is the lack of a Lusophone specialist within the RMU-WCA. When translation support is needed for a learning activity, they call on a staff from Lusophone grantees (e.g. Mozambique NEC). The other challenge has been the difficulty in matching the timing of learning initiatives together with the schedules of grantees. It is a challenge that the RMU WCA Learning Advisor had to address by negotiating a common schedule with relevant grantees. In the process of finding the common schedule, some grantees still faced difficulties finding the right staff to send for participation and/or land in a situation where there are conflicting program schedules.

Grantees find the support of RMU WCA to be very helpful but there were also concerns about the level of interaction that seem to be focused on EOL Coordinators and NEC Secretariat leadership with less representation from the rest of staff, Board and other coalition members. Some grantees also reported not having enough support in completing the reporting template made available to them especially when they have challenges.

The engagements with RMU were very useful and we consider them effective. They give us assurance to develop more and more professional work

(OC1 Cape Verde)

Engagements with RMU WCA were very informative on various themes. The learning events and the RMU monitoring visits, led by the learning advisor are extremely useful, and the results supportive.

(OC2 SfL, Ghana)

We found RMU's support at the planning stage and the clarity brought on the reporting template to be very helpful.

(OC1 Togo)

EOL financial resources were adequate. Support was available where our budget was limited. We were given assurance for additional funding to adaptive management after reviewing our learning plan, and new things came onboard.

(OC3 GNB)

Communication (from RMU WCA) mostly takes place with the Project Coordinator, however, the objectives are not always being achieved by only dealing with the technical officers and that can be limiting the implementation progress. It will be good to widen the communication to a group of officers and the executive board, so that they are all on the same page and can come in/intervene if necessary.

(OC1 Angola)

The process is pretty complex with a complicated template that kept changing so you would have to be changing as you populate. There was also the issue about language: we worked on the template in English but our partners needed to work on it in French and this was difficult. Our partners have only basic excel skills and not enough to understand and complete EOL template. We didn't necessarily receive support on reporting except for the sharing of reporting template

(OC3 GNB)

Learning Partners have expressed satisfaction with RMU WCA support to learning activities. The Unit helped clarify the ToR, provided clear guidelines for the contracting process, provided useful inputs during inception meetings as they have the appropriate technical competence in their staffing, provided narrative project report templates, supported the coordination of training schedules and correspondence with grantees. The RMU WCA was found always responsive to Learning Partner concerns and ready to collaborate. There have been concerns, nevertheless, in implementing training services such as the limited resources for language translation. Learning Partners were at times needing to find resource persons with trilingual skills that proved difficult. Material translation was also challenging because of limited contract resources and time.

Learning Plan Implementation

13 out of the 15 interviewed sampled grantees (87%) have completed 70 to 90 percent of their Learning Plan under the EOL 2020-2023 grant period. Meanwhile, EFANet-The Gambia only implemented learning areas supported under the EOL grant and Angola had just started technical activities after the formalization of the coalition in late 2023. There has never been an updating of the Learning Plans although they were reviewed and monitored by grantees, mainly for purposes of the grant monitoring system. Table 6 lists down the constraining and the facilitating factors to Learning Plan implementation, as mentioned by interviewed grantees and survey respondents.

Table 6: Constraining and Facilitating Factors to Learning Plan Implementation According to Grantees

Constraining Factors	Facilitating Factors
1) Many grantees and coalition members could not get the full benefits of the training because of challenges with internet connectivity.	1) Grantee engagement: Team effort, team cohesion and the presence in the different regions
2) Limited grantee financial resources. Many had come up with several learning needs beyond what EOL could fund and had difficulty mobilizing extra resources.	2) Financial and technical support from RMU-EOL
3) In several countries in the WCA portfolio, donor presence and INGO support are very limited, especially on education system strengthening”, which limits the sphere of influence for civil society.	3) Good coordination with stakeholders, including Learning Partners with their flexibility in sharing their time for continuous mentoring
4) Rising operational costs due to economic downturns such, such as rising prices, inflation, and depreciation of the currency.	4) Robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms
5) Project duration during the program phase under assessment was short, and that they needed to implement activities hurriedly, including Learning Plans. As a response, the EOL Technical Progress Report confirms extension of the OC1 grants, and offering longer grants.	

Inadequate budget has been a general concern in Learning Plan implementation with some of them only reliant on EOL funding. To address this, some grantees either mobilize additional funds from a variety of sources, streamline planning and time management processes, and/or strengthen partnerships with technical experts and collaborative organizations.

Knowledge Sharing

The EOL Learning Framework also guides grantees to implement knowledge sharing. Online survey results showed some of the grantees only able to share acquired knowledge to some extent even as others indicated having share knowledge to a large extent. The most important factors cited for the inability of grantees to share knowledge are limited time, scattered location of coalition members and poor internet connectivity. The reasons for not sharing knowledge are listed here in the following categories: Time, Technological, Financial and Logistical, Attitudinal and Bureaucratic/Administrative.

❖ Time factor

- 1) Some members were not available at the time of the sharing meeting. (2)
- 2) Staff identified for training had heavy workload preventing them from fully participating and also sharing knowledge acquired.

❖ Technological

- 3) Lack and/or poor internet connection especially in remote areas which has limited coverage of activities. (2)
- 4) Members scattered in different locations, needing reproduction and collation of training materials etc. (2)
- 5) Absence of a knowledge sharing device/technique that enables systematic sharing of the learning outcomes.
- 6) Some of the regional and local committee members are not computer literate or digitally inclined.
- 7) Lack of an appropriate environment for safeguarding the learning outcomes and knowledge acquired.

❖ Financial and Logistical Constraints

- 8) The distance between the headquarters and the places in the region where the representatives of the coalition are located, makes gathering of members too costly. (2)
- 9) Lack of funding for step down training within the organization.
- 10) Inadequate skilled trainers/training for trainers.
- 11) Inability to conduct adequate field visits during which knowledge can be shared with members.
- 12) Inadequate access to international training materials/reports.

❖ Attitudinal

- 13) Some members have low commitment to replicating the learning activities in their institutions.
- 14) Poor attention given to the important role of communication.
- 15) Inadequate/low member participation in workshops.
- 16) Limited engagement during undertaking field visits.

❖ **Bureaucratic and Administrative Constraints**

- 17) Organisational processes within the consortium limiting easy sharing.
- 18) Poor choices in the selection of representatives for certain institutions.
- 19) Absence of a communication strategy and sharing of knowledge within the organisation.
- 20) Inadequate consultations on training activity dates with the targeted participants.

Grantees put forward their recommendations to improve knowledge sharing some of which require their internal adjustments. These recommendations include:

- i. Put measures in place to facilitate sharing of documents.
- ii. Improved time management and commitment of members to attend future trainings and learnings.
- iii. Equip the regional members with information technology tools and passwords for connection.
- iv. Use of other online knowledge sharing platforms.
- v. Mobilise resources for workshops on knowledge sharing/restitution
- vi. Plan towards availability of funds to conduct step down trainings within the membership.
- vii. Conduct more training of trainers.
- viii. Put in place an effective internal and external communication strategy.
- ix. Sensitise members of the coalition on best practices in information sharing.
- x. Select the right people to represent the institutions at meetings.
- xi. Sharing training documents in advance.

4.4 Impact (Best Practices and Key Lessons)

- ❖ To what extent did the EOL/WCA RU learning efforts achieve the target outputs & outcomes of grantee EOL Program, and how are the learning processes and outcomes consistent with the EOL ToC and Assumptions?
 - ❖ What were other organisational benefits of the learning program, observed best practices and key lessons?
-

- 1) It is premature to assess the impact of the EOL RMU WCA learning efforts as the implementation period for learning activities had been short.
- 2) Majority of the achievements have been at the level of learning activities and not much tangible grant project results or outcomes. So a lot of capacity enhancement has taken place, be it on advocacy skills and knowledge, organizational strengthening or thematic improvement. At best, a conducive environment has been created for tangible project outcomes and envisioned changes in the educational sector to be achieved.
- 3) Some project outcomes are not fully achieved due to resource constraints, operational challenges, or unforeseen external conditions such COVID.
- 4) Some of the grantees' long-standing advocacy efforts, as well as improved communication measures during the project period, led to increased visibility, and are being invited by local authorities to share expert inputs in thematic discussions, development of policies or tender processes.

Movement Towards impact

The observed indications that could potentially lead to impact are the following:

- i. Strengthened capacities of grantees and improved organisational practices and fostered positive changes in their areas of intervention.
- ii. High impact potential from capacity building in thematic areas, manifest in changes in behavior, practice and skills.
- iii. Enhanced capacity to engage in discourse on education and educational rights at the national and sub-national levels (for all grantees).
- iv. Strong evidence of organizational strengthening, network and coalition management – all grantees, especially Lusophone through RELUS.
- v. Enhanced and varied levels of visibility, recognition and credibility of grantees and EOL processes emanating from advocacy efforts (Lusophone) and leadership roles in national policy dialogue (Anglophone and Francophone) and other processes across board.
- vi. Emergence of learning culture among grantees, with very high potential for impact and transformation of the grantees into learning organization through organization learning.
- vii. Grantees derived high levels of formative support from Learning Partners engaged by RMU.
- viii. High levels of interest in grantees by donor organizations interested in learning and their learning plans and processes, for instance as in the case of SfL.
- ix. Changes in learning practices have generated several benefits, including improved operational efficiency, better decision-making, increased innovation, adaptation to environmental changes, and an increase in the quality of services or products offered.

The internal and external factors that had negatively affected grantee learning processes include:

- i. Resurgence of COVID 19 or related diseases
- ii. Weak internet connectivity
- iii. Wide geographical spread of coalition members
- iv. Limitations on and dependence on external funding sources
- v. Mixed and varied effects in dealing with state institutions, such as limited space for CSOs (Mozambique), uncertainty about social inclusion (Ghana) and political turmoil (Angola), etc.

Best Practices

The learning assessment have gathered the following best practices as attested by grantees and Learning Partners, as well as observed in program reports.

- i. Provision of learning support systems such as plan templates, learning activities and Resource Persons had contributed to the effective, efficient implementation of the EOL learning agenda of grantees.
- ii. The thematic approach to capacity building has enhanced and strengthened the capacities and capabilities of grantees that transcends EOL and onto the broad spectrum of social development.
- iii. The adoption of training and learning has made the grantees to gradually engage and improve upon their advocacy and lobbying work in the education sector.
- iv. Adoption and use of EOL learning tools and learning plans, and their application as complementary to other donor funded programs, have created synergies and efficiency in the cases of SfL, CEFAN, LUSOPHNE network and DEDRAS.
- v. Collaborative learning proved to be most effective for Grantees, especially when exchanging practical and successful experiences at national, regional, continental and global levels.
- vi. Best Learning Approaches:
 - International networking events
 - Learning and exchanges among network of coalitions within the same language groups, especially sharing from advanced countries
 - Learning Partner-facilitated workshops and follow up processes such as mentoring and coaching.

Before EOL, our planning was essentially activity-based. The EOL learning approach has taught us, with the guidelines and tools, to change our approach and always start project planning with a situational analysis, identification of the problem and visioning of the changes or results.

(OC1 Togo)

International meetings were impactful events, since they offer the opportunity to directly exchange with the RMU team, other grantees, Learning Partners, and generate inspiration for new activities or thematic priorities. Through the exchange with the international the Lusophone network, we were inspired to legally formalize our network in 2022. This positively impacted the institutional setup and performance. Engagement with other Lusophone organizations made them appreciate the need for training.

(OC1 Angola)

The effectiveness of the workshop held in Nairobi on advocacy, the Lome workshop focused on fragile and emergency situations, where each participant catalogued their relevant experiences to inspire other participants not forgetting the collaborative learning undertaken with colleagues from Benin, Gambia, Madagascar, Burundi, Ivory Coast, RDC, Senegal, Guinea Bissau, Cape Verde and Angola on financing programmes on education transformation.

(OC1 Chad)

Key Lessons

Based on the document reviews and stakeholders' interviews, the learning assessment have gathered the following key lessons from the implementation of RMU WCA learning efforts.

- i. Grantee identification of learning needs is a guarantee that learning processes and solutions are tailored to the specific to needs and therefore helps the program. However, RMU WCA coaching and consolidation of learning needs across the WCA grantees will provide a more comprehensive and rationalized learning framework/agenda.
- ii. Identification and prioritisation of learning needs require adequate time for the consultative process to be effective at the same time harnessing ownership.
- iii. New knowledge can be better translated into action, if there would be further follow-up measures to training, such as mentoring or peer exchange
- iv. Some grantees tend to mix up their internal learning needs with their broader mission in the educational sphere, and it therefore, highly important to clearly define and distinguish internal and external needs, as well as the organizations' specific actions to address these needs on the different levels. RMU WCA can take on a guiding role in this process.
- v. The RMU WCA guidelines for reporting do not ask for the reasons why some learning needs in the Learning Plan were not implemented, the challenges met, and the implications of not addressing those learning needs.
- vi. The different categories of consultants/trainers provide a broad perspective on the different training approaches and sharing of experiences.
- vii. Collaborative learning and learning events with large groups would be only beneficial if all participants have equal access to understanding materials and proper language translation
- viii. There are a number of grantees and even Learning Partners who believe the duration of training events are too short. There is a need for mutual review of the time devoted to the different training courses with the aim of allowing for good assimilation of the subject matter.
- ix. Handouts, assignments and recordings are required to be made available to participants by the respective Learning Partners. However, there are indications that not all involved in the training consume these materials for consistent and continuous learning as well as sharing.
- x. Majority of the implementation of learning has been at the activity level. At best, a conducive environment has been created for tangible grant project outcomes to be produced and eventually cause real changes in the education sector.
- xi. No clarity yet on how learnings are actually translated into the organisational activities of the grantee organisations and how they are embedded or institutionalized within the longer-term vision of the networks.
- xii. Many of the grantee monitoring reports seem to focus more on activity level performance. The learning aspect of a broader MEAL framework is not yet fully

- exploited. It could help to further translate monitoring results into better institutional performance and the promotion of learning.
- xiii. Grantees received training in fundraising, however, it seems that the newly gained knowledge was mostly aimed at writing better proposals rather than targeting internal structures and alternative means of resources generation.
 - xiv. Learning Plans were not updated during the assessment period (2020 – 2023) but new Learning Plans are rather resulting from currently entering a new project phase (2024 – 2026), in which the grantees and RMU jointly work on that document. RMU states that some grantees have difficulties to identify institutional weaknesses and prioritize their learning needs, therefore RMU's availability to support that process will be of assistance.

4.5 Sustainability (Ownership)

- ❖ What is the likelihood of continuation of learning culture and building capacity (organizational, thematic and, advocacy)?
- ❖ What has been the level of grantee ownership of the learning process and the possibility of institutionalisation of these processes?

-
- 1) Despite the limitations in the implementation of their Learning Plan and sharing knowledge, grantees have actually recognised the usefulness of a systematic learning process introduced by EOL. There is now a high sense of ownership of this process though it is at the initial stage where grantees are trying to resolve how to bring it to full take off. Eleven (11) out of the 13 grantee survey respondents (85%) agree that “there is evidence that the culture of learning and strengthening of capacities will be carried out at the level of their organisation”.
 - 2) Prospects for sustainability is high and contingent on the extent to which grantees utilise, transfer and integrate knowledge and skills, learning approaches, tools and methodologies, and complementary support systems, for instance, national coalitions such as BAFASHEBIGE in Burundi, CONAMEPT in Madagascar, SOCOCIDE in Chad, and the OC2 grantee School for life in Ghana.
 - 3) Prospects for continuation of the learning culture are, and will be contingent on availability of funding, preferably from diverse sources including internal grantee resources.
 - 4) Grantees are definite about the possibility of replicating the EOL process with for instance, RNCEPT-Cape Verde, CONAMEB-Madagascar indicating the intention to work with actors in the non-formal education and out of school children.
 - 5) The participatory approach in planning and decision-making, and the involvement of relevant stakeholders and beneficiaries in the design of educational programmes and the identification of training needs, have added potential to expanding knowledge on EOL and related processes.
 - 6) There are prospects for engaging with Learning Partners who have experiences and familiarity with the EOL to support grantees beyond the life of the program. The Learning Partners have initiated establishing WhatsApp groups for the continuous information exchange and sharing of lessons among the grantees. These channels have been continued by some grantees.

We have members who are capable of mobilising funds. The coalition also have in place the critical mass of experts to ensure strengthening of institutional capacities, themes and advocacy. These activities will serve as a point of departure from the support and gains in capacity strengthening that EOL has delivered in the past.

(OC1 Chad)

Resource Mobilization Committees were formed and trained to raise funds for the for the organization which will help in the continuation of the learning plan. Members are indeed committed to learning and sharing within their learning plans for their organization specified

(OC1 The Gambia)

We have engaged with other organisations in order to diversify our portfolio of partnership. We have also undergone capacity strengthening on learning.

(OC1 Mauritania)

Several of our project team members have registered for online programmes to strengthen their capacities. We have also negotiated with the CLE programme to build capacity of our project team members.

(OC2 Benin)

We think the learning around collaboration and joint advocacy with coalitions in other countries and with education coalitions will be continued. in Burkina Faso for instance, child marriage coalition has been working with education coalition on joint strategizing and building capacity together to carry out advocacy recognizing the importance of collaboration and working together. The other one is around youth advocacy and research which we think will carry on and deepen especially in Burkina Faso who have set up a youth advocacy group that has started working actively. The gains from the project is enough to carry them on but they will have to conduct resource mobilization

(OC3 GNB)

5 Recommendations

The identified gaps and constraints, emerging opportunities, key lessons and best practices gathered from the learning assessment were the bases for the recommendations for consideration and action of grantees and the RMU WCA.

Grantees To:

- i. Consider virtual networking and collaboration among each other to learn and share, conduct peer review and quality assurance. Maintain WhatsApp groups that had been initiated under EOL for this purpose.
- ii. Institute systems that will encourage and support trained staff to share acquired learning (knowledge and skills) with other members.
- iii. Work at affecting change by focusing on transforming the collaborative processes with public sector systems at national and sub-national levels, and maximize benefits of collaboration within the process.
- iv. Initiate a coalition-wide familiarization and internalization of the EOL Learning Framework/Brochure (recently share by RMU WCA) to fully benefit from the guidance the document provides in prioritizing learning needs and various ways of implementing their learning plan.
- v. Ensure that the processes of adaptive management that is necessarily linked to the ToC, are observed and effectively guiding project management. It should not be seen as a mere response to RMU requirement.
- vi. Ensure that all MEL systems and processes move from just output monitoring to describing how the outputs were used to attain outcomes, as well as impact.

RMU WCA To:

- i. Facilitate the process of grantees developing their organization-level learning strategies.
- ii. Support grantees to shift from being satisfied with one-off learning to that of a learning organization that will ensure continuous learning and improvement of program performance, with comprehensive internal-learning strategy.
- iii. During the shift to a dialogue-based learning needs assessment from a self-assessment process, integrate a deliberate training of trainers to ensure that grantees themselves can independently conduct an effective assessment internally and/or with external stakeholders including other donor partners. Also, assist to put in place a documentation system that will allow grantees to reflect back on their learning needs assessment processes. This dialogue-based process should include the aspect of budgeting and financial planning for learning activities. This will enhance transparency and allow grantees to efficiently plan for budgeting and sourcing of resources outside EOL support.
- iv. Reinforce with the grantees the processes and linkages between organizational capacities, theory of change and adaptive management.

- v. Support the improvement of grantee adaptive management processes by building their capacity in data collection and analysis, encourage them to allocate adequate resources to organizational learning, and coach them how to overcome structural or cultural barriers that may hinder collaboration and communication. It is also crucial that grantees observe equal participation of women and men in all learning and decision-making processes.
- vi. Ensure that the monitoring and progress report guidelines should include information on grantee Learning Plan implementation, the challenges met, and the implications of not addressing those learning needs.
- vii. Reinforce the guidelines and adequately assist grantees to describe the outcome and impact of learning, not just reporting on activities.
- viii. Establish more formal and regular feedback mechanisms with grantees to ensure that their needs and expectations are fully considered throughout the learning plan development and implementation processes.
- ix. Consider starting engagement with Learning Partners with the sharing of grantee learning plans to allow them understand the learning agenda of the organization, situate the thematic area they are tasked to address, and identify the potential synergies.
- x. Consider adequate funding for equal access to proper material and in-training language translation, and ensure the guidelines for Learning Partner proposal costs include these aspects.
- xi. Encourage grantees to source additional resources to be able to implement their Learning Plan. A starting point will be to strengthen capabilities for alternative funding models, including engaging other donor partners and internal resource mobilization.
- xii. In the advent of reduced COVID 19 threats, consider organizing in-person capacity building events and training so as to promote more effective learning and networking. For instance, in-person learning will be best suited for training under the Thematic Competency Areas. This type of training entails the introduction and discussion of more technical concepts that may take longer for grantees to internalize and require more interaction/consultations with Resource Persons. Learning Events and Learning Collaboratives, particularly events with high number of participants from various regions and varying languages, can benefit more with in-person format. Such big events require more dynamic interaction among participants, easier access by any grantee to any participating individuals or groups of interest, that online format (especially within unstable internet environment) can offer only to a very limited extent.
- xiii. The duration of the training events should be reviewed to allow for adequate engagement. Learning partners could be consulted in the determination of the duration of the training.
- xiv. Design cross-coalition networking and sharing events with manageable number of participants, methods that allow each individual to participate actively, adequate time for interaction, provisions for adequate translation particularly for a multi-language target group.

- xv. Consider funding support to knowledge sharing particularly targeting National Education Coalition members.
- xvi. Facilitate better coordination between donors and partners to help maximize the effectiveness of available resources for supporting grantee learning plan and avoid duplication.
- xvii. Consider dissemination of the summary of the Regional Learning Plan in order for grantees to understand the context (diverse situation, comprehensive learning agenda) from which EOL Learning Support is coming from.
- xviii. Disseminate training schedules early. In line with the sharing of Regional Learning Plans, advance schedules of learning activities will allow target grantees to also plan internally, considering other program and project schedules.
- xix. Consider adding Learning Collaboratives on media engagement and partnership with research institutions. Cape Verde grantee will be a good lead for the Lusophone group.
- xx. Consider supporting advocacy for long-term and transformative policies for the educational system, keeping the different levels of education and training in mind, as well as the inclusion of vulnerable and marginalized groups. (The School for Life, RNCEPT and AASCS EPT experiences could be shared and replicated).

6. Conclusion

The findings of the Learning Assessment included positive experiences and assessment from grantees engaged in EOL implementation in the period 2022 -2023. There was a general view that the learning agenda and implementation approaches and tools applied by the RMU WCA were relevant to the needs of the grantees. The extent of effectiveness of the learning services is undoubtedly existing in terms of improved knowledge and skills among the engaged grantee staff. However, it still remains to be seen whether these acquired capacities will fully translate to impact on the defined target outputs and outcomes of their grant projects, that is, the envisioned changes in the education sector. This, of course, will also depend on internal and external environmental factors outside just the learning processes, something that needs systematic monitoring. The sustainability of the learning culture as introduced by EOL RMU WCA is also contingent on major efforts of grantees to institute the appropriate technical and management systems to promote the acquisition and sharing of lessons by the staff and the rest of coalition/network members. Eventually, continued and consistent partnerships between and among CSOs, RMU WCA and other major stakeholders are still necessary to ensure that learning is institutionalized to achieve the transformation within a sector that is aiming for education for all.

References

2020 – 2023 Grantee Learning Plans and Progress Reports

2020 – 2023 Learning Partners Terms of Reference and Technical Reports

Kirkpatrick Partners. The Kirkpatrick Model.

<https://www.kirkpatrickpartners.com/the-kirkpatrick-model/>

RMU WCA

- The Learning Agenda: Learning Needs Identified by Grantees under RMU WCA for the period 2022/23
- Regional Narrative Learning Plan 2023
- Learning Plan Implementation in 2023: Status of Planned Learning Activities
- EOL Global Results Framework
- EOL Mid-term Review Report, 2022
- EOL Learning Framework, September 2022
- Technical Progress Report, 2023
- Theory of Change Essentials

SDG Report, 2023 www.unstats.un.org/sdgs/

World Bank Group. Learning Poverty. www.worldbank.org

UNESCO. Education 2030: Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action for the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all; 2016 (unesco.org)

ANNEXES

1. Sampling Methodology



Annex1
_Sampling.docx

2. List of Stakeholders Interviewed



Annex 2_Stakeholders
Interviewed_EOL Learn

3. Learning Assessment Framework



Annex
3_13Mar_Learning As:

4. Guideline for Desk Review



Annex
4_5_6_Guidelines for L

5. Guide Questions for Interviews of Grantees, Learning Partners and RMU WCA

6. Online Survey Questionnaire

7. Online Survey Results- Grantee Assessment of Effectiveness of Learning Activities They Attended



Annex 7_Assessment
of Learning Events Att



Europe

MDF Netherlands

Ede, Netherlands
mdf@mdf.nl

MDF Brussels

Brussels, Belgium
info@mdfbrussels.be

Africa

MDF West Africa

Accra, Ghana
mdfwa@mdf.nl

MDF Eastern & Southern Africa

Nairobi, Kenya
mdfesa@mdf.nl

MDF Afrique Centrale

Goma, DRC
mdfac@mdf.nl

MDF Bénin

Cotonou, Benin
mdfbenin@mdf.nl

Asia

MDF Pacific Indonesia

Bali, Indonesia
mdfpi@mdf.nl

MDF Myanmar

Yangon, Myanmar
mdfmmr@mdf.nl

MDF Bangladesh

Dhaka, Bangladesh
mdfbg@mdf.nl